

People drift from church to church. **'Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers?'**  
Some say: 'I don't need the Church'.

**1 John 3:16**

**Christian identity is more about WE than ME.**

Identity! The church is built on the rock of **revelation** that Peter confessed.

Matthew 16:16-18

Ministry! Through the church, Jesus ministers his redeeming reconciliation.

Matthew 18:17

**A. The Church - People:** Jesus said: 'I will build my church (ekklesia) = people, Stephen called Israel 'the assembly (ekklesia) in the wilderness' (Acts 7:38).

**B. The Church - Pardoned:** '*church of God which he bought with his own blood.*' (Acts 20:28). The cross is our verdict on Jesus. The cross is God's verdict on sin. The Son of Man came....to give his life as a ransom for many.' (Mark 10:44-45).

**C. The Church - Purpose: 1 Timothy 3:14-15**

*Although I hope to come to you soon I am writing you these instructions so that if I am delayed you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household which is the church of the living God...pillar and foundation of the truth.*

The Church is the pillar and foundation of the truth. Not '*tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine by the trickery of people, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.*' (Eph 4:14) *We are also the foundation of the truth.*  
**We hold the truth firm against all heresy. We hold the truth up making it visible.**  
Christian truth is public truth. '**It was not done in a corner!**' (Acts 26:26) **Christian truth is total truth** encompassing all of creation and history and eternity. **What is truth?**

**Truth in a first century hymn.**

*Beyond all question the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:  
He appeared in the flesh, he was vindicated by the Spirit, he was seen by angels,  
He was preached among nations, was believed on in world, he was taken up glory.*

1. **'He' Personal** Jesus. The True God. Deity. True man. Humanity in word and deed.
2. **History:** 'appeared' **Body:** birth. **Spirit:** baptism ministry. **Angels:** resurrection.  
**Nations:** preached to all the world. **Believed:** on in the world. **Glory:** taken up.
3. **Eternity:** 1. **Flesh and Spirit:** *The Work of Jesus Human and Divine in Palestine.*  
2. **Angels and Nations:** *The Witness of Jesus to heaven and on earth.*  
3. **Believed and Glory:** *The Welcome of Jesus as he acclaimed as Lord.*

**This truth is worth living for and worth dying for.**