

# The Church, the body of Christ

What does Christ think of the church? (Eph. 5:25-27)

**Matt. 16:18** – “...On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Purpose of this study – To understand some of the principles of the New Testament governing the character and conduct of the church.

Note: Correctness of church position must never be separated from correctness of (heart) condition.

# Definition of the Church

- **Church** – “**ekklesia**” (Gk) which means a “called out company”, “a gathering”, “an assembly”. The most common use of the word is a group of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. **Acts 20:28** “**the church of God** which He purchased with His own blood...”
- The church is **not an organization** but **an organism, a living unit**; a fellowship of all who share the life of Christ and linked together in a living Union by the Holy Spirit.
- To further understand the church we will look at various titles used:

# Some Titles used for the Church

- A Flock ([John 10:16](#)) – tended by the Good Shepherd
  - **Fold** (*Gk.aules*) an enclosed area (Israel)
  - **Flock** (*Gk.poimne*) related to poimen (shepherd)
- God's field ([1 Cor. 3:9](#)) – Fruit bearing
- God's building ([1 Cor.3:9](#)) ([1 Pet. 2:5](#)) – living stones
- The Temple of God ([1 Cor.3:16](#)) – worship
- The Body of Christ ([Eph.1:22-23](#)) – Christ's expression
- One New man – ([Eph.2:15](#)) – A new creation

# Some Titles used for the Church

- Dwelling place of God – ([Eph.2:22](#)) – Christ in you!
- The Bride of Christ – ([Eph.5:25-27](#)) – Loved by God the Son!
- The House of God – ([I Tim. 3:15](#)) – warmth, security, order, discipline
- The Pillar and ground of the truth – ([I Tim. 3:15](#)) – proclaim, stability, support

# When did the church begin?

- **Eph.3:4-5** – “...the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.”
- **Eph. 3:9** – “...mystery which from the beginning has been hidden in God...” Thus the church was a mystery hidden through Old Testament times and revealed when the New Testament Apostles and prophets appeared.
- **Matt. 16:18** – Lord Jesus said “on this rock I will build my church...” indicating that it was still a future occurrence when the Lord spoke.
- **Eph. 4: 8-11** – There is emphasis that the risen Christ will give gifts to the church. We believe and can show that the church began on Pentecost.

# When did the church begin?

- **1 Cor. 12:13** – The church was formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When did this happen?
- **Acts 1:5** – The Lord told His disciples “.....you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”
- **Acts 2:1,4** – On the day of Pentecost: “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.....”
- **Acts 5:11** – “So great fear came upon all the church...” By this time the church has definitely come into being.