

## How We Know

As Spirit-filled Christians, we know and understand what God is saying to us through His Word when we are guided by a **plain reading** of the Scripture. *2 Timothy 3:15-16*

One of the questions to ask as you open the Bible and read is: “What does the **plain reading** of Scripture tell you about the character and purpose of God throughout Scripture?”

We know from a plain reading of Scripture that God is holy, **loving** and just, and find that the foundation for His relationship with mankind is found in I John 4:8.

### Romans 8

**28** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. **29** For whom **He foreknew** [Romans 11:2; Acts 26:4-5], He also **predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **30** Moreover whom **He predestined** these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

We can only understand God’s Word or any topic of theology when we interpret the whole of Scripture and its individual books with the basic principles of language applied plainly, simply and **consistently** as we walk in the Spirit.

How we know what God **intended** for His local church is only through the plain reading of Scripture

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

### Matthew 16:18

“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock [built on the declaration that Jesus is the Messiah, the resurrection and the life] **I will build My church** [ekklesia], and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. **19** And I will give you the **keys of the kingdom of heaven**, and whatever you **bind** on earth will be **bound** in heaven, and whatever you **loose** on earth will be **loosed** in heaven.”

### Matthew 18:15-20

**17** “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to **the church**. But if he refuses **even to hear the church**, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. **18** **Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind** [local church] **on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.**”

The Greek word for church [ekklesia] was used as far back as 500 years before Christ to mean the coming together of committed citizens in one place **at one time** for making decisions on judicial and political matters. *Acts 19:28-39*

A clear example of the Apostles following Christ’s teaching for His church is found in **Acts 15:13-19**, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6

The local church is a group of committed Christians who gather together in one place **at one time** to read and learn God’s Word, to have water baptisms, to celebrate communion and to “bind” or expel the evil, and “loose” or promote what is right for the body according to God’s Word. This empowers the church, when preaching the gospel, to **break** through the gates of hell which enslaves the lost in the darkness of their sin.

Hebrews 10:23-25