

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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April 7, 2024

“What Is The Church?”

By Jarrod Jacobs



The question in our title is an important one. In the world today, people use the word “church” in several ways. They use it to describe a building. (i.e., “The church is located on Tresvant St.”).

Some will lump every denomination together and describe it as a church. (i.e., “The church in America...” or, “The church says ...”).

Still others use the term in describing religion in general. (i.e., “The church is not important, but being spiritual is...” Or “My church is the outdoors ...”).

We could continue, but this is enough to show us that people in our culture use the word church in ways God never intended. Using the word “church” in this way results in confusion since men are defining the word as they please. Did God ever talk about the church? What did He say?

The word “church” is used often in the Scripture. It is found 79 times in the New Testament. The plural (“churches”) is located in 36 verses in the New Testament. For God to use a term 115 times in Scripture, it must have significance. What can we know about this term and how it is applied to us today?

First, the word “church” comes from two Greek words, “ek” (out of) and “klesia” (called). They are often spelled as one word. Thus, the word “church” (“ekklesia”) means “the called out.” From what were they called? The context of the passage must answer that question.

I say this because sometimes the word “ekklesia” is used to describe a confused, lawless mob (Acts 19:32). In the same chapter, “ekklesia” was used to describe a lawful gathering (Acts 19:39). This should not gender confusion, but show that “ekklesia” means certain ones were “called out” for different reasons.

Acts 7:38 (KJV) confuses some when they read about the “*church in the wilderness.*” Some have mistakenly taught that this means the Lord’s church, promised in Matthew 16:18, existed in the days of Moses. Not so! That word translated as “church” (“ekklesia”) means that there were people “called out” into the wilderness. When we place Acts 7 in context, “*church in the wilderness*” refers to the time when the people were called out of Egyptian bondage and traveled to Sinai (Acts 7:28; Ex. 15-20). We also see an application in the Book of Numbers as God’s people had been called out into the desert to wander for forty years (Acts 7:36).

Having defined the word “church,” how do we apply it in a spiritual sense? When Christ promised, “*I will build my church,*” in Matthew 16:18, He did not promise a building, an unruly mob, a nation of people, etc. Rather, He promised to start a “called out” group of people to build a relationship with them. This is why the Scripture refers to His church as his body (Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22-23).

These called out people who compose His church are not bound by national lines or ethnic groups, for when the Lord purchased His church with His blood (Acts 20:28), that blood was shed for all people (Matt. 26:28; Heb. 2:9, 5:9; etc.). For this reason, we read about only one church in Scripture (Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18, Eph. 4:4)! This is a relationship and a blessing from which people worldwide can partake.

Another reason we know this church (“ekklesia”) is different from the other descriptions we have found in Acts 7 and 19 is because to be considered a part of this “ekklesia” (Christ’s called out people), the Lord must add you to this body (Acts 2:47)! This is not something done by men, but by God. He adds the saved to His “ekklesia” and none of the unsaved.

Only saved people are in this called-out group. This is not because the church is your Savior, but because the church is the relationship in which saved people dwell!

Therefore, when I submit to the Lord in faith and repentance, when I confess my faith in Christ and am baptized for the remission of my sins (Acts 2:36-38, 41), then I am saved, and added to this "ekklesia," this church (Acts 2:47)! The descriptions given here are nothing like what man describes! These descriptions are nothing like an unruly mob, merely having some assembly somewhere, a wandering group, a club meeting, or anything else to which men try to compare the church!

What work does the church ("ekklesia") have on earth? When we speak in terms of Acts 2:47 or Ephesians 4:4, this worldwide group, composed of the saved, has no work that it is to do. However, we find that when saved people in a specific location agree to work and worship together, then there is work to be done in a "local" sense.

For example, we read of the Lord's church located in Jerusalem, Corinth, Colossae, Galatia, Ephesus, Smyrna, Laodicea, Sardis, Thyatira, Antioch, Rome, etc. These groups are not multiple denominations teaching different and conflicting doctrines.

Instead, these are Christians who lived in a particular area and formed a local group of called-out people (Rom. 16:16). Within this relationship, we see Christians engaging in worship to God (Jn. 4:24; Acts 2:42, 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Eph. 5:19; etc.), as well as serving God through evangelism (I Thess. 1:8), edification (Eph. 4:11-12), and benevolence to saints (Acts 11:28-30). We do this today (II Tim. 2:2).

As we can see, the church, as described in Scripture, is far different from what the world wishes the church to be. Let us respect what Christ has founded (Matt. 16:18), purchased (Acts 20:28), and leads today (Col. 1:18). She has specific work to do and needs to be about doing it. The church of Christ is not a club, a social group, a mob, a denomination, or anything like that. Instead, she is a spiritual relationship with spiritual work to do (Rom. 14:17), and needs to be about doing it until the Lord returns!

"THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE"

By Richie Thetford

We have all heard someone say "that's impossible" when responding to something that someone had just told them that they could do, knowing that it could not be done. Webster defines impossible as "not capable of being, being done, or happening." Certainly there are many things which are impossible for man to do here on this earth.

In the religious realm there are also some impossible things to consider. God has told man that unless one has faith it is impossible to please Him. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). If we are not determined to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior (2 Peter 3:18), gaining faith by reading His word (Romans 10:17), then we are not going to be pleasing to God. Do you think that those that are not pleasing to God will enter heaven? Think about it.

In Hebrews 6:18 we read "...in which it is impossible for God to lie..." Now if it is impossible for God to lie and he has told us that He is a rewarder of those who DILIGENTLY seek Him, then if we do not seek Him (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:2), then it is certain that we will not see Him in heaven. The Hebrew writer so stated this fact in Hebrews 2:3. We see from that passage of scripture that it is impossible to neglect salvation and be saved. If we want to be saved then we will strive to do whatever God says (Matthew 7:21).

Let's consider some other impossibilities. It is impossible to be saved without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22). It took Christ's death on the cross, the sacrifice for our sins in order for us to be saved. Therefore, it is impossible to believe in Christ and obey Him and not be saved (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20). It is impossible to enter into heaven without a birth of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5), and it is impossible to enter into the Kingdom (heaven or church), except through Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Galatians 3:27). If you think that you can and will be saved in eternity AFTER this life is over, without being obedient to Christ while living on this earth, well....that's impossible! (Luke 16:19-31).

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Meeks Street Church of Christ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgiXJxZC1oraOugO9qlfBtw?view_as=subscriber

And Our Facebook Page.

For sermon videos, articles, and announcements.



Those Who Need Our Prayers & Encouragement:

Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Mary Ann Holley, LuAnne Parrish, Robert Howard, Billy Grisham, & Fred Johnson.

Prayers for the family of Elberta Grisham, who passed away last Thursday.

We Have Changed The Dates:

Our Gospel Meeting With Stacy Crim is scheduled for April 28—May 1st.
(Sunday to Wednesday)

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Paul Johnson
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *“Is Church Attendance Necessary For Salvation?”*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
Author: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Herschel Patton
Starting Page & Question: *Page 59, Question #16*

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Brian Meade
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Danny Sheffield
Scripture Reading: *Hebrews 12:16-17*
Song Leader: Jerry Kennemur
Lord’s Supper: Doug George
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *“Bad Bargains Gone Wrong”*
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

April 10, 2024

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
Workbook: The Book Of Daniel
Author: By Daniel H. King
Starting Page & Question: *Page #61, Question #1*
Invitation: Brian Meade
Song Leader: Tim Harris Sr.
Closing Prayer: Danny Sheffield

Gospel
Meeting

Speaker: **Stacy Crim**

Location: **Meeks Street Church of Christ**

Date: **April 28st-- May 1st.**

Starting Time: **9:00 A.M. Sunday Morning**

7:00 PM Monday–Wednesday

(No Sunday Evening Service)

“Is Church Attendance Necessary For Salvation?”

Question: Does Local Church Membership Really Matter To God?

I. The World’s View Of Church Membership.

- “I Don’t Want To Be A Part Of Organized Religion.”
- “Give Me Christ, But Not His Church.”
- “I’m A Member At Large.”
- “Where Does The Bible Say You Have To Be A Member Of Any Church To Be Saved!”

II. How The Unfaithful Christian Often Views It.

- “I Still Have Jesus, I Just Don’t Go To Church Anymore.”
- “I Am Still A Part Of The Universal Church, Therefore I’m Good.”
- “I Can Worship God At Home Just As Good As I Can At A Building.”
- “Church Membership Is An UnBiblical, UnScriptural Concept.”

III. How Many Denominational Preachers View It.

- Church Attendance Is Good For You, But Not Required.
- It Can Help You In So Many Ways, But You Can Stay Home Too.
- It Is Even A Command From God, But Optional.

IV. What Does The Bible Say?

- God Established The Church, The *“Called Out.”*
 - (1) The Church Universal- **Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23-27.**
 - Each Christian Works Individually In The World- **Matthew 5:16; James 1:27.**
 - (2) The Local Church- **Philippians 1:1; Acts 20:17-21; 31; Revelation 2—3.**
 - God Designed The Church To Have Overseers & Deacons- **1 Timothy 3; Titus 1.**
 - Each Christian Is Accountable In God’s Design- **1 Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17.**
 - Those Who Argue For “Membership At Large” Want No Accountability.
 - But Not A Safe Way! **James 5:19-20.**

(3) Local Church Membership- **Acts 9:26-28.**

– Church Attendance— Membership Is Necessary To:

- Be Unified Together As A Church- **Philippians 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10.**
- Praise God In Song Collectively- **Ephesians 5:19; Hebrews 2:12.**
- Fulfill Our “One Another” Duties Together- **1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24.**
- Take The Lord’s Supper Together- **1 Corinthians 11:23-26; vs. 33-34.**
- Give Support For The Work Of The Church- **1 Corinthians 16:1-2.**
- Grow And Do Our Part In The Work- **Ephesians 4:12-16.**
- Obey God’s Command To Assemble- **Hebrews 10:25.**

“Bad Bargains Gone Wrong”

Lesson Text: **Hebrews 12:16-17**. Esau Made A Bad Bargain With His Brother.

I. The Sons Of Jacob Sold Their Brother Into Egypt.

- **Genesis 37:27-28.**
- **Genesis 37:3-5**, Their Jealousy And Hatred Of Their Brother Led Them To This Deal.
- **Genesis 37:20-26**, It Was Only Little Better Than What They Planned To Do At First.
- God Would Take This And Turn It Into Good- **Genesis 50:20.**

II. Israel’s Covenant With The Canaanites.

- **Joshua 9:1-15.**
- The Problem: **Joshua 9:16-21.**
- What God Had Said in **Deuteronomy 7:1-4.**

III. King Saul Bargained With The Witch Of Endor.

- **1 Samuel 28:3-12.**
- What Was The Word From Samuel? **28:15-20.**
- Did Saul Gain Anything By This Deal?

IV. Gehazi Bargained With Naaman.

- **2 Kings 5:20-27.**
- What Motivated Gehazi To Go To Naaman?
- **Proverbs 1:19.**

V. Herod Bargained With Salome.

- **Mark 6:16-25.**
- Herod Lived To Regret His Words- **6:26-29.**
- Their Bargain Did Not Stop The Truth Of John’s Words! **Matthew 19:9.**

VI. Judas bargained With Jewish Leaders To Betray Jesus.

- **Matthew 26:14-16**
- **27:3-5**, It Was The Worst Bargain He Ever Made!
- **Mark 14:21.**

VII. Ananias And Sapphira Bargained With Peter To Give “All.”

- **Acts 5:1-4.**
- Both Paid A Great Price For Sin- **5:5-10.**
- What May Have Motivated Their Bargain? **Acts 4:34-36?**

Conclusion: Bargaining With Our Soul- **Matthew 16:25-26.**