



*...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, ... (Ephesians 4:15)*

## Part 7 — THE CHURCH

1. **The birth of the Church.** Although God had His congregation in Old Testament Israel (Leviticus 19:2), the New Testament Church began in Acts 2 after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.
  - A. The Gentiles were also accepted as God's people. Paul called it the "mystery" in Ephesians 2:19-22 and Ephesians 3:4-6.
2. **Called out.** The New Testament word for "Church" is the Greek word, *ekklesia*, meaning to be called out (and brought into).
  - A. Exodus 19:3-6 *...Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession, for the whole earth is mine and you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...*
  - B. 1 Peter 2:9-10 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light...* A royal priesthood suggests the idea of authority and servanthood.
3. **The Church belongs to Christ.** He purchased it with His own blood on the cross.
  - A. 1 Peter 1:18-19 *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Galatians 3:13)*
4. **The Church is the Body of Christ.** When speaking of a particular church, people usually mean a building or an address. However,

His dwelling place is not in buildings but in His people from all walks of life and cultures, all around the world. (Revelation 7:9)

- A. 1 Corinthians 3:16 *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? (Isaiah 66:1-2; Acts 7:48-49; Ephesians 2:19-22)*
  - B. Jesus is so identified with the Church that persecution against the Church is actually persecution against Him. (Acts 9:4)
  - C. We are members of the same Body and joined together with a great diversity of gifts, abilities and callings. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*
5. **Christ's Body is divinely structured.**
    - A. Jesus Christ as the Head of His Body (Colossians 1:18), is building His Church. Matthew 16:13-19 *...and on this rock I will build My church...*
    - B. He has placed servant leadership in His Church to equip (heal, train and release) and shepherd His people. Ephesians 4:11-16 *So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...*
  6. **The purpose of the Church** — Growing and empowered to expand the Kingdom of God in the earth in total victory!
    - A. We are to reflect His Love and Glory to a fallen world. (1 Peter 2:9-10)
    - B. The Church's authority in Matthew 16:18-19 *"...and on this rock (confession of who Jesus is) I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*
    - C. The Church is called to the task of expanding the Kingdom of God. Matthew 28:18-20 *...Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...* (Acts 1:8)
  7. **The Church in Heaven is the bride of Christ.** This imagery reveals both intimate relationship and purity.
    - A. Revelation 21:2 *I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. (Revelation 19:7-9)*
    - B. 1 Thessalonians 4:17 *And so we will be with the Lord forever.*