

Orcutt Christian Church

A Grace Driven Church for Grace Needing People!

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Emmanuel = God With Us

Sermon on The Mount - 51

Matthew 5 - 7; Luke 6:17-49

The Believer and The Kingdom 03

September 25, 2022

Communion: Archie Miller

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Matthew 6:1-34 (NASB)

1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven... 25 "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 "And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? 28 "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to

you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰ "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! ³¹ "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' ³² "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ "But seek first **His kingdom** and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴ "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Studying Christ's "kingdom" is more important than most of us think.

And, are you curious why?

It's because John Nelson Darby fell off his horse in October 1827!

Darby was a 26 year old Church of England priest at the time he fell from his horse, and he spent months recuperating.

That bump on the head did more damage than you image. When he regained consciousness, the idea came to him that what the Church had taught for 1800 years about the **Kingdom** and the **Church** being the same thing was wrong.

And the thought came to him that true Christians would be raptured before Christ's second coming.

Darby was a staunch 5-point Calvinist, and taught that only the "elect," those whom God had chosen before the creation, would be saved, and the "non-elect" are destined to be in hell.

Darby's theology is the foundational theology of Pentecostal and Charismatic and some Baptist churches; and colleges like the Moody Bible Institute, the Bible Institute of

Los Angeles, Philadelphia College of Bible and Dallas Theological Seminary were developed to propagate Darby's theological ideas.

Darby is noted in the theological world as the father of "Dispensationalism", which was spread in the United States by Cyrus Scofield's Scofield Reference Bible.

Authors and preachers such as Hal Lindsey and John Hagee made Darby's theology widely popular.

Was Darby right in throwing out 1800 years of Church theology?

Well, let's spend a few minutes this morning reflecting on **The Kingdom** and **The Church** and find out.

Let's consider first

Matthew 16:18-19 (NASB)

***18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."*

In v.18, our Lord says "**My church.**"

And in v.19, He says "**the kingdom of heaven.**"

In the context of this scripture, both terms refer to the same institution which Christ said He would set in place.

Remember that Jesus is speaking in Greek, which has been translated into our English.

So He uses two different words for the same concept.

We read in Mt. 16:18 that the "**church**" is the "**ekklesia.**"

We read in Mt. 16:19 that the "**kingdom**" is the "**basileias.**"

Well, you say those are certainly two different words.

Last Lord's Day we spoke of how the word "**basileias**" conveyed the concept of the reign of the Monarch.

There is another concept in the word "kingdom" that corresponds to the wide spread British Empire, the "United Kingdom," and the word for that" is also "**basileias.**"

When you were immersed into the Body of Christ, you immediately entered a state of union not only with Christ but also with all others who are already united with Him.

This corporate aspect of salvation is what is called the **Kingdom of God.**

We sing the hymn of Samuel Stone, an English preacher,

*The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word.*

*From heav'n he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.*

The new creation is the Church, the Kingdom of God.

You know that the word that Jesus used for the Church is different than the word for Kingdom.

When Our Lord wanted to tell us the nature of the Church, He says in Mt. 16:18 that the "**church**" is the "**ekklesia.**"

What does "**ekklesia**" mean?

"**ekklesia**" describes the church as a holy, separated nation, and is used over a hundred times in the New Testament.

The word is a combination of **kaleo**, "to call," and **ek**, "out of."

Thus its literal meaning is "***the called-out ones.***"

If I were to say "every one who lives west of Bradley, please move over to the west side of the Chapel."

All of you who got up and moved over in front of the piano, are "**the called-out ones.**"

What's true for the church is true for the kingdom.

To know what the church is, is to know what the kingdom of God is.

It is the body of Christ, the house of God, the temple of God, the building of God.

When we are thinking of the Lord's community as a *body*, we think of the head and the individual members, the life and support of the body.

When we think of the same community as a *house*, or a *family*, we immediately think of the head of the family, the members, the discipline and ruling of a family, the care and oversight of a family, the support and dependence of a family.

We think about becoming a member of the family by birth or adoption, and the losses by death, or those who have abandoned the family.

When we think of the same community as a *temple*, we think of the priest, foundation, the lively stones built together in it, and the builders.

When we think of it as a *kingdom*, we think of a king, constitution, laws, territory, subjects.

When we think of it as the *church*, congregation or community founded by Christ, the only divinely founded religious community on earth.

We think of God, who authorized the *church* before the foundations of the earth were laid.

We think of the prophets, who predicted its founding, with many of its stupendous and momentous impact on the human race.

We think of the Lord Messiah, who founded it; the great truth on which it is built; the authorized apostles and evangelists who first preached the gospel, called people together, under their new head, in the new community, *the kingdom / the church*, making "*one new man*."

It has Christ for its head.

It has the gospel--the power of God--to turn the world to

God.

It has the teaching of Christ and His apostles for its edification and instruction.

The apostle Paul summarized the gospel when he said in **1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NASB)**

***1**Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, **2**by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. **3**For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4**and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*

Christ is its supreme authority for everything.

His authority is set forth in His own teaching and that of His divinely authorized and inspired apostles.

The first thing to understand about the church's nature is that it is a group of people who are qualitatively different from and distinct from everyone else on earth.

It is composed of those who have been separated from the mass of fallen mankind and who constitute the new creation as it presently exists in the very midst of the old creation.

Thus the human race is divided into two groups: the church, and the not-church.

This aspect of the church's nature is emphasized in the image of the

1 Peter 2:9 (BSB)

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, to proclaim

the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Isn't that beautiful?

The Church is a **holy nation!**

We have been called **into His marvelous light** for the purpose of proclaiming **the virtues of Him** to those who live in the **darkness**.

We have a mission to be God's mouthpiece.

The church is not a literal nation in the sense that Israel was.

Israel was a political entity occupying a specific geographical locality that some people call "The Holy Land."

People entered into the physical nation of Israel's citizenship by physical birth.

Not so for the Church.

Rather, the church is a spiritual nation entered by spiritual rebirth, its citizens coexisting in this world side-by-side with non-citizens and being distinguished by their lifestyle rather than their location.

Whereas OT Israel sought purity through geographical separation, the church seeks separation through purity.

In the NT Christians are those who have been "called."

Called—by whom?

1 Cor 1:9 (BSB)

God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

By God himself.

He is the One who calls us ***into fellowship with His Son Jesus***

And, as Peter says, we have been called out the darkness of this world.

Did you ever stop to think how God called you out of the present darkness?

It certainly wasn't by some secret, selective, irresistible call heard only by "the elect" as the Calvinists teach.

It wasn't some exclusive knock on the head that we are called.

We heard the Good News

Romans 10:17 (ESV)

faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

We heard the word, and we accepted God's call.

Paul declares that we are

Gal 1:6 (NASB)

called you by the grace of Christ

We are called by the grace of Christ that we

2 Thess 2:14 (NIV)

might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And the *the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*

Rom 1:16 (NIV)

is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes

You can see that the **ekklesia, the church**, is the collective group of people who have answered this gospel call.

And here is the amazing result of answering the call of the **grace of Christ.**

Paul declares in

Romans 1:7 (AMP)

[I am writing] to all who are beloved of God ... called to be saints (God's people) and set apart for a sanctified life, [that is, set apart for God and His purpose]:

What are saints?

Saints are not some football team in New Orleans.

Saints are not what the Roman Catholic church teaches which a person who is recognized as having an exceptional degree of holiness, likeness, or closeness to God.

Saints are not some dead people who have been declared to be extraordinary people.

As Paul puts it, we, that is you and I, are “**called to be saints.**”

We are

Rev 20:9 (ESV)

the camp of the saints

The English word “**saints,**” is the Greek word “**hagioi,**” and this characterizes the nature of the church as a holy, separated nation.

Saints then are simply the ones who have been separated or set apart into a special relationship with God.

It is used in the NT to describe the body of believers as a whole, not just a select few of the spiritually elite.

It refers to the church as a “holy nation,” the ekklesia that has been called and set apart from everyone else.

In the beginning God created the human race in his own image in order to have personal fellowship with them in a relationship of intimate love and communion.

This purpose was interrupted by sin, which places a barrier between God and man.

Isaiah 59:2 (NLT)

It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.

We sing

*The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word.
From heav'n he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.*

God was determined to have a people of his own anyway by a new creation.

Thus, even though the whole human race is God's people in the sense that he is their Creator and Lord, only those who have been called out from the darkness of mankind into the church are the people of God in the sense that he originally intended.

The way Peter describes us in

1 Peter 2:9 (BSB)

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, to proclaim the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

God's own possession

The church belongs to God; He owns it.

I would image that this conjures up in your imagination is that of the church as slaves of God.

And it is certainly true that we are God's slaves in the sense that he has bought us

1 Cor 6:19–20 (NASB)

***19*Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and**

*that you are not your own? **20**For you have been bought for a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*

Paul literally says that **You are not your own**

We owe God our absolute obedience.

But another way to think of this idea that the church is God's own possession suggests the image of a family or household.

Paul says

Eph 2:19 (Aramaic Bible in Plain English)

Therefore, you are not strangers, neither guests, but inhabitants of the city of The Holy One and children of the household of God.

We don't live in the slave quarters nor sleep in the guest room.

We belong to God's own family.

Family relationships form the deepest level of the church's life.

God as Father is the head of the family, and every member of the church is his adopted child

2 Cor 6:18 (NASB)

And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

In this context Jesus is pictured as the elder brother who shares his inheritance with us.

The relationship of Christians to one another is that of brothers and sisters.

The church is thus a "brotherhood" that is told

1 Pet 2:17 (ESV).

***Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.
Honor the emperor.***

Living as the “brotherhood” reminds of how much we need to have reunions and be to worship together as “the family of God.”

So we are commanded

Hebrews 10:25 (BLB)

not forsaking the assembling together of ourselves as is the custom with some, but encouraging one another

Because the Church is a separated brotherhood, a distinct people, the family of God, Jesus gives this commandment

John 13:34-35 (BSB)

34A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. 35By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.

We know that we must show this love to the brotherhood, but we must show this love to all people, even our enemies.

As God’s people we must exhibit family love, a brotherly love, toward one another.

Paul commands us to

Rom 12:10 (BSB)

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Outdo yourselves in honoring one another.

brotherly love is the affectionate love between friends.

honoring one another is the tender affection among family members.

The bottom line is that we as God's family must have feelings toward one another that are different from our feelings toward unbelievers.

We, as a family of believers, can have deep, spiritual fellowship only with other members of the household.

Deep, spiritual fellowship can only be with other Christians.

We cannot have deep fellowship, intimate, sharing relationships, with unbelievers.

This is why God says,

2 Cor 6:17 (NLT)

Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the LORD.

Fellowship involves a sharing of something in common, but believers and unbelievers at the deepest level have nothing in common.

This does not mean that Christians must break off all associations with unbelievers—far from it!

Our Lord in His high priestly prayer said

John 17:15 (NKJV)

I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Christ left us as His Ambassadors to the world, and that means that our association with non-Christians must have the character of redemptive friendship rather than intimate, family fellowship.

Intimate, family fellowship must be experienced only within the family of God's people.

Our purpose as the household of faith is to steer the non-Christian towards themselves being members of the *household of faith*.

As Paul puts it in

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

And, just as the human body has a head, so does *the body of Christ*

Col 1:18 (NIV)

And he is the head of the body, the church;

Doesn't this picture for us a human body in all its parts, with the head representing Jesus Christ and the rest of the body from neck to toes representing the church.

Doesn't this say to us that the church is the body of Christ and we are in a relationship of submission to Christ, who is its head in the sense of "leader, one in authority.

Doesn't this mean that Jesus and Jesus alone is the final authority for all things relating to the church.

How, then, does exercise His authority?

He exercises this authority through His apostles and prophets, whose teaching comes to us in the form of the NT Scriptures.

Jesus, in looking into the future when He has established the church, says

John 16:13-15 (BSB)

***13**when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. For He will not speak on His own, but He will speak what He hears, and He will declare to you what is to come. **14**He will glorify Me by taking from what is Mine and disclosing it to you. **15**Everything that belongs to the Father is Mine. That is why I said that the Spirit will take from what is Mine and disclose it to you.*

These NT documents are in effect the very words of Christ our head, they possess the absolute authority of Christ himself.

The church is submitted to Christ as its head only to the degree that it is obedient to his Word.

Christ's mission was

“to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10),
to draw all men to himself (John 12:32),
and to bring them abundant life (John 10:10) through the power of his death and resurrection.

We are the church, the kingdom of God, the household of faith, and our responsibility as the body of Christ is to be the means through which Christ the head fulfills his mission upon the earth.

The mission of Christ the head can be accomplished only as we, the members of his body, the church, obey his orders. As we members of the body exercise our Spirit-given talents, the head is carrying out his own purposes through us. Our hearty enjoyment of the food at our Potluck reminds us that our bodies need sustenance.

Ordinarily in the human body all the food and liquids that nourish and sustain it enter into it through the mouth, which is part of the head.

The church, the body of Christ, receives its sustenance and life through Christ the head.

The church maintains its own life and strength and continues to grow only when it remains in close union and fellowship with Christ its head.

Our union with Christ our head is the means by which all the benefits of life and salvation are transferred to us.

He provides the laws needed for the kingdom.

He provides the leaders the church needs.

He provides us His words which give us spiritual strength.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (BSB)

11And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12to equip the saints for works of ministry and to build up the body of Christ, 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, as we mature to the full measure of the stature of Christ. 14Then we will no longer be infants, tossed about by the waves and carried around by every wind of teaching and by the clever cunning of men in their deceitful scheming. 15Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ Himself, who is the head. 16From Him the whole body, fitted and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love through the work of each individual part.