

Part 2, Where's the True Church that Christ Built?

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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

Summary:

Part 2. Please listen to Part 1 first. Yeshua (Jesus) promised to build his one church (ekklesia) and it would survive the ages (Matthew 16:18). So where is it? Are all Christians automatically a part of that body? Is it a particular group you can go worship with? WHAT is the true church? WHERE are its people? Is it any one organization led by a man or woman someplace? Can we meet with others if our doctrines don't fit 100% with each other? Can a group be part of the true church – but be having some real spiritual problems? Who has God called “My people”? You might be surprised. Should God's children become friends with people of the world? Find out!

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Warm welcome from Orlando, FL to all of you being called to be children of our heavenly Abba – our dear Daddy in heaven who is also God Most High, El Shaddai, God Almighty! And by the way, I'd sure like to meet any others of you in FL who come to this website. Certainly feel free to contact me if you wish to chat.

This is part 2 of our detective work trying to find where God's children really are! Be sure you hear Part 1 before hearing this one. Surely not everyone calling themselves a Christian is a spirit-filled and spirit-led child of the Highest. But then who ARE those making up the true church? I'm going to do a good review while also covering new aspects and angles we didn't cover last time. If this message stirs you, please tell others about it and learn from it.

WHY am covering this?

- Too many of you are blinding yourselves from plainly seeing other true spirit-led brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Others of you admit there are true members of that church Yeshua built scattered here and there – and yet you don't really make any effort to go see them!
- Other church groups will even forbid their members from ever visiting other church groups! If there are converted spirit-led children somewhere else, why should the children not be mingling as the one family we are? It comes down to the church pastors and leaders who want control, power and the people's tithes. But remember we belong to Christ, not to organizations or human leaders.

Look at the promise by Yeshua (Jesus):

Matthew 16:16-18

“Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter (*petros*) and **on this rock (*petra*) I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.**”

Today we'll further define who and where those people are who make up the *ekklesia* (church) that Yeshua built.

We'll also cover:

- What other terms are used to describe that *ekklesia*? What are they called out from?
- What makes someone a member of that *ekklesia*?
- What happens when there are doctrinal differences and disagreements? Can we continue to meet with people who don't believe exactly the same as we do? I'll touch on that today but more likely go in more depth in the next sermon.
- What lessons can we learn from Peter's experience with the hated Romans being called also into the *ekklesia*? Have some of us still not learned from Peter?

The Called-out ones, the *Ekklesia*

OK quick review:

We covered how the **word "church" comes from the Greek word "*ekklesia*"** meaning a group of people, an assembly, a congregation, a group called out for a specific purpose. You've been called out of the world to be a special people, a holy people, declaring the wonders of the living God and of His Son – our Savior Jesus Christ, Yeshua the Messiah. You've also been called out to be first fruits, the first born ones after Christ, for obedience now and to prepare to be leaders and teachers in the coming kingdom of God.

1 Peter 2:9-10

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

As I began to cover last time, the Chosen People of God in the New Covenant is not limited to just Israel or Judah. Now the Chosen of God come from all nations – all who accept Yeshua as their Savior. The Jews and Israelites are still the PHYSICAL chosen of God, but they picture the bigger reality – the SPIRITUAL ISRAEL of God, the *ekklesia*, which includes believers from all nations.

The CHILDREN OF GOD vs. the Children of the Adversary

I briefly touched last time on how though we are all children of God *by creation*, but we are not all His children by the *spirit*, by conduct, by calling. There are children of God and there are children of Satan, the god of this world. That sounds harsh, but scripture is clear on that. Write these verses down – and study them later in your own Bible.

- Yeshua told the Jews challenging him that they were of their father the devil (**John 8:44**)
- God told the Serpent – Satan – that there would be war and hatred between his children and the woman's Seed but that ultimately the promised One (Christ) would stomp his head but Satan will bruise his heel (a prophecy of the crucifixion – the means whereby Satan is defeated) **Genesis 3:15**.
- Apostle John teaches that we can discern who is a child of God and who is "of the Devil" by their life. Do they live righteously or sinfully? **1 John 3:8-12**. Nobody

can live a life of intentional, flagrant sin and think they are part of the *ekklesia* that Christ built.

Adam and Eve were in the Garden. When they rejected Yahweh as their Leader, they were kicked out – and all of mankind along with them! At that point, mankind became a part of the god of this world's domain (Satan- 2 Cor. 4:4).

WHY there is a calling-out

God had to CALL OUT chosen people from the world to begin to work with them. The *ekklesia*, the church – really is composed of whoever God chooses to call out –and who respond to His call.

Right now it's just a few that end up being part of the chosen. Even when it says "many are called, but few are chosen" – the many called is in relation to the number who respond. But when compared to all humanity, I don't think He's saying he's calling many from the total number. Not yet anyway. The majority of the world is composed of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, atheists, nominal Christians who have never really deeply repented – so how could we believe that "many" of them have been called. They haven't. But of those God is calling, only a few respond.

I'm convinced, that when you consider the very end of all God's works and time, that there will be far more who choose God's way when they're resurrected than those who don't. If you don't know what I mean, please hear my sermon about "The Glorious 8th Day" I gave in October 14, 2014. Please hear that sermon. There you'll find how God will work with all humanity in the Millennium and the resurrections that follow.

God is working with just a FEW right now – but during and after the millennium every one ever born will be resurrected and have their minds opened to see the things of the spirit and come to God. *It's all explained in the sermons about the 7th day of Feast of Tabernacles and the 8th Day holyday after the 7 days of the Feast.*

There is no scripture I know of that says "and behold, in the lake of fire were a great number of people, innumerable, so many we can't count them". No, you won't find that. But you will find a great innumerable people standing before the throne of God who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb – hallelujah! (Revelation 7)

So, God began calling individuals out of the world at first. Just one here and there. The first ones called out from this world to be part of the *ekklesia* of God – were the Fathers and prophets like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – and some wives also like Sarah and others.

Then YHVH called out the family of Jacob – who was renamed "Israel" – as His chosen people. He had Moses command Pharaoh to "let MY people go". So Stephen, in his sermon in **Acts 7:38** calls Israel "the church (*ekklesia*) in the wilderness".

The adult Israelites 20 yrs and older who came out of Egypt did not let Egypt come out of THEM – so they had to die in the wilderness (**Numbers 14:28-32; 32:10-13**). This was a picture of the spiritual meaning: *WE have to be born again to be in the kingdom of God*

(John 3:3). Only the new creation, the new man, the new life in Christ will be in the true Promised Land.

Though the entire 12-tribed nation was being called out, only a few of them were to be part of the SPIRITUAL ISRAEL, at least at that point in time. Only a few of them were given the Holy Spirit, in other words. Certainly Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Jacob (Israel), Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Joshua, Caleb, David, the prophets, I suspect Hannah the mother of Samuel, and a few others – but not very many were clearly given the Holy Spirit **(Genesis 41:38; Numbers 11:17; Numbers 27:18; 1 Samuel 16:13-14; Daniel 5:11)**

But Israel refused to the terms of the covenant and went into captivity and disappeared from obvious view – but they ARE out there, someplace, otherwise Genesis 49 is a farce. That's the chapter where Jacob prophesies what each of the 12 sons will be like as big nations "in the last days". So somewhere out there are the remnants of those 12 tribes. Many of us believe that Israel in the Middle East is simply the ancient House of Judah. The House of Israel, many of us believe, are the nations today of the United States and UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – and many of the nations of northwestern Europe.

Is it conceivable to you that nations like Egypt, Ethiopia, Libya and Persia (Iran) are mentioned by name – but somehow God didn't know about USA, UK, Russia, China, European countries? No, they're there – just they have coded names!

So in the Old Covenant, God chose the family of Jacob – renamed Israel – to be his called-out people, to be a light to the nations. See **Deuteronomy 7:6 and 14:2**.

In the New covenant, God is not limiting his call just to Israel – but individuals from ALL nations to be part of his *ekklesia*. But God the Father has to start the process – and frankly continues the process all the way through to the end.

John 6:44 – NO ONE can come to Christ and be part of the new covenant chosen of God, unless God the father draws him.

Our work is to believe in the Son of God –John 6:29.

Your calling originates from the Highest place possible. YOU. Hand-picked by God Most High.

TERMS USED TO DEFINE AND DESCRIBE THE *EKKLESIA* of God

Last time we covered how this *ekklesia* is described in various ways. Any good detective when trying to find someone is also asking "what else do people call him?" – any other nicknames, names, titles, aliases and so on. We have to do the same with the *ekklesia* of God.

The church that Christ built is also known by other terms:

- **Children of God!** Not just angels. Not just anything else but children of GOD. Be sure you hear by sermons on "our Breathtaking Destiny". A REAL child of God.
- **"The BODY of Christ"** – with many body parts, but one Body. And each body part has its own function. (1 Timothy 3:15; Colossians 1:18).

- **“The temple of the Holy spirit”.** The word “temple” is the Greek “*naos*” meaning the inner sanctum, where the Holy of Holies was; where the shekinah glory of the Presence resided. That’s YOU. That’s me, if we have been given the Holy Spirit.
And everyone and anyone who has God’s spirit, who is being led by God’s spirit, is a child of God – Romans 8:14. More on that in a few minutes.
- **Let me add a new one we didn’t mention much last time: the *ekklesia* – the “church”—is also the “first fruits” of the eventual huge harvest.** God is NOT trying to save everyone just yet. Not yet. If God was trying to save everyone now, then you’d have to conclude Satan is winning!

No—once again the Jewish harvest pictures the SPIRITUAL reality! **The holydays of GOD (Leviticus 23:1-2), the FEASTS of YHVH revolve around the harvests of Israel and picture the divine order, or sequence, in which God is working with people.**

First you have Christ himself, the first of the firstfruits, then you have the smaller spring/summer harvests of barley-wheat, then the biggest general harvest in the autumn. Those harvests picture the sequence in which God is brining humanity into his kingdom.

Much of Christianity has missed this point. We picture the firstfruits and the early harvest, and then God will set out to convert the rest of the world when Christ takes over the reins of government in the Millennium. It is at *that* time that the “kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” – **Revelation 11:15.** **Then at that time will Christ be fully responsible for what happens on the earth.**

During the Millennium is when the knowledge of YHVH will fill the whole earth like waters cover the sea! That’s when minds are opened, and people everywhere will be called.

So that is why Israel had to bring their firstfruits to God’s temple first, before they could finish the rest of their harvest (**Exodus 23:19; 34:26**). That is why there was a Wavesheaf offering of the first of the barley harvest – and that pictured Yeshua. He is the first of the firstfruits. Let’s look at some scriptures:

Christ is the first of the firstfruits:

1 Corinthians 15:20

“But now **Christ** is risen from the dead, and **has become the firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep.”

Then after that Wavesheaf you have the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost – and on this day 2 *leavened* loaves are waved or raised up toward heaven – picturing the firstfruits. “They are the firstfruits to YHVH” (Lev 23:15-20, especially v 17).

There is a sequence to those being called and chosen. NOT everyone is being called just yet.

1 Corinthians 15:22-24

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.** 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.”

Leviticus 23:9-12

And YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall wave the sheaf before YHVH, **to be accepted on your behalf;** on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it."

That Wavesheaf offering of barley flour represented Yeshua, who had to ascend first to God the Father after his resurrection to be accepted on our behalf. HE had paid the penalty for our sins, incurred the wrath for us, and once Yeshua was accepted by Father – that sealed the deal: so are you, so am I now forgiven of all our sins, accepted, beloved of God the Father – through Yeshua, IN Yeshua.

It is always through Yeshua that we now can come boldly before our Father. If you hear my sermon about Yeshua our High Priest, that High Priest also carries our sins on Himself, for the people. (**Exodus 28:28-30, 36-38**) Be sure to hear that sermon, and at least read these verses I just cited in Exodus 28 – that the High Priest – who pictured Yeshua – is “HOLINESS to YHVH” engraved on his golden head plate/crown, “That Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts... that **THEY may be accepted before YHVH**” (v. 38).

So WE who are those being called now – and only a few of those who are being called respond, and accept the invitation. Remember the parable of the Wedding Supper (Matthew 22:1-10)? Most gave excuses why they could not come. But WE are the first fruits of the harvest and that is such a high calling.

James 1:18

“Of *His* own will HE brought us forth by the word [Yeshua is the Word] of truth, that WE might be **a kind of firstfruits** of His creatures”.

The 144,000 walking on the sea of Glass after their resurrection are called “Firstfruits to God” – **Revelation 14:4.**

Paul says “We also, who have the **firstfruits of the Spirit**” are awaiting our adoption, redemption of our body (Romans 8:23).

Are you getting it? Those who make up the one true church, the *ekklesia* that Yeshua built, are those being called first and they will have a higher reward, because we have so much more to have to fight.

Paul often referred to the brethren, even specific brethren, as firstfruits – Romans 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:15.

- **We are also called “the House of God”; the church is the beginning of the expanding FAMILY of God. God is building HIS HOUSE.** *It is not*

coincidental that Yeshua was a house builder, a carpenter by trade (Mark 6:3), and Joseph was also a carpenter (Matthew 13:55). God IS in the business of building.

God the Father is adding children. Real children. Not angels. HIS children who will be like him.

1 John 3:1-2

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that **we should be called children of God!** Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. **2 Beloved, now we are children of God;** and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, **we shall be like Him,** for we shall see Him as He is.

To be born of God, we have to receive his Seed, the Holy spirit.

John 1:12-13

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: **13 who WERE BORN, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but OF GOD.**”

In the case of God’s children, we’re talking about a group called out of the world by God himself to be His people, a chosen people, to a very, very high calling.

1 Peter 2:9-10

“But YOU are **a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people,** that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

Peter was primarily writing to **Jews** and Israelites dispersed around the world (1 Peter 1:1) – and he calls even THEM in v 10 – people who were nobody but are now the people of God! Being chosen for the new covenant “holy nation”, the new definition of “his own special people”—is quite a high, high calling. And Christ is not ashamed to call you his brother or sister (Hebrews 2:10-12). I didn’t read this last time either:

Hebrews 2:10-12

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. **11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them (meaning you and me!)] ‘brethren’,** **12** saying:

“I will declare Your name *to My brethren*;

In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”

That is just phenomenal! You are a brother and sister of Yeshua spiritually. Are you grasping your high calling to be among the *ekklesia* right now, in this life? It is always through Yeshua that we can come before the Father.

So we are the first of those being called to be among the very household of God, including all males and females to whom He gifts His Holy Spirit. Here’s another new scripture – so this “review” I’m giving is also adding to the last message.

2 Corinthians 6:18

"I will be a Father to you, [that's God Almighty speaking!]
And you shall be My sons **and daughters**", says the Lord Almighty."

If you're getting this, this should be SO exciting for you!

- **THE *Ekklesia* is also the new Spiritual "Israel of God" Gal. 6:16**

So as I covered last time, even those of Israel and Judah, though they were chosen by God nationally and physically – were a type of the spiritual "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). And though God will continue to work with the physical remnants of Israel and Judah, he is also now working even more so with the more glorious Israel of God: all those being called out of this world, whether Jew or Gentile!

And this "Israel of God" – is made up of those who are now a part of the *ekklesia* in the new covenant, the church Yeshua said he would build.

And as I covered last time, even Jews will have to accept Yeshua as their Messiah and Savior in order to be grafted into this new SPIRITUAL Olive Tree of Israel. This is not traditional "replacement theology" that Hebraic Roots folks seem so afraid of. No – it's the truth. There IS still the special PHYSICAL status of Israel and Judah – but even more so there is the spiritual Israelite today, made up of people from all countries. Look at these verses:

Romans 9:6-8

"But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. **For they are NOT all Israel who are of Israel, 7 NOR are they all children [just] because they are the seed of Abraham;** but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, **these are NOT the children of God; but the children of the PROMISE are counted as the seed.**"

Did that sink in? It's not enough anymore to physically be an Israelite and considered "Israel" or "seed of Abraham". One must now accept Yeshua or you are no longer considered a part of the new, spiritual Israel as Romans 9:6-7 says.

Romans 9:25-26 (in reference to Gentiles being called now)

As He says also in Hosea:

"I will call them 'My people', who were not My people,
And her beloved, who was not beloved."

26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them,

' You are not My people,' There **they** shall be called sons of the living God."

What I've just read was spoken to Gentile Romans. God is now calling *Gentiles* who have accepted Yeshua "MY People" and the Beloved of God. Or more correctly, God is now calling ANYONE – Gentile or Jew – who calls on the Name of Yeshua "My People", the chosen ones, the Beloved of God. (See also Colossians 1:13; Titus 2:14).

Romans 11:13-15

For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh

and save some of them. 15 **For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?**

Romans 11:23-27 [v. 23-24—even Jews will have to be grafted back in!] And they [the JEWS] also, **IF** they do not continue in unbelief, **will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.** 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, *how much more will these [Jews], who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, **that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so ALL Israel will be saved**, as it is written:

"The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 For this is **My covenant** with them, **When I take away their sins.**"

Jews around the world, listen up: Read verses 23-24 again. You also, IF you do not continue to reject and refuse your own brother Yeshua as the true Messiah and if you stop refusing to believe in him, YOU also will be grafted in, for God is able to graft you in again.

So now, in the spiritual Israel of God, both Jews and Gentiles are being grafted into this spiritual Olive Tree (Rom 11:23-24). *But first they have to give up their rather strong denial and refusal to believe and accept Yeshua (Jesus) as their Messiah and Savior.* Jews in Israel, I hope you're listening. I will someday give at least one full sermon proving Yeshua was and is the promised Messiah who fulfilled all the Messianic prophecies such as those in Psalm 22, Isaiah 52 and 53, Zech 9:9; Zech 12:10; Micah 5:2 and so many more!

So the Israel that we must all become a part of is NOT the nation of Israel in the middle East – but SPIRITUAL Israel. Even physical Jews must become a part of that. THAT is the one true church that Yeshua built which I'm discussing here.

So the "chosen people" now are not automatically the physical Jews or Israelites anymore. The chosen people now are people from anywhere, including all you Gentiles in Romania, China, Turkey, Brazil or wherever you're from -- who become the seed of Abraham through faith in Yeshua as Galatians 3:26-28 clearly states.

Galatians 3:26-29

"For you are ALL sons of God **through faith in Christ** Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized **into Christ** have put on Christ. 28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek**, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus.** 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

THE BRETHREN IDENTIFIED

So we are to look for members of this one true church to be from anywhere. As long as each one repents of his/her sins, is immersed in water baptism and received God's spirit (which immerses them into the body of Christ – 1 Cor. 12:13), and if they believe Yeshua is the Son of God who came as the promised Messiah and died to pay the penalty of our sins and was raised from the dead to live once

again in us by His spirit.... If that is happening to anyone anywhere in the world, that person is a child of God and a member of the one true church Yeshua built.

Let's learn a LESSON from Peter's EXPERIENCE

Let's change gears a bit and I want to make the point that I think some of us have yet to learn the lesson that Peter had to learn. Peter had always thought – as so many scriptures said it – that Israel alone made up God's chosen people. God called them "MY people" and so many verses speak of how God chose them from all the families of the earth.

So when he was told to go preach the gospel to Cornelius and the Romans, just think how shocking this must have been. The Romans were the despised conquering people who had humiliated Israel! How could any of them ever possible become a member, a part of the chosen people -- the one true church? As I covered last time, Peter was shocked – and yet elated – by this! In the Jerusalem conference of Acts 15, he told everyone that "WE (Israelites) will be saved the same way as they (the Gentiles)" – by FAITH in Christ.

Read the whole story in Acts 10 yourself if you're not very familiar with it. But once God gave them His Holy Spirit, with the sign of speaking in other languages including the tongues of angels (1 Cor. 13:1), Peter realized "who am I to say these aren't spirit-filled people of God?"

We learned last time that anyone to whom GOD has given His spirit, no matter who that person is, or where he/she is —IS A MEMBER OF THAT *EKKLESIA*, the chosen church that Christ came to build (Romans 8:14; 1 Cor. 12:13). Once anyone has the Spirit given, that person becomes a SAINT, a "*hagios*" in the Greek, a holy one. They are made holy and a saint not by some decree by the Catholic church. NO! They become a saint, a holy one, because God's HOLY Spirit is working inside them. Amen!

We covered last time **that the chosen *ekklesia* is a work in progress**. So there will still be faults and problems in the church – but it can still be the church of God. Just like the churches of Revelation 2 and 3. Some of them had major doctrinal and behavioral issues, but they were still all called the church of God with Christ walking in their midst. Got it? So we need to quit self-righteously declaring for God who is and who isn't included in his select, holy, chosen church! The choice is God's choice!

The imperfect Corinthian church members were still called "SAINTS" (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1) – holy ones, members of the church, because they had God's spirit. God does not remove His spirit every time we sin or fail. Thank God for that. Over time the Spirit can become dormant in us, and over time we can lose it and if we continue in sin, God WILL take away His spirit eventually. That happened to King Saul, for example (1 Samuel 16:13-14). David, after realizing his profound sin of murder and adultery, pleaded – years after the murder took place – "Take not your Holy Spirit from me." (Psalm 51:11).

Yes, if we continue to deliberately sin, God presence departs from us, as it did for a time from Samson (Judges 16:19-20). When Samson deeply repented, and when David deeply repented, our merciful Abba restored His Presence.

Are we having to learn the same lesson as Peter? Do we decide for God to whom GOD has given His Holy Spirit? Do we decide “surely that person can’t be a converted, spirit-led member of the church? Surely not” – we say – but I’ve heard people say that! Sure... there must be, in time, fruit and evidences of God’s Spirit. But do you and I always have those gracious and loving fruit of the spirit on display? Paul had to deal with this also among the Romans who wanted to condemn one another – and Paul says that’s God’s job. (Romans 14:10-13)

ONE FLOCK

I’ll just briefly comment here and will give another sermon on the “one flock” concept. The ultimate goal our father has for his family is that we all dwell together in UNITY, as one loving and happy family. We are one body, one church, one spirit, one family. “How good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity!” – Psalm 133:1.

Some pastors are even declaring that God is the one who wanted the church split up and separated out into splinter groups. I’ll address next time how that is such a diabolical lie. Yes, God ALLOWED it, obviously, but is division what He wants in the ONE body of Christ?

Oneness, perfect unity was and is the goal. Yeshua certainly prayed that the disciples would be “one as WE are one” – as “one” as Yeshua and His father were/are. John 17:20-23. Now that is oneness. That is what Yeshua prayed for.

John 17:20-23

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 **that they all may be one**, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may **be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.** 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that **they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.**"

Any of you want to go against that prayer? Are you doing anything to bring God’s children *together*? We’re either scattering or gathering. If you’re not gathering together, you’re scattering. You know who said that? Yeshua did! Luke 11:23!

Luke 11:23

"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters."

So do you really think he is happy with the attacks, the splits, the splinter groups, the divisions in the church? Some of you want to blame God for it! I’ll speak on that. There ARE some verses that say HE scattered the sheep but in context it is placed in context of that being a consequence of the horrible shepherds or the bully sheep in the flock! I’ll cover that more next time.

John 10:15-16

"As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must

bring, and they will hear My voice; and **there will be one flock** and one shepherd.”

I contend that it is NOT God’s ultimate purpose for us all to be so split up. Read **1 Cor. 1:10-13**, where Paul pleads that “there be NO DIVISIONS among you” and ends that section with “Is Christ DIVIDED?”

I recommend you hear my ‘ONE BODY’ series given in late 2009 and early 2010 where I go in depth into this. Our Father will work EVERYTHING out for his good. He allows for free moral agency. He allows free will. But he’s so great and wise and awesome that he will make it all good in the end – but that is in SPITE of us.

More on this later. I hope you’ll also hear my sermon also on the SIGNS OF TRUE DISCIPLES.

So far, the true church is:

- **The *ekklesia* is composed of ANYONE led by God’s spirit – Romans 8:14.** God’s spirit will lead us to live as Christ lived, through Christ, with a life of faith and obedience. God gives His spirit to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32; Hebrews 5:9) and seek Him with all their being. They are those who find Him! We CANNOT claim to be a child of God and live a life of constant intentional sin!! We have to have repented, been baptized and commit to a new and sanctified life in Christ by His spirit – or we’re none of his (Romans 8:9). A life “of the flesh” cannot please God (Romans 8:8) and if we live according to the pulls of this flesh, we will die (verse 13).
- **Those who are led by God’s spirit may surprise us** –just like Peter was surprised that God was giving His Holy Spirit to the despised Roman conquerors! But God was!
- **Those who have God’s spirit are not all congregating in one organization right now** but are scattered in various groups for now, but there WILL BE one flock eventually. The true church is not an organized organization yet – but an organism.
- The church of God that Christ built will be composed of people **who have Christ on display**. They shine the light back on Him. HE is the Light. HE is the Rock. They love God the Father absolutely, but they also know we have access to the father only through and because of Yeshua, so they speak of Yeshua, sing of Him, delight in Him, speak to Him as well as God the Father, and will marry Him. These will be people who absolutely worship, adore, focus on and have faith in – Yeshua! AMEN.
- **The brethren who make up this body of Christ will have a graciousness and profound love in their lives for one another**, and really for all people, and for God the Father and Yeshua. You know the often touted verse, but not often practiced – that “BY THIS shall all men know that you are my disciples, in that you have profound love for one another (**John 13:34-35**), “as I have loved you”.

Where you see pastors spending sermon time just tearing down other pastors or groups – beware. Find another pastor. Or speak to the pastor first... after a lot of prayer.

- **I find the members of this true church are people who have a “simplicity that is in Christ” about them.** They simply love Yeshua! Too many theologians have complicated the mix! Now we have “Systematic Theology” projects that

complicate the message of the Cross and the coming Kingdom of God. (**Acts 2:46; 2 Cor. 11:3**). Focus on your relationship with Yeshua far more than on technicalities

- There are other signs of true disciples – they certainly **will be bearing fruit (John 15:8), will be living by the word of God (John 8:31)** and not just human reasoning, and so many other points that you'll find in my other sermon about "Signs of True Disciples."

Are TRUE MEMBERS OF THE TRUE CHURCH RECLUSES FROM THE WORLD?

Some – who believe they are God's people – don't have anything to do with anyone not a part of their fellowship. That's wrong. We are not OF the world, but we are sent INTO the world, Yeshua prayed in John 17. We were chosen out of the world (John 15:19), but we are lights to the world. If lights only shine where there's light – other brethren – what good is the light?

We are not to love the world – the society, or ways of the world – but we are to be like God who so loved the world (the people) that He sent his only son INTO the world to die for all of us! John 3:16-17

Neither did God send his son into the world – to condemn it (John 3:17). SO if we're of God, we will have HIS same attitude. Too many believers I know spend too much time talking about how bad the world is. Hey, we know that already! We came out of it! So let's talk about the coming Kingdom. Let's talk about our KING. The good news is that we have a King-Savior who makes it possible for us to enter the Kingdom of God. Yes, the gospel is about the kingdom – but first we have to have a way into that kingdom, so it's also about Yeshua! He's the Way, He's the Door, He's the Life, He's the Truth, He's everything!

When Paul was called, he went all through the known world doing what? Christ himself said Paul was a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings and the children of Israel" (**Acts 26:15-18** is the full story), and the FIRST sermon Paul preached was that he "preached Christ...that He is the Son of God." (v. 20, 22).

Remember we are to imitate Christ, be like Him, learn of him, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

When this perfectly holy Son of God came, did HE distance himself from the horrible people of the world? Did he hang out just with "converted people"? If he would have tried to, with WHOM could He have hung out with? NO, he had a way about him of making even the worst sinners feel comfortable around him.

The ones Yeshua had harsh words for were the religious folks! But you don't find him chewing out sinners. You don't. He was sent INTO the world, to be the light to the world – and sinners came to listen. He was called "a friend of tax collectors", cheats, liars, and sinners and "a glutton and a winebibber". He knew how to eat and drink as well. He mingled with sinners, without being a part of their sinful way of life. We can't do that. But we must be lights. *Lights are of no use if the lights stay away from the darkness.*

- John 4 – sinful woman at the well in Samaria

- John 8 – the woman caught in the very act of adultery “Neither do I condemn you... go and sin no more.”
- Luke 15:1-2 – all the sinners hung around Jesus and he got criticized, and what follows are the beautiful stories of God’s love – the lost coin, the lost sheep, the lost Prodigal son...
- Luke 19 – Zacchaeus – Yeshua SOUGHT OUT this sinner.

SO folks, stop hiding your light. Get to know your neighbors. It’s by them seeing what you’re really like, and liking it – that you can effectively speak of Christ. How will you have the opportunities without being their friend and confidante?

Question: Would you ever think of visiting a Jewish Synagogue? Or a Jewish temple – if there is to be one? Paul and the other apostles did! Yeshua did! Now THINK about that! Did those attending the synagogue have all doctrine down yet? Did they even know about the Holy spirit or Yeshua? NO! But Peter and Paul visited the temple and the synagogues (Luke 4:16; Acts 2:46; 3:1; Acts 5:21; 13:14-42; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4, Acts 21:26; etc.)

Now – think about that? Would you, would you not?

We have been called to be a light, to go where there is darkness, so the light does some good!

1 Corinthians 5:9-11

“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did NOT mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, **since then you would need to go out of the world.**

11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner — not even to eat with such a person.”

WHY am I reading that? Because some of you feel you can’t fellowship with your neighbors because – who knows – they use a swear word, or keep Christmas, or they’re living common-law, or worship on Sunday, or God forbid, they might even be atheists or gay or eat pork or something. Come on! Read 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 again!

SOME of those may be people God is beginning to work with – and maybe God put you near them to be the light they needed! Have you thought of that!?

Would you pray for them, or their sick child? Paul DID.

Paul prayed for and healed the sick *pagans* in Malta – Acts 28:1-10. Would you have done the same?

I covered all that so you broaden your mind a bit to realize there may be “people of God” out there – at least in the future if not right now – that you may be dissing and missing because they don’t keep all the things you keep, or know all the things you know.... So I hope the groundwork has been laid.

So the next point: doctrinal differences.

DOCTRINE

This is worthy of a whole sermon and I'll speak on it soon. But many of you will refuse to meet with anyone who doesn't believe exactly as you do. That was me too, years ago. But I've found out that even a husband and wife may not agree doctrinally on every single point – but they still sleep together! **So why won't we meet with some folks who believe slightly differently? And are you sure your set of doctrines are 100% correct? And is that the main thing Yeshua is looking for?**

Is the right set of doctrines the thing that identifies the true church? Or was it something else? Some of you ACT like having all the right teachings is what is most important. I don't feel that's MOST important. Yeshua said "By THIS – that you LOVE one another – by this shall all men know you're my disciples." He did NOT say, "By this will all men know you're the true church because you have all the right doctrines."

I'll speak more on it later, soon, but let's do a quick rundown:

Having said that, I do know doctrine IS important. Yeshua said Father wants to be worshiped in spirit and **in truth. (John 4:23-24).** So truth is vital. I preach that.

- Timothy was told to be sure the elders in his area were preaching the same thing, not some other doctrine (1 Timothy 1:3)
- Timothy is also exhorted to give attention "to reading, exhortation and doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:13). **V 16** – he is to take heed to the doctrine.
- **2 John 9-10** – says if we aren't abiding in the doctrine of Christ, we don't have God the Father. If we abide in Him, we have Christ and God the father; then John says "if anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him..." So there are points of doctrine where we can't compromise.
- 2 Timothy 3:15 – scripture is given and profitable for DOCTRINE

I could give more. Having right doctrine is important. So let's start with that.

Having said all that, we have numerous examples of groups CALLED "the church" which also had false doctrine but who were still called the Church – by Christ himself.

- The 7 churches of Revelation 2-3, are all the church of God, with Christ in their midst (**Revelation 1:13; 2:1**), but some had terrible doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans, "Which I hate". He commands repentance, but they were also his church.

So the true congregation/*ekklesia* can have some in its midst who have incomplete knowledge or even teaching wrong things – but as they are shown the truth they have to quit the error, and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

- **Throughout Romans**, we read of various doctrinal disputes about the law, but they were the beloved saints in Rome nonetheless (**Romans 1:7** – beloved of God, called saints...). Some believed they **could not eat meat**. *Paul did not correct the false doctrine but corrected the response of those who disassociated themselves from those who would not eat meat. Ponder that.*

Read Romans 14:14-23. "Don't destroy the work of God for the sake of food" (Rom 14:20) – or for the sake of disagreement over non-salvational doctrinal points. You don't quit fellowshiping with someone who doesn't study food labels

as carefully as you do! That's not what the kingdom of God is all about! See also 1 Cor. 8:13 – if meat causes offense, then don't eat meat around those folks, Paul says.

- Remember even one of the early **powerful PREACHERS, an APOSTLE – Apollos** – didn't understand the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and had to have Aquila and his wife Priscilla explain it to him. Yes, a woman helped teach even a man who became an apostle. But Apollos was allowed to preach, though his understanding was incomplete. (Acts 18:24-26)

The spirit of truth will lead us into all truth – John 16:13. It's a work in progress!
The church is to work together *until* they reach the unity of the faith – Ephesians 4:13

IF there are SALVATIONAL issues, like who Yeshua is (the Son of God, the Creator of all things), then I won't eat or drink with those folks as **2 John 9-11** says. But if the differences are not salvational, bear with it. Don't miss out on all the children of God you could be meeting and learning from because you feel "better" ("Holier") than they are.

Paul didn't order ministers to disfellowship those brethren teaching the resurrection was past, or that there was no resurrection (1 Cor 15:12-19). No, he explained the truth.

So I don't assume I have all doctrine complete or correct, and perhaps I can learn from others – and I hope they will meet with me too.

SO where is this ONE TRUE church?

So what have we learned?

They are those who have responded to the call, have been baptized by immersion, have received the holy spirit, making them sons and daughters of God.

They must be LED by the Spirit (Romans 8:14). The spirit won't lead you into sin. Someone who is a true child of God will not be living a way of life of intentional sin.

- We all still stumble and fail and still sin. But these are stumbles, not ways of life.
- We will not be perfect and incorruptible until the resurrection – "when this corruption shall put on incorruption" as 1 Cor. 15 says.
- It is Christ who cleanses us (Ephesians 5:25-27) and presents us faultless before the Throne, for we in him and HE is our covering and our righteousness. There is no amount of human goodness that will ever "qualify" for the kingdom of God. It has to be the righteousness that is by faith in Christ and that is given to us as His gift, as so many verses state so clearly – Philippians 3:9, Romans 5:17; 2 Cor. 5:20 and more.
God is the one who qualifies us. Colossians 1:12 NKJV.
- So this body of people focus on our Messiah, on HIM, not on our efforts.
Romans 9:30-32
Philippians 1:11 – It is the fruit of HIS righteousness
Philippians 3:9
We speak OFTEN of Messiah and HE IS OUR BELOVED.

- We can now experience the true JOY of his salvation. We no longer have the spirit of fear and bondage, for perfect love casts out fear and its terror (**1 John 4:15-19**). (Read Rom 8:15-19 again) We now have joy and peace knowing we have been saved by faith through grace as **Ephesians 2:8-10** clearly says. If you don't have that confidence, how can you experience the joy of salvation?
- This body will have profound love for one another. **John 13:33-34** We aren't beating up the other believers. We aren't disparaging the other preachers. They act more and more as ONE. Sure the liver thinks the colon looks terrible – but both need each other. Can we not be the same in the Body of Christ?
- This body of people walk a new walk of obedience **1 John 3:3-6**
- These are the people whose names are written in the book of Life and registered in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
- So where's that church? THEY'RE SCATTERED in groups, congregations, house fellowships, organizations, churches everywhere around the world. In many congregations – let's say 200 members – there may be 5 or 22 who may actually be a true child of God. In another group, there may be 150 attendees, but perhaps just 1-2 may have the Holy Spirit. The rest "look the part" but unless they have Spirit, they are none of His. The true brethren are all scattered. Be willing to seek them out and find out where they are. And just because you're more comfortable with the group you fellowship with – and they're all baptized – doesn't mean they're being led by the spirit or know anything about faith in Christ.
- And this true body may have some differences of teachings – for now – but God will sort us all out and straighten that up someday.

SO, STOP dismissing potentially thousands of brothers and sisters out there simply because they're not part of your spiritual heritage. Maybe they never were a part of your background. *Consider there are brethren out there you are missing because you're limiting your view to only those who believe a certain way.* Go find, enjoy, enrich and be enriched spiritually by the rest of your brothers and sisters! This is why I can fellowship with folks who have a church of God background, as well as those who have a Hebraic Roots background, or a "Messianic" background. There are numerous areas I don't see eye to eye with them, or they with me—but we have a great time loving our Beloved Savior and learning more of Him and his way.

If someone has been given God's seed – His spirit – and is being led by that Spirit into the Kingdom's new way of living, that person is part of the one true church.

So, the "One True Church" is NO particular organization of men. It's not a denomination. It's not a church group with a big sign. No, the One true Church is the spiritual group of people who are being led by God's spirit .

Many of them are scattered for now into and among many man-made organizations, or just meeting in small home-fellowship groups, or may feel like Elijah did – "I'm all alone" – until God opens their eyes to the thousands nearby around them who in fact are His people.

If any of you would like to email or contact me through this website, I'd be delighted to talk to you. I love getting email from you believers in Yeshua – whether you're in Kiev Ukraine, in Makati in the Philippines, or in a small town in Montana, or Portland, Oregon or in Australia, Kenya or Beijing China , Romania, Turkey or France -- or wherever you are. I'd love to hear from my brothers and sisters in Christ. Just go to the "Contact us" link on this website. May YHVH bless you.

I can't wait until all the living precious stones of the temple finally come together at the return of Messiah. Wow, what a glorious church that will be. What a beautiful body of people, what a wonderful, glorious time – forever and ever.