

# The Church You Leave Behind

## Definition of a “church” by Radius International

What do we mean by the goal of “planting a **church** among an unreached language group?” The answer to that question is a complex one, but a crucially important one. The church left behind will be the ongoing message-bearing people who will carry the responsibility for making disciples throughout their entire people group, and beyond!

### The Flock

1. **Believers from a cross-section of the community.** A group that encompasses men, women, young, and old who have individually understood their sins have been forgiven based solely on what Christ accomplished on the cross. The church is made up of an understanding driven/Christ confessing group of people. **Believers**...Acts 2:38-41, 11:25,26, I Cor 12:,12,13, Eph 5:24, Col1:2,24, I Thess 1:1,9 **Not just a family**...Jn 17:20-23, Acts 2:5,8-11, Acts 6:1, 9:31, 11:25, Rom 2:1,17 (a mixed church) I Cor 1:10-12, 12:12.
2. **Tangible spiritual life.** There is genuine fruit of spiritual life. The various giftings that allow for fellowship, forgiveness, sharing of means, sharing of their faith and discipling of new believers, all happen among them at a level that is unique to these Christ followers. These are not culturally driven habits but responses to being the people of God. I Jn 2:5,6 2:6,9 Rom 12:1,2 9-13 I Cor 12:7, II Cor 8:1-4 I Thess 1:7,8 Titus 2:1-8.
3. **New biblical identity.** The Christ-following community has a growing awareness and allegiance to their oneness in Christ. That awareness is allowing them to see their relationship to other Christ followers as eclipsing their previous religious, clan, political, or even family relationships. Lk 8:19-21, 9:57-61, 12:49-53, 14:25-26, Acts 2:42-45, I Cor 3:1-17 12:14-26 Eph 2:14-18, Phil 3:3-8a.
4. **Testimony to the community.** Those outside the community of faith (non-believers) have some sense of the difference between them and those who make up ‘the church’. The church has an identity. Those churches existing in hostile situations have a valid understanding of the costliness, and where needed, a preparedness to endure the cost of being known as Christ followers. Jn 15:18-21, 16:1-4, Acts 5:12-14 8:1-3, 12:1-3 13:49-50, I Cor 5:12,13 I Pet 2:13-15 3:15 4:4,5 12-16.

### The Word

5. **Submission to God’s Word.** The Word of God is seen as solely authoritative in matters of faith, life, marriage, culture and other areas that it speaks to. Acts 2:42, 6:3,4, I Cor 14:29-31 II Cor 2:17 4:2 Gal 1:6-9 Eph 2:19,20 6:17 Phil 1:14 Col 3:16 4:3 I Thess 2:13, II Tim 2:15 4:2 Heb 4:12, 13:7, I Pet 1:23 I Jn 2:14 Rev 22:18,19.
6. **Teaching of God’s Word.** The teaching of Gods Word is regular and central to their times of corporate life, prayer, worship, and an awareness and practice of Christian ordinances are also practiced corporately. Matt 28:18, Mk 16:16, Jn 3:22 Acts 2:38, 8:12,36 9:18 16:33; Luke 22:14-22, Acts I Cor 11:17-34 14:1-39.

### The Shepherds

7. **Recognized leadership.** Recognized leaders who shepherd, teach, encourage, protect, rebuke, and when needed, lead in disciplining the people of God. Acts 1:15-26 6:2-4, I Tim 3:1-13, II Tim 4:1-5, Titus 1:5-10, Heb 13:7,17, I Peter 5:1-4.