

GOD'S FAMILY

STUDY 4

When any human being is born, they become part of a family. Usually they have a mother, a father, siblings, grandparents, uncles, and aunts etc. In the same way, when we are born spiritually, we 'appear' in the centre of a great family.

Ephesians 2:19 talks of a great spiritual relationship, where God is the Father, Jesus is our older brother, and the saved souls are our brothers and sisters. This family is the church.

True, the word "church" has often been used to describe a place, the building where Christians meet. However, the most important fact is to remember that "church" is actually the congregation, the community of people who have been born again.

Read **Acts 2:47**

What does the word 'church' refer to? (Tick appropriately)

- A building
- A group of people
- Neither one

Jesus created the Church (**Matthew 16:18**). We are founded in Him, firmly standing in His word. This Church is also a nation (a people), the continuation of the people that God had chosen from the beginning (Israel).

In the stories of the Bible, the relationship between God and the Church is shown through examples and metaphors. This type of teaching (via examples) is very interesting as it teaches us many things by using comparison. For example, if we say that some things 'are like water and oil', then we have an understanding straight away that they don't go together, which is the total opposite of saying that something is like 'flesh and blood'.

The following two passages use the same illustration to talk about the relationship between Christ and the Church. Read them and complete the questions/sentences below.

Ephesians 5:23 and **Colossians 1:18**

Christ is the _____ of the church and the church is the _____ of Christ.

This comparison teaches us that:

There is another great metaphor that shows the situation between Christ and His Church.

Revelation 19:7-8 and **2 Corinthians 11:2**

Christ is the _____ and the Church is His _____

This comparison teaches us that:

The Lord loves His Church, and He wants us to be together with our brothers and sisters in faith. The Bible tells us that we have to meet together (congregate).

Hebrews 10:25

Meeting together should not be a sad or difficult chore. On the contrary, in Church we find many good things. Read the passages and write what they say about the church:

Psalm 133:1-3

1 John 4:16,21

1 Thessalonians 4:18

Acts 2:46

Hebrews 10:24-25

What is the main function of the Church? (Tick one of the next phrases)

- Take care of its members
- Take care of the community
- Take care of God
- Pray for the needy
- Sing
- Preach the good news

For the Church there is nothing greater than God. Our Father is the reason for our meetings and activities.

Isaiah 43:7 says that we were _____ for _____ of God.

He made us for that reason and we, whether we are alone or with the Church, need to fulfil this purpose. We preach because we love Him, we help others because we love Him (because He asks us to) and we meet together to worship Him. Everything is based on our Father and the great love we hold for Him.

Who does what in the Church?

According to **Hebrews 13:17**, Is Jesus is the only leader? Explain your answer:

Within the congregation, there are different functions and roles to make sure the Church grows strong and healthy. Look at what these functions are according to the bible passages, and write in the box the name of the job followed by the job description.

Job	Job Description

All the jobs and duties are important in the Church. From the things that appear to be the smallest and most hidden (generally seen to be the cleaning) to the more visible jobs, (such as playing an instrument or preaching) they are all fundamental for the church to work well. Each child of God has a responsibility to fulfil, and we must be content with ours. The apostle Paul in **1 Corinthians 12** explains this subject well, so that we are left with no doubts. Part of the passage says:

1 Corinthians 12:6-7 *"There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church."*

It's great to know that we have been chosen for a task, and that God gives us knowledge and understanding to carry it out well.

God sees each one of us as living bricks ("living stones" in **1 Peter 2:5**) who together make up the great building that is the Church. We must ask God for strength and we must put all our effort into making the Church better, day by day. This way, those who see a Church that is beautiful and united, will have a reason to marvel and worship God.