

A scenic view of a Swiss village, likely Lucerne, featuring a prominent church with a tall steeple and traditional wooden houses along a lake. The scene is captured in a warm, golden light, possibly during sunrise or sunset, with a rainbow visible in the background. The foreground is filled with out-of-focus foliage.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH



A CRUISE SHIP

A BATTLESHIP



A TRAINING CENTER



A SPORTS ARENA



HOSPITAL
Complex

A PLACE FOR HEALING

WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?

We need to avoid the trap of thinking that the church is just another social club that we need to fit into our busy schedules.

We need to understand that the church is God's designed and appointed institution/organism for training up and bringing to maturity His people!

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- COLOSSIANS 1:18
- ¹⁸ He (JESUS) is also **head of the body**, the church; and He (JESUS) is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself (JESUS) will come to have first place in everything.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH (also Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16)
 - As the Head of the church, Jesus is the one with the right to set the direction for the church.
 - As the Head of the church, Jesus is the one we are to exhalt.
 - We should have unity with our “HEAD” (JESUS) If indeed Jesus is the one “calling the shots”, then there should not be any division within the body!

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH (also Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16)
- WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST!
 - As the Body of Christ, we are to be His hands and feet, ministering the grace of God to one another and to the lost!
 - We are to do what the HEAD directs us to do.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- 2 Corinthians 11:2
- ² For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I **betrothed you to one husband**, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin.

The background of the slide is a close-up, high-contrast photograph of several red roses. The petals are tightly packed and show deep red and dark red tones, with some highlights where the light catches the edges. The roses are arranged in a way that fills the frame, creating a romantic and elegant feel.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- **THE CHURCH IS CALLED
“THE BRIDE OF CHRIST”
(also Rev. 19:7-8)**
- **What would you say is the
“ideal picture” of a bride?**

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- THE CHURCH IS CALLED “THE BRIDE OF CHRIST” (also Rev. 19:7-8)
 - Called to be Pure and Holy
 - Called to be faithful to the bridegroom
 - Called to avoid spiritual adultery
 - Called to do righteous “deeds” in preparation for our wedding supper

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- Ephesians 2:19-22
- ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are **of God's household**, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*,**

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- Ephesians 2:19-22
- ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a **holy temple** in the Lord, ²² in whom you also **are being built together into a dwelling of God** in the Spirit.

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- THE CHURCH IS CALLED A TEMPLE, A BUILDING
 - A temple was and is a place to go, so as to meet with God in a special way with other believers
 - While it is not about “the physical building”, it is about our gathering together in unity, to corporately worship the Living God. And by entering His presence, we are on Holy Ground
 - There is something unique about the local body of Christ gathering together that we do not experience on our own.

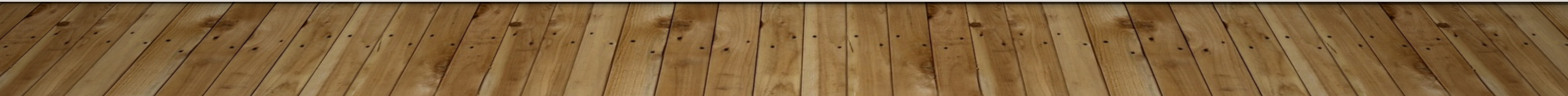
THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

JESUS CHRIST IS THE CHIEF SHEPHERD AND THE CHURCH IS HIS FLOCK (OF SHEEP) (JOHN 10)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE VINE AND THE CHURCH MAKES UP THE BRANCHES (JOHN 15)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE HIGH PRIEST AND THE CHURCH IS “A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS” (HEBREWS 4 & 1 PETER 2)

JESUS CHRIST IS “THE TRUTH” AND THE CHURCH IS “THE PILLAR OF TRUTH” (JOHN 14 & 1 TIMOTHY 3)



THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- ROMANS 15:5-6

- ⁵ Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that with one accord **you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- TO GLORIFY GOD THROUGH
CORRECT WORSHIP
 - To bestow honor; to render as Glorious; to value God for who He is.
 - We Glorify God by worshipping Him in Spirit and in Truth.
 - We Glorify God through Prayer and through Praise.
 - We Glorify God by living godly lives.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- TO GLORIFY GOD THROUGH
CORRECT WORSHIP
 - Are we glorifying God in all we do as a body of Christ?
 - Are we pointing one another to the throne of Grace? To the Master, the Savior?
 - Do the songs we sing glorify God or is it about us?
 - Is the teaching and preaching about God or about man?

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- EPHESIANS 4:11-13

- ¹¹ And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, ¹² **for the equipping** of the saints for the work of service, to the **building up** of the body of Christ; ¹³ until we all attain to the **unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a **mature man**, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- TO TRAIN AND EQUIP BELIEVERS FOR MINISTRY THROUGH SOUND TEACHING
 - To help the body grow in the grace and knowledge of God (2 Peter 3:17-18)
 - To provide instruction and examples for those in the body so that they know how they should live out their faith. (Col. 1:28-29)
 - To train the body to minister one to another. (Eph. 3:15-16)
 - To train the body to minister to those in the world as Ambassadors of Jesus. Presenting the message of reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5)

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

- TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND HEALTHY PLACE TO BE RENEWED AND FIND HEALING (1 Thess. 4&5; Romans 12:3-8)
 - Comfort one another
 - Encourage one another
 - Loving one another (meeting the practical needs of each other)
 - Preferring one another above our own desires

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

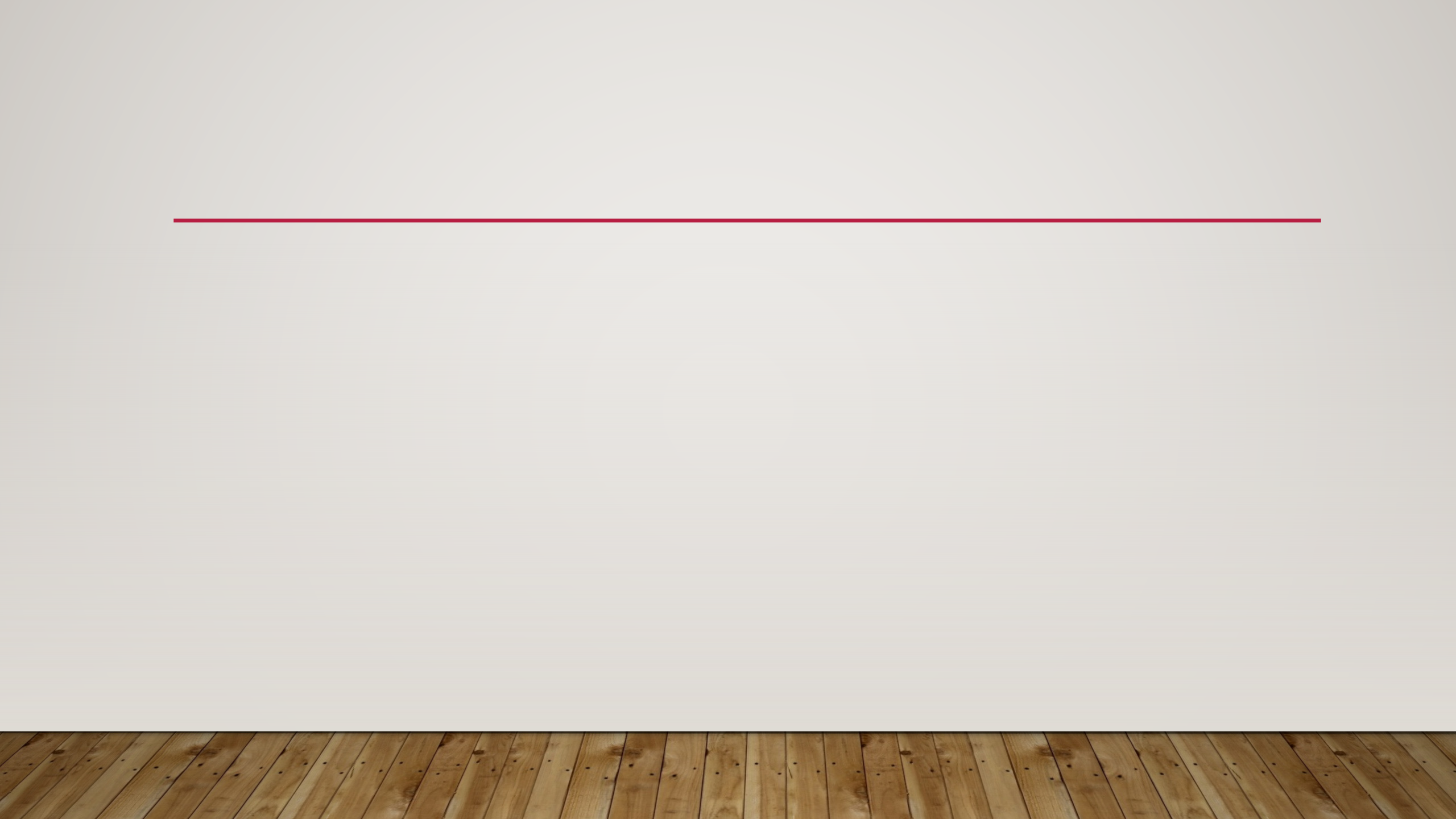
- TO OBTAIN A “RESET” IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR GOD (Isaiah 58:13-14)
 - Oh, how we need this reset!
 - Every week we are bombarded with the things of this world
 - We need to be reminded that this world is not our home...
 - We need to be reminded that God's ways desires are far more important than our own desires
 - We need to be reminded that we are not alone in our spiritual journey

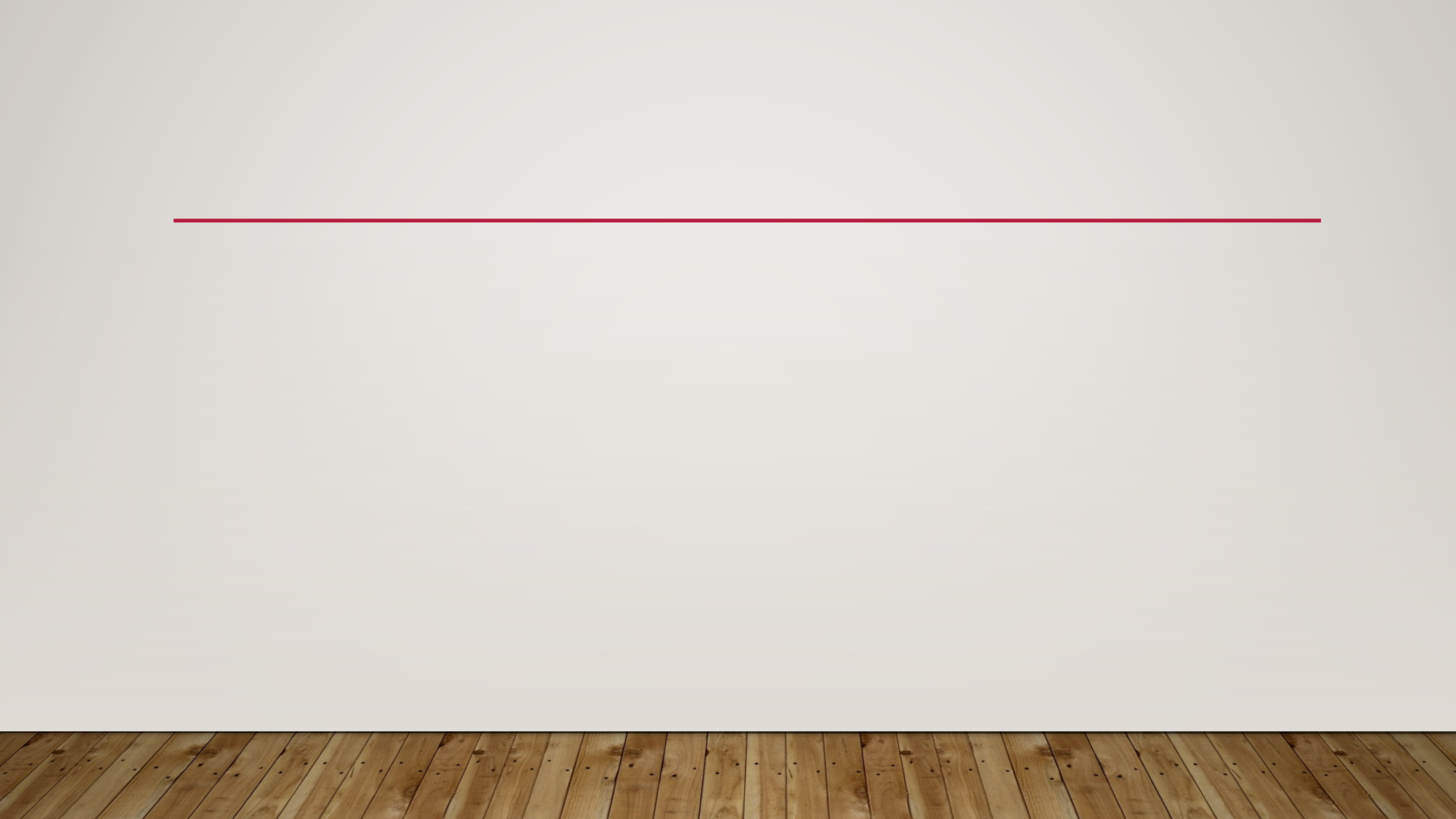
APPLICATION

- **When** we understand the various pictures, God has given us to describe the church, **then** it is easier to understand His heart for us!
- **When** we understand the various purposes for the Church, **then** it is easier to understand just how valuable the Church is for US!

APPLICATION

- OUR FAITHFULNESS IN COMING TO CHURCH IS FOR OUR GOOD!
 - To guard our First Love
 - To spur one another on...
 - To grow in our understanding of the Greatness of our God
- WHY WOULD WE NOT DESIRE TO BE HERE EVERY WEEK?





APPLICATION

- As church attendance numbers fade across the nation and online services become more convenient, it is important to remember why your attendance in person matters to you and your family as well as to the body of Christ itself.
- You cannot serve the body of Christ from your sofa. You cannot experience the community of Faith in isolation.
- You miss out on the experience of a room full of worshippers, glorifying God with one voice. Christians aren't called to be spectators. We are designed to be contributors. We don't just watch, we engage. We pray with one another, we comfort one another.
- The church needs you and you need the church.