

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1 CORINTHIANS 2:2

INTRODUCTION:

1. When Paul preached “*Jesus Christ and Him crucified*” his preaching also included the church. (1 Cor. 2.1,2,6,7; Eph. 3.3-6)
2. We are to set Jesus and the church before the world.

I. THE CHURCH IS THE KINGDOM

- A. Jesus spoke “*of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*” (Acts 1.3; cf. Matt. 16.19; Col. 1.13,18)
 1. When would the kingdom be established? (Acts 1.6-8)
 2. The church comes into existence in Acts 2. (Acts 2.47)
- B. Philip preaches Jesus and “*the things concerning the kingdom of God*” (Acts 8.12)
- C. For three months, Paul was “*reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.*” (Acts 19.8)
- D. In Rome, Paul “*explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God*” (Acts 28.23,30,31; cf. 1 Pet. 2.9)

II. THE CHURCH IS OF THOSE WHO CALLED ON GOD

- A. **ACTS 2.21:** “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord...*”
- B. Paul persecuted those who called on the name of the Lord.
 1. Who did Paul persecute? (Acts 9.13,14; 8.1,3)
 2. Paul: A former persecutor. (Acts 9.20,21; cf. 22.16).
- C. If you want to go to heaven, you must be among those who call on the name of the Lord. (Acts 2.21; Eph. 5.23; 1.22,23)

III. THE CHURCH IS THE CALLED OUT

- A. Church (ekklesia): Kaleo – “to call.” Ek – “out.”
 1. Saul persecuted the called out ones. (Acts 8.1,3)
 2. The called out one were disciples. (Acts 11.26)
 3. Herod harassed the called out ones. (Acts 12.1)
 4. Paul gathered the called out ones. (Acts 14.23,27)
- B. The church follows Christ. (Matt. 7.21-23; Rom. 10.1-3)

CONCLUSION: The church is singular as the one true church.

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“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”
-Mark 16.15

July 21, 2024

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

Growth of the Body

There are two ways that the church can and should grow. First, the church grows spiritually. Brethren increase their knowledge and understanding of the Bible (2 Pet. 3.18; Heb. 5.12-14). They add to their faith (2 Pet. 1.5ff). They develop a spiritual mindset (1 Cor. 3.1-3). Second, the church grows numerically as more and more of the lost are saved and added to the church (Acts 2.41; 5.14). How can the church grow both spiritually and numerically?

The church grows by the providential involvement of God. In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul wrote that “*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase*” (1 Cor. 3.6,7). It is not our charisma or personality that causes the church to grow. The church grows because God causes it to grow. But how does God give the increase? Notice that Paul wrote that “*I planted, Apollos watered.*” If you back up to verse 5, we are told that Paul and Apollos are ministers “as the Lord gave to each one.” God gives us abilities. When we use our abilities to contribute to the work of the church, God, through our abilities, gives the increase. We find the same thought in Ephesians 4. Reference is made to “*the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body*” (Eph. 4.16).

The church grows when God works through us as we use our talents to contribute to the work of the church. CLP

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

EPHESIANS 5.32

INTRODUCTION:

1. What does it mean when we talk about the church of Christ?
2. In Ephesians 5, the Holy Spirit uses the relationship between husbands and wives to teach us about the church.

I. THE CHURCH IS SUBMISSIVE TO CHRIST

- A. **EPHESIANS 5.22-24:** *“as the church is subject to Christ.”*
 1. Subject (hupotasso): Literally, to arrange under.
 2. The church is arranged itself under the authority of Christ.
- B. **MATTHEW 28.18:** *“All authority has been given to Me...”*
 1. Jesus has all authority *“in heaven.”* Jesus sent the angels out to minister to us. (Heb. 1.14; 1 Pet. 3.22)
 2. Jesus has all authority *“on earth.”* We are to obey the commands of Jesus. (Heb. 5.8,9; Eph. 1.22,23)

II. THE CHURCH IS SPECIAL TO CHRIST

- A. **EPHESIANS 5.25-27:** *“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”*
- B. How special is the church to Jesus?
 1. **GALATIANS 1.4:** *“who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age.”*
 2. **EPHESIANS 5.1,2:** *“a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling aroma.”* (cf. Gen. 8.21)

III. THE CHURCH IS SINGULAR FOR CHRIST

- A. **EPHESIANS 5.22-33:** Reference to the church is singular.
 1. Jesus only built one church. (Matt. 16.18)
 2. Why is it sometimes plural? (Rev. 22.16; Rom. 16.16).
- B. How do we identify this exclusive group of God’s people?
 1. **1 PETER 2.9:** *“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people”*
 2. **1 PETER 2.10:** *“who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”* The people of God are forgiven.
- C. Who are those who have been forgiven by God?
 1. God’s people are those who have obeyed the gospel. (Acts 10.43; 3.19; Rom. 10.10; Acts 22.16)
 2. The gospel is simple. (2 Cor. 11.3)

CONCLUSION: Are you among the exclusive people of God?

The First New Testament Church

What kind of church existed in the first century? When the church was established, the first congregation that was formed was in Jerusalem. Studying Acts 2 very carefully, we learn that this was a congregation that actively engaged in worship (Acts 2.42). They also were unified (Acts 2.44,45). If you keep reading, you find something else about this congregation. These brethren were social.

In Acts 2.46, it says, *“continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their bread with gladness and simplicity of heart.”* These were brethren who were together and remained together daily. They did not meet together on the first day of the week, and then go home to their own lives. Brethren sold their possessions and gave to anyone who had need. Why did some have need? Because they did not anticipate staying as long as they did and did not bring enough supplies for an extended stay. They intended on celebrating Pentecost, and then going back to their homes. But when the church was established, these who had become Christians stayed for much longer than they intended.

Notice that they *“continued daily.”* The word translated “continued” translates a Greek word that means, “to be intently engaged.” It is the same word found in verse 42 where it says that they *“continued steadfastly”* describing their active engagement in worship. The church in Jerusalem actively engaged in worship on the first day of the week (v. 42). And then they met together in the temple every day. For what purpose? For worship? Bible Study? Prayer? We are not told. Whatever they were doing, it was *“with one accord.”* Again you have the idea of unity.

Notice also that they were *“breaking bread from house to house.”* Breaking bread is a generic phrase that refers to sharing a meal. In verse 42, breaking bread was a reference to the Lord’s Supper (cf. Acts 20.7). But in verse 46, they broke bread from house to house. These were brethren who socialized. They had each other over to their homes. Their relationship was not confined to interacting on Sunday morning. They spent time with each other every day.

Seeing the church as a social group can make many of us feel uncomfortable. That because the worship and work of the church is not to be social. The church is not the place for getting together socially (1 Cor. 11.22,34). But brethren, as members of the church, got together individually and spent time together socially.

How well do you know your brethren? We cannot expect to succeed on our own. We need to be involved in each other’s lives and *“exhort one another daily”* (Heb. 3.13).
CLP