

MODULE 2 LESSON 2

Introduction to the Church

In this session I will:

- Explain the purpose of the Church
- Explain why God wants every believer to be planted in the Church
- Help you see the value of making a life-time commitment to the Church

What do the words "Christian" and "Church" mean?

Christian means _____

Church means _____

As Christians, we are called out from following the world's system to follow God's Kingdom system.

CHURCH IS NOT A HUMAN INSTITUTION

- Man makes up his institutions and societies that gathers humans around human kingdoms.
- God made the Church to gather humans around God and His Kingdom

 Matthew 16:18 (KJV) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build MY CHURCH; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The Church belongs to Jesus. Man makes up organisations and societies that gather humans around human agendas. God has made the Church to gather humans around Jesus and His agenda.

...I will build My Church



Different names for church

The Bible uses many different names to describe the Church, each highlighting a different aspect of our nature and purpose. Read through this page and link each term with the correct description.

Name	Aspect being emphasised
The Body	This emphasises that Jesus will act through us to reach out to a dying world. It also emphasises our connectedness and interdependence as believers.
The Bride	We are loved by Jesus. He is our husband, our Lord, provider and protector and we carry His name.
The Elect	This emphasises the fact that Jesus has personally chosen us to be His special people. We are dearly loved by God and privileged above all other groups on earth.
The family of faith	We are a spiritual family. We have a spiritual Dad and Mum (our Senior Pastors) and we are all brothers and sisters. This also emphasises the love that we have for one another; which is our central defining characteristic.
The Church	Literally means "called out." This term was used to refer to a group of local people that were called out to rule and govern. This emphasises our role in society to take dominion and establish God's Kingdom order.
The House	This emphasises our function as the dwelling place of God. God is fitting our lives together as "living stones" to build a house so that He can dwell in us. We carry the Presence of Jesus.

The importance of being planted in the church

 John 12:24 (NKJV) Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

- ☛ A seed must be planted in the ground before it can grow. When a seed is planted, the pressures from the soil crack the outside shell of the seed.
- ☛ Once the hard shell is broken, the seed will automatically send a root out. Once it has a root, the seed can begin to receive the nutrients that it needs from the soil to grow.
- ☛ Over time, the seed will grow into a plant and produce many more seeds.
- ☛ Jesus said that our lives follow a similar process to the seed... we get planted, we die, and then we produce life.

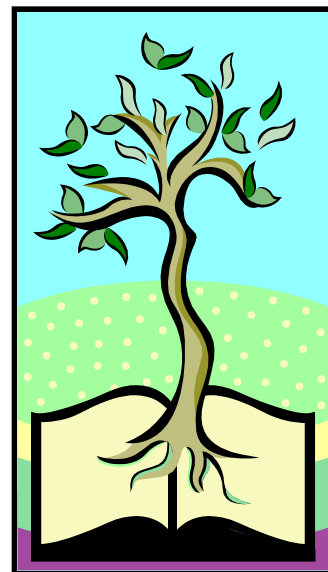
Step # 1—Get planted

Getting planted is the first step on our journey towards fruitfulness (success). The Bible teaches us that we must be “planted in the House of the Lord.”

 Psalm 92:13 (KJV) Those that **BE PLANTED** in **THE HOUSE OF THE LORD** shall **FLOURISH** in the courts of our God.

HOW DOES A PLANT GROW?

- ☛ Planted in good soil.
- ☛ Watered.
- ☛ Catches sunshine.
- ☛ Weeds and pests kept away.



God promises us that if we “put our roots down” and get fully connected with the House then we will grow fast and strong.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU KEEP UPROOTING A PLANT?

The sad reality is that many so-called Christians don't want to be planted in the Church. It is estimated that there are over 40,000 Christians in Auckland alone who used to attend Church but no longer do. Christians who don't attend church are not committed to serving the Church in any way which is a totally dysfunctional culture!!!

 *Matthew 16:18 (NKJV) ... I will build My Church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*

Jesus is building His Church and He expects every Christian to be part of it. Unfortunately, many Christians think that they know better than Jesus. They don't have time to build what Jesus is building; they have better ideas for impacting society than Church, or they have become discouraged and lose faith in God's strategy.

Step # 2—Die to self daily!

God is more concerned with who we become as a person than in what we do as a person.

A person's character is defined by who he is...not just what he does.

God uses His Church as a character development training ground for His people.

By being connected and planted in His Church, Christ-like character is developed.

Being planted in the church will give you the opportunity to develop Kingdom Character

- ☛ Submit to God ordained spiritual authority in your life and develop greater authority = **GODLY SUBMISSION.**
- ☛ Serve others, even when you don't feel like it, and develop humility = **HUMILITY.**
- ☛ Forgive others and develop mercy and patience = **MERCY AND PATIENCE.**
- ☛ Attend and serve week after week and develop faithfulness = **FAITHFULNESS.**
- ☛ Give and develop generosity = **GENEROSITY.**
- ☛ Let other people get to know you and develop honesty = **HONESTY.**
- ☛ Persevere and develop character = **INTEGRITY.**

You can't develop these things as a Christian by yourself.
However by constant interaction in the House of God these Christ-like character traits are developed.
As you remain planted in the Church, you will learn to die to selfishness and become more of a servant like Jesus.

Matthew 20:28 (NKJV) just as the SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, but TO SERVE, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Unfortunately, many Christians go from Church to Church looking for the perfect Church. What they don't realise is that there is no perfect Church! The Church is made up of imperfect people, like you and I.
These Christians often don't realise that God uses uncomfortable situations to help us identify things in our own life that He wants us to change.

Hebrews 12:7 (NIV) Endure hardship as discipline

- Its easy blame others for our problems and make excuses for ourselves.
- However harmony and blessing flow into our lives when we choose to live a life of humility and servitude toward God and man.
- Pastor Norm and Jess have served in ^{the} House of God since 1980.

What happens if you keep uprooting a plant?



Christians who have a wandering spirit and uproot themselves and move from Church to Church never grow to reach their full potential and often end up spiritually dead.



Step # 3—Produce life

You don't have to go to Church to get saved. All you have to do is believe in Jesus. However, if you want to discover your destiny and be successful in life and fulfil your purpose, then you need to go to Church to learn these things.

Success means different things to different people. To some people it means power. To others it means position, popularity and wealth. Biblical success involves two things:

1. _____ everything that God created me to _____ in life
2. _____ everything that God created me to _____ in life

Being all God created me to be

(Who you are as a person, your character)

If you wanted to become a successful surgeon what two things would you need to do?

- ☛ Study medicine by going to medical school.
- ☛ Connect to an experienced surgeon and health professionals who will help you apply medical theory into practical reality.

Likewise if you want to become a mature Christian then you need do similar two things.

- ☛ You need to go to Church and study the word of God under anointed preachers.
- ☛ You also need to connect to an experienced Pastor and mature Christians who can help you apply Kingdom theory into practical reality.

Doing all I was created to do

(What you do as a person, your ministry)

Generally, our job as Christians is to **help build God's House** in order to **bring the Kingdom of God to earth**.

 Matthew 6:10 (NKJV) Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

- God is not using individual Christians or isolated ministries to bring heaven to earth; He is using His House to extend His Kingdom.
- When you connect to a Church that's operating according to Kingdom principles, you are connecting to the greatest organisation for global peace in the universe.
- God has chosen to bring order and harmony into the earth through His Church.

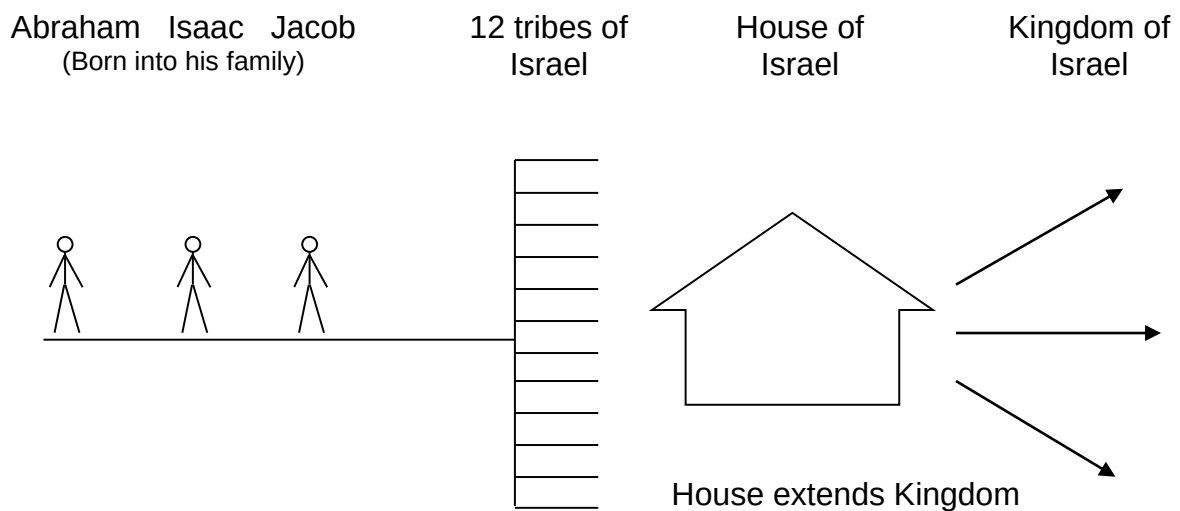
THE HOUSE EXTENDS THE KINGDOM. (Not the other way around)

From over 25 years experience leading Church and helping develop Christians into their full potential I have discovered there are Christians who grow and those who don't. The Christians that never grow are the ones who are not planted in a local Church. The ones who grow are the ones who are planted in the local Church.

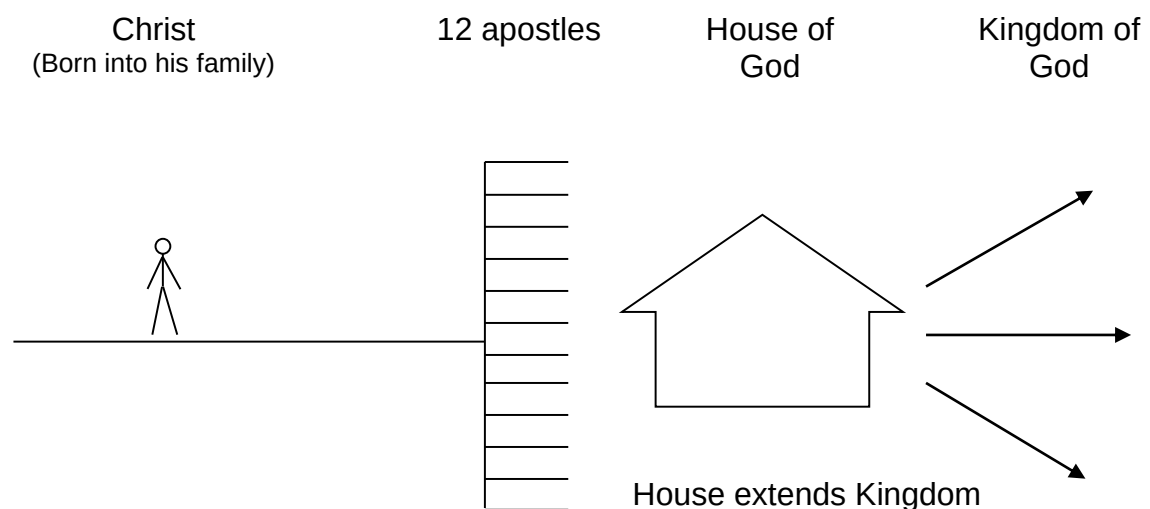
In the past there have been many non Church going Christians trying to extend Gods Kingdom. This is totally dysfunctional and unbiblical living. Because they are opertating outside of Gods divine order there is no divine harmony in their ministry or lives.

God has clearly ordained that He will only extend His Kingdom through the Church...not through backslidden Christians who refuse to connect and get planted in His House.

Old Testament example of the House of Israel extending the Kingdom of Israel.



New Testament example of the House of God extending the Kingdom of God.



When you are committed to the Church on earth you are better able to extend the Kingdom of God on earth.