

WORD PICTURES OF THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH - Its Foundation

Matthew 16:13–18 (ESV)

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Jesus declared that he will build His church as the revealed Christ, the Son of the living God. And all who accept this revelation regarding His person will become a part of His church.

Jesus clearly referred to Himself as the cornerstone. (Mark 12:10).

Paul describe this building of the church as people (Ephesians 2:19–22).

Peter as well as the other foundational leaders will build Christ’s church as guided by the Cornerstone, Jesus.

So what is the meaning of the word church?

ekklesiá. ~ “to call out.” ~ “the called people.”

The word “church” carries **two connotations.**

1. all who are called by Christ in the fellowship of His salvation.
(Matthew 16:18; Acts 9:31; Galatians 1:13; Ephesians 3:21)
2. the “called out people of God,” expressing life in a specific location.
(Acts 8:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; Galatians 1:2–3)

We are called out to meet together as the called out ones (Hebrews 10:24–25).

THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST

Paul clearly correlates the church as Christ’s body (Colossians 1:24).

Christ is recognized as the head of the body, the church (Ephesians 4:15-16).

As the body of Christ, each part functions according to its purpose to form a cohesive bond (Romans 12:4-5).

In Acts 9:4-5, Jesus asked Saul/Paul, “**Saul**, Saul, why do you persecute me?” In what way was Saul persecuting Jesus? He was persecuting the church, which is Jesus’ body.

Jesus declared that His followers would do greater works than He Himself had done while on the earth (John 14:12). He would be able to affect more lives in more places as His church becomes His arms, His feet and His voice in reaching out to many more people.

THE CHURCH IS THE FAMILY OF GOD

Since before the beginning, the relationship of God within Himself has always been one of a family. God is eternally Father and Son with the Holy Spirit dancing between them in an all encompassing love relationship (John 17:1,5).

Before the world was made, God predestined us to be adopted as His children (Ephesians 1:5).

When we place our trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord, we are adopted into God’s family (John 1:12).

The Holy Spirit calls us into an intimate relationship with God the Father (Romans 8:15).

It is the Holy Spirit’s responsibility to bring assurance to us that we are truly now God’s child (Romans 8:16).

As the Father’s child, we become heirs to all of the riches of the glories of heaven (Romans 8:17).

All of this is made possible because of the love of the Father (1 John 3:1).

As a family, we have certain obligations to one another.

The first and foremost obligation is that we love each other (John 15:12).

Another obligation is how we treat each other (Galatians 6:10).

Relationships in our biological family guide us on how to interact with other members of the family of God (1 Timothy 5:1–2).

Recognizing our church as a family is a major emphasis in our fellowship. That's why it is so important to get back to regular, in-person, meetings.

In our church, I can truly say that we are a family. Many of us have a closer relationship within our fellowship than with our blood kin. That's because we are "blood kin." We are a family bound together by the blood of Jesus.

In the Bible, the most common term for referring to other believers is brother or sister. We are gathered here today as a local expression of the family of God.

Sing and pray and worship with your brothers and sisters in the faith.