

# The Church

Sermon Title: **The Church**

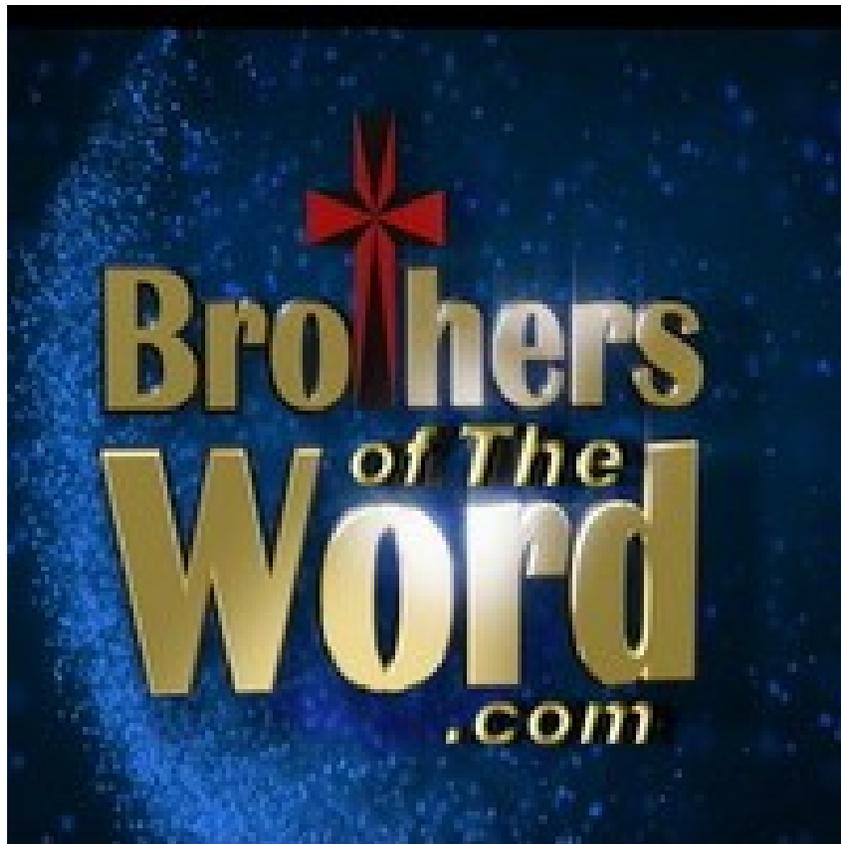
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Speaker: **Jordan Sherman**

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We want to thank all of the listening audience for joining today at Brothers of the Word, because, brother, you need a word.

I want to speak to you for the next few minutes about the church. Look at your neighbor and say, "The church." When we considered the church, when we talk about the church, most of us would agree that the church in our minds is a entities like what we're sitting in today. People, who've gathered to minister to the Lord, and to minister to each other, and thank God for church. Thank God for what we have experienced in church. You heard as the brother was reading my view, that I'm the son of pastors. I've been in church all my life. I love church. But quite frankly, I've seen the best and the worst of church.

The best of church is that it creates an environment for people to come together and to hear a word. Look at somebody and say, "A Word." And I don't care what you think about the matter. Thank God that we understand that all we need is a Word from God to turn our lives around. You can break it down in the Hebrew. You can give it to us in the Greek. You can speak in tongues. But, however, you get in across. It is the power of that great Word that changes our life. Some of us have lost perspective about that. We don't come to church anymore to get a Word from God. We come to church for a number of other things: Networking opportunity, business advancements or what have you. Even dating, some of us have figured out the church is a good place to hookup and meet people.

But if you forget that this is supposed to be about God and receiving a Word from God, then you will soon realize that everything you're doing is irrelevant, has no real place and no real meaning in life. It is a place where we receive a Word from God. Thank God for that. Church has also been a place for deliverance. In my tradition of church, when we come together, we also have room and opportunity for the Holy Spirit to deliver people. Deliverance has changed a lot. We don't see trashcans coming up and folks foaming at the mouth as much. But we do understand that deliverance still takes place in the House of God. If there are any witnesses, you want to just shout "amen."

Church has also become a place of speak tradition and religion to such degree that we do not readily feel the presence of God anymore. It has become a place where the dignified and the pious come and feel good about themselves, because they've shown up. So what the enemy has done is, he has diluted our message and polluted the anointing with prides. People no longer come with an open heart to experience God. We come and we sit as if we're doing God a favor to be here. But I want to sound the alarmed in this assembly and across the world that church is still a place where we come to have an unprecedented encounter with God. Look at your neighbor and say, "That's what I showed up for."

I don't know what your motives had been. I don't know what you've been getting up out of bed to come for. I don't know why you got all tied, put on girdles and got your best suit on, but I came to have an encounter. All right, I guess I've got three-fourths of the church in here. We're going to go get the whole church together by the end, of the message.

Church is supposed to be an "impact center." It is supposed to be a place that we come yes for good programs. We need things that'll better our lives. We need financial empowerment seminars. I've heard some things about fitness. Praise God for all of those elements that minister to the whole men. But we must not ever forget that there is a simple, a very simple... a very simple element that can never leave our churches and it's the presence of God. If we don't have His presence, tabernacling our churches, what are doing? For certainly, it is not by power, neither is it by might. But look at your neighbor and say, "It's by His Spirit." If messageness about the Spirit of God, ruffle our centers and upset us and make us feel like, "This is not what I showed up for." Then you are proof of what I'm saying that we've gotten too far away for what church is supposed to be about.

Will you open your Bible to accept truth? Just a few moments and I'm going to be out your way. Thank you, Father, for you glory. Thank your for your anointing. Hallelujah!

Acts Chapter 2 and I will begin at Verse 40. When you have it, shout, "I've got it." I want to wait on a few more, "I've got this." I want you to read with us. If you need to pull out your smartphone and use the Bible app, that's fine. "And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received His Word were baptized. That day, there were about 3,000 souls added to them and they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship and in breaking the bread and in prayers. And in fear --" somebody say fear, the Word translates to be enthrall respect "-- came upon every -- soul and many wonders and signs were done. Now, all who believed we're together. They had all things in common. They sold their possession and goods and divided them among all as anyone had meat. So, continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking break from house to house. They ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all people and the Lord added to the church daily those who were to be saved."

Father, we give you praise for the power of your Word. We thank you for what you're doing here in this house. We give you praise, Lord, as we understand that your Word is quick. It is powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. It divvies the son, the soul, and the spirit. Your Word is the only thing that has the ability to penetrate deep within our hearts and to change us. Father, we ask for your holy conversion. We ask for change. Turn us away from religion and tradition. Bring us

back to the heart of real worship. We pray, Lord, that you would reunite us with our true mission as a church. And while we exist, it is in Christ name that we receive your glory and your presence. Amen and amen.

So as I spoke here in my introduction about the church, it is crucially important that we understand that church has a lot of good and has been good to our community. Praise God for all of the greats of church history, of antiquity. Thank God for what's happening and what's transpired. But it's important that we begin to connect the dots now as we move forward in this postmodern generation of believers. It is important that the ancient landmarks pertaining to God and pertaining to God's centers established for worship that we do not remove. In other words, as we evolve and we become more sophisticated and more educated and we can doubt all of our eyes and close all of our teeth, we must not ever forget those lessons we learned in tarrying services. We must not ever forget the value of fasting and prayer. We must not ever forget what a consecrated life would do for the anointing and the presence of God in our lives. Can you shout amen?

When we look in this text, what's happening here is the disciples and the believers in the first century church are just at the beginning of the New Testament ministry. They've received specific instructions that says, "You're going to tarry here in Jerusalem and wait on the Holy Ghost until He brings something upon you that is undeniable." And as the praying and as the waiting, the Bible talks about how did the Holy Spirit rushes in on them and He sets upon each of them like fire and tongues begin spring up out of their spirit, so much in soul that the rest of the world wonder, "What in the world is going on with these people?"

In modern days, it would be us sitting here in this sanctuary. And at one accord, we begin to speak in other tongues. And while people are listening in China, while people are listening in India, while people are listening in different countries of Africa, while people are listening in South America, they hear us distinctly glorifying God in their native tongues and languages. What a sight to see, to imaging, to feel, to be a part of the Holy Spirit birthing something out of you that's bigger than you, that's bigger than just the old church, that's bigger than just your choir and bigger than just your preacher. The New Testament Church is our example of what church is supposed to always be about. A lot of us don't like that, because we found so many conveniences in church. But church is not about our convenience. Church is about making a difference in people's lives through the power of God. Let me tell you something. It's going to take people who accept the fact that it may mean me, being uncomfortable at times. I can tell you how it will make me work in a bit in here.

So the Bible begins to talk about what happens when all of these people start marveling and start looking at what's taken place in Jerusalem. And Peter stands up bold and full of the Holy Ghost and begins to preach to them that what they are

experiencing is not that uncommon. It should not be mystical. It should not be unbelievable, because this is the very thing that Christ exemplified in His everyday life. What's amazing to me is that you and I exist in the world where when we woke in the spirit, there are so many people around us who have still never seen anyone walk in spirit. They still don't know what it is to show up to church and receive a tangible impartation.

With all of these titles in the church, with our bishops and archbishops, junior bishops and prophets and senior prophets, and we still have sanctuaries with God's glory. Whereby, it's not present. They did not know what was going on. Peter stood up and declared to them what was happening. He says, "What you're seeing happened --" he connected them with history. He said, "It's exactly what Joel the prophet testified about." He said, "In the last days, I'm going to pull out my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesize." He begins to declare to them that this thing is happening by the same Jesus that they crucified. The very thing they refused to accept as truth is the very truth that's delivering their sons and their daughters.

I have a message for the world. The world wants us to believe that the church has become irrelevant. The world wants us to believe that we have no real place and that there was no real impact made. And in part, they're right if we're talking about a church that does not know the power of God. If we're talking about a church full of pious people who will not humble themselves and get on their face. But for the New Testament Church, who knows their God and God knows them, evident in His presence, then the church is the only hope for this world. We're the only ones who possess what it takes to not just give you a motivation or message, but to give you a word that changes your whole life.

Peter stands up and he preaches to them and he gives them the Word. As he is preaching, something happens in their spirits and their hearts. With God, we could get back to this type of preaching. I appreciate hermeneutics and homiletics and all of those wonderful things. But with God, we could just get back to appoint that when people hear the Word of God, something happens in their soul, something in their spirit says, "I know that's the truth. I may not have it in the seminary, perhaps I didn't know all the scriptures, but something started jumping in my woe." What's going on right now, it's real.

He begins to preach and they hear him and the Bible says that as he said to them, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Those people said, "I want to be saved now." They were baptized upon hearing that word. "We've got to go back and have a simple service." He came baptizing about the same day. We've got to get some together. We've got to make sure folks got them. They rose and we've got the pool ready and room temperature and all. See, we've gotten too deep now, too sophisticated now to just go down to a creak.

But these folks heard the word of God and instantly, something happened in their hearts where they said, "I'm not going to wait until tomorrow. I don't want to wait until next Sunday. I want to change now." And what's happening with the church is our relevance is coming back to the community in such a way that when we declare the Word of God, people are going to say, "I want it now."

I don't know where you are in your spirit, but here is where the sheep, were getting ready to be separated from the goats. All the preachers that only have a word when they go to YouTube and they lookup Peter James and Noel Jones and they pick their messages to preach in the face of real decisions for people. They're going to be ill-equipped. All the people who only have a word when they're in the spotlight and they can tell you what does said the Lord and tell you that you'd get ready to get a house and a car in the face of Wal-Mart's parking lot, when people start experiencing God's glory, they are going to be ill-prepared. It's going to show that you do not know God. It's only so long you're going to be able to hide behind your church name.

I love being an evangelist. I love being able to just come and preach and go home. I don't have to worry about the politics. I don't have to worry about nobody and I want to give them all free. I don't have to worry about the deacons who wanted to call me and then question. I could just drop the bomb and leave. There's only so long we're going to be able to hide behind our churches. There's only so long we're going to be able to write of our bishop's anointing. There's only so long we're going to be able to use other people's name, other people's relationship with God to have influence and leveraging in people's lives. You're going to have to know God for yourselves.

I feel the Holy Ghost. So it is that as Peter preaches, they instantly say, "I want the change now. I don't want to wait on a program or format." And that very day, because the church was most in tune with God, 3,000 souls was added in one day. We can't get 3,000 souls out within the year. With all of our new modern church world techniques, sale groups and everything we have. What's happening? God is trying to show us, "I'm not going to share my glory with another. I'm not going to give the next philosopher my glory." You may experience some measure of growth, but when we start talking about exponential growth, when we start talking about explosive growth, when we start talking about record breaking growth, it's going to happen for those who say, "We're going to do it in God's way and we're not going to answer to anybody else about it."

Let me move along. There's something that happens here, because once these believers are baptized, they are definitely inducted into a family and into a community of believers who do things in a certain way. One way they do things is love. Lord, have mercy. Look at somebody and say, "Love." It is their way of life. It

is the way they exist in life. They love each other. I'm going to stick a pen right there and just say, "You've got to stop saying you're saved. Stop being a part of churches and you can't speak to folks when they sit next to you."

We don't care what your title is. You can be a prophet, or apostle, whatever. But if you can't exemplify love, how is it that you can say God exists in you? It was the way of life for the New Testament believers. To love each other and to love each other so much and so that in action, not just in word, if I had a loaf or bread, you have a loaf or bread. You want to know what's going to stop making a difference in the world? When they start seeing a different love in the church. The Bible said that this community loved each other, they shared everything in common and they also had a respect for God's men and women. I believe I have many have time to deal with that like I need to, but I just want to make this point. You've got to stop trying to sit up under pastors you don't respect.

I'm going to move along. I don't want to upset nobody. But here is the reality. I can't teach you beyond the level on which you respect me. What's amazing to me is while we sit in churches that we voluntarily join and criticize leadership the whole way through. Why don't you find a church where you love the pastor? All right, I'm going to get off.

This is not just an Atlanta word. This is not just a Brothers of the Word in Ark of Salvation word. This is a worldwide word. You know why? Because the devil knows what systems to employ, to disrupt the anointing and to stop the flow of God's glory. He knows that there's no way we're going to experience the power of God and we're hateful and mean and cannot love. He knows there is no way we're going to experience the glory of God in our churches and we have a discontent for our pastors. Look at somebody and say, "God is the God of order."

I'm talking about the church today. I'm talking about us, understanding where our position is to be in the church. Please hear me when I tell you that once these believers were effectively acclimated to what the New Testament Church was, that was also a part they had to play. So I say that when we think of the church, most of us think of entities. We think of something like what we are now. But look at your neighbor and say, "You are the church." My daddy used to say for some people, "Your life will be the only Bible they ever read." So, it is an absolute must in this season and in this time that we start seeking out personal relationship with God so we can be that church.

I want you to pay attention to something that happens here. In Verse 46, it says, "So continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house. They ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and as they were doing this favor grew with all people." I said that you're going to have to understand that you are the church. As we're getting more and more into

what some are calling a post mega-church age. That means that we've experienced the hype of mega-church, which was only new to us here in the west. Because certainly, in Africa and South Korea and other places, what we call mega is still something like storefront. When you have churches with over a million in attendance a day, then your 30,000 members are going to drop in the bucket. What I'm trying to get through is that God has been shaking us to get out of widget mindsets that says the only thing that's relevant is what is popular, what is being, what everybody can see. We're going to have to start processing that we individually, are the elements that make up a church. How many understand what I'm saying? In other words now, as we're getting into this post mega-church age, we're going to start understanding more and more the relevance of good, clean fellowship. We're going to start noticing that if we can't find a way to effectively build relationships with people, they're going to walk out of our church doors. It means, now that people are becoming less interested in what's happening up here and more interested in what's going on out there.

Oh, Lord, I don't why you are looking at me with that tone of voice, like I just said some wrong, but you all know as well as I do how hypersensitive we are in church. You'll know how critical we are. You'll even try to say billion people over there are fake. They only say nothing about the pastor, nothing about what's going on up here. Those people, we all say and we all talk about faithful, hate and faithful. Don't look at me like that. I hear it. I see it. I understand. I've been on both sides of the equation. But what we're happening to understand now is that we all have a burden that we must bare under to be the example. These believers -- and I'm finished -- took personal responsibility for their new found freedom and relationship. They enjoyed what they were experiencing in their church, but they found a way to share that with others. They allowed themselves to step out of their comfort zones enough that they notice when such that so and so who normally sits besides them is not in church anymore.

I don't care what size our ministry is. We still need good folks who love God with all of their heart and care about souls. I know I don't have a proper message today, but please hear me. This is why the church is losing its rootedness in our communities. This is why we could be right in the heart of communities that need a Word from God, but they will not step in our churches because of you and I, who have refused to understand our place as the church. It's not just this building. What good is the building if it won't have good people in it that represents it well.

What good in the programs if we won't be the example of the benefit of being in those programs? It's amazing to me the number of people who come in contact with you and I and talk about our nasty attitudes. It's amazing to me the number of waiters and waitresses that call in on Sunday because they don't want you to come to a table. I'm not talking about just our culture thing, I'm talking about across the

board, church folks, have an issues with blessing people, but we always have our hands up to God saying, "Bless me."

All right, I'm moving. I see it. I see it. I'm setting the mean to start changing. What am I calling for? I'm calling for a sense of realness to come back to the church. And when we think of real, we always want to point to other people. We always want to talk about how if he was real, he wouldn't have got caught up in this. If she was real, she wouldn't still be in this. But if you was real, you wouldn't care about any they were doing. Because at the end of the day, I'm in this world because of what I believe as it pertains to God. I'm in this world because I heard a call in my heart, in my spirit that said, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Not the pastor, not the prophet, not the apostle, not the first lady, not anybody who don't smile at me, but he said, "I will give you."

I'm calling for the church to get this thing back in prospective. If you're showing up to church because you're hoping somebody is going to look at you and look at your situation and bail you out of your condition, you have the wrong attitude. If you're only a part of this minister, you'll stop, because you're hoping someone is going to launch your career till the next level, you've got the wrong attitude. The Bible says, "Promotion does not come from the east to the west. It comes from above." God is the one who judges our hearts. I'm finished and I feel so much coming at me right now. But you've got to understand as we're moving forward in this thing we called church, that it is our heart's posture that matters to God.

You'll be called when I'm done. When the Lord called for David to be anointed as king. He is a young man, younger than the rest of us siblings, country boy, always hanging out with a sheep in the backside of the mountain. When Samuel comes to anoint the next king, he instantly looks at and recalls who have military credentials. God rebukes them and says, "I didn't say look at the external." He says, "You're the one who are fixated on the way people look. If they sound pretty good, they've got to be saved. If they speak in tongues, they know the Lord. If they can hold me up on the pew, that sure is a man of God. He says, "But I don't look at the external. See, that's going to jack up some of my philosophy and ideologist right there." He says, "When I gazed your heart, " He says, "I found someone who's after my heart." When we talk about that, most of us think that what God is saying is, " I found somebody that I favor more than others." In part, He is, but what He is really saying is, "I found someone who his sole desire in life is to please me." Thank you for that, Daddy.

His sole desire in life is to please me. It means, if none of you are happy with what's going on right now, that's okay because I want to please. When you and I come back to these hearts, this is when we'll see real change take place in our communities and in our churches. You know David's life. You looked throughout the scriptures. This man has all kind of issues. He can't keep his family together. He has

adulterous relationships. This brother struggles in his flesh. He's a man of war. He's a man that commits murder, but he has God's hearts. He is constantly in pursuit of God's heart and God favors him and God chooses him.

Why am I saying this? Because part of what we can't focus on being in the church is because we're trying to please people, because we think they have what we need. I want to sound the alarm in this church. I want to sound the alarm across the world. If you are going to any other source for what you need besides God, you are in idolatry. Yes, even in some of the greatest churches with the greatest preachers known to men, if I don't know how to get on my face and say, "Lord, I need you." If I don't know how to say, "I will look to the hills, from which come with my help for my help, for my help is in the name of the --" If I've got to call bishop, whoever first, if I've got the speed now probably best and say, "Do you have a word first?"

I'm not being the church that God has called me to be. Will you stand on your feet with me? I want to pray for this house. I want to pray for this ministry. What I discern concerning this house and concerning this ministry is that there is a tremendous weight of God's glory. Let's get ready to hit this house. What I discern and what I see is that there is a clarion call from God, force to come back to the altar, force to assume the pasture of prayer again. There are some things I want to say specifically, but let me just pray in general right now for this house. Can you lift your hands?

Father, we give you praise and we give you glory for what you're doing in this ministry and in this house. It is a great house. It's pretentious unlimited. What you called this church to do in this community and worldwide is much greater than anything we could do on our own. We need you. Not only do we need you for the abundance of resources to make things happen, but we need your glory in unprecedented capacities, because there are powers, there are principalities, rulers of darkness of this present, a spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places that have staged warfare to keep us from moving forward. We need your anointing to destroy every yoke. We give you praise, Father. We bless you for all that you're doing. In Christ name, we pray. Amen and amen.

Can you put your hands together and give the Lord praise? Those of you who've joined as a listening audience, God bless you. And if you would like to have this message in its entirety, please go to [brothersoftheword.com](http://brothersoftheword.com) and search The Church. We thank you for listening to us today at Brothers of the Word, because, brother, you need a Word. Can you give the Lord a hand of praise?