

What is the Church?

November 27, 2016

CHURCH IS EXPERIENCING THE GLORY, PRESENCE AND POWER OF GOD BY THE COMMUNAL MULTIPLICATION OF FAITH AND WORSHIP

Ephesians 2:11-22 NASB

21 **IN WHOM THE WHOLE BUILDING** [universal church], **BEING FITTED TOGETHER, IS GROWING INTO A HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD,**

22 **IN WHOM YOU ALSO** [local church] **ARE BEING BUILT TOGETHER INTO A DWELLING OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT.**

Matthew 18:20 NASB

20 "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, **I AM THERE IN THEIR MIDST.**"

When the world's definition of success creeps into the Church, then success is defined by apparent results and metrics, such as more people, more money, more programs, more events.

When the success of the Church is defined by apparent results and metrics, then:

1. *the church service becomes a performance to appeal to the mind, emotions and senses*
2. *the Truth in the teaching is compromised to be non-offensive*

But the Church is defined by one criteria in the Scripture: the spiritual intercourse between God and His people.

1 Peter 2:5 NASB

5 **YOU ALSO, AS LIVING STONES, ARE BEING BUILT UP AS A SPIRITUAL HOUSE FOR A HOLY PRIESTHOOD, TO OFFER UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES ACCEPTABLE TO GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.**

2 Corinthians 6:16 NASB

16 **FOR WE ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD;** just as God said, "**I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.**"

Revelation 21:2-3 NASB

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **MADE READY AS A BRIDE ADORNED FOR HER HUSBAND.**

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "**BEHOLD, THE TABERNACLE OF GOD IS AMONG MEN, AND HE WILL DWELL AMONG THEM, AND THEY SHALL BE HIS PEOPLE, AND GOD HIMSELF WILL BE AMONG THEM.**"

Hebrews 8:10-11 NASB

10 "**FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.**"

11 "**AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.**"

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 NASB

4 Now there are **VARIETIES OF GIFTS**, but the **SAME SPIRIT**.

5 And there are **VARIETIES OF MINISTRIES**, and the **SAME LORD**.

6 There are **VARIETIES OF EFFECTS**, but the **SAME GOD WHO WORKS ALL THINGS IN ALL PERSONS**.

7 **BUT TO EACH ONE IS GIVEN THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT FOR THE COMMON GOOD.**

8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 **BUT ONE AND THE SAME SPIRIT WORKS ALL THESE THINGS, DISTRIBUTING TO EACH ONE INDIVIDUALLY JUST AS HE WILLS.**

Acts 2:1-11 NASB

1 When the day of Pentecost had come, **THEY WERE ALL TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE.**

2 **AND SUDDENLY THERE CAME FROM HEAVEN A NOISE LIKE A VIOLENT RUSHING WIND, AND IT FILLED THE WHOLE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE SITTING.**

3 **AND THERE APPEARED TO THEM TONGUES AS OF FIRE DISTRIBUTING THEMSELVES, AND THEY RESTED ON EACH ONE OF THEM.**

4 **AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEGAN TO SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES, AS THE SPIRIT WAS GIVING THEM UTTERANCE.**

Acts 2:41-43 NASB

41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

42 **THEY WERE CONTINUALLY DEVOTING THEMSELVES TO THE APOSTLES' TEACHING AND TO FELLOWSHIP, TO THE BREAKING OF BREAD AND TO PRAYER.**

43 **EVERYONE KEPT FEELING A SENSE OF AWE; AND MANY WONDERS AND SIGNS WERE TAKING PLACE THROUGH THE APOSTLES.**

Acts 4:31-33 NASB

31 **AND WHEN THEY HAD PRAYED, THE PLACE WHERE THEY HAD GATHERED TOGETHER WAS SHAKEN, AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEGAN TO SPEAK THE WORD OF GOD WITH BOLDNESS.**

32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.

33 **AND WITH GREAT POWER THE APOSTLES WERE GIVING TESTIMONY TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD JESUS, AND ABUNDANT GRACE WAS UPON THEM ALL.**

THE CHURCH CANNOT EXPERIENCE GOD'S PRESENCE WITHOUT UNITY AND HARMONY OF RELATIONSHIP

Ephesians 2:11-22 NASB

11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands--

12 remember that you were at that time **SEPARATE FROM CHRIST, EXCLUDED FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL, AND STRANGERS TO THE COVENANTS OF PROMISE, HAVING NO HOPE AND WITHOUT GOD** in the world.

13 **BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS YOU WHO FORMERLY WERE FAR OFF HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

14 **FOR HE HIMSELF IS OUR PEACE, WHO MADE BOTH GROUPS INTO ONE AND BROKE DOWN THE BARRIER OF THE DIVIDING WALL,**

15 **BY ABOLISHING IN HIS FLESH THE ENMITY,** which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, **SO THAT IN HIMSELF HE MIGHT MAKE THE TWO INTO ONE NEW MAN, THUS ESTABLISHING PEACE,**

16 **AND MIGHT RECONCILE THEM BOTH IN ONE BODY TO GOD THROUGH THE CROSS,** by it having put to death the enmity.

17 **AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR;**

18 **FOR THROUGH HIM WE BOTH [Jews and Gentiles / Circumcised and Uncircumcised] HAVE OUR ACCESS IN ONE SPIRIT TO THE FATHER.**

19 **SO THEN YOU ARE NO LONGER STRANGERS AND ALIENS, BUT YOU ARE FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS, AND ARE OF GOD'S HOUSEHOLD,**

20 having been **BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, CHRIST JESUS HIMSELF BEING THE CORNER STONE,**

21 **IN WHOM THE WHOLE BUILDING, BEING FITTED TOGETHER, IS GROWING INTO A HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD,**

22 **IN WHOM YOU ALSO ARE BEING BUILT TOGETHER INTO A DWELLING OF GOD IN THE SPIRIT.**

John 17:21-23 NASB

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.

22 The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, **THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, JUST AS WE ARE ONE;**

23 **I IN THEM AND YOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE PERFECTED** (*teleioō - make perfect, complete, accomplish, finish, bring to an end*) **IN UNITY,** so that **THE WORLD MAY KNOW THAT YOU SENT ME, AND LOVED THEM, EVEN AS YOU HAVE LOVED ME.**

Ephesians 5:27 NASB

27 **THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT TO HIMSELF THE CHURCH IN ALL HER GLORY, HAVING NO SPOT OR WRINKLE OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT SHE WOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS.**

Disunity destroys everything that is supernatural in the relationships between members of the Body of Christ.

Unity in Christ creates the channels of relationship where His presence, His power, His life, His anointing have free and unhindered flow.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 NASB

10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **THAT YOU ALL AGREE AND THAT THERE BE NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU, BUT THAT YOU BE MADE COMPLETE IN THE SAME MIND AND IN THE SAME JUDGMENT.**

11 For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you.

12 **NOW I MEAN THIS, THAT EACH ONE OF YOU IS SAYING, "I AM OF PAUL," AND "I OF APOLLOS," AND "I OF CEPHAS," AND "I OF CHRIST."**

13 **HAS CHRIST BEEN DIVIDED? PAUL WAS NOT CRUCIFIED FOR YOU, WAS HE?** Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

We agree on the essentials.

We tolerate and respect the non-essentials.

The relationship and unity are more important than the non-essentials.

Ephesians 4:1-3 NASB

1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

2 **WITH ALL HUMILITY AND GENTLENESS, WITH PATIENCE, SHOWING TOLERANCE** (*anechō - to hold oneself up against, sustain, bear, endure*) **FOR ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE,**

3 **BEING DILIGENT TO PRESERVE** (*tēreō - to attend to carefully, take care of, guard*) **THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND** (*syndesmos - that which binds together, joint, tie, ligament*) **OF PEACE** (*eirēnē - peace between individuals, harmony, concord*).

UNIFIED BY THE SOLID FOUNDATION

Ephesians 2:11-22 NASB

20 **HAVING BEEN BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, CHRIST JESUS HIMSELF BEING THE CORNERSTONE,**

The accuracy, authority and weight of the teaching and doctrine from those who personally knew and listened to Jesus here on earth can never be replaced or duplicated.

The teaching and doctrine of the contemporary church must never shift or deviate from their foundation; to do so is to drift not only from the Truth but from God.

It is the foundational and core doctrines of the Church which unifies us, for they are essential. We bear patiently, we overlook, we respect the non-essentials.

Hebrews 1:1-3 NASB

1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

2 **IN THESE LAST DAYS HAS SPOKEN TO US IN HIS SON,** whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

3 **AND HE IS THE RADIANCE OF HIS GLORY AND THE EXACT REPRESENTATION OF HIS NATURE,** and upholds all things by the word of His power.