

The human body of Jesus was brought about by the operation of the Holy Spirit. It was a perfect body, without sin, sickness or any other blemish.....God manifest in the flesh. Jesus used this body as a vehicle for doing the Father's will, including ministering to a needy world in love, power and authority.

THE BODY OF JESUS NOW

What God did in the natural body of Jesus by the Holy Spirit, He wants to do in the church by that same Spirit. The Church is also a "prepared body," and the purpose of its existence is that the will of God might be done in the earth.

God is raising up a "corporate" many-membered Christ in the world today to minister to the needs of people in the same love, power and authority as Jesus did in the days of His flesh.

The Church's ministry is seen in *Eph 3:10*. Write this verse out.

Briefly what do you think this verse means? _____

What is the task (and privilege) of the end time Church to be?

Mat 24:14 _____

Also read *Mat 28:18-20*.

*We do not mean to imply that Jesus has no Body other than the Church, for His Resurrection Body is in heaven. What we emphasise is that **as far as His ministry to the world is concerned**, the Church is the only Body He has."

No 19

CHRISTIAN LIFE BIBLE COURSE

Study Nineteen The Church

Upon becoming a Christian you entered into a relationship with God in which He is your Father and you are His child. Until now, this course has emphasised that relationship. However it is important for you to realise that there are other children in God's family, ("your brothers and sisters"). You must learn to relate to them in a meaningful way. This study will introduce you to what the Bible says about God's family as a whole – the Church.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "CHURCH"

Originally, the word "church", (Greek ekklesia), referred to the assembly of registered voters of a Greek city – who were the decision makers and governed the city. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit gives this word a spiritual significance, applying it to the assembly of believers, (i.e. a local "church"). These are to be decision makers and govern the nations as they are led by the Holy Spirit through intercession. Write out *2Tim 1:9* "Who _____

_____ purpose and grace".

THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

Every true believer, (regardless of "denomination"), is part of the world-wide fellowship of His Church. This great Church is **not denominational or political**, but rather is united in **spiritual oneness**.

Complete these words of Jesus from *John 10:16*:

"There shall be _____ fold and _____ shepherd."

Read carefully *Eph 4:1-6, Heb 12:23*.

THE LOCAL CHURCH

Write out *Mat 18:20* _____

The local church is the **visible expression**, in any given locality, of the Universal Church. As a child of God, what should you not neglect?

Heb 10:25 _____

It is interesting to note that 90% of the times that the word “church” is used in the New Testament, it is with reference to the local church. *Ac 13:1; Ac 14:23; Ac 15:4; Ac 20:17*. The Local Church is ideally a miniature version of the Universal Church. In other words, that which is true of the Universal Church should also be true of the church in its local expression.

PICTURES OF THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Each of the following pictures emphasises a particular aspect of what it means to be part of the Church.

- a. **A City** *Heb 12:22,23; Ps 48:1,2,12; Rev 21:2,3,9-27*.
Belonging to the Church means accepting the responsibilities of citizenship as well as the benefits.
- b. **A Kingdom** *Col 1:13; Mat 13:43-46; Mat 25:34; Mk 1:14,15*. Belonging to the Church means submitting to the authority of the King, both direct and delegated.
- c. **A Family** *Eph 2:19; Eph 3:14,15; Heb 3:6, 1Tim 3:15*.
Belonging to the Church means relating in a meaningful way to brothers and sisters, as well as to our Father God.
- d. **A Bride** *Eph 5:31,32; Rev 19:9; Rev 21:2,9,10; Rev 22:17; Jer 33:11*. Belonging to the Church means a collective deepening of our love relationship with Jesus. It also means purity as we look forward to the marriage of Jesus and His Church.
- e. **An Army** *Ezk 37:10; Eph 6:11,17, 2Tim 2:3,4*,

Mat 16:18. Belonging to the Church means that we wage a continual, corporate warfare against the Prince of Darkness.

- f. **Branches of the Vine** *Jn 15:1-8*. Belonging to the Church means that we all draw from the same source of life (Jesus) and are called to have fruit.
- g. **A Priesthood** *1Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; Heb 13:15*. Belonging to the Church means offering spiritual sacrifices to God.
- h. **A Temple** *1Pet 2:5; Eph 2:20-22; 1Cor 6:19*. Belonging to the Church means to be fitted into a place in the building as a “living stone”.
- i. **A Garden** *1Cor 3:4-10; Ps 1:1-3; Mat 6:28,29; Ps 92:12-15*. Belonging to the Church means to be planted with others in the Garden of the Lord, to be to the praise of His Glory, *Eph 1:12*.
- j. **A Body** *1Cor 12:12-27, Rom 12:4,5*. Belonging to the Church means:
Submitting to the authority of the Head (Jesus).
Working harmoniously with the other members (or “organs”) of the Body.

Note that each emphasises the essential **unity of the Church**.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

Before time began, God desired to have a people through whom He could manifest His divine wisdom. This is known as His _____ purpose, *Eph 3:11*. As we have seen before, God calls the Church the _____, *1Cor 12:27*, and this gives us an indication of the role of the Church in the world today.

THE BODY OF JESUS 2,000YEARS AGO

Read *Heb 10:5-7* and complete the following from v5 “When He _____ He says, ‘ a body _____ for me.’ ”