

THE CHURCH

WHAT IS IT?
DOES IT MATTER?
SHOULD YOU CARE?



“Paul, Silas and Timothy , to the CHURCH of the Thessalonians...” 1 Thess. 1.

“Christ loved the CHURCH and gave himself up for her.” Ephesians 5

“I will build my CHURCH and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” Jesus, Matthew 16.



Half of 'nones' left childhood faith over lack of belief, one-in-five cite dislike of organized religion

Reasons for disaffiliating among those who were raised in a religion and are currently ...

	NET Unaffiliated	Atheist	Agnostic	Nothing in particular
	%	%	%	%
NET Don't believe	49	82	63	37
Disenchanted/don't believe	36	71	46	25
Not interested in/don't need religion	7	3	8	7
Views evolved	7	7	12	5
Went through a crisis of faith	1	2	1	1
NET Dislike organized religion	20	10	19	22
Anti-institutional religion	15	2	17	16
Religion focuses on power/politics	4	5	1	6
Religion causes conflict	1	3	2	1
NET Religiously unsure/undecided	18	5	12	22
Unaffiliated but religious	7	1	1	10
Seeking/open-minded	6	3	5	7
Spiritual but not religious	3	2	4	3
Uncertain about beliefs	2	0	4	2
NET Inactive believer	10	0	3	14
Non-practicing	8	0	2	11
Too busy	2	0	1	3
Other	<1	0	<1	1
Unclear/no answer	6	3	7	6

Ekklesia: Called-out Ones



Genesis 12:1–3 (NIV)

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. ² “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”



Deuteronomy 4:7–8

⁷ What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? ⁸ And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?



Deuteronomy 4:10

¹⁰ Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me,
“**Assemble the people** before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children.”



Hosea 2:23

²³ I will plant her for myself in the land; I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one.' **I will say to those called 'Not my people,' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.'** ”



Church = the community of God's
people



[The Church] is a people, a special people,
a people who see themselves as standing in
relationship to the God who saves them
and to each other as those who share in
this salvation.

Stan Grenz



- The Local Church
- Local Churches spread-out through a city or a province
- The Universal Church



Revelation 7:9–10

⁹ After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”



Are you one of God's people?



Ephesians 2:11–12

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.



Ephesians 2:18–19

¹⁸ For through him [Jesus] we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,





this family is stupid