



## The Doctrine of the Church

**The church is a really, really big deal to Jesus Christ.**

**He was – and is – deeply committed to church & its mission:**

*Now I say to you that you are Peter... and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. Matthew 16:18 NLT*

**He is so committed that he willingly gave up his life for the church:**

For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. Ephesians 5:25-26 NLT

**What is the church?**

The word church never refers to a building, but rather refers to a group of people who have been called out of this world and redeemed by Jesus Christ.

The church of Jesus is made up of men and women from every conceivable racial, ethnic, economic, political and social tribe imaginable.

"The church is the only institution that exists primarily for the benefit of those who are not its members."  
William Temple

**How is the church described in the New Testament?**

● **The church is pictured as a family.**

*So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Ephesians 2:19 NLT*

● **The church is pictured as the body of Christ.**

*Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. Romans 12:4-8 NLT*

● **The church is pictured as the bride of Christ.**

*For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. Ephesians 5:25-27 NLT*

● **The church is pictured as an embassy for God's kingdom.**

*For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 2 Corinthians 5:19-20 NLT*