

# 8

## Being Part of the Church

The term “church” means the “called out ones” for that is what we are. We have been called out of the dying world through Christ into a new living way and called into His family. That occurred at our salvation; now we must live the reality, both in our worship and in our lifestyle.

### The Adopted Family

*For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.*

~ Ephesians 1:4, 5

The following verses prove that we are God’s children:

- John 1:12
- Philippians 2:14-16
- 1 John 5:2, 19
- Galatians 6:10

The Spiritual family of God are those who have been reborn by faith. And therefore it includes all of God’s people from all the ages past, present and future from all nations. This is what is called the true church, the “Universal” or “catholic” church.

### Family Requirements

Because we have been called out of this sinful world and joined the universal church of Christ (also called the ‘body of Christ’ in 1 Corinthians 12:27 ‘Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.’) we are told to be separate from the lifestyle that we once lived.

- 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 2:1-5; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; 2 Peter 3:10-12

A believer must pray and ask the Lord to make them more Christ-like, while at the same time determine to cast off all the elements of the life we were saved from. In doing so, we can walk in obedience to the Lord, and reflect Him to others.

### The Church Universal

As we already noted the universal church is comprised of all redeemed believers, in all times, both in heaven and on earth (Ephesians. 2:21, 22; 5:24,25). It is also the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:5

### The Local Church

The local church is a voluntary gathering of believers under Christ to worship and edify under the human spiritual leadership of elders.

- Romans 16:5
- 1 Corinthians 4:17
- Philippians 1:1

Whether the church is you as an individual believer, the local fellowship, or the church universal, we all are equally called to be separate from this world and be united in holiness with the Lord. If any part of the church fails in this area then we become ineffective in our work and will finally come under God’s discipline.

### Homework

Read 1 Peter 2 and find the element of the church from that passage.

**Question:** What makes our fellowship part of God’s church?

### NOTES

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