

## **WE ARE THE CHURCH!**

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **Matthew 16:18**

The church as we know it is at a crossroads. This is a time in which we must take time to reexamine our role and purpose in this world.

My concern is not for the Church of Matthew 16:18, my concern is for the Church of 2023.

## **WHO/WHAT IS THE CHURCH?**

I want to start this series by identifying who and what the church is.

I am concentrating on identity in this session. It is imperative that we know who and what we are.

### **1. The words and intention of Christ**

Matthew 16:18

A. God wants the Church to know who it is.

Genesis 1:26

Jeremiah 1:4-5

B. The identity Jesus chose for the church.

**Church – Ekklesia** from a compound of the Greek word, “**ek**,” meaning out (from) and a derivative of “**kaleo**,” meaning called. The Church then consists of people who have been “**called out**.”

C. Original uses for ekklesia.

1. An army assembly and poised for battle.

2. The assembly of competent full citizens of a city.

### **2 Biblical metaphors for the Church**

There are several metaphors that are used in reference to the Church, which helps to define what the church is and how it functions.

A. The Church is Body of Christ.

Colossians 1:18

Ephesians 5:22-23

B. The Church is the Bride of Christ.

Revelation 19:7-8

The imagery of a bride communicates two things to us:

1. Relationship
2. Purity

C. The Church is a Royal Priesthood.

1 Peter 2:9-10

1. Royalty suggests that the Church rules or will rule.
2. Priesthood suggests that those in the Church are God's ministers or servants.

D. The Church is a flock.

Acts 20:28-31

Let me sum up what the Church is...like this:

1. As the Ekklesia – the Church is powerful and competent.
2. As the Body of Christ – the Church is here to do what Jesus is no longer physically here to do.
3. As the Bride of Christ – the Church is here to demonstrate to the world the holiness of God and the purity of a life lived to God's glory.
4. As a Royal Priesthood – the Church can demonstrate authority with humility and altruism.
5. As a Flock – the Church exhibits successful interdependence and trust in God.