

What Paul Said About The Church

Introduction. I have always found it very 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 such issues as raising children, the rain forests, and how to balance the budget. But when you get right down to it, they are only human and their opinion means about as much as anyone else's.

Today we are going to examine six statements that Paul said about the church. Now I know that Paul was just a man also, but he had an unusual relationship to heaven. Look at Ephesians 3:3-5. Paul was able to reveal this mystery because he was inspired. He wrote the mystery in a few words so that we could understand it and be saved. But he was only able to do this because he was inspired (1 Corinthians 2:9-13).

The New Testament is a verbally inspired book. What Paul says about the church is actually what the Holy Spirit says about the church. Therefore, it is wise to examine Paul's statements about the church.

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

- A. In Ephesians 3:8-10, Paul said the church makes known the manifold wisdom of God. The term "manifold" means variegated, many-sided, or many colored. The same word is used in the LXX of Joseph's coat of many colors (Genesis 37:3).
- B. The wisdom of God is made known to the rulers and the authorities of the heavenly places. These rulers and authorities are the superhuman spirit beings. 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 manifold wisdom of God.
- C. God's plan before the foundation of the world is now carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord (Ephesians 1:4). This helps us see the importance of the church. The premillennial concept makes the church an afterthought or a substitute.

II. ***Paul Said The Church Was Bought By The Blood Of Jesus***

- A. When Paul made his statement in Acts 20:28, there are two points that stand out. First, the church of Jesus Christ is valuable. Is there anything you have of a material nature that you would die for? Jesus wanted the church to exist so badly that He was willing to die for it. Have you ever met people who love Jesus but they could care less about the church? They devalue the church.
- B. 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.” That is a phrase of ownership, much like the one found in 1 Corinthians 1:2. The “church of Christ” is not a denominational name or designation. The car of Kyle Campbell is out in the parking lot because I paid for it.

- C. Because the church was bought by Christ’s blood, God gave Christ as the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22). The term “head” implies authority, direction, or guidance. He is to direct everything that pertains to the church.

III. ***Paul Said The Church And The Body Are The Same***

- A. 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 want to separate the two, but it is not possible! If a boy asks a girl to marry him, she cannot say that she loves his head but hates his body. She takes it all or takes nothing.
- B. James 1:17 tells us that all good things are from the Father. This includes both material and spiritual blessings. Everyone has material blessings, but only those who obey God have spiritual blessings bestowed upon them. These spiritual blessings are found in Christ (Ephesians 1:3) and blessings in Christ are only found in the church.
- C. The church is the body of Christ. When we think of the church as a body we should think of it as a living organism. A head without a body would be of no value.

IV. ***Paul Said The Church Is One Body Composed Of Individuals***

- A. In Ephesians 4:4-6, there are seven ones that all culminate with God. If someone came into town preaching the “God of choice,” he would not last very long, but he is hailed as a great and broad-minded person when he embraces all churches. If there is one God, there can only be one church according to Paul.
- B. 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. When Jesus made His statement in Matthew 16:18, He was saying in essence that there would be no choice.
- C. In 1 Corinthians 12:20, 27, Paul argues that the body is composed of many members. Just as I have a body composed of many members, so the church has many members within it. After the Corinthians believed and were baptized, the Lord added them to the church (Acts 2:47) and therefore to the body of Christ.
- D. Denominations today believe that the church is composed of the different denominations, but Paul said it was composed of individuals. Also, some today have the erroneous concept that the church is the

building, hence the expression "Going to church." But the church is nothing more than individuals who are "called out" of the world and of sin and into righteousness and holiness.

V. ***Paul Said The Church Is The Household Of God***

- A. 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; Hebrews 11:7). In 1 Timothy 3:15, the household of God is called the church of God.
- B. Every Christian is a part of this family (Roman 8:16-17) and have a responsibility to obey God the Father (2 Corinthians 6:16-18; 1 Peter 1:14). This congregation ought to see itself not as individual family units, but one aggregate whole. As one whole we work together, weep together, rejoice together, and grow together. Everyone in here ought to looking for opportunities to bring this congregation closer together as a family.

VI. ***Paul Said The Church Is A Saved Body***

- A. The church is a saved body because Jesus Christ is Savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23). God cannot save outside the body (Acts 2:41, 46-47). On the day of judgment, if you are not a member of that body, then you cannot be saved. I know that statement is not politically correct, but it is biblically correct.
- B. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that the teaching of the Holy Spirit is to be baptized. The writers of the New Testament continually affirmed that no one is saved and added to the Lord's church until they have been baptized into the body of Christ (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21).
- C. If you have ever seen a preacher on television, they will tell people to accept Jesus as their Savior and then tell them to join the church of their choice. When the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized in Acts 8:32-37, the Lord added him to the church of His choice, the church of Christ.

Conclusion. Revelation 2:10 and 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 teach that you cannot go to heaven without obedience. A lot of religious people think that God just wants them to be happy, but all God wants you to be is obedient.

If you are here today and not a member of that body, you can be with simple obedience to Christ. If you have faith, repent of your sins, confess Jesus as the Christ, and be buried with Him in baptism, you can become a member of that blood-bought body.