

What Paul Said About The Church

It is interesting to see how someone's opinion is valued after they become famous. All you have to do is see how music and movie stars, once they reach stardom, are asked their opinion on issues like raising children, global warming, and politics. But when you get right down to it, they are only human and their opinion means about as much as anyone else's. Paul made six statements about the church, and because he was inspired (1 Corinthians 2:9-13), and because the New Testament is a verbally inspired book (2 Timothy 3:16), what Paul says about the church is really what the Holy Spirit says about the church. Therefore, it will greatly edify us to examine Paul's statements about the church.

Paul Said The Church Is The Manifestation Of God's Manifold Wisdom

In Ephesians 3:8-10, Paul said the church makes known the manifold wisdom of God. The term "manifold" means variegated, or many colored. Peter informs us that angels desire to look into God's plan (1 Peter 1:12). When they see the church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, they see the all the many facets of God's wisdom. God's plan before the foundation of the world is now carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 1:4). The Premillennial concept makes the church an afterthought or a substitute, but a correct understanding of Ephesians 3:8-10 helps us see the importance of the church. not man's wisdom

Paul Said The Church Was Bought By The Blood Of Jesus

When Paul made his statement in Acts 20:28, two points stand out. First, the church of Jesus Christ is valuable. Do you have a possession that you would die for? Jesus wanted the church to exist so badly that He was willing to die for it. Who could possibly proclaim to love Jesus but care nothing about the church? Second, Acts 20:28 shows ownership. God paid for the church with His Son's blood (John 3:16). In Romans 16:16, Paul says that the "*churches of Christ salute you,*" and this is a phrase of ownership (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:2); it is not a denominational name or designation. The car of Kyle Campbell is in my driveway because I paid for it. Furthermore, because the church was bought by Christ's blood, Christ is its head (Ephesians 1:22). "Head" implies authority and direction. He directs everything that pertains to His church (Matthew 28:18).

Paul Said The Church And The Body Are The Same

Ephesians 1:23 and Colossians 1:18 both teach that the church and the body are the same. It is ridiculous to hear people who say that they love the

Lord but do not want to be a member of the church. They are inseparable! Everyone has material blessings, but only those who obey God have rich, spiritual blessings bestowed upon them. When we think of the church as a body we should think of it as a living organism, composed of people who are priests of God (1 Peter 2:5), and who offer spiritual sacrifices (Hebrews 13:15).

Paul Said The Church Is One Body Composed Of Individuals

In Ephesians 4:4-6, there are seven "ones" that culminate with God. If someone were preaching "Worship the God of your choice," he would laughed at, but he is hailed as great and broad-minded when he embraces all churches. If there is one God, there can only be one church. When you bought your first car, if you went to a used car lot that only had one car and the salesman told you to pick whatever car was on the lot, you would think he is crazy. Jesus said regarding the church that there would be no choice (Matthew 16:18). Denominations today believe that the church is composed of the different denominations, but Paul said it was composed of individuals (1 Corinthians 12:20, 27).

Paul Said The Church Is The Household Of God

In Ephesians 2:19, Paul uses a domestic figure to describe the church. Those who were once alienated from God are now in His family. The term "house" or "household" refers to the family (Acts 16:15, 31-34). In 1 Timothy 3:15, the household of God is called the church of God. Every Christian is a part of this family (Roman 8:16-17) and has a responsibility to obey God (2 Corinthians 6:16-18; 1 Peter 1:14). Our congregation ought to see itself not as individual families, but as one aggregate whole. As one whole we work together, weep together, rejoice together, and grow together. You are important in your congregation, not someone to be overlooked and unused!

Paul Said The Church Is A Saved Body

The church is a saved body because Jesus Christ is its Savior (Ephesians 5:23), and God cannot save outside the body (Acts 2:41, 46-47). At the judgment, if you are not a member of that body, then you cannot be saved. That statement is not politically correct, but it is biblically correct. The New Testament writers affirmed that no one is saved and added to the church until they have been baptized (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21). Your friends may try to convince you that all you need to do to accept Jesus as your Savior and then convince you that every church is the same, but when the Ethiopian eunuch

was baptized, the Lord added him to the church of His choice, the church of Christ (Acts 8:32-37).

Do not think of the church as just someplace you go, think of it as the glorious institution God intended. Do not take it for granted, but work as hard as you can in it for the rest of your lives. You will be glad you did when you men and women converted to Christ, your brethren edified, and spend eternity with God!

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