

What's the  
point of church?

AKA: ramblings in 2026 from an  
old hat GenXer, Stu McGregor

Imagining for the future...

# What's the benefit of being a christian?

Group Question

**the present reality**

**how  
things  
are**

**HINT:**  
**it's not great...**

| Question               | Christian answer      | Secular humanist answer               |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| What is fullness?      | Union with God        | Human flourishing/authenticity        |
| What causes it?        | Grace                 | Human capacities                      |
| What is exile?         | Separation from God   | Alienation from self, others, society |
| What is ordinary life? | Pilgrimage toward God | The primary arena of meaning          |

***A Secular Age, Charles Taylor***

|                                | Earlier Paradigm                                   | Emerging Paradigm                                          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The Bible's origin</b>      | A divine product with divine authority             | A human response to God                                    |
| <b>Biblical Interpretation</b> | Literal-factual                                    | Historical and metaphorical                                |
| <b>The Bible's function</b>    | Revelation of doctrine and morals                  | Metaphorical and sacramental                               |
| <b>Christian life emphasis</b> | An afterlife and what to believe or do to be saved | Transformation in this life through relationship with God. |

**do we really  
need church?  
...or faith?  
...or God?**

**Group Question**

**the ideal**

**how  
things  
ought to be**

**question:**  
**what *is* church?**

a working hypothesis

**church is:**  
**the crucible for**  
**divine love**

**the future**

**how  
things  
could be**

- **Center love.**
- **Accept difference**
- **Move from attendance to connection.**
- **Decouple the work of the Spirit from emotional experience**
- **Stop making salvation primarily about individuals—it's primarily about us.  
Salvation is a corporate gig.**

**Thoughts to throw around**

- **Jettison the concept of Orthodoxy.**  
**Orthodoxy is colonising and unbiblical.**
- **don't lose sight of what is, but hold onto what ought to be. The 'what is' is the raw material we have to work from.**
- **Jettison the heroes of old:**  
**remythologise them and learn from them. They're squished down into two dimensions—a product of preaching for application.**

**Thoughts to throw around**