

# What Does the Church Mean to You (Me)

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## Focus thought: Laying hold on the blessings designed for the church

[13] When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? [14] And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. [15] He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? [16] And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. [17] And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. [18] *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. [19] And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.* [20] Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. (Matthew 16:13-20)

*[11] For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* [12] Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; [13] Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (1Corinthians 3:11-13)

[1] Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. *[2] Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: [3] And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.* [4] Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. [5] They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. [6] We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. (1John 4:1-6)

[1] Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. [2] By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. [3] For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. [4] For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. *[5] Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* [6] This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. [7] For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. [8] And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (1John 5:1-8)

### 1. Definition:

- CHURCH: “Called out”
  - **1577.** *ekklēsia* *ek-klay-see'-ah* from a compound of 1537 and a derivative of 2564; a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both):--assembly, church.
  - **Word appears 118 times in KJV bible: translated church 115 times and Assembly 3 times**
- **James Strong** restricts his definition to people and give no credence to the fact that CHURCH could very well be referring to people: Let us look at the word ASSEMBLY
  - **4150** *mow`ed mo-ade'* or (feminine) *mowedah* (2Chronicles 8:13) {*mo-aw-daw'*}; means properly, an appointment, i.e. a fixed time or season; specifically, a festival; conventionally a year; by implication, an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose); technically the congregation; by extension, the place of meeting; also a signal (as appointed beforehand):--appointed (sign, time), (place of, solemn) assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast, (appointed, due) season, solemn(-ity), synogogue, (set) time (appointed).
  - **4186** *mowshab mo-shawb'* or *moshab* {*mo-shawb'*}; from [3427](#); a seat; figuratively, a site; abstractly, a session; by extension an abode (the place or the time); by implication, population:--assembly, dwell in, dwelling(-place), wherein (that) dwelt (in), inhabited place, seat, sitting, situation, sojourning.
- A Church is both (1) the place where people are gathered and (2) the people who are called out to be gathered

[37] This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. *[38] This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:* [39] To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, [40] Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. (Acts 7:37-40)

- Now, this **“Church in the Wilderness”** was not Israel as the people of God, but the TABERNACLE, in the midst of the people of God.
  - Focus on the with/s in verse 38
- Uniquely, Old Israel was also referred to as the CHURCH
  - It is against this fact Jesus spoke: “I will build my CHURCH”.

- He rejects the Old Israel to Establish the NEW Israel (Galatians 6:15-16)

*[15] For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. [16] And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. (Galatians 6:15-16)*

*[4] Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. [5] For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. [6] For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (Galatians 5:4-6)*

- The New Israel of God, is one by a simple rule: “*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*”
- Do you receive it? Discuss Romans 2:27-29 – spiritual Jews; 11:1-25 – Jewish Olive tree is the Church of Jesus Christ; Philipians 3:1-3 – the true and spiritual circumcision is the Jewish Church.

*[28] Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)*

*[18] Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; [19] But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: (1Peter 1:18-19)*

*[19] What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? [20] For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1Corinthians 6:19-20)*

*[23] Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. (1Corinthians 7:20)*

- Those blood washed and bought people are the church.....
  - This church is not a building, but the sanctified people of Jesus
- Remember the church belongs to Jesus
  - You are not your own.

## **2. Why the CHURCH**

- This is all about relevance: Why did Jesus gave his life for the church? How does the church fit into the divine plan of Jesus for all ages?
- I believe the answers to these important questions are at the heart of a faithful and purposeful life.
  - Place where we can meet with God
  - Place where we can worship
  - Place where we can hear from God
  - Place where we can fellowship
  - Place where we can be edified
  - Place where we can find peace
  - Place where we can be comforted
  - Place where we find and give love
    - If love is not in the church the world is darker
    - See John text above
    - An endtime sign is waxing cold of love or as Paul said without natural affection
  - Place of salvation from psychological, emotional, spiritual, and financial struggles
    - Law verse Grace ....Discussed
    - Science = observable, reproducible, and repeatable
    - No other institution in world can consistent get the results the church is getting across culture, racial divide and even sin divide
    - Simple rule: anyone who comes in contact with Jesus will never be the same
    - If government would give more money to the church and/or gives more freedom to exercise our mandate we would do far more for society than all the social intervention programs compiled.
  - The greatness of an institution is seen by its effect in the lives of people
    - The church is the greatest institution ever

*[9] Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, [10] Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. [11] And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (1Corinthians 6:9-11)*

- Such were some of us: homosexual, drunkards, extortioners, fornicators, unrighteous, etc
- But Jesus washed, sanctified, and justified us
  - Simple rule: anyone who comes in contact with Jesus will never be the same
  - If government would give more money to the church and/or gives more freedom to exercise our mandate we would do far more for society than all the social intervention programs compiled.

- Blessings of Jesus In his foreknowledge he predestinated and provided for us

*[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: [4] According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: [5] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, [6] To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. [7] In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; [8] Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; [9] Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: [10] That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: [11] In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: [12] That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ..... [17] That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: [18] The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, [19] And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, [20] Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, (Ephesians 1:1-12)*

- Paul was just trying to get his message across.
  - There is a great reason why the church
  - Hope of your calling
  - The final gathering together of all things in Jesus Christ
  - What a hope!!!

### **3. Laying hold on your blessings – (Jesus Messiah Divine Blessing Plan – JMDBP)**

*[7] Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. (Joshea 1:7)*

- Jesus wants to bless us and he wants you to be prosperous: but you must follow the plan, that is, stick to the word

*[2] Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. [3] For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. [4] I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. (3John 2-4)*

- Again, one must stick to the word to be prosperous. Here the apostle expresses the “No Greater Joy” truth.
- Jesus has designed a blessing for those who come into the church and we must accept it
- Our blessing here on earth and health should not exceed the prosperity of our souls

#### **A) The blessing of Sound Mind: Produces both Physical and Spiritual Blessing**

*[7] For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (2Timothy 1:7)*

- SANITY AND SANCTITY
  - SANITY is derived from the word SANE meaning to be rational, sensible, reasonable, sound, wise, commonsensical, etc. The opposite of SANE is IRRATIONAL. Jesus wants us to be SANE, thus having a sound, rational and commonsensical MIND
    - A sound mind will tell you that the pleasures in the world are incomparable to the pleasures you with received from Jesus if you remain faith
    - A sound mind will tell you only a fool will refuse to serve his creator
    - A sound mind will tell you that you cannot hide from God, therefore you should so live your life before God that he will be please with you
    - A sound mind will tell you that Jesus knows your thoughts and your motive-intentions and that you will have to give account. So you can fool men, but you cannot fool Jesus.
    - A sound mind will tell us that there is nothing to be ashamed of or afraid of when we associate ourselves with the people of God. It will underscore that the greatest people on earth is in JESUS’ FAMILY.
    - A sound mind will tell you that there is nothing in the world (your past out of which you were taken) that is worth going back to. This is one of the antidotes to backsliding. Yes, it is linked to having a sound mind.
  - SANCTITY is derived from sanctify meaning to be set apart (exclusively for Jesus)
- A SOUND MIND is the foundation for SANCTITY or HOLINESS.
  - A man with a Sound Mind will not backslide; he will not walk out on Jesus;
  - He will not kill himself physically or spiritual; he will not kill his friends, his relative, or his family members, but will seek to spare and protect their lives.
  - A man with a sound mind will demonstrate the disposition of love as is enunciated in 1Corinthians 13, thus he will love souls (both his and others) and seeks their salvation.

- A man with a sound mind will love Jesus, which is expressed in his complete adherence to the reveal will of God

*[24] O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? [25] I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. (Romans 7:24-25)*

- A man before and after he received a SOUND MIND

*[1] I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. [2] And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)*

- You just cannot be holy without a SOUND MIND.
- Our minds got messed-up, but I thanked God for the Holy Ghost, which renews my mind daily to I can serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

*[1] Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; (1Peter 4:1)*

- We are in need of Patience: yes we do. We need the mind of Jesus Christ who have suffered that horrible cross

### **B) The blessing of doing God's business**

*[2] Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD's house should be built. [3] Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, [4] Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? [5] Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. [6] Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. [7] Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. [8] Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD. [9] Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. **Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.** [10] Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. [11] And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands. (Haggai 1:3-11)*

- We have more churches and more people in our churches today than in time of the Apostles
  - Why are we still not getting anything done? Answer, we lose sight of the purpose of the church
  - World waited on a believer: they are crying out for help? But what do we do? We are doing our own business.
  - Have you ever wondered why you are working so hard and can't see an increase?
  - Have you ever wondered why you are not more blessed?
  - Consider you ways

*[49] And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? **wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?** [50] And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. (Luke 2:49-50)*

### **C) The blessing of Giving to the Lord and to the Poor**

*[8] Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. [9] Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. [10] Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. [11] And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. [12] And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts. (Malachi 3:8-12)*

- God promise to rebuke the devour that is intent on destroying the source of a giver.
- You rob Jesus and he take it back from you in a car accident, sickness, various struggles amongst family member
- Have you ever considered?

*[35] I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35)*

- Only in the church you can hear such things: more blessed to give than to receive
- Not just tithe, but offering and other goodies especially to the needy.

### **D) The blessing in Partaking of the Lord's Table**

*[53] Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. [54] Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up*



at the last day. [55] For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. [56] He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. (John 6:53-56)

- Eating the Passover of the Lord Jesus is an absolute requirement
- Once should be conscious

[27] Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. [28] But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. [29] For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. [30] For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. (1Corinthians 11:27-31)

- Weakness, sickness, and death arose from partaking of the Lord Feats in an incorrect manner.
- Every man should examine himself

[16] The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? [17] For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. [18] Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? [19] What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? [20] But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. [21] Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. [22] Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? (1Corinthians 10:16-22)

- You cannot eat of the Lord's table and the table of devils

### **E) The blessing of living free from Sin**

[1] And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. [2] And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? [3] Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. (John 9:1-3)

- Sin brings sickness
  - Not in all cases, but this text shows the general doctrine that most sickness is as a result of sin
  - Get sin out of our life and be blessed
- Sin brings a curse
- Sin brings pain
- Sin brings torment
- Sin brings frustration
- Sin humiliates
- Sin destroys

### **F) What next for the Church**

[1] The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; [2] To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; [3] To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified. [4] And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. [5] And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. [6] But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. (Isaiah 61:1-6)

- Reaping the Harvest
- Expanding the kingdom
- Transforming lives by the preaching of Christ
- Proclaiming liberty to the captives
- Bringing healing to the many who are oppressed
- more