

southcitychurch

God by his Word (**Deut 4:10**) and Spirit (**Acts 2:47; 1 Cor 12:13**) creates the Church, calling sinful men out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's Body (**Eph 4:4-6; 1 Pet 2:9**). By the same Word and Spirit, he guides and preserves that new redeemed humanity (**Matt 16:18; Acts 11:26; 1 Cor 7:17, 11:36, 14:4-5, 26, 34; Eph 5:27-29**). The Church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally appropriated the gospel (**Matt 18:15-20; Acts 2:41,47; 14:23; 20:7; 1 Cor 1:2, 9; 11:20; 12:13; 16:1-2**). The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (**Col 3:16; Eph 1:2; Eph 5:16-19; 1 Pet 2:9**). It also exists to serve him by faithfully doing his will in the earth (**Matt 28:19; Acts 11:29; 2 Cor 8:4; Gal 2:10; 1 John 3:17**). This involves a commitment to see the gospel preached (**Isa 61:1; Matt 10:7, 11:1,5; 24:14; 26:13; Mark 3:14; 6:12; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15,20; Lk 9:2, 6; 16:16; 24:47; Acts 8:4; 14:7,21; Rom 10:15; 15:20; 1 Cor 1:21,23; 2:4; 9:16; 15:1, 11; 2 Cor 4:5; 1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim 4:2**) and churches planted in all the world for a testimony (**Acts 8:1, 4, 14; 9:31; 11:19-22; 13:2; 14:21-23; 1 Cor 3:6; Col 1:6; 1 Thess 1:7, 8; Tit 1:5**). The ultimate mission of the Church is the making of disciples through the preaching of the gospel (**Matt 28:18-20**). When God transforms human nature, this then becomes the chief means of society's transformation (**Jer 29:7; Matt 5:13-16; Rom 8:19-21; Gal 2:14**). Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church, in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer (**Acts 2:41-42**).

All members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local church (**Acts 9:31; 20:28-30; Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 1:2; 16:19; 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; Philem 1:2**). In this context they are called to walk out the New Covenant as the people of God (**2 Cor 3:6**), and demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God (**Matt 10:8; 12:18; 16:19; 24:14; Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 6:9-10**). The ascended Christ has given gift ministries to the church (including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) for the equipping of Christ's body that it might mature and grow (**1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11-14**). Through the gift ministries, all members of the Church are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of ministry (**1 Cor 14:3, 12, 26; Eph 4:12**). Eldership in the church is male (**1 Cor 14:33-34; 1 Tim 2:11-14; 3:2; Tit 1:5-6**). In

the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and leadership (**Acts 20:28**; **Heb 13:17**; **1 Tim 3:5,13,17**; **2 Tim 2:10**,14-15,24-26; 4:2-5; **Tit 1:7,9**; 2:1) and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in his service in relation to one another and to the world (**1 Cor 12:4-31**; 14:1-33; **Eph 5:18-21**).

IMPLICATIONS:

Because the church is God's means of growing the believer, we do not believe it is possible to be a healthy Christian without being a part of a local church. We seek to be a vital, active member in the local church that God has placed us in. We serve others with our gifts, and receive the help and ministry of others, that together, we may grow in know Christ, holiness, and making Christ known to the world.