



Apostolic Notes

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The REAL Church



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In today's society, if you were to ask "What is church?" you would receive a myriad of responses. Many will define it in the context of a denomination. Some will speak about a purpose of "saving" the "lost" and preparing ourselves for an eternity in heaven. Still others view the church as a social organization to accomplish good things in our society. There are those who will speak of church as a place they go for inspiration and encouragement: implying that it is "something" added to their routine life. There may even be those

who see it as religion, bondage or obsolete. In reality, there is not one clear idea of what church is today.

So the question begs to be asked, is there a clear idea in the Word of God that allows us to define what the church was intended to be? Obviously, I believe there is. (Otherwise I would not be writing this AN!)

Paul gives us a partial glimpse of the purpose of the church in Eph 3:10; "[The purpose is] that through the church the complicated, many-sided wisdom of God in all its infinite variety and innumerable aspects might now be made known to the angelic rulers and authorities (principalities and powers) in the heavenly sphere." - AMP. Basically, God intends to demonstrate His power to the spiritual principalities via THE CHURCH. Let me put it another way, the church is intended to be a place where God's power is demonstrated to creation.

The origin of the word church gives us further insight into this purpose. The common Greek word translated for church is ekklesia, "a regularly summoned legislative body, assembly," and is a compound noun from ek, "out of," and kaleo, "to call." While in our times and frame work, the word has taken on a distinct Christian flavor, it had its own pre-Christian application.

The use of ekklesia during first church era would have been associated with the following common secular applications:

- the popular assembly of Greek citizens that helped to govern a city or district
 - These citizens were conscious of their privileged status over against slaves and non-citizens
 - This was an assembly in which fundamentally political and judicial decisions were made

So we see the original context of this word was to summon a group of individuals who were of a distinct status to exercise governmental control over a particular city or area.

I have to believe, that when this term was first applied to the new church, those who were born again would have grasped the significant application. They would have understood themselves as constituting an assembly, called out by Jesus Christ for a special purpose and that their status was a privileged one in Him (Eph 2:19). They were not a building, denomination or place of community activism. **They were a called out assembly to do one thing, exercise authority.**

Jesus' church is to be the manifestation of His presence and authority here in this world. We have been called out of darkness to walk in His marvelous light, revealing to this world the source of this light. We as the church should not be focusing on an escapist idea of us leaving, but on His returning. We should be busy demonstrating the blessings and freedom of living under his rule in such a way that we are seasoning the world as salt and illuminating it as the city set on a hill. In short, **we should be revealing kingdom authority.**

Food For Thought-
What is your view of church? Are you exercising the authority you have been given?

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