

THE CHURCH

A quick study through Acts

The word "church" is used 17x in the book of Acts. Let's take a closer look!

I. What is the church doing? How is it described?

For each instance where the word "church" is found, answer the questions:

1. What is the church doing?
2. How is the church described?

Acts 5.11	(<i>Example</i>) The church is <i>hearing things</i> and <i>experiencing fear</i>
Acts 8.1	(<i>Example</i>) The church is <i>being persecuted</i> and <i>scattered</i> and is described with the pronoun "they"
Acts 8.3	
Acts 9.31	
Acts 11.22	
Acts 11.26	
Acts 12.1	
Acts 12.5	
Acts 13.1	
Acts 14.21-23	
Acts 14.27	
Acts 15.3	
Acts 15.4	
Acts 15.22	
Acts 18.22	
Acts 20.17	
Acts 20.28	

II. Word Substitution: Extended View

Now, choose a substitute word or phrase for "church" that maintains the meaning found in the verse. For example:

"And great fear came over the whole **church**, and over all who heard of these things." (Acts 5.11)

Becomes...

"And great fear came over the whole **community of believers in Jerusalem**, and over all who heard of these things." (Acts 5.11)

The first two rows have already been done. Starting with the third row, substitute a word or phrase that maintains the original meaning.

Acts 5.11	<i>(Example)</i> "And great fear came over the whole community of believers in Jerusalem , and over all who heard of these things."
Acts 8.1	<i>(Example)</i> "Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the believers in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."
Acts 8.3	"But Saul began ravaging the church , entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison."
Acts 9.31	"So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase."
Acts 11.22	"The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch."
Acts 11.26	"...and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."
Acts 12.1	"Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them."
Acts 12.5	"So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God..."
Acts 13.1	"Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul."
Acts 14.21-23	"When they had appointed elders for them in every church , having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed."
Acts 14.27	"...when they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles."
Acts 15.3	"Therefore, being sent on their way by the church , they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren."
Acts 15.4	"When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them."
Acts 15.22	"Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church , to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren..."
Acts 18.22	"When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church , and went down to Antioch..."
Acts 20.17	"From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the

	church."
Acts 20.28	"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

III. Word Substitution: Summary View

Make a list below of the substitute words and phrases you came up with in the previous exercise.

Acts 5.11 church = (Example) "community of believers in Jerusalem"
Acts 8.1 church = (Example) "believers"
Acts 8.3 church =
Acts 9.31 church =
Acts 11.22 church =
Acts 11.26 church =
Acts 12.1 church =
Acts 12.5 church =
Acts 13.1 church =
Acts 14.23 church =
Acts 14.27 church =
Acts 15.3 church =
Acts 15.4 church =
Acts 15.22 church =
Acts 18.22 church =
Acts 18.22 church =
Acts 20.28 church =

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Write down what you have learned about *church*: what it is, what it is not, what it does, etc. What should you do with what you have learned? What are the implications for how you live your faith?

Think through and record what you have learned in terms of *Head, Heart, and Hands*:

Head: What *information* have you learned about church?

Heart: How have your *beliefs and values* been challenged and changed?

Hands: What *action* will you take based on what you have learned?