

I love my church – The benefits

Show video

I love my church, I love the church, I love Jesus Church.

Last week we talked about the excuses that people use for not coming to church and the results of not coming to church. Today I want to talk about the benefits of coming to church.

What is the Church?

The foundation of the church – The foundation of the church is not about me, or some gifted leader or praise team. The foundation is to be built on Jesus Christ - His death, burial and resurrection. We identify ourselves a lot with the leaders of the church rather than Jesus Christ. When people ask me what religion I am, I say “I’m a Christian.” I don’t say “I’m a Wesleyan, or a PFWCian,” I’m a CHRISTian, a follower of Jesus Christ!

Matthew 16:¹⁵ Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. ¹⁸ Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’)(petros – a stone), and upon this rock (petra – a massive rock) **I will build my church, (future tense)** and all the powers of hell^l will not conquer it. ¹⁹ And I will give you **the keys of the Kingdom** of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.”

²⁰ Then he sternly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Jesus Christ is the foundation and we are the building.

I Cor. 3:11 “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ.”

The launch of the church – Acts 2

¹ On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. ² Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. ³ Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. ⁴ And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

⁵ At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem.

⁶ When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.

⁷ They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, ⁸ and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages! ⁹ Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!” ¹² They stood there amazed and perplexed. “What can this mean?” they asked each other.

¹³ But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, “They’re just drunk, that’s all!”

Peter Preaches to the Crowd

¹⁴ Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, “Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o’clock in the morning is much too early for that. ¹⁶ No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel

- They spilled out of the building –
- They proclaimed Christ
- They healed the Sick
- They helped the poor
- They loved the sinner
- They ministered to the brokenhearted.
- They baptized the new believers.

- They disciplined them.
- They had communion together.
- They fellowshiped together. And...
- They worshiped the risen savior

Who is the church?

Who does that include when I say “I love my church” -

I Cor 3:9 For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.

Acts 2 – Around 3000... were baptized. ⁴¹ Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

Baptism is a natural progression of a person that has given their life to Christ.

What we should expect from the church?

Acts 2:42

⁴² All the believers devoted themselves **to the apostles’ teaching**, and to **fellowship**, and to sharing in meals (including the **Lord’s Supper**), and to **prayer**.

⁴⁶ They **worshiped** together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—⁴⁷ all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

What we should expect from the church?

1. ***Love of God not self - Radically committed*** --Worship: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart." – Matthew 22:37 – What is Worship – It’s an action verb and it’s expressing our love for God to Him.

It’s hard to live life disconnected from God. Coming weekly to church for worship helps you to re-center your life, get your priorities straight and opens your heart and soul to worship.

2. **Ministry** – Loving Others - **Discover** -- "Love your neighbor as yourself."
– Ministry to others. Too many people think that this is the responsibility of the Pastor only but all followers of Jesus Christ are to be ministers!

Ephesians 4:12 ²**His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church),**

3. **Evangelism - Reach** - "Go and make disciples." - **Great Commission:**
"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Acts 2: 47 “**And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.**”

4. **Fellowship - Unite** -- "Baptizing them." - baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

As we fellowship together we develop relationships with one another and God has created us to be relational beings. That's why the men's ministry is important, the women's ministry is important, even hanging out after church and visiting or getting together with others is important... because that's where relationships take place. If we just come in and sit through the service and walk back out not associating with others with the exception of a hello, were mission out on an important part of church. **WE NEED EACH OTHER.**

According to the National Survey of children's Health, children and youth who attend religious services weekly exhibit the fewest behavior problems, are more likely to have high quality relationships with parents, and are more likely to exhibit positive social behavior, including showing respect for teachers and neighbors, getting along with other children, understanding other people's feelings and trying to resolve conflicts with classmates, family or friends.

5. *Discipleship - Grow* - : "Teach them to obey." - and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you

The "self" is composed of four elements: physical (body), mental (mind), emotional (soul), and spiritual (spirit). God calls us to love Him with all of these. When we actively take care of ourselves in all four areas, we enjoy a balanced life and a healthier one too. Insurance studies have actually show that regular church attendance adds 5.7 years to your life.

These are all elements that should be part of a church.

Love
Ministry
Evangelism
Fellowship
Discipleship

All of these take an investment of our time.

It's not easy to always love
It's not easy to make the time for ministry
It's uncomfortable to share our faith because of fear...
It makes us vulnerable when we open ourselves up to others in fellowship
It stretches us when we grow spiritually and that's sometimes painful.

But... that's what we are to be. And when that is the case, I believe that the Lord will add to our numbers those that are being saved. I believe that we are striving to be just such a church and that's why we are doing The Experiment....

Penn Forest Worship Center
A ministry of the Wesleyan Church!
Statement of Purpose

PFWC exists to ***REACH*** non-believers, to ***UNITE*** them with Christians, help them ***GROW*** in their faith, ***DISCOVER*** their gifts, and see them become ***RADICALLY COMMITTED*** to Jesus Christ both in life and in death.

Great Commandment: "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:37-40

Great Commission: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

The five italicized words in our purpose are found in these two passages:

6. ***Radically committed*** --Worship: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart."
2. ***Discover*** --Ministry: "Love your neighbor as yourself."
3. ***Reach*** --Evangelism: "Go and make disciples."
4. ***Unite*** --Fellowship: "Baptizing them."
5. ***Grow*** --Discipleship: "Teach them to obey."

Our Motto
RELENTLESSLY pursuing God and the people He loves!