

# Title: What Makes a Great Church in the Eyes of the Lord?

Scripture: I Corinthians 16:19

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I Corinthians 16:19 : *“The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”*

Webster’s Definition of church: a building that is used for Christian religious services. The whole body of Christians.

Our definitions of church:

1. The whole company of the redeemed
2. The representative body of the Lord Jesus Christ on this Earth
3. The local assembly where the saints gather together

There are four words that show a great church in the eyes of God:

1. **Participation:** commitment; dedication. In verse 19, Paul says “the churches of Asia salute (or greet) you.” This means that people were getting together to worship God. When we talk about participation, we need proof that the commitment is genuine. If we are really participating in the church that we are members of, are we really committed to that church? If absence makes the heart grow fonder, some people must really love their church. During our time together at church, we should want to participate with other members.

2. **Proclamation:** the act of saying something; to make a solid statement. I Corinthians 15:1-4: *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”* As a church, we have been given what we are to proclaim. We are to proclaim the Gospel of Christ. The reformer Martin Luther said John 3:16 was “the Gospel in miniature” He wrapped it up like this:

“God” .....The greatest Lover  
“so loved”.....The greatest Degree  
“the world” .....The greatest Company  
“that He gave”.....The greatest Act  
“His only begotten Son” .....The greatest Gift  
“that whosoever”.....The greatest Invitation  
“believeth”.....The greatest Simplicity  
“in Him” .....The greatest Person  
“should not perish”.....The greatest Promise  
“but”.....The greatest Difference  
“have”.....The greatest Certainty  
“everlasting life”.....The greatest Possession

The greatest news that this (or any) church can proclaim is that God can save the lowest of the low. It doesn’t matter what you’ve done or where you’ve been. The gospel is for EVERYONE.

3. **Perseverance:** to keep in its original state or condition; to keep safe from harm or loss. If you have something good that you want to keep, you want it to remain safe and in its original condition. Are you original? Is God’s original work that he started in you still there? Paul talks about a man named Demas and how his perseverance dwindled. *“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.”* Demas turned his focus away from God and put his focus on the

world. In Luke 9:62, Jesus said that if any man turns his back once he has come to know Christ, he isn't fit for the kingdom of God. *"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* We see so many falling away due to their lack of perseverance.

4. **Propagation:** to enlarge or to increase. Acts 2:47 *"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."* I Corinthians 3:6-7 *"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."* Both of these scriptures give great detail about what should be done in order to add to the church. There are three things we must do as a church to see an increase:
  - a. We must see: there are multitudes of people that are lost. They are going to hell because they don't know Christ.
  - b. We must sow: Share Christ. We all have a different personality and a different testimony. We can all reach different people, but you have to talk to them first.
  - c. We must seal: Don't give up on them. What would've become of you if someone praying for you had given up? How long have you shared the gospel? How long have you shared your testimony? How diligent have you been with reaching your loved ones?