

## What is the Church?

- The church (Gr. *ekklesia*) = “an **assembly** of the citizens regularly summoned, the legislative assembly... **to call an assembly**... an assembly is held... in the NT the church, either the body, or the place. Hence *ekklesiazo* (to hold an assembly, debate therein, to be a member of the assembly. Hence *ekklesiastes* (a member of the *ekklesia*)” (LS 239).
- “A popular assembly... a local portion of the church, a **local church**... a Christian congregation” (Moulton 125).
- “Assembly, as a regularly summoned political body... assemblage, **gathering, meeting**... the Christian church or congregation... **the totality of Christians living in one place**” (AG 240-241).
- “A gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place; an assembly... an **assembly of Christians gathered for worship** cf. I Cor. 14:19, 35” (Thayer 196).
- “In the Greek world it was used of a public **assembly summoned by a herald**” (ISBE, v. 1, pp. 692).
- The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary notes that the Greek word *ekklesia* is divided into two parts i.e., *ek* meaning “**out**” and *kaleo* “**to call**” (236).

# The Church of Christ

## The Church is comprised of People:

- **People** in any given location (I Cor. 1:2; Col. 4:16; I Thess. 1:1; I Tim. 3:15) that have been called out of the world of sin by the gospel message (Joel 2:32-33; II Thess. 2:13-14; I Pet. 2:9-10).
- This kingdom of people have cast off the works of the world (Eph. 5:5).
- Church people are sanctified (Jn. 3:2-3; I Cor. 1:2).
- The called “**assemble**” together (Acts 11:26; 14:27; I Cor. 11:18; 14:23; Heb. 12:23).

## The Kingdom of God and its relationship to the church:

- Paul inferentially connects the **kingdom** of God with the **church** at I Thess. 2:12 (comp. with II Thess. 2:13-14; Eph. 4:1; Acts 2:38-39; **Col. 1:13-14**).
- Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom of God connects it to the church (cf. Matt. 16:28; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27).
- The book of **Daniel** is a prophetic timetable that reveals the identity of the kingdom of God as the universal church (see Dan. 2:44).
- The author of **Hebrews** connects God’s “*kingdom*” (Heb. 12:28) with the “*church*” (Heb. 12:22ff).
- Paul tells us that Jesus purchased the “*church with his own blood*” (Acts 2:28). John reveals that these blood bought people are known as “*a kingdom and priests*” (Rev. 5:10).
- The NT uses the word “church” in both a “**local**” (Acts 8:1; 11:22; 13:1; Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 1:2; Phil. 4:15) and “**universal**” (Acts 9:31; Eph. 1:22) sense.

## Jesus’ Association with the Church / The Kingdom of God:

- Jesus said he would build His church (Matt. 16:13ff) as a master architect (Heb. 3:1-6).
- The foundation of the church is Jesus (Eph. 2:19-22).
- The body of the church is Christ (Eph. 1:22).
- The head of the church is Jesus (Eph. 5:22).
- Jesus was of the seed of David and fulfilled God’s promise to establish an everlasting kingdom with an eternal king (i.e., Jesus) (Isa. 9:6-7; Zech 9:10; Jn. 12:36ff; 18:37; Acts 2:29-36; Matt. 21:4-5; Rom. 1:3; Acts 13:22-26, 36-39; Dan. 7:13-14 / Matt. 8:20).

## The Nature of the kingdom of God / Church:

- God’s kingdom is eternal, that is, it shall **never be destroyed** (II Sam. 7:13; Dan. 2:44; II Pet. 1:11).
- God’s kingdom is **spiritual** (The church is nowhere depicted as having a secular agenda nor is it to be concerned with the affairs of this world) (Matt. 3:1-4; 22:15-22; Jn. 18:36; Rom. 14:17).
- God’s kingdom is **unlike any other kingdom** that is of this physical world (Matt. 20:24-28)
- God’s kingdom on earth (i.e., the church) will be His kingdom for ever (I Cor. 15:24).
- Many in times past have had **preconceived ideas and expectations** of the kingdom of God. Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom and confirmed its truths with miracles yet multitudes rejected it because it did not meet their expectations (cf. Matt. 11:11-19; 12:38-42; 13:14-15; 17:10-13; 18:1; 20:20-21). Faulty expectations of the church today will only leads many to immediate and eternal heart aches. The church of the NT is not a relief society for the needy of the world and neither is it a place responsible for child care or secular education.