

12 December

Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Church – God acts



Let's hear your story

1. Have you ever had to explain to a friend or family member who the church is?
2. When did Jesus announce His church for the first time? (See **Matthew 16:15 – 18.**)
3. What did Paul say Jesus did for His church in Acts 20? (**See Acts 20:28b; Jesus bought the church with His own blood.**)
4. What are the only two expressions of church? (**Universal and local.**)



Let's go deeper

5. What image does Ephesians 6:10 – 20 portraits of the church? (**The church is the army of God.**)
6. Is the church about people or buildings? (**People, see Acts 20:28.**)
7. What kind of women did God use in His church? (**Mothers, grandmothers, unmarried, married, servant girl and business women..**)
8. How do you become part of Jesus' church? (**By believing in Jesus. John 1:12; But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.**)



Let's apply this

9. Jesus uses all kinds of people in His church:

In the book of Acts it is clearly demonstrated that Jesus can use any person who makes themselves available to Him.

- What gifts and talents did you receive?
- How can you use your gifts and talents to serve Jesus' church?
- Don't isolate yourself, but be a part of the church family of God.
- Ask your life group leader how to get more involved in church life.

SUMMARY:

- Church: God acts

In **Matthew 16:15 – 18**; Jesus announces His church for the first time. **v.17**; He declares that the church is built on the revelation that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world; the Son of God, and that this revelation is a gift from God.

v.18; Jesus is both the owner and builder of His church this is His final end time project on the earth. Jesus declares in v.18, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His church. Jesus' church is advancing, overpowering and overcoming the works of the devil. Paul writes in **Acts 20:28b**, that Jesus bought the church with His own blood.

The word church is from the Greek word "Ekklesia" and means the called-out ones. It is not a building or denomination, but born-again believers.

Definition: The church is people who are born again by the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit to represent Jesus Christ to the world.

Two expressions of church in the New Testament:

The **universal church**: "ekklesia" - all past, present and future born-again believers. (See Matt.16:18; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 6:9 – 11; Rev. 7:9 – 14).

The **local church**: "ekklesia" – born-again believers in a given locality. (See the book of Acts; Paul's letters; John's letters and Revelations 2:1 – 3:22).

What are some pictures or images the bible use to refer to the church?

The army of God – see Ephesians 6:10 – 20.

The body of Christ of which Jesus is the Head – Rom 12:5, 1 Cor. 12:27 and Eph. 4:12.

The bride of Christ – see Ephesians 5:24 – 33.

The temple of God – see 1 Corinthians 3:16 – 17 and 2 Cor. 6:16.

The family of God – see John 1:12 and Romans 8:15.

The flock of God – see Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 26:31 and John 10:3.

The children of light – see Luke 16:8; Ephesians 5:8 and 1 Thess. 5:5.

The holy nation of God – see 1 Peter 2:9.

The pillar and foundation of truth – see 1 Timothy 3:15.

The dwelling place of God – see 1 Peter 2:5.

Church is about people, not a building:

During the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, "the Lord descended on it in fire" (Ex 19:18). There was fire above the roof of God's building during the dedication of the Tabernacle (Ex 40:34-38; Numbers 9:15,16). When Solomon was dedicating the Temple, "fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering..." (2 Chron 7:1-3). When the Lord empowered the church (Acts 2:3), "fire comes down and settles on Believers' heads" – God's new building!