

Encounter Church
Sunday November 24, 2024

“C” God’s Way
The Church

INTRODUCTION: What in the world is the church?

Matthew 16:17-18- “.....and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.”

“Ekklesia”- In secular Greek it’s the assembly of citizens. In the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible from the original Hebrew, it is referring to the congregation of Israel.

The dominant use in the New Testament is to describe an assembly or company of Christians. Those who have been called out.

Here’s another definition of Ekklesia. **A legislative assembly. (Matthew 16:19)**

The church is the assembly of God’s people. The church is people....who gather!

There are about twelve descriptions of the church in the Bible. For example..

Colossians 1:18- “Christ is also the head of the church which is his body....”

But the one I like the most is the one that says that the church is **A FAMILY!**

Ephesians 2:18- “So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God’s holy people. You are members of God’s family.”

The Bible says that we are members of one another.

The phrase “one another” is used through-out the Bible. In fact it’s used 58 times. These phrases tell us what the church is supposed to be like.

It’s the family of God. And just like your family and my family there are some characteristics of the Family of God that I want to look at this morning.

THE CHURCH.....GOD’S WAY!

1. People That Love One Another

John 13:34,35- “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

That’s one of the first tasks as the church. LOVE ONE ANOTHER! That’s one of the characteristics of the church family, LOVE!

1John 4:7,8- “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.”

Sixteen times in the Bible we are commanded to love one another. We are a family and families stick together and love one another.

1 John 3:16-“This is how we have discovered love’s reality: Jesus sacrificed his life for us. Because of this great love, we should be willing to lay down our lives for one another.”

Jesus says, “I will build my church, now you love one another!”

2. People Who Accept One Another

Romans 15:7-“ Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”

First we should love one another then we should accept one another.

Everybody needs acceptance, why, because no bodies perfect! We’ve all got hang-ups, we’ve all made mistakes.

Please be patient with me, God is still working on me.

The church is for imperfect people. If you’re perfect you don’t need the church. We’re all being developed and are growing and maturing.

It’s sad to say but most people are accepted based on their performance. The way they look, the way they dress, their economic status or their education.

Jesus accepted people regardless of their place in life, with their hang-ups, with their problems and difficulties.

John 3:17- “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

Jesus says, “I will build my church, now you accept one another!”

3. People Who Greet One Another

Romans 16:16- "Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings."

In this last chapter it interesting what the Apostle Paul does inspired by the Holy Spirit. When he closes out the letter to the Christians at Rome he list 26 different names of people he wants to say hello to in Rome.

Greet one another. WHY! **Because people matter!**

Everybody wants to feel significant! And when we greet each other it says that you are worthwhile.

And God expects us to be genuine. How many times have you been somewhere and somebody comes up and says, "hey how you ding?" and you say, "Oh, I just broke my leg." Oh, great, great and they walk on.

How you doing this week? Oh, I lost my job and my wife is in the hospital. Oh fantastic, good to see you. **NOT EVEN LISTENING!**

GREET ONE ANOTHER!

Jesus says, "I will build my church, now you greet one another!"

4. People Who Serve One Another

Galatians 5:13- "You my brothers were called to be free. But don't use your freedom to indulge in sinful nature. But rather serve one another in love."

What does it mean to serve? ***Simple, to care and to share.***

In our society we have a sit and watch syndrome. It's kind of the attitude of let's let the professionals do it instead of getting involved ourselves.

We don't play football anymore we watch it. We don't play golf anymore we watch it. We don't play tennis anymore, we turn on the TV and watch it.

Then we come to church and do the same thing. The Bible tells us that every Christian is a minister.

1Peter 4:10- "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

Jesus says, "I will build my church, now you serve one another!"

5. People Who Encourage One Another

1Thessalonians 5:11- "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

How many of you need encouragement on a regular basis? Everybody needs encouragement. You never get enough.

The Bible says that the church is to be an encouragement station!

When people leave here on Sunday they should go out with a lift and not a load. It ought to be a blessing, not a burden.

It ought to be something that builds you up and not tears you down.

Hebrews 10:25" Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Jesus says, "I will build my church, now you encourage one another."

CONCLUSION:

Jesus says, I will build my church, now you, love one another, accept one another, greet one another, serve one another and encourage one another."

FRIENDS THAT'S THE FAMILY OF GOD! THAT'S THE ELLESIA!

If you're not already part of the family, today you can be. The invitation has been given.