

What Is The Church? #1

The gospels inform us that people were sometimes confused about the identity and purpose of Jesus. While some believed He was a prophet, while others tried to dismiss Him as demon possessed. Some saw Him as a good Man, others saw Him as a blasphemer. We should not be surprised to find that confusion exists concerning Christ's church too. The following are some misconceptions people have about the church today.

First, the church is not an ATM machine. When some people fall on hard times, their cupboards get bare and their light bills are past due, they pick up the phone and start calling churches. The Bible does not allow the church to be used and abused in this way. Local churches helped their own members who were in need (Acts 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:3-16), and they extended benevolence to needy members of the church in other places (Romans 15:26), but they were never used as a charitable organization for the community at large. The purpose of the church is primarily spiritual in nature, not financial.

Second, the church is not in the entertainment business. To some people, their feelings about worship are dependent upon what they have experienced with their eyes and ears, not what they have expressed with their hearts. Preachers are sometimes looked upon as entertainers, judged by style, not substance. As long as they can deliver a short, polished, non-judgmental message, churchgoers are pleased (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:1). The Lord warned the prophet Ezekiel that he was looked upon as an entertainer: *"And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not"* (Ezekiel 33:32).

Adapted From Heath Rogers