

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE • May 31 - June 7, 2020

INTRODUCTION

When we think of church, why is a building the first thing that comes to mind? Is church a place full of robes and pews? Bands and banners? Or is church meant to refer to something different?

Monday: Genesis 12:1-3

From the beginning, God's intent for human beings pointed outward, not inward: "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." God didn't call Abram to sit at ease, cut off from the needs of a hurting world. The inner urge to become "us" (versus "them") has always made it too easy for God's people to forget their purpose.

Tuesday: Ephesians 3:7 – 4:1

Three times this passage mentions God's power. It uses the Greek word *dunamis*. That's the word behind the English word "dynamite"! This section rings with energy, activity and drive. Nothing here about "church" as a static, outdated place – this is about cosmic energy calling us to live out an eternal purpose.

Wednesday: Romans 12:1-8

In Old Testament times, offering an animal as a sacrifice meant the animal died. Paul says it's much better for God's purposes if we offer ourselves as "living sacrifices." The church is meant to be a whole society of people like that. Not just a building, a place, but an active, vibrant "body of Christ," living God's principles in the world.

Thursday: Acts 9:36-42

There is no record of a church building in Joppa. The church was there, though, an exhibit A was a marvelous seamstress named Tabitha. She lived her faith in such a beautiful way that God allowed her to keep living longer. Peter became God's channel for a great act of healing and restoration.

Friday: Matthew 5:13-16

This is the keynote of Jesus' call to each of us. Notice: he doesn't ask us to "go" to a place, but to be and to do certain things on God's behalf. Tri-County Church in Pennsylvania gave their members T-shirts. On the front, they read, "I don't go to church." On the back, they said, "I AM the church." When we let our light shine, then we truly ARE the church.

MOVING FORWARD

Church is much more than a building or a place. Church is more than pews or hymnals, lights and music. In fact, on opening day, the church had no buildings or rituals, no bands or robed choirs. What it did have was a gathering of people who were intent on one thing: to create followers of Jesus Christ. In that sense, the church was a movement that continues today, a multiplying, multi-cultural gathering of people who believe that Jesus is the Savior and whose lives reflect his teaching.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) ekklesia, B) house, C) English. IIA) predicts, B) resurrection. IIC) sermon. III A) Jesus, B) mission, C) disciples.