

THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST MAY BE BUILT UP

*Ephesians 4:1-16*

November 22, 2009

1. God's concern, from the beginning of time, has been to create a people who know Him.

**O.T.** The people are called by the name "Israel."

**N.T.** The people are called by the name "The Church."

**Old Testament:**

☞ **Salvation is a corporate concept.**

Genesis 12:2 – God's promise to Abraham

Exodus 6:7 ; Leviticus 26:12 – God's promise to the nation of Israel

☞ **Blessing is a corporate concept.**

Deut. 26:19; Psalms 106:4-5

☞ **Sin and need for forgiveness was a corporate concept.**

(Josh 7) – Achan's sin

(Hosea) – God identifies the nation of Israel with Hosea's harlot of a wife

Neh. 1:6-10

☞ **Leadership is a corporate concept, both in blessing & punishment.**

**New Testament:**

☞ **John the Baptist**

Luke 1:17

☞ **Jesus**

**Immanuel** – "God with us" (Matthew 1:23)

**Jesus** – "...because he will save his people from their sins." (Mat 1:21)

**"Our Father..."**

☞ **The early church had a corporate perspective.**

Acts 2:42ff

☞ **The Epistles**

Letters to the churches

1 Peter 2:9-10 ; Eph. 4:11-12

☞ **Imagery**

living stones in a spiritual temple (1 Pet. 2:4-5)

The body of Christ (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12)

The bride of Christ, etc.

2. We are created to be the people of God, a community which bears witness to Him.

☞ **Christ is the center of community.** He is **Immanuel** – God with us.

He is **the head** of the body which the church.

Leviticus 26:1, 12

☞ **God creates a community of individuals – a people**

EK KLESIA – the called out ones.

Two extremes: **Individualism & Conformism**

The world's way leads to "**Isolation**"

God's way leads to "**Oneness.**"

2 Timothy 2:26

Philippians 3:15

3. Together we can accomplish FAR more than we ever could apart.

☞ **In Discipleship:** We grow far more in the context of relationship than we do outside of relationships.

Proverbs 27:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4

☞ **In Evangelism**

John 13:35; 1 John 4:7-8, 11-12, 19-21

☞ **In prayer...**

A Truth to Remember: The Bride of Christ is the Church, not a bunch of individuals.

A Challenge to Consider: If you are a member of the Church, are you playing an active part in her growth? If you are NOT a member, what is it that is keeping you from joining? Would you be willing to talk with the pastor about this?

One thing I heard this morning was...

**Next Week: ADVENT # 1: (Isa. 40:1-5; Mt. 5:3-4) JESUS CAME TO COMFORT US**