

The Main Thing

Churches do many good things for people. Church people often make good friends. You might meet your future spouse! There are programs for youth and families. Churches are often good places for music lovers. Some have seminars on finances, coping with loss, overcoming addictions, and parenting. These are great ways to serve the community. All these good activities, and many others, are ways a church can show God's love for the world. But non-church people can do all these things too, and sometimes they do a better job of them.

The main thing a church has, which the world does not have, is the Word of our God. Martin Luther made the point vividly saying, "The Church is God's mouth-house." Truly, the church exists for God – it lives because He does. It is His embassy in this world. Here lost people can come and find Him. Church events should do more than entertain believers. All of our meetings and programs should introduce people to Him. The Word of God, empowered by the Spirit of God, and lived out by the people of God is the greatest hope for this lost and dying world. The Apostle Paul makes this point in three verses of Scripture. He calls the church, "God's household, the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Timothy 3.15). "His [God's] intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known" (Ephesians 3.10). And to the Philippian believers he wrote, "You shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life" (Philippians 2.15,16). So the Church of Jesus is founded on the Word, grows by the Word, and must make the Word known.

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