

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. We have seen how the word *church* (in its original meaning) referred to a place – the Lord’s house. This is a very different concept from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means an assembly or gathering of called-out people who come together for a purpose. Do you think this is just a matter of semantics or hair-splitting, or are these really substantially different concepts? If *church* is not the best word to define *ekklesia*, what would you suggest as an alternative? If you were starting a new congregation (or church) today, what would you call it – and why?
2. The *ekklesia* – the called-out and gathered community or people of God – have been given a purpose (or several purposes) by God. How would you define the purpose(s) of the *ekklesia* – the church? What do you think are the absolutely critical components of the *ekklesia*’s mission, and which are not critical?
3. In today’s message we looked at one important aspect of the life of the *ekklesia* – openness and authenticity. Do you think it is a good value for a congregation to encourage people to “come as you are”? For those of us who are familiar with older hymns and songs, is this the same concept or value as the hymn, “Just as I am”?
4. While people should feel able to come as they are, and those who come (or are already here) should be willing to be open and authentic, most people pretend to be something they are not. Why is this? Do you pretend? How can you journey to a more authentic life and lifestyle?
5. Authenticity is hard work and it is dangerous. Why is it hard and why is it dangerous? Have you been hurt by others because you were “too authentic” and opened your life to others who did not respond appropriately? Or have you hurt others by not treating them with dignity and respect when they were open and authentic with you?

## It’s called *church* because...(2)

Sermon Series: It’s called *church* because...  
Pastor Alan Robinson, February 25, 2007

*Paul, Silas and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; Grace and peace to you. We always thank God for all of you, mention you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Thessalonians 1:1-3 (church Bible page 835)

**Ekklesia** (usually translated *church* in our English bibles – a gathering or assembly of people who “come out,” to be together, for a purpose.

It’s called *church* because we are called-out to be a community of

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For further reading see *No Perfect People Allowed*, by John Burke  
“Come as you are; but don’t stay that way”

**Everyone is “\_\_\_\_\_”**

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*  
Romans 3:23 (church Bible page 797)

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.*

James 5:16 (church Bible page 856)

Authenticity \_\_\_\_\_

**Most people feel \_\_\_\_\_**

*We know the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand that I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do....For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.*  
Romans 7:14-19 (church Bible page 800)

Authenticity \_\_\_\_\_

Authenticity \_\_\_\_\_

Authenticity \_\_\_\_\_

“Most people live lives of quite desperation.” Henry David Thoreau

**Most people \_\_\_\_\_**

Authenticity \_\_\_\_\_

**Playing by \_\_\_\_\_**

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of the fullness of God.*

Ephesians 3:14-19 (church Bible page 828)