

Sermon Outline

WHAT'S THE POINT OF CHURCH? ... | Geoff Lin

Bible Reading: Psalm 95 (p.855); Ephesians 1:3-6 (p.1664); Revelation 7:9-17 (p.1754)

Q. What is "church"?

"Church" Competition (enter at <https://www.trinitycity.church/resources/series/church/>)

1. What do you love about church?
2. What could you do to make church better?

1. What is church "for"?

A1. To praise and worship God

Ps 95:1 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.² Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song ...⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;⁷ for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that **you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

A2. To proclaim God's glorious grace

Eph 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—⁶ to the **praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.**

Rom 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

"Even when sin and misunderstanding burden the communal life, is not the sinning brother still a brother, with whom I, too, stand under the Word of Christ? Will not his sin be a constant occasion for me to give thanks that both of us may live in the forgiving love of God in Jesus Christ?" (D Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*)

"A Christian fellowship lives and exists by the intercession of its members for one another, or it collapses. I can no longer condemn or hate a brother for whom I pray, no matter how much trouble he causes me. His face, that hitherto may have been strange or intolerable to me, is transformed in intercession into the countenance of a brother for whom Christ died, the face of a forgiven sinner." (D Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*)

Rev 7:9 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."¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes —who are they, and where did they come from?"¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

2. In the meantime ...

the church temporal vs. the church eternal

"That half-finished, sham Gothic building ..." (CS Lewis)

Rev 19:6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

a work-in-progress vs. a train in transit

"When we are baptized, we (like the first disciples) jump on a moving train. As disciples, we do not so much accept a creed, or come to a clear sense of self-understanding by which we know this or that with utter certitude. We become part of journey that began long before we got here and shall continue long after we are gone." (S Hauerwas & W Willimon, *Resident Aliens*)

3. (Some) practical application:

No mention of ... "do I have to go to church?"

For next Sunday ... arrive early, leave late

Heb 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.