

Church On Purpose

A Study through the book of Ephesians
Ephesians 2:20-22

A college age person once asked an older believer, “why go to church...after all, you can know God without going to church, right?”

The older Jesus follower looked at the young man in the eyes, he warmly smiled and said, “I go to church because Jesus goes to church, He is there and I want to be where He is.” Then he continued, “The truth is, one can’t really know God without being with Jesus.”

Jesus loves His churches, and whether they are big or small, casual or formal, in a building, in a home or under a tree in the jungle, He has designed them to function in the same wonderful ways. When a church functions in these ways it becomes His church on purpose. Let’s talk!

Welcome back to our journey through the book of Ephesians, where today we will be finishing out the second chapter by looking at verses 20-22 to see what a church on purpose looks like.

Our context is how through Jesus both the born-again Jew and the born-again Gentile are equally a part of God’s household. **Ephesians 2:19, “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household.”**

From here we are given four descriptions of what His Church on Purpose looks like. It’s about the Bible, it’s about Jesus, it’s about worship and it’s about the Holy Spirit’s presence.

Ephesians 2:20a, “Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,”

As spoken last week, the foundation of the apostles comprises our New Testament, and the foundation of the prophets comprises our Old Testament.

Being a Church on Purpose means we stand firmly on God’s Word as the final authority. We hold that the Bible is the eternal, inspired Word of God, absolute truth from cover to cover.

This is what Paul referred to when he talked about the church in 1 Timothy 3:15, “If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.”

Because we are a Church on Purpose, we stand as a local pillar and foundation of truth, where the Word of God is the authority and is central to our teaching, our preaching, our disciple making and our practice.

Ephesians 2:20b, “with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.”

The purpose of a cornerstone was to both set the true alignment for the building’s structure as well as to bind together the stones that hold the building in place. Jesus does both of these.

Jesus being our “chief cornerstone” means that all of Jesus, Who He is, what He has done, His heart and His truth, forever serve as our true alignment of what God wants us as a church to be, to express. Jesus and His purposes is what holds us firmly together.

Being a Church on Purpose means that Jesus is the point of it all, He is our priority. This is why our mission statement as a church is “Know, Grow, Live, Give” To know Jesus, to grow in our relationship with Jesus, to live for Jesus and to give Jesus to all.

Ephesians 2:21, “In Him [Jesus] the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.”

Unlike any other temple one would find in the world, this temple in Jesus does not comprise of bricks and mortar but of people, those who are in a faith-based relationship with Jesus who are called together in His name to be His local church (note “In Him”).

Unlike any other temple one would find in the world, this temple in Jesus, is called a “holy temple in the Lord”. Holy means it is set aside by God to Himself for His purposes. And as a “holy temple in the Lord” it is also set apart from the world and its ways by God.

Unlike any other temple one would find in the world, this temple in Jesus is the only place that brings the kind of worship that God desires.

As Jesus said in John 4:23-24, “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

Being His Church on Purpose means that we prioritize worshipping in a way that truly attracts God, not people. We gather together to worship Him in spirit i.e. with our hearts lead and filled with the Holy Spirit. And to worship Him in truth i.e. sincerely and according to the Scriptures.

Ephesians 2:22, “And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.”

Being His church on purpose means that as a people joined together by our mutual faith-based relationship with Jesus Christ (note “in Him”) together we are where God is taking up residence through the presence of the Holy Spirit among us.

We are to be a people where God’s presence is experienced by the Holy Spirit.

We are to be a people where God’s voice is heard by the Holy Spirit.

We are to be a people where God’s touch is received by the Holy Spirit.

Just as that old chorus says, “Holy Spirit you are welcome in this place, Holy Spirit you are welcome in this place, omnipotent Father of mercy and grace you are welcome in this place.

This is why we here at New Life are all about the Bible, all about Jesus, all about worship and all about the Holy Spirit’s presence. We are glad each of you are a part of us too!