

The Church:

The Word of God declares that “Christ also loved the Church” and He gave Himself for it and that the Church was chosen in Christ before the foundations of the world” (Ephesians 5:25). Jesus paid the ransom price for His Church through the shedding of His life’s blood on the cross of Calvary. Jesus desired the Church so strongly that He came into this world and submitted Himself to all the humiliations and limitations of mortal man.

Everything He did while in His mortal body was for His Church. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever...” (Jn 3:16).* Jesus came to purchase those “whosoever’s” and then He sent the Holy Spirit to gather them together into one Body of believers called the **Church**.

The Church is not a second choice of God’s. The Church was not planned and instituted only after Israel rejected her Messiah. **The Church was included in God’s eternal plans before the foundation of the world.** His ultimate purpose for the Church is to be an eternal companion of His Son. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus. He is King of the universe and head over all things to the Church. When the Church-Bride becomes eternally joined to the Son, then they will sit down together on the Father’s throne (Rev 3:21).

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” Revelation 3:21

When a man and woman are joined in marriage, God calls them “one flesh.” The Father looks upon Jesus and His Bride as one. The Bride will equally share Christ’s reign and will perform and relate to God as one with Christ Jesus. All the promises of the Bible that refer to the saints ruling and reigning with Christ are qualified by a prerequisite of membership in the universal Body of Christ (Born-Again). **Christ does not work on planet earth apart from His Church. The Church is His earthly body of expression.**

To get in on the promises you must become a living member of the Church, the corporate Body of Christ.

Jesus declared, “I will build My church...”

“**I**” Jesus is personally committed to the building of His Church.

“**will**” The Church had not yet been birthed, but was the sovereign will of Jesus Christ. *Will* indicates the determination to produce and perfect, regardless of the time and effort required.

“**build**” Suggests a long, slow, drawn-out process. The Church **is being built**.

“**My**” His personal property, and possession. “Christ gave Himself for it [the Church], and purchased it with His own blood.” Ephesians 5:25; Acts 20:28

“**Church**” Establishes at once the distinction between this special, called out company and every other classification of human being. The **Ekklesia** Greek word means a body of called out people.

The English word “church” comes from the Greek word **‘kutiskos,’** which means **‘belonging to the Lord.’**

A group of people called out from the world and belonging to the Lord.

The word Church literally means a called -out company and therefore, it comprises only those who are truly called out from the world by Christ unto Himself, in other words, all true believers wherever found. The Church is composed of all true Christian believers taken out of all nations, tribes and tongues and united with their living head, Jesus Christ.

The Church Defined:

The term *church* has many meanings in Christendom. It is used to describe a building set aside for religious services. To some it denotes their local congregation or denomination. To others it is a term that encompasses all religious Christian organizations. Some only think of the word in relation to identifying the “Catholic church,” “Baptist church,” “Pentecostal church,” etc. Since the church is God’s idea and is very important to Him, it is essential that we find out how the Bible defines the Church.

The Church is one universal Body of believers. It is one great corporate Body consisting of multi-millions of members. The one and only true Church is a living organism, a functioning body consisting of many lively members. These members are born-again, Spirit-filled believers who have accepted Christ Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

More fully stated, the one Church of God is **not an institutional but a supernatural entity** which is in process of growth towards the world to come. It is the sphere of the action of the risen and ascended Lord. **All its members are in Christ and are knit together by a supernatural kinship.** All their gifts and activities continue the work of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, originate from Christ are coordinated to Him to the final goal. Then the Church will appear in the age to come as the one people of God united in one congregation before the throne as the one celestial city-the new Jerusalem. (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*)

Why a Church?

- God wants the Church to be a witness.
- To preach the gospel to the whole world
- To occupy until He comes back.
- To represent Christ to the world
- To carry on the work of Christ.
- To multiply the ministry of Jesus through millions of mortal humans rather than just through the one mortal body that the man, Jesus Christ inhabited.
- To demonstrate God's power.
- To manifest His ministry.
- To portray His precepts
- To reveal His will for mankind.

The Mystery of the Church:

For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery by which when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

*To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which **from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God** who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent **that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the Church** to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. Ephesians 3:1-11*

The mystery of the Church is this, the Church is one universal Body of believers. It is one great corporate Body consisting of multi-millions/billions of members. The Church is not a denomination, an organization, or a religious system that propagates certain doctrines and religious rites.

The one and only true Church is a living organism, a functioning body consisting of many lively members. These members are born-again, Spirit filled believers who have accepted Christ Jesus as their Savior and Lord. The Church is fully equipped to do the work of the ministry. We have been supplied with the armor of God to wage a victorious warfare with the enemy. We are called to go into the dark places and rescue souls. We are commissioned to wield the Name of Jesus in the advancement of God's Kingdom. We are commissioned to wear the shoes of the gospel of peace; the helmet of salvation is our perpetual head dress, our heart is protected with the breast plate of righteousness while wearing the belt of truth. And we take the massive shield of faith that extinguishes all the flames, missiles,

darts and whatever the enemy launches at us. And we in turn are to take, the Word of the Lord to initiate God's will and plan and to neutralize the enemy's schemes.