

# We Are The Church

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January 7, 2024



## Week 1: "The Church as God's Household"

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Title: Embracing Our Identity in Christ

Scripture: Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:9-10

Key Points:

### **Understand Our Adoption**

There is great significance to belonging in God's household...but it lies in its implications for unity and reconciliation.

Paul explains:

*"...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole*

*structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.”*

(Ephesians 2:20-21)

Going even deeper Paul reveals that the believers are the building blocks of this spiritual temple.

He states, “In Him, you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:22).

So what does this mean for us?

Barriers that once separated us from God have been removed. He is building us to become unified, reconciled, and mutual support within the body of believers.

Being part of God’s household is not just a theoretical concept; it is a lived reality that impacts every aspect of our lives, relationships, and identity as followers of Christ.

Paul emphasizes the inclusive nature of God’s household, stating, “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...” (Ephesians 2:19, ESV)

Through faith in Christ, we have been brought into a new reality.

### **We are Citizens of God’s Kingdom**

As fellow kingdom citizens with other Christ-followers, there are several privileges and responsibilities we have.

- Privilege of being part of the body of Christ: This means we have a shared identity and purpose and can draw strength and encouragement from one another.

The Responsibility is to love and support one another: As fellow citizens, we are called to love and support one another in the same way that Jesus loved us. This includes showing kindness, compassion, and forgiveness, and

bearing each other's burdens.

- Privilege of spiritual growth and edification: We can learn from one another's experiences, insights, and spiritual gifts, which can enrich our own faith journey.

The Responsibility is to spur one another on toward godliness. (Hebrews 10:24)

This is challenging and encouraging one another to live according to the teachings of Jesus, and holding each other accountable.

- Privilege of unity in diversity: The body of Christ is diverse, consisting of people from various backgrounds, cultures, and giftings. This diversity allows us to experience the richness of God's kingdom and learn from one another's unique perspectives.

The Responsibility is to promote unity and reconciliation: This means actively seeking to reconcile relationships, biblically resolving conflicts, and fostering an atmosphere of love and acceptance.

- Privilege of corporate worship and service: Being fellow citizens allows us to gather together for corporate worship, prayer, and service. We can worship God together, lifting our voices in praise and thanksgiving.

The Responsibility is to use our gifts to build up the body of Christ: This means offering our abilities to foster the love of God corporately.

## **We are called to Live in Unity**

Living in harmony and love with our fellow believers brings glory to God.

Here are some ways:

### **Testimony to the World**

Jesus said,

*"By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another"*

(John 13:35)

When Christians live in harmony and love, it becomes a powerful testimony to the world.

### **Reflecting God's Character**

God is a God of love, unity, and harmony. When we live in love and unity with one another, we reflect his character and attributes. Scripture teaches that God is love.

*“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.” (1 John 4:8)*

### **Displays the Power of the Gospel**

The Gospel message is about reconciliation and restoration. When believers live in harmony and love in spite of their differences and pasts, it shows the transforming power of the Gospel.

This is so important that it was one of Jesus' prayers to the Father. In John 17:

*“I pray that they may all be one just as you, Father, are in me, and I and you, that they may also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*

Our unity not only glorifies God but also fulfills the desire of Jesus to see his followers united in love.

When believers live in harmony, they create an environment where God's presence is evident, and this brings glory to God.

The Church is not merely a physical building or an event but a spiritual family where everyone has a role to play.