

# Different Aspects of the Church

(by Bob Pulliam)

The church has several different aspects for looking at her, although there is only one of her. This should not surprise us, since other things in this world can claim the same – A Man: husband; (job description); father; son. These are not different names; rather, different descriptions due to relationship, responsibility, or blessings to bestow. In this lesson we will consider the various aspects of the church.

## ***The Called Out...***

Our word "church" is derived from a word (kuriakos) that means "belonging to the lord". The word "church" is used to translate a word (ekkllesia) in the original which meant "to call out". Thus, when you see the word church, it is used to translate the concept of a called out body or group. This word was not invented by Jesus or the apostles. The word (ekkllesia) translated "church" was already in use when Jesus came on the scene. Jesus took this word from the Greek language and gave it a spiritual significance. Acts 19:32 is an excellent example of this. Luke describes a secular assembly of people, who were antagonistic toward Paul and the preaching of the gospel. The word assembly in this verse is the very same word translated "church" in other passages. The assembly of people in Acts 19:32 was composed of people called out from their everyday businesses into the theater.

The word "church" is not the only place where we find the concept of "calling out". Such is also spelled out in:

- I Pt 2:9 We were "called out of darkness" into light (cf. Col 1:13).
- I Cor 1:9 We were called into fellowship with Jesus.
- II Tim 1:9 Called "with a holy calling".

The emphasis of this designation is two-fold: 1) We did not come out by our own power, but were called out by God. 2) Something has been left that we might enter something else. There must be a change of state, and status.

## ***The Body of Christ...***

The church is referred to as the body of Christ several times in scripture. Paul spelled this out in no uncertain terms:

- Eph 1:22f "...the church, which is His body..."
- Col 1:18 "And He is the head of the body, the church..." (cf. Col 1:24)

The emphasis of this figure is on the unity of the church under the rule of one Head (Jesus Christ):

- Eph 5:24 "...the church is subject to Christ..."
- Eph 4:15f Grow up into the Head, growing in unity.
- Rom 12:3-5 There are many members, but one body, and one head.

## ***The Temple of God...***

The church is spoken of as the temple of God; not as a literal building, but as the worshipers who offer praise. The church at Corinth was the temple of God, and as such was holy (I Cor 3:16f). The Ephesians were being built up as a holy temple in the Lord (Eph 2:21). The emphasis here is the worship offered up by the church.

## ***The Household of God...***

The church is referred to as the household of God...

- Eph 2:19 Those once classed as strangers are now a part of the household.
- I Tim 3:15 The church of God is the house of God.
- Heb 3:6 Jesus is a Son over His house.

This designation emphasizes our relationship with God, and the supreme blessings He promises His children.

***The Kingdom of God...***

This designation causes more trouble for most people than any other. Many people do not believe the kingdom of Christ will be established until He comes again. Then, they think, Jesus will reign on David's throne in Jerusalem for 1,000 years. But the church is actually the kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament.

In Matthew 16:18 & 19 we read that Jesus would build His church. And we also read that He would give the keys of the kingdom. If the keys fit what He said he would build, then the kingdom must be the church.

The kingdom came during the generation among which Jesus lived. Jesus said that it would (Mk 9:1). Jesus is now sitting on the throne of David (Acts 2:30-36). People in Paul's day had been translated into the kingdom of the Son (Col 1:13). John was a fellow partaker (companion) in the kingdom (Rev 1:9).

This designation emphasizes the absolute rule of Christ over the church.

***Conclusion...***

There are several designations for the church, and we have not discussed all of them. Each designation has an aspect of the church to emphasize, and does not refer to something different. In all, these designations teach us about the church, and what we should do and be within her.