

Church - The Dwelling Place of God

April 14, 2019

Ephesians 2:19-22 ESV

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Revelation 21:1-3 ESV

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

- **The Church is not an organization or institution of man's design or making.**
 - Westgate Chapel, with its constitution, its 501c3 status, its federal tax ID number, its building and lease, its bank accounts, its website - is NOT the Church. Westgate Chapel is a product of human effort and will one day cease to exist.
 - Westgate Chapel is merely a human vehicle by which the true Church can come together.
- **The Church is the supernatural and eternal creation of God, birthed in Jesus Christ in His body on the cross, inhabited by the one and only true God, living and breathing by the Holy Spirit.**

Ephesians 2:14-16 ESV

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility

15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,

16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

Romans 6:3 ESV

3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Romans 6:5 ESV

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

- **The Church is joined together, crafted and fitted together by God Himself, living, breathing and growing by relationship first with God, and second with God's people.**

- *God is not interested in how many rocks you can bring into the building. God's focus is how those rocks are positioned and relating to one another.*

1 Peter 2:4-5 ESV

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up (epoikodomeō - to rear up, build upon) as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:20-22 ESV

*20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being **joined together** (synarmologeō - to join closely together, to render close-jointed together, organize compactly), grows into a holy temple in the Lord.*

22 In him you also are being built together (synoikodomeō - to construct out of several things to build one whole) into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

- **A "church service" is not a program designed by human creativity or natural talent. When the Church assembles, it is for the Church, of many members, to have a holy intercourse and communion that God Himself directs.**

- *One huge hindrance in the American Church is auditorium seating. Auditorium-style seating positions celebrities on stage who perform in front of an audience of spectators. The corporate worship of the church was never meant to be a spectator event or program.*

"Too many churches have become entertainment halls where star speakers strut and swagger for their fans. For too many houses of worship, the platform has become a performance stage for musicians—and I mean that in the most ignoble sense. Even when they shout and sing the name of Jesus Christ, somehow the focus of attention is upon them and public praise stays with them."

— Charles R. Swindoll, Fascinating Stories of Forgotten Lives

2 Corinthians 6:16 ESV

16 For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Psalms 22:3 ESV

3 Yet you are holy, enthroned (dwelling in) on the praises of Israel.

- **Holiness is required of the Church, the temple in which God dwells.**

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 ESV

16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

2 Corinthians 6:16-18 ESV

16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you,

18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."

- **Many details are unknown, in both Scripture and history, of how the early church conducted their corporate worship. However, the scriptures are clear that there were four main components of their corporate worship:**

- **Reading and teaching God's Word**

2 Timothy 4:1-4 ESV

1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,

4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

- **Praise, worship and prayer**

Matthew 26:30 ESV

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Acts 16:25 ESV

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

Colossians 3:16 ESV

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Ephesians 5:18-20 ESV

18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart,

20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually;

so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when he comes in the clouds of heaven.”
—John Wesley

○ **Gifts of the Holy Spirit**

- *The gifts of the Spirit is one primary way that God interacts with and speaks to His people.*

Romans 12:4-8 ESV

4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;

7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;

8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 ESV

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;

5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;

6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

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

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

10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

○ **Fellowship and relationship**

Hebrews 3:12-14 ESV

12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

Hebrews 10:23-25 ESV

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.