



The Kingdom Perspective

The Church: Jesus's Gathered Body

Hello, this is Pastor Don of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

The church by its very nature is a gathered community. We meet regularly, because we are called to be together as one.

The Bible tells us that we are embodied, communal creatures. God made us flesh and bone, and He made us in community with other flesh and bone creatures. At the creation of Adam, God says, "It is not good for man to be alone" (Genesis 2). In the immediate context, this leads to a statement on marriage. But Genesis is just the beginning of the story. You've got to look at how this traces out down the sightlines of the Bible. At the end of the biblical story, we see that this is not merely a statement about the meaning of marriage, but more so about the meaning of the church (see Ephesians 5:30 and Revelation).

Why did God design a world with a community of flesh and bone divine image bearers? He did so precisely because He intended His church to worship Him *together*, in flesh and bone. He actually sent His one and only Son to become flesh and bone with us, quite literally, so that He, like Adam, might sing over us His bride, "Flesh of my flesh! Bone of my bone!" (Genesis 2; Ephesians 5)

Thus, any kind of so-called "virtual worship", though perhaps necessary for a time, should leave us feeling a bit uncomfortable and unsatisfied, longing for something more. It's not what God has ultimately intended.

But, for now, we live in a fallen world which is separated by sin. And we experience the effects of that separation from God and from one another to a greater or lesser degree, at various times and places. Yet, our hope is that someday, when the fullness of our salvation comes, all that has been separated will be brought back together before the throne of Christ—in glorious, embodied resurrection!

Nonetheless, in this in-between-time, we believe in the mystical union of the saints—that though we may be scattered to one degree or another, we are still united under the kingly presence of Jesus our Lord, by the abiding power of His Holy Spirit.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

"So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church."

~ **Ephesians 5:28-32 (NASB)**

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying,

"Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

~ **Revelation 7:9-12 (NASB)**

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