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7 Powerful Traits of a Truly Biblical Church

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What do you picture when you think of church? Do you think of the rows of wooden pews or the intricate stained-glass windows in the sanctuary? Stacks of Bibles and hymnals? What about a stage or pulpit? Maybe you think of a large auditorium setting if you attend a mega church. All these details tell us what we see when we look at a building, but they tell us nothing about what a church should biblically look like. Scripture does not give directions about the format of seating or the use of a stage. We find no mention of a required carpet color or use of stained-glass windows. During the early days of the church, there were no chapels or cathedrals with steeples. That is because the Church is not a building. Believers make up the body of Christ, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:27). As members of the body of Christ, what we look like stems from our relationship to Jesus and the mission He gave us. He has called us to be a multiplying people, a community that grows and reaches into the lives of others. It is a group of individuals who increasingly look like Him. C.S. Lewis wrote about the purpose of the church in *Mere Christianity*. As he explained, "[T]he church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time" (HarperOne, 2001, p. 199). At first, Lewis' statement might surprise us. Constructing buildings, doing missions, and studying the Bible are wastes of time? They are if people are not growing in Christ and making disciples. The body of believers is meant to look increasingly like Jesus and help others become reflections of Christ too. If the church is not doing that, then it is not accomplishing its purpose. It will not look like a biblical church. But what are the indications that a group of believers are accomplishing this purpose of growing to become more like Christ? Scripture does not have directions about what a church building should look like, but it does have a wealth of information about what it looks like to live as individuals belonging to the Church. Photo credit: ©Getty Images/Will & Deni McIntyre

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