

The Church

Purpose

Encourage the seeker that he/she will not be left to fend for one's self after baptism. Instead, Jesus baptizes us into the body, the church (*1st Corinthians 12:12-13*) to be joined by a *team* of likeminded disciples in our devotion to Him. These brothers and sisters are meant to be a continual source of encouragement in our walk with Christ.

- **Acts 2:40-47.** The first 3,000 converts joined together in devotion to the Apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. A beautiful view of the early church. How would such a church be received today?
- **John 17:20-26.** Jesus' passionate prayer in the Garden focused on our unity as a church. He equated our unity with the unity between the Father and himself. How would Jesus view the splintering of Christendom?
- **1st John 1:5-10.** True fellowship can only occur in the light. Both our fellowship with God and our fellowship with one another are based on grace; therefore, never try to present yourself as one without need for grace. Be encouraged: as we continue to confess our need for Jesus, he continues to cleanse us from all sin. Thus, you don't need to be baptized again and again (see *John 13:7-10*).
- **Hebrews 10:22-25.** After being washed in baptism, we need the continual exhortations of brothers and sisters to stay the course. Prepare in advance how you will spur on fellow Christians in the fellowship. Also prepare to receive biblical input that will result in greater love and good deeds. Missing meetings of the body is a bad habit.
- **Hebrews 3:12-14.** We each have the charge and the responsibility to see to it that no one has a sinful, unbelieving heart that falls away from God. Daily encouragement helps everyone stand firm until the end.
- **2nd Corinthians 6:14-18.** We are the temple of the living God! He is our Father, and we are His very sons and daughters! Stress this wonderful promise. Therefore, He calls us to separate from the world so that He can welcome us. What relationships do you have that yoke you unequally?

Additional Helpful Scriptures:

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| ▪ Eph. 2:19-20 | ▪ 1 st Cor. 12:12-27 | ▪ Col. 2:18-20 |
| ▪ Rom. 12:4-8 | ▪ Col. 1:18 | ▪ John 13:34-35 |

