



They Devoted Themselves

May 10, 2020

What We Believe

An eight-week series on Valley's Statement of Beliefs

This week our sermon series brings us to the statement concerning what we believe about “The Church.” We'll focus on the first part of the statement in this study.

THE CHURCH — We believe in the universal Church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local Church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. [Part 2] We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local Church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. (Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:38-41; Eph. 2:19-22; Eph. 5:25-27)

What a privilege to belong to the body of believers God designed as the Church. We are connected to our brothers and sisters in Christ both throughout the world, and locally at Valley.

Read 1 Peter 2:9–10:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

When you came to salvation through personal trust in Jesus Christ, you became part of a people, a body of believers. As a part of this body, you have both a privileged position and a purpose to which you are called.

[Q] What is that privileged position? (v. 9a, 10)

[Q] What is that purpose? (v. 9b)

*“The church is the regenerate people of God
saved by the power of God
for the purposes of God in this world.”*

Pastor Jeff Vanderstelt

Read Acts 2:42-47:

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

[Q] Describe what it looks like to be *devoted* to something or someone. Can you give an example of someone who is devoted to another person, or a cause, or an activity? What does it mean for a person's time and resources to be devoted to someone or something?

[Q] List the attitudes, activities and experiences of the early church in Acts 2:42-47:

[Q] Compare your list with God's commands listed below:

John 8:31-32; 2 John 9

John 13:34-35; Luke 12:32-34

Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Hebrews 10:25

James 5:13; Colossians 3:16

[Q] Which gives you the most joy? Which would you like to be more devoted to? How will you rely on the Holy Spirit?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.

[Q] One of the metaphors Paul uses for the church is the human body. Like body parts, we are designed to need each other. How might the church actually be strengthened through a time of crisis? In what ways will you participate in the body this week?

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21 (ESV)

This week, read:

- Ephesians 2 and 3
- Ephesians 4
- Romans 12
- Romans 13
- Psalm 150