Portraits Of The Church

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday November 5th, 2017

Text: Mark 10:28-30; Matthew 12:46-50

### Intro

1. Part of the blessings of being a member of the Lord’s church is that we are family! (Mk. 10:28-30: As saints we have spiritual family the world over!) – *A Kingdom without borders!*
	1. Mt. 12:46-50: Jesus says His family are “whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven” – obedience makes one a member of God’s family *(Gal. 3:27; Rom. 8:14-17)*
2. The Scriptures describes the church in ways that show it is important to God and to man!
	1. The Body of Christ *(Eph. 1:22-23) – Baptized into the body (I Cor. 12:13)*
	2. The Household of God *(Eph. 2:19) – Family (I Tim. 3:15)*
	3. The Temple of God *(Eph. 2:21-22) – Living Stones (Blocks)*
	4. The Kingdom of God *(Eph. 5:5)*
	5. The Bride of Christ *(Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 19:7)*
3. In looking closely at the church being “the family (household) of God” we can see the relationships of the saints to the church! (To each other)
	1. Eph. 2:19-22; Rom. 12:4; Acts 20:28: We see the church is a close-knit family!
4. Let us examine the portraits of the church to see what God wants us to be!

#### ***Blocks (Living Stones)***

* 1. Eph. 2:19-22: The church is God’s “holy temple,” with each member a block fitted together (“Living Stones” – I Pet. 2:5)
		1. The Old Testament temple was material. It was beautiful to behold!
		2. The New Testament temple is spiritual. We are to be beautiful to behold!
		3. The temple is a place of beauty and worship.
			1. The church reflects the beauty of holiness *(I Pet. 1:16).*
			2. *Jn. 4:24:* The church worships God in spirit and in truth.
	2. Is. 28:16; I Pet. 2:5-7: This building has a sure foundation and the Holy Spirit revealed the meaning of Isaiah’s prophecy to include those “who believe.”
		1. *Mt. 16:18:* Jesus said, “I will build My church.”
		2. Its foundation is built upon the fact that Christ is “the Son of the living God.” *(Mt. 16:16)*
		3. I Cor. 3:10-14: Christ is the strong foundation!
		4. The chief cornerstone holds the building together.
		5. *Is. 28:16;* Acts 2:24: It is a foundation tested by the greatest power over man: death.
	3. As “Living Stones” saints comprise the blocks that fit together to make the church!
		1. One block can be easily knocked over; but try kicking in the support wall!
		2. I Tim. 3:15: The church is the “pillar and support of the truth.”
	4. Saints are to be built up together—on the chief corner stone, which is Christ!

#### ***Body***

* 1. Rom. 12:4-5: The “church” is the body of Christ, or the people through whom He works to accomplish His mission on earth (I Cor. 12:13: Entrance is through baptism!)
		1. The body of Christ is made up of individual members with different functions (much like the workings of the physical body – *I Cor. 12:12-31).*
	2. Blessings in the body:
		1. Eph. 1:22-23: The church (body) is “the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”
		2. Eph. 2:16: Reconciliation to God.
			1. Col. 1:18-23: The reconciled ones are those through whom the Lord works and those whose lives He controls.
		3. Eph. 5:23: Salvation is in the body. “He Himself being the Savior of the body.”
	3. Like blocks that are fitted together to make the whole, so are the members of the body!
		1. I Cor. 12:12-14, 19-20, 27: All members with roles – must work together!
		2. If a member is hurting, the body feels it (I Cor. 12:26)
		3. If a member is severed (cut off) it will die if not rejoined! (Js. 5:19-20; Jn. 15:4-6: The branch away from the vine withers and dies & is burned!)
	4. The church is the body of Christ; must be a member to be saved *(No other church can)!*

#### ***Flock***

* 1. Acts 20:28: The church is called the “flock.”
	2. Jn. 10:1-5, 7-11, 14-17, 27-30: Jesus calls His sheep.
		1. When we obey the gospel we answer His call and become His sheep.
		2. He says He must gather all sheep into one fold.
		3. He is the door. We must come to God through Christ *(Jn. 14:6).*
		4. When we answer His call, He will give us rest (*Mt. 11:28-30*).
		5. He will give us eternal life *(Mt. 25:34, 46; Jn. 10:27-28).*
		6. If we are His sheep, we only heed Him (only obey Him).
		7. If we walk off or go astray, we have heeded the voice of a stranger and are on the path of death and destruction *(Jn. 10:10).*
	3. When we heed His voice, no one can take us from His fold or lead us astray!
		1. We choose to hear a stranger’s voice or not!
		2. Rom. 8:35-39: Self is left out – “Self” can take us out of the fold.
	4. As the flock of God, we are promised eternal life by the Good Shepherd Himself!

#### ***Family***

* 1. Eph. 2:19: Saints are “no longer strangers and aliens,” but are “of God’s household!”
	2. I Tim. 3:15: God’s “house” identifies His family.
		1. Responsibility: The church is to be “the pillar and support of the truth.”
	3. Rom. 8:14-17: God’s children are in His family.
		1. Those led by the Spirit are sons of God. (Jn. 1:12: Those who believe were granted “the right to become children of God”)
		2. Children by adoption *(Can call God, “Abba! Father! – Mk. 14:36; Gal. 4:6-7).*
		3. Heirs of God; fellow heirs with Christ.
		4. If suffer with Him, will also be glorified with Him! *(Rom. 8:17)*
	4. The family metaphor emphasizes:
		1. The closeness of God and His people.
		2. God’s love and concern for His children.
		3. The honor involved in church membership (Members are children of God).
		4. Eph. 5:7-11: The responsibility to live as a *child* of God.
	5. Two figures are used to show the means of entrance into God’s family:
		1. Eph. 1:5: *Adopted* by God as His children *(Rom. 8:15-16)*
		2. I Peter 1:22-23: A new *birth*. *(Baptism: Jn. 3:3-5; I Cor. 12:13-14; Gal. 3:27)*
	6. Through obedience to the gospel saints are members of the family of God!

## Conclusion

1. *Eph. 3:5-6:* The church breaks cultural & ethnic barriers to welcome ***ALL*** in!
2. *Eph. 5:25:* The church was important enough to Jesus that He died for it (Acts 20:28)
3. God has described the church in ways saints can see the closeness to each other and to God!
	1. Blocks (Living Stones), Body of Christ, Flock (Christ’s Flock), & Household of God.
4. The church is important to God and to man!
5. It is important and essential to salvation to be a member of the church Jesus built and died for!
6. Saints must work together in being built up, and to be the “the pillar and support of the truth!”
7. If you are not a Christian, you are outside the family of God! Repent and be baptized!
8. If a Christian in error, remember the honor you have been given as a member of God’s family!
9. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!