

Devoted to Building Up Our Church

Lesson 04 in the series: "Devoted"

I. We are devoted to building up our church.

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and **build up the church, the body of Christ**. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ."

Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT)

a. Our church is NOT a building.

"...the Most High doesn't live in temples made by human hands. As the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Could you build me a temple as good as that?' asks the LORD. 'Could you build me such a resting place?'" Acts 7:48-49 (NLT)

"He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples..." Acts 17:24 (NLT)

b. Our church is us.

"Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?"

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NLT)

"And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple." 1 Peter 2:5 (NLT)

c. Building up our church means training and equipping people to carry out His mission.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

"You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others." 2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT)

Note: We use buildings as tools to equip and train people.

"Paul... held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for the next two years, so that people throughout the province of Asia—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord."

Acts 19:9-10 (NLT)

"The churches here in the province of Asia send greetings in the Lord, as do Aquila and Priscilla and all the others who gather in their home for church meetings." 1 Corinthians 16:19 (NLT)

II. We are devoted to building up our church so that it will endure.

a. We are devoted to training and equipping our children.

"We will not hide these truths from our children; we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders. For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, so the next generation might know them— even the children not yet born— and they in turn will teach their own children. So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands. Then they will not be like their ancestors— stubborn, rebellious, and unfaithful, refusing to give their hearts to God." Psalm 78:4-8 (NLT)

"In the future your children will ask you, 'What is the meaning of these laws, decrees, and regulations that the LORD our God has commanded us to obey?' Then you must tell them..." Deuteronomy 6:20 (NLT)

b. We are devoted to training and equipping the next generation of leaders.

"Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that honors God. They must not slander others or be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good. These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God. In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely. And you yourself must be an example to

them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching.” Titus 2:3-7 (NLT)

Note: Jesus was devoted to us first. The Church was His idea. The Church is His bride.

“God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.” Ephesians 1:22-23 (NLT)

“Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.” Matthew 16:18 (NLT)

“For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her...”
Ephesians 5:25 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions

1. What do most people mean when they say “I’m going to church”? How does this differ from the statement “We are the church”?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16 & 1 Peter 2:5. How did Paul and Peter describe the church? What do you think a “living stone” is?
3. Read Acts 7:48-49, 17:24, & 19:9-10. At Centerpoint we view facilities, whether rented or permanent, as “tools” that help us accomplish ministry. Why is this important?
4. Centerpoint has never had a permanent facility in Prattville before. How will having a building help us do more/better ministry? What excites you most about this project?
5. Read Ephesians 4:11-13. What would Centerpoint look like if everyone involved was fully devoted to becoming spiritually mature and building up other believers?
6. Read Matthew 16:18 & Ephesians 1:22-23. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus came up with the idea of “church” and that He is as devoted to the Church as a husband is to his bride?
7. Spend some time as a group praying for our new facility in Prattville.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility as a ministry hub for starting sites wherever God leads us.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to share the gospel with people who don’t know Christ.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to train up children in godliness.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to disciple our people to disciple others.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to help people build meaningful relationships with God & others.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to develop Christian leaders.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to equip & empower people to serve where God has gifted them.
 - Ask God to help us use this facility to help people gain God’s vision for the entire world.

“The Church is the body of Christ, created by His Word and Spirit. The Church is not a religious institution, denomination, or building but is made up of all people everywhere and in every time who have surrendered their lives to Christ. The Church exists to worship and glorify God and to serve Him by faithfully doing His will on earth. All members of the church are called to ministry and service.” *Centerpoint Statement of Beliefs*