



Knowing Him Together Ministry

“The Church” - Broad & Specific

Broad / Universal / Trans Local / Large	Specific / Limited / Local / Small
(Act 8:1) And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.	(1Co 5:12) For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?
(Act 8:3) But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.	(1Co 11:22) What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.
(Act 9:31) So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.	(1Co 14:4) The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.
(Act 11:22) The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.	(1Co 14:5) Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.
(Act 11:26) and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.	(1Co 14:12) So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.
(Act 12:1) About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.	(1Co 16:19) The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.
(Act 12:5) So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.	(Col 4:15) Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.
(Act 13:1) Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.	(Phm 1:2) And Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:
(Act 14:27) And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.	(3Jn 1:9) I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.
(Act 15:3) So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers.	(3Jn 1:10) So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.
(Act 15:4) When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.	Act 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
(Act 18:22) When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch.	1Co 4:17 That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.
(Act 20:17) Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.	1Co 11:18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part,
(Act 20:28) Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.	Act 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.
(Rom 16:1) I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae,	(Rom 16:5) Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.
(1Co 1:2) To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:	
(1Co 5:12) For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?	
(1Co 6:4) So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church?	
(1Co 10:32) Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God,	
(1Co 11:22) What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.	
(1Co 12:28) And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.	
(1Co 14:4) The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.	

(1Co 14:5) Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.	
(1Co 14:12) So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.	
(1Co 15:9) For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.	
(2Co 1:1) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:	
(Gal 1:13) For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.	
(Eph 1:22) And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,	
(Eph 3:10) so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.	
(Eph 3:21) to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.	
(Eph 5:23) For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.	
(Eph 5:24) Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.	
(Eph 5:25) Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,	
(Eph 5:27) so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.	
(Eph 5:29) For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,	
(Eph 5:32) This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.	
(Php 3:6) as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness, under the law blameless.	
(Col 1:18) And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent	
(Col 1:24) Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,	
(Col 4:16) And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.	
(1Th 1:1) Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.	
(2Th 1:1) Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:	
(1Ti 3:15) if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of truth.	
(1Ti 5:16) If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are really widows.	
(Jas 5:14) Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.	
(3Jn 1:6) who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God.	
(3Jn 1:9) I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.	
(3Jn 1:10) So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.	
(Rev 2:1) "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.	
(Rev 2:8) "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.	
(Rev 2:12) "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: 'The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword.	
(Rev 2:18) "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.	

(Rev 3:1) "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. "I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.	
(Rev 3:7) "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: 'The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.	
(Rev 3:14) "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.	

The purpose in compiling these verses, is to make it very clear regarding the two aspects of "The Church," as seen from God and His apostles' perspectives.

The Church is not a place it is a people...

In the broad sense, The Church is composed of all of the smaller specific fellowships in a given region and beyond that to all believers throughout the earth.

In the narrow or specific sense, The Church is composed of those who the Lord has joined together, to form a localized expression of His body and Church.

As we transition from the Traditional understanding we have all had of Church, as a place, a building, a business, and an organization, towards a new understanding of the organic or life oriented concept of a people, a community, and redeemed family, we must be very careful that we not fall into an error of rejection of a call to commitment to the specific fellowship of believers the Lord would draw us into, in favor of an independent, unaccountable, drifting army of disconnected individuals.

The apostles saw these things very clearly. On one hand they referred to The Church as:

Acts 8:1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against **the church in Jerusalem**, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

In this verse we are seeing the broader Church, a Church composed of the many homes and places the Church was gathering in, in the broader context of the city of Jerusalem.

On the other had, the Church is seen in its very specific and localized expression:

1Corinthians 16:19 The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with **the church in their house**, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.

Both are "The Church," but one is The Church composed of many "The Churches," the other is The Church composed of a small subset of the broader Church, localized in one specific family's home.

It is fine for us to relate on many levels and with many connections, to many small localized expressions of the Church, as well as to the broader Church as a whole, but if we fail to develop relationships of deep commitments and accountability to the Spirit of Christ in one another, with those in a small and identifiable expression of the localized Church, then we have missed a wonderful dynamic of God's plan for His people.

It is not sufficient to think of myself as connected to the broader Church, but have no commitment to the smaller and identifiable local expression of The Church. I run the risk of becoming a maverick, magnifying my personal freedom over my responsibility to be known, and deeply involved with a specific subset of the broader Church.

Certainly this is true of leaders, whom must be known and not had hands laid on them too swiftly until they are adequately known amongst a limited number of people they are in relational dynamics with, but beyond this, it is true for all believers. The Church is not just a universal thing, it is also a localized and specific set of people we know and are known by.

In this context we see the apostles establish a certain order. It is where deacons and elders have their place in service to the body, and the body is in submission to Jesus' authority within them. Their authority is not in title or position, nor based on them being on some Church's staff, but is based on their having spiritual gifts and graces that set them apart as unique servants to the Church. We might refer to them as "The Specialists." Not special in any sense of "better," but in the sense of uniquely focused on divine objectives and functions in behalf of the body specific and broad. Without such leadership/specialists the body is all too inclined to drift around and to being blown about by every wind of doctrine.

We need specific identifiable leaders, who, with the character and wisdom of Christ, care for our souls, teach us the Word of God, exhort, correct, admonish, and rebuke as needed, so that we might grow up into Him who is the Only Head of His Church. Their role is to draw the people to Him, and reveal His headship and wisdom. It is not to do their own thing, at the expense of the people, and turn them away from Him and to themselves.

It is in this context that congregational disciplines can take place, accountability to Christ in one another, relational depth, knowing and being known, etc., can happen with definition and regularity. Without this there are little body oriented protections from deception, error, and the wolves that Paul refers to in Acts 20:29 & 30. We need shepherds to protect us from these kinds of folks, because these kinds of folks will always exist and will always be looking for prey. For the body, their safe place is under the oversight (mind you I did not say "covering") of godly leadership, who care for their souls.

We have all grown up in Traditional Church settings, where accountability, commitment, and covering were thrown about in very dangerous ways, and with far too loose and broad of definitions. We are called to be accountable to one another, but specifically to Christ in one another. Our accountability is not to hierarchical title and position oriented ideas, where someone is my boss in the Church, and I am to blindly submit to them just because of their title or position. But, my accountability is to the Christ in my brothers and sisters, who, in the context of prayer and knowing me, hear from Him and speak His wisdom and word into my life. I am accountable to Christ in them. Our commitment is not so much expressed by always being at every gathering, getting involved in some "Church program," or giving a set amount of money to "The House of the Lord," although giving will be a part of our lives. Commitment is far more connected with a commitment to love, serve, know, and care for others, rather than to religious legalism and artificial rules of man. The entire notion of covering could have had a wonderful meaning to it, but it came to be known as an excuse for leadership to lord it over God's flock, as bosses and controllers, thus effectively removing the flock from Christ's headship, and reordering their lives under human headship. This notion of covering is dangerous and completely unbiblical. If we had understood covering, as "love covering a multitude of sins," or an over sight of love, care, and service, then such a notion could have been healthy. If we understood covering as relating in honor towards those called to lead us to Christ and express His oversight in our lives, that could have been healthy. But when it has come to be known as a justification for intense control and boss orientation, then it becomes time to abandon the term and concept, and return to the clearer and more accurate concepts of biblical leadership.

So, we come away from false understandings, but we do not throw the baby out with the bath water. Church is not a place, but it IS a specific people, as well as the broader family of God. Leadership is not based in title and position, but it IS based in God ordained orientation to specific leaders who manifest His grace, love, wisdom, character, and service to the body.

May God help us to “know” where He is connecting us. We need His help to know those whom we are to relate intimately and in community related commitment with. We will enjoy many fellowships, and the broader body of Christ, but we will also be highly identified with one specific group of people, who know us at the deepest levels, and with those who know us well enough, that when we walk into the room they can just tell when we are sad, angry, wounded, struggling, tempted, or afraid. We are known. We are family. We hang with these ones. We would lay down our lives for these ones.

We are “Joined” to one another, not as one “joins” a club, but as one joins one bone or sinew to another. This term was clearly a key term in describing the nature of relationships in the body of Christ:

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, **being joined together**, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

Eph 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, **joined and held together** by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Acts 17:4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, **joined Paul and Silas**.

Acts 17: 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 However, **some men joined him** and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but **that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind** and in the same judgment.

When we leave these kinds of small and close knit communities, we don't just stop coming. We clearly communicate to the body our reasons for moving on. If we are leaving because we have been unsuccessful at stemming the tide of unhealthy doctrine or leadership, then we leave with explanation and sorrow. If we are leaving because Jesus is calling us onward, into new fields of service in His Kingdom, then we leave with full disclosure, prayer, sending forth, and the blessing of the body. We don't just come and go. Church is far more than just a bible study we occasionally attend. It is more than some Jesus Supper Club, where we go to enjoy good fellowship and a meal. It is more than just a prayer gathering. Church local is the place of being “joined to” by the Spirit, and leaving is a very serious and important event.

May God bring us to wholeness in these areas. If we are to become the Church of His headship and design these things must come into order.