

“The Church”

1 Timothy 3:15

July 28, 2013

Let's see what the Bible tells us about the Church's:

Definition,
Declaration,
&
Description

Last week we learned:

The Church is...

a “**MIRACULOUSLY** Multiplying” **PEOPLE**:

See **Acts 2...**

- “...and 3,000 were added that day”
- “...**and the Lord added** daily, those who were being saved.”

This week we continue in Christ-like continuity:

1 Corinthians 12:13 = *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

Step One:

A Definition of the Word 'Church'

The Greek word from which we get our English term 'church' is **ekklesia**. It is a **compound word made up of the preposition ek, (or 'out,')** and the verb **kaleo, ('to call.')**

Ekklesia is the "called out" people... However:

NOTE: In ancient secular Greek this term was used for an assembly that had gathered for "some" purpose,

In [Acts 19:32](#) *(The **assembly** (ekklesia) was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there.)* it was **used of a riotous mob** that gathered who were aroused by Demetrius, a silversmith whose business, along with others, had been threatened by Paul's ministry.

Nevertheless...

Church is ALWAYS a PEOPLE, NEVER a PLACE! - JDP

T/S: With that said... further definition is needed:

Contrast "VISIBLE" vs. "INVISIBLE" Church...

TOZER Qt:

The church is afflicted by dry rot...

Because the Holy Spirit is not given a chance to work in our services, nobody is repenting, nobody is seeking God, nobody is spending a day in quiet waiting upon God with open an Bible, seeking to mend his or her ways. Nobody is doing it— we just want “*more people.*”

NOTE: “*I will build my church*” ([Matt. 16:18](#))

T/S: One last defining point...

LOCAL & GLOBAL Church:

- | | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------|
| A. Col. 1:18 | = | World |
| B. Acts 9:31 | = | Region |
| C. 1 Cor. 1:2 | = | City |
| D. Romans 16 | = | Houses |
| E. Matt. 18:20 | = | 2 or 3 gathered |

DECLARATION of Church’s Purpose:

Continuation;

Proclamation;

Demonstration;

Glorification

(1) Continuation

- the Church is to **carry on & carry out** Christ's Great **Commandment & Commission!**
 - see [Acts 1:1](#) & 1:8

(2) Proclamation

- **Mark 16:15** = *"...He said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim/preach the gospel to the whole creation."*

NOTE: see **STICKMAN Gospel** handout

(3) Demonstration. (to angels & demons)

- **Ephesians 3:10** = *...so that God's multi-faceted wisdom may now be made known... **through the church** to the rulers & authorities in the heavens.*

NOTE: **God is using the church to demonstrate to the angelic hosts**, both good and fallen, His great wisdom.

(4) Glorification.

Ephesians 3:21 = *"... to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen"*

A Description of the Church

Descriptions of the Church in the New Testament. are **almost always in the form of analogy** and are often complimented by **characteristics**...

Church ANALOGIES:

BODY of Christ

TEMPLE of God

BRIDE of Christ

HOUSE-HOLD of God

FLOCK of God

BRANCHES of the Vine/Jesus

The BODY of Christ

Unity... Individuality... Headship of Christ

With **this analogy** Paul emphasizes both the **unity of the body and the individuality of each particular member.** That Jesus Christ is the Head of the body suggests that it is our Lord who directs and guides the body, and that its unity comes from the Head of the body, **Who coordinates and directs each individual part.**

- **Romans 12:4-5** = For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, **5**so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

***** "body of Christ" = 2 points**

1. Christ's embassy/ambassadors
2. Christian's interdependence...

A TEMPLE of the HOLY SPIRIT

* **1 Corinthians 3:16** = *Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

******* The temple is the place where God dwells, so...
God not only dwells in each Christian individually, but in all Christians corporately.

******* This “temple” reference emphasizes the shift from an **external meeting place** with God... **to the internal marks & ministry of God's Holy Spirit.**

******* Each individual Christian is a stone, all of which make up the temple, still under construction, and our Lord Jesus Christ is the Chief or Cornerstone

******* The temple was also the place of worship, from which praise was to ascend to God.

The BRIDE of Christ

Love & Provision of Christ for His Church/bride...

Church's responsibility to remain pure for Christ...

- **Revelation 19:7 = Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.**

The HOUSE-HOLD of God

Ephesians 2:18-19 = ...through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. 19So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, **but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household**

* **Galatians 6:10 = ...let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. **PRIVILEGE****

* **1 Peter 4:17 = For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? **RESPONSIBILITY****

PRIVILEGED RESPONSIBILITY:

1 Peter 2:9 = *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

- a **chosen race** = God's personally adopted people
- a **royal priesthood** = authoritative ambassadors
- a **holy nation** = God's righteous & unified exception
- a **people for His own possession** = "doulos"

* **Acts 20:28** (blood-bought) = *"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

The Vine and the Branches

- ([John 15:1ff](#)).
- **Jesus is the source of life/power/fruit**
- The Christian must abide in Christ for fruitfulness.

NOTE:

- Not all friction is the fault of the false teachers &/or the family of faith...

Contrast Church Disrespect vs. Discipline...

Church CHARACTERISTICS & TRAITS:

Church is a “**LOCALLY GATHERING**” people:

Hebrews 10:24ff = *(let us not stop coming together... Let us spur one another on...)*

Church is a **STRONG & COURAGEOUS** people:

Joshua 1:9 = *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.*”

Church is a **UNIFIED** people:

John 17:21 = *that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.*

Church is an **ENCOURAGING** people:

1 Thessalonians 5:11 = *encourage one another and build one another up,*

Church is an **IMITATING/EMULATING** people:

Philippians 3:17 = *Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.*

Church is a **FORGIVING** people:

Colossians 3:13 = *as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.*

Church is a **BURDEN-BEARING** people:

Galatians 6:2 = *Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

Illustration: little boy overboard in turbulent waters... strong swimmer ties rope around self/waist and tosses the rope to those in the crowd and says "hold the rope - I'm going in after him!" ...the crowd is filled with curious on-lookers... when the man got to the boy and lifted him up out of the drowning water in just a nick of time... the man assures the boy that he's ok now... then yells up to the onlookers: "pull us in!" BUT... as everyone looked at each other it quickly became painfully clear that no one took ownership of holding the rope.....

Lesson: the Church is here, in part, to hold the rope... as our strong swimmers go in after the drowning souls going under all around us.

*** You need to hold the rope... because Christ paid for and threw you the rope and other Christians have already held it for you!

Church is a **WARRING** people: (a.k.a. **Warriors**)

Timothy = ***“fight the good fight”***

Eph 6 = ***“put on the full ARMOR of God”***

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church!” - Turtullion

Matthew 28:18-20 reveals... Churches are a

COMMISSIONED,

SENT,

DISCIPLING,

TEACHING,

OBEDIENT,

LEARNED,

SUBMISSIVE,

BAPTIZED & BAPTIZING,

ASSURED

&

ACCOMPANIED People...

...of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

Churches are an **EMPOWERED** people: **Acts 1:8**

Churches are **SEPERATED / DIFFERENT** people:

Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate," says the Lord. "Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." —[2 Corinthians 6:17](#)

TOZER Quote: The church's mightiest influence is felt when she is different from the world in which she lives. Her power lies in her being different; (she) rises (to the degree) with (which) she differs; and sinks as her differences diminishes.

This is so fully and clearly taught in the Scriptures and so well illustrated in Church history that it is hard to see how we can miss it. But miss it we do, for we hear constantly that the Church must try to be as much like the world as possible...

"Christianity must come & commit to defend against 'Churchianity!'" – JDP

TOZER (cont.):

Let us plant ourselves on the hill of Zion and invite the world to come over to us, but never under any circumstances will we go over to them. The cross is the symbol of Christianity, and the cross speaks of death and separation, never of compromise. No one ever compromised with a cross. The cross separated the dead and the living.

The timid and the fearful will cry "Extreme!" and they will be right. The cross is the essence of all that is extreme and final.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 = "...realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. **2**For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, **3**unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, **4**treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, **5**holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

Churches are **COMPASSIONATE** people:

Matthew 9:36 = When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Churches are "**soldiering/striving/seeding**" people:

*** **2 Tim 2:** *Farmer, Soldier, Athlete...*

*** **1 Peter 1:15-16** = as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16**since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Transformed people – Romans 12:1-3

Freed People - John 8:32 & 36

New People – 2 Corinthians 5:17

Righteous People - 2 Corinthians 5:21

Fruitful People per **Galatians 5:**

Love

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Faithfulness

Gentleness (and) Self-Control

Faithful People – Hebrews 11

Blessed People

- Poor in spirit
- Mourning
- Meek
- Hunger & thirst after Righteousness
- Merciful
- Pure in Heart
- Peace-makers
- Persecuted

Churches are a “**SERVING**” people:

Ephesians 2:10 – *“serving “works of service” = For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

Churches are a **ZEALOUS** people:

Titus 2:24 - ... (Jesus) gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (*“Zealous for good works”*)

Churches are **HOLY** people:

*** **1 Peter 1:15-16** = as he who called you is holy,

you also be holy in all your conduct, [16](#) since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Churches are a **HUMBLE** people:

Matthew 23:12 - *Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*

TOZER Quote: Within the last quarter of a century we have actually seen a major shift in the beliefs and practices of the evangelical wing of the church... SO RADICAL as to amount to a complete sellout; and all this behind the cloak of fervent orthodoxy. With Bibles under their arms and bundles of tracts in their pockets, religious persons now meet to carry on "services" so carnal, so pagan, that they can hardly be distinguished from the old vaudeville shows of earlier days. And for a preacher or a writer to challenge this heresy... is to invite ridicule and abuse from every quarter.

Our only hope is that renewed spiritual-pressure will be exerted increasingly by self-effacing and courageous men who desire nothing but the glory of God and the purity of the church. May God send us many of them. They are long overdue.

Churches are a: **1 Thess. 5:16-22** people:

- Ever **REJOICING**

TOZER Quote: I must agree with the psalmist that the joy of the Lord is the strength of His people. I do believe that the sad world is attracted to (a genuine) spiritual sunshine.

Some churches train their greeters and ushers to smile, showing as many teeth as possible. But I can sense that kind of display, and when I am greeted by a person who is smiling because he or she has been trained to smile, I know I am shaking the flipper of a trained seal. When the warmth and joy of the Holy Spirit are in a congregation, however, and the folks are spontaneously joyful, the result is a wonderful influence upon others....

The reason we have to search for so many things to cheer us up is the fact that we are not really joyful and contentedly happy within....

- **PRAYING** without ceasing
- **THANKING** God in all circumstances
- **OBEYING** the Spirit (vs. “quenching” Him)
- **EMBRACING** truth (prophetic utterances)
- **EXAMINING** everything...
- **GRASPING** the “good”
- **ABSTAINING** from “every form of evil”

CLOSE:

According to Jesus in **Luke 12:48**...

Churches are People to whom
“much has been given,” and

consequently...

***Churches are People from whom
“much is expected!”***

The Church is an **UNCOMPROMISING** people:
Galatians 1:6-9 with pillar of truth...

Pizza Hut is closed....
...Dunkin Donuts is coming.

1 Timothy 3:15 = *in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, **the pillar and foundation** of the **truth**.*

Pillars = holds up & lifts high

Foundations = what is built upon...

NOTE:

The Church is an **UNCOMPROMISING** People:
Galatians 1:6-9 with pillar of truth...

Church is a LOVING people:

*** 1 Corinthians 13 ***

Thus, the Church is the salt, light, & scent of Christ...

EPHESIANS 4:15: *we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. (NLT)*

Definition

The called out, set apart people of God

Declaration

The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Description

The ambassadors of Christ
&
Ministers of Reconciliation

Let's Pray!