

The Body ....**The Church** ...**Do you know what The highest and greatest organization on Earth is? Jesus' Church.** That is true because it is designed and built by God, and shall go on forever and ever. Microsoft, Apple, Ford or any other organization can't make that claim, nor can any other great organization you might think of. And this organization is complex...for it is also a living organism made up solely of people...The word Church come from the Greek which means *ĕkklēsia, ek-klay-see´-ah*; “called out”, a popular *meeting*, a religious *congregation*.

**In other words...the church is a group of People “called out” from this world and into God’s Kingdom and united as a family through faith in, and relationship with Jesus one another – to be with Jesus and to carry on Jesus’...**

**His church...the assembled or called out ones...the worldwide congregation...made up of all the smaller community congregations...**

**It is built on Jesus and by Jesus ...and he will not let it be overcome...it will be victorious ...against it's arch enemy**

*MT 16: 13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” 14 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”*

*15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades[c] will not overcome it.*

**Throughout history we have seen nations and kingdoms fall, but the Church of Jesus Christ still stands. Why? Because it's Leader and purpose is eternal.**

- *Regarding our enemy who mans the fort of Hell and all demonic forces..... cant defeat this church God is organizing and building...certainly man cant defeat it...*
- *We are VICTORIOUS*
- *And also all the other spritiual forces both good and evil in the heavenlies...God chose to make the church an an example of his incomprehensible power and wisdom...*

*Eph 3:<sup>10</sup> His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,<sup>11</sup> according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

- *Now the challenge becomes how do you oranginze this called out to be together group...*

***lets go back to the beginning...of the church..explain the situation..then Peter speaksto the crowds...***

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”<sup>37</sup> When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”<sup>40</sup> With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”<sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.<sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.<sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common.<sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.<sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,<sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord **added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

- **Now here is where it gets sticky...the adding to the number...from all the different kinds of cultures and backgrounds, speaking different languages...having various spiritual conditions....just like us**

Acts 2:5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.<sup>6</sup> When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.<sup>7</sup> Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?”<sup>8</sup> Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?<sup>9</sup> Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,<sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome<sup>11</sup> (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”<sup>12</sup> Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

- **and this is not just our situation now...it will be a distinctive in heaven and in the New earth..**

Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.<sup>10</sup> You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

## what makes this possible UNITY....

*John 17: 20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*

- **Now regarding the people brought into his organization and organism and family...will be from of every tribe and nation... all kinds of people from all walks of life..**
- **They will look like us and not Look like us...they will Dress like us and not like us... Act like us and not like us... think like us and not think like us...they will live lives similar to ours and very different than ours... they will Do it our way and not our way...**
- **they will become family to us... and you are part of this...**

... *EPH 1 13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.*

- **Christ plan is to redeem all those who will be redeemed to the praise or advertising of God's (the Father) Glory...his love for the world**
- **You are included but you are not the focus...**
- **You were created for God's possession...you exist for because of him and for Him**

**Listen Family is defined as any group of persons closely related by blood. So by definition, we're all part of the family of God because of the blood that was shed for every one of us. Yet there are many that fail at being a good family member within the family of God because their concept of family has been distorted by failed marriages, abuse, disappointments and dysfunction.**

**Here is the deal....one can't really be a healthy Christian alone. Christianity, is corporate from its very roots. It is absolutely essential for God's children to learn to work and play together in the kingdom, the kingdom both here (in the church) and in the future (in heaven) and in the new earth...**

**So there can be no individual Christian, nor can there be a "radio" church Christian, nor even an "Internet" church Christian. Why? Because of the person-to-person relationship that is at the very heart of the doctrine of church.**

Show slide:



**This is not community... God and you alone on a cell phone... person-to-person relationship that is at the very heart of the doctrine of church.**

If you think faith is purely private, a "me and Jesus" thing, you are fooling yourself. You might ask, "Who says you need church to be a good Christian? Who says so?" Well, God says so. Just look at some of the ways that God describes the church in the Bible.

In the Newer Testament there are two metaphors given when referring to the redeemed people of God.

- One is of a "body" where all parts, great and small, work together and must function well for the body to be whole.
- The other of course is the family...we are sons and daughters of the Father, we are each others ...brothers and sisters.
- **\*\*\*\*And The community of God's people..his family... are to be an intimate group of people doing life in relationship connected together ...just as a the parts of the body owe their life by being connected to the rest of the body....**
- **In both of these models there is only one head, the Lord Jesus Christ,**
- **Where the Holy Spirit is present among the people** unifying, equipping and experiential Holy Spirit working in all the members of the family and body and each family member is said to be of great value and worth.
- **Listen....There is nothing more intimate to you than your body! Listen the people in the early church had to figure out how to do this...just like us now...**
- **Every group of God kids...are having new family members being born again..born into the family...**

**\*\*\*\*And having new parts of the body being grafted in...This is way Messy!!!**

*1 Corinthians 12: <sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.*

- **To combat pride based on gifting, social standing, power, position, ethnicity... which apparently was happening in Corinth...**
- **Paul expresses every part is needed...and no part is better...**

*Like a body the church is most healthy when we all are participating and using our talents for the common good.*

## **Paul writes clarifying this in Romans...**

*Romans 12: <sup>4</sup> For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. <sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

- ***There is only one way to do this...being devoted to each other***

<sup>10</sup> *Be devoted (dedicated) to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.*

<sup>11</sup> *Never be lacking in zeal (passion), but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.*

<sup>12</sup> *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality<sup>15</sup> Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

- ***Pride has no place in a body! In fact it deforms the body...***

<sup>21</sup> *The eye cannot say (forbidden) to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, <sup>24</sup> while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. <sup>27</sup> *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.**

**1. Each one is a part and does a part for the body...**

**2. it is in person to person relationship where we talk about about meaningful things...where we work out personal issues...where we grow personally...and relationally...where we get to live out being family and aprt of..that than apart from....**

3. the problem is Relationships take time. Your relationship with God and with the church is no different.
4. To reap the benefit of the community you have to do the work of being in community and that means showing up and pitching in. It means not being the last person in and the first person out the door when the service is over.
5. But here's the really great news: when you put the time in, a healthy church community is an incredible blessing.

Church is all about being a community where inspiration to do greater good takes place, where deeper love is explored, where enriching relationships occur, where authentic living is practiced...where family is expanded and the body receives new parts....

**Sometimes we have this idea that love is syrupy...it is anything but...love is hard word! But This is the honey which attracts those not yet a part of the community...**

John wrote this ...quoting Jesus ...

**John 13:34** “A new command I give you: Love **one another**. As I have loved you, so you must love **one another**. **35** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love **one another**.”

And sixty years later...writes this

**1 John 3:11** For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love **one another**.

**1 John 4:12** No **one** has ever seen God; but if we love **one another**, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Bottom line...you can only love one another, from a distance but only up close and personal....like being part of the body....always making room for more family and parts of the body....

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