

# What is the Church?

## Ascent

Winter Session, Lesson 6

### Introduction

Review last week

This week: **Ecclesiology – The Study of the Church**

### The Universal Church

Definition – All those who are spiritually united by faith in Christ from Pentecost to His return

Scriptural Images of the relationship between Christ and His church

The Good Shepherd and the sheep (John 10)

The Vine and the branches (John 15:1-11)

The Cornerstone and the living stones (1 Peter 2:4-9)

The High Priest and a kingdom of priests (Hebrews 9:11-12, 10:19-22)

The Head and members of His body (Colossians 1:18, 1 Corinthians 12)

The Bridegroom and the bride (John 3:29)

### The Local Church

Definition of the local church – A group of persons who have professed personal faith in Christ and gather together in His name to perform God's will as revealed in the Bible.

Earliest example: Acts 2:42-47

## Organization of the local church

Defined gathering times and places

Defined leaders

In the Jerusalem church

The Apostles

Servers of tables (Acts 6)

As the movement spread

Elders/Overseers

Appointed by Paul and Barnabas Acts 14

Qualifications 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Deacons

Probably originated with servers in Acts 6

Qualifications 1 Timothy 3:8-13

## The Purpose of the local church

Bring glory to God – worship

Build up believers – teaching/discipleship

Reach the lost – evangelism

## The Ordinances of the local church

Definition

Baptism

The Lord's Supper

### *Digging Deeper:*

“Ecclesiology: The Church,” <https://bible.org/seriespage/8-ecclesiology-church>

“What is the Church?” <http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/the-study-of-god/why-study-god/what-is-the-church>

“What is the Church?” <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/what-church/>

*Next Week: Evangelism – What is the good news, and how do we make it known?*