

Philosophy of the Church

The Church – The Mystery

There is something very exciting about the word “mystery”. The very word challenges the hearer to investigate that he might uncover and know what that mystery is.

Definition: _____

We know that there are many things relative to the kingdom of God that the natural man who has not been initiated by the Spirit of God cannot understand (1 Cor. 2:6-16).

- *If we are lazy in our approach to God we cannot expect to find answers to our questions.*

Psalm 25:14; Luke 10:21; 1 Thes.5:4; 1 Cor. 2:9-11

Paul speaks of a “mystery of Christ” (Col. 4:3).

Paul refers to the new relationship between the Jew and the Gentile as the “mystery of His will” (Eph. 1:9-10).

- *We are going to have to open our hearts to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the great initiator, as He speaks to us through the Word of God. (Eph 3:1-4)*

The Church – The Eternal Purpose

God has but one eternal purpose that He is working toward.

(Malachi 3:6)

- Determined by God (1 John 5:7; Eph. 1:9)
- Established before time began (Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2)
- Hidden in ages past (Eph 3:5; Mat. 13:17; Romans 16:25-26)

- Made manifest in the present age (Eph. 3:1-5; Romans 16:25-26; Col. 1:26)
- Unfolded little by little

1

God is our Heavenly Father, having a heart and passion of a father.

God had a desire to reproduce himself, to have many offspring, to reproduce His ministry in His offspring, to have fellowship and relationship with that offspring and to provide a bride for His only begotten Son.

1. A desire for reproduction of self
2. A desire for multiplicity of seed
3. A desire for reproduction of ministry
4. A desire for worship, praise and fellowship
5. A desire to provide a bride for His Son

Satan was successful in seducing the man but was not successful in frustrating God’s purpose.

- Will never be frustrated

God likens this whole principle in His character and nature to the cycle of the rains. He compares the cycle of the rain and snow to the cycle of His Word. (Isaiah 55:8-11; James 5:7).

- Is being accomplished in the New Testament Church (Eph. 3:8-11)

It is the Church where all of God’s intended purposes will come to realization. He is going to use the Church and His operation through the Church to bring us to

_____, _____,
_____, and to the _____

_____.
(Eph. 4:12-16; Col. 3:10; Romans 8:28-30)

God's plan involved bringing together of all nations into ONE BODY – THE BODY OF CHRIST!!

Paul was able to say that whatever this purpose was, it is something that is now revealed

2

1. _____ (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:16; 4:4)
2. _____ (Gal. 3:27-29)
3. _____ (Gal. 4:28)
4. _____ (Eph. 3:6)
5. _____ (Col. 3:10-11)

Paul unfolds this purpose in detail in *Ephesians 2:11-22*.

The nature of the Church

“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or epistle.”
(2 Thess. 2:15)

The word “church” comes from the Greek word “ekklesia”. This word in its simplest definition means

_____.

(Matt. 16:18) It includes those who have been called out from their place of habitation in the world, who have separated themselves unto God unto the door of the New Testament Tabernacle, Jesus Christ Himself. Only through **Salvation** are they born again to Christ. They are free citizens of the heavenly community summoned of the trumpet of the gospel to assemble themselves together for

worship and fellowship (Phil. 3:14; 1 Cor. 1:24-26; 2 Peter 1:10).

- It is important for us to understand that the word “church” is never used to refer to a building or a house of worship.

- _____
that are building together into a spiritual building for God's habitation. (Eph. 2:20-22).

The Old Testament Connection

3

Jesus on the Nature of the Church

- God Himself is the **Architect** of the Church of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:9; 3:10-11; Heb. 8:5)
- Jesus Christ Himself is the builder (Matt. 16)
all of our labors apart from the Lord are futile (Psalm 127:1)
- Jesus Christ is the owner of the Church (Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 4:1)
- Jesus Christ commissioned the Church (Matt. 16; 18:18; 28:19-20; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).
- The Church is a living and spiritual organism (Matt. 16:16-18)
- The Church will be holy unto the Lord (Eph. 5:23-32)
 1. The church is holy because it is unique, special possession of a thrice holy God (1 Peter 2:9)

2. The Church is Holy because it is separated from the world (John 15:19; 17:14-16; 2 Cor. 6:17)
 3. The Church is holy because it is consecrated unto God (Eph. 5:27; Col. 1:22; Romans 12:1; James 4:7)
 4. The Church is holy because it is cleansed from sin (Eph. 5:26; Hebrews 13:12; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thess. 5:23-24; 1 John 1:7-9; Titus 3:5)
 5. The Church is holy because she is to marry Christ. Jesus Christ cannot be unequally yoked (2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:27)
- The Church will be a unified Church (Matt. 18:19)
 - The Church will be a *victorious* Church (Matt. 16:18-19; 18:15-20)
 - The church has a local expression (Matt. 18:15-22)

Each book of the New Testament demonstrates how God uses the Local Church to bring His people to **maturity** and **completion**.

4

The Church – God's Peculiar People (Eph 3:9-11)

The word "peculiar" here refers to "a **special, precious, private possession**". (1 Peter 2: 5-10)

- **Geographical Isolation** - When God called the New Testament people out of the Egypt of this world He called us to a new land, not a natural land, but a spiritual land flowing with the milk and honey of the Word of God. (Phil. 3:20; Gal: 3:1)
- **An order of worship** – We are to worship Him with all of our minds, soul, heart, and strength. **That leaves**

no room for anything else. (Lev. 17:5-6). And we are to worship Him in *spirit* and *truth* (John 4:24)

- **A mode of dress** – (1 Tim. 2:9-11; 1 Peter 3:3-4) We are to be distinctive in our dress not only in the natural sense, but also to be distinct because it has its spiritual garments in order. *Often times true believers cannot be easily identified because they have on the wrong garments. Every believer is to have on the garment of salvation* (Isaiah 61:10), **the robe of righteousness** (Isaiah 61:10), **and the garment of praise** (Isaiah 61:3).
- **Marital laws** – The Church of Jesus Christ is **forbidden** to intermarry with the world (2 Cor. 6: 14-17)

The Church of God – The Temple of God

This picture that God gives us is to help us better understand the purpose and nature of the Church. (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 3:9; Hebrews 3:9; Eph 2:21-22)

5

- The Foundation in the Church (Matt.16:16-18)
- The Cornerstone (Isaiah 28:16; Eph. 2:20-21; 1 Peter 2:6)
- The Materials
The Temple that God is building is to be made up of stones, living stones (1 Peter 2:5). These stone have to be dug out of the quarry of this world (Isaiah 51:1-2) and cut and shaped by the hand of the Lord before they are ready to be built into the house of the Lord (1 Kings 5:17-18).

- The Workman – Christ
- The Priesthood
Every other temple in the Old Testament had a *priesthood* and *sacrifices*. (1 Peter 2:15)

The Sacrifices (Hebrews 5:1)

1. **Ourselves** – (Romans 12:1-2)
2. **Our Time** – (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5)
3. **Our Substance** – (Phil. 4:8; Luke 12:15-31)
4. **Our Works** – (James 2:20; Hebrews 13:16)
5. **Our Fruit** – (Romans 14:16)
6. **Sacrifice of Joy** – (Psalm 27:6)
7. **Sacrifice of Thanksgiving** – (Lev.7:12)
8. **Sacrifice of Praise** – (Jer. 33:11; Hebrews 13:15-16b)
9. **A Broken and a Contrite Heart** (Psalm 51:17)

Ephesians 3:19-21

6

The Church – The Family of God

The Relationship in the Family

- In the Church we have but one Father
God is our Father (Psalm 68:5; Isaiah 64:8; Matt. 5:16)
- In the Church all true believers are the children of the family.

If we are to take part in the family of God we must be born into the family of God by the process of the new birth (John 1:12-13; 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23)

- In the Church we enter into a place of permanent relationship

The Autonomy of the Family

- The local Church is to be self-governing (1 Tim. 5:17; Romans 12:8; Hebrews 13:17, 24) God has not left man to do that which is right in his own eyes.

- The Local Church is self-supporting

Giving our substance to the Lord begins by giving ourselves to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:5; Romans 12:1-2). Once we have done that we are free to fulfill the New Testament requirements, giving:

Generously (2 Cor. 8:2; 9:6)

Willingly (2 Cor. 8:3, 12)

Proportionately (2 Cor. 8:14-15; 9:6)

Lovingly (2 Cor. 8:24; 1 Cor. 13:3)

Cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7)

Systematically (2 Cor. 9:7)

Thankfully (2 Cor. 9:11-12)

Sacrificially (Heb. 13:16; Mark 12:44)

As unto the Lord (Matt. 25:40)

7

- The Local Church is self-propagating (Gen. 1:28; Mark 16:15)

For the Covering and protection of the family
Psalm 34:7; 91:1-16

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