

*Parenting Tools:*  
**Is Church Relevant  
Today?**



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**Does the 1st century church meet the needs of man today?**

To answer this question, we must ask and answer some other pertinent questions (when we mention “church,” think of The Church, all people who trust and follow Jesus, not just the congregation you attend).

**Has man changed?**

Is modern man any different from ancient man? Let us compare the two. For one thing, man’s nature is always the same. His physical nature is unaltered. He is made of the same material and has the same physical needs as the man in Jesus’ day, the same hungers, thirsts, and impulses. No one is asking for new air or new sunshine today. Man’s moral and spiritual nature is unchanged. He has the same desires, inclinations, and tendencies. If the primitive church met the needs of primitive man, who had the same nature as modern man, will not church meet man’s same needs today?

**Has the world changed?**

Are we living in a different world than the people of ancient times? It may look different, but the world is the same at heart. Men continue to steal and kill for gain. The same motive that moved the ancient world still motivates the present world. It is still true that “the love of money is the root of all [kinds of] evil” (1 Timothy 6:10). There is no evil that does not spring from covetousness or greed. Indeed, the world is still the same.

### Has the nature of sin changed?

Modern man has invented no new sins. Drunkenness goes back to the days of Noah. Murder reared its ugly head in the twilight of time when Cain killed Abel. The eternal triangle with its emphasis on sex is not just a phenomenon of present day politics; it appeared in the palace of the beloved King David. Sin, which has plagued man from the dawn of creation, has never changed. If the Christian religion dealt successfully with unchangeable sin 2,000 years ago, it will do the same today.

### Has the penalty for sin changed?

Paul declared in Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Death, or eternal separation from the presence of God, is still the penalty for man's sins. If the church could offer the solution for man's need for God in New Testament times, can't the church still do so today?

### Has man's helplessness to overcome sin changed?

After the Industrial Revolution, many thinkers around the world predicted the introduction of a golden age, in which there would be no crime, poverty, panic, depression, or wars. History reveals that the "golden age" never occurred. These problems not only exist in our highly enlightened and cultured world, but they have increased in intensity. Modern man's basic needs are the same as those of ancient man. Again, if the church of the first century could help man find the solution to overcome sin, isn't the church still able to do that today?

### So, what is man's purpose?

God said, "Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:7). Man was made for the glory, praise, honor, and worship of God. The New Testament reveals that God's purpose is fulfilled in the church. In Ephesians 1:7-12, Paul declares that "in Christ" God "purposed" that "we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ." To be "in Christ" is to be in His church. Peter tells the church, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Our purpose, then, is to express the nature and life of God in this world through praise and glorification of His name. This is the highest and holiest purpose for life. The church supplies our true purpose.

### Conclusion: is the church relevant today?

Therefore, because all these things are unchanged, we conclude that the church is relevant to man. In the body of Christ we can be shaped and molded into the kind of people God wants us to be. When we enter the church, by choosing to trust and follow Jesus, our blackened past is cleansed in the precious blood of Christ and we remain clean as long as we walk "in the light" (1 John 1:7). In the church, a new life emerges, a life with real purpose. Each day brings to us an exciting adventure. In the church, we experience a true sense of belonging in a great fellowship with the best of heaven and earth.

Since the above is true, why do we ask, "Is the church relevant today?" Could it be that man is simply not relating to God's way? How do you make water relevant to man? You drink it. How do you

make food relevant to man? You eat it. How do you make Jesus relevant to man? You accept Him, submit to Him, and follow Him. How do you make the church relevant to man? You accept it exactly as Christ and His apostles established it and become a vital and active member of it.