
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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A GENUINE CHURCH

- I. "The church of God"—a church not only being possessed by God, but having God as its nature and essence, which are divine, general, universal, and eternal—v. 2a.
- II. "The church...in Corinth"—a church in a city, remaining in a definite locality and taking it as its standing, ground, and jurisdiction for its administration in business affairs, which is physical, particular, local and temporal in time—v. 2b.
- III. "The church...sanctified in Christ"—a church having been sanctified, made holy, in Christ, having Christ, who is the embodiment of the processed Triune God in His fullness, as its element and sphere—v. 2c.
- IV. The church being composed of the "called saints"—the assembly of the saints, the sanctified ones, who have been called out of the satanic world—v. 2d.
- V. "With all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place"—this long phrase indicating that the church which is genuine is related with all the saints who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place around the globe—v. 2e.
- VI. The Lord Jesus Christ being "theirs and ours"—this indicating that the church which is genuine has the Lord Jesus Christ as "their" portion, "their" possession of the divine inheritance, for "their" enjoyment—v. 2f.
- VII. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"—this indicating that the church which is genuine, being under the dispensing of "grace" (the embodiment of the processed Triune God for the enjoyment of His called ones) and "peace" (the processed Triune God as the issue of the enjoyment of Him as grace by His called ones), from God the Father as the source of the Divine Trinity, from the Lord Jesus Christ as the course of the flow of the Divine Trinity, and from the Holy Spirit as the reaching of the flow of the Divine Trinity (not mentioned in word, but implied in denotation—2 Cor. 13:14)—v. 3.
- VIII. "Based upon the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus"—this indicating that the church which is genuine having the grace of God given to it in Christ, not the condition in itself, as its base—v. 4.
- IX. "In everything you were enriched in Him,...so that you are not lacking in any gift"—this indicating that the church which is genuine is enriched in everything in Christ, so that it is not lacking in any gift, the inward initial gift issuing from grace, such as the eternal life and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:23;

Acts 2:38; Heb. 6:4), not the outward miraculous gifts—vv. 5-7a.

- X. "Awaiting the unveiling of our Lord Jesus Christ"—this indicating that the church which is genuine should have a normal sign, that is, awaiting the unveiling (the appearing) of our Lord Jesus Christ—v. 7b.
- XI. "Who (referring to God in verse 4) will also confirm you till the end, unprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ"—this indicating that the church which is genuine needs to grow in life (as mentioned in 1 Cor. 3:6) after its initial receiving of grace, that it will be unprovable in the day of Christ's coming—v. 8.
- XII. "God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord"—this
- XIII. indicating that the church which is genuine has been called by God the Father who is faithful into the fellowship of, the participation in, His Son Jesus Christ who is the consummated, all-inclusive, indwelling and life-giving and dispensing Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18), as its divine portion for its enjoyment of the consummated Triune God—v. 9.

In my early study concerning the church, 1 Corinthians 1:2-9 was very striking to me and stirred up the appreciation of the holy Word in my spirit. No other portion of the Word contains such a portrait of what a local church is. This portion is very short; yet, in these eight verses every feature of a local church can be seen, including its nature, standing, element, sphere, and relationship. There are twelve significant items presented in these eight verses, each of which deserves our full attention. These items are very mysterious and full of spiritual implications and spiritual, hidden, mysterious, and divine secrets.

AN EXCELLENT PORTRAIT OF THE CHURCH

First Corinthians is a long book consisting of sixteen chapters. Chapter one, verses 2-9, is a condensation of the entire book, giving us a skeleton of its structure. Although in these verses Paul speaks concerning the church in Corinth, he does not speak about its condition. Many times when we speak concerning a church, our speaking is mainly about the church's condition. This may be compared to the way we describe a person. When we describe a person, we usually speak about his condition and appearance. Very few of us would describe a person according to his nature and standing. However, if we do not avoid speaking about a person's condition, it is hard to present a genuine portrait of what that person really is; we may not express what the real nature of that person is. Likewise, whenever we speak about a church, it is easy to center on the condition of that church. It is not common to hear someone speaking about a church according to its nature, essence, and element.

However, if our speaking is centered on the condition of a church, we may spread rumors and give others an inaccurate impression of that church.

When Paul dealt with the church at Corinth, the condition of the church was negative and miserable, full of divisions, confusion, errors, and even heresies and rebellion. According to the New Testament record, no other church's condition may have been as negative as that of the church in Corinth. However, Paul was wise and logical. Paul loved the church, and he would never depreciate or defame the church. Often biographers place a handsome portrait of the subject of their book on the opening page in order to give the reader a positive impression of that person. In the same way, Paul, in the opening of his epistle to the Corinthians, presented a beautiful, marvelous, and excellent portrait of the church of God.

THE CHURCH OF GOD

Verse 2a says, "To the church of God." This expression indicates that the church not only is being possessed by God, but that it has God as its nature and essence, which are divine, general, universal, and eternal. Paul does not refer to the church in Corinth as a pitiful church with troublesome Jewish teachers and proud philosophical Greeks. Although others may have looked at the church according to its condition, Paul knew the real nature of the church, so he had the boldness to call it "the church of God."

As the church of God, the church is not only being possessed by God, but has God as its nature and essence, which are divine, general, universal, and eternal. Every element has its nature, and in the nature of the element is its essence. God is the nature and essence of the church. Therefore, the church is divine.

THE CHURCH...IN CORINTH

"The church...in Corinth" (v. 2b) was a church in a city, remaining in a definite locality and taking it as its standing, ground, and jurisdiction for its administration in business affairs. As such, it was physical, particular, local, and temporal in time. The church of God to whom Paul wrote was not in the heavens but in Corinth. Corinth was a very sinful, modern Greek city, which was famous for its fornication. However, the church remained in that locality for a local testimony of Christ. A local testimony of Christ is a part of the universal testimony of Christ. The universal testimony is composed of and constituted with the local testimonies.

The church takes a locality as its standing, ground, and jurisdiction for its administration. A local church has an administration which has a jurisdiction for business affairs. The standing, ground, and jurisdiction of the church is physical rather than divine, particular rather than general, local rather than universal, and temporal in time rather than eternal. These are the local aspects of the church.

THE CHURCH...SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST

The church is "sanctified in Christ" (v. 2c), having been sanctified, made holy, in Christ, who is the embodiment of the processed Triune God in His fullness, as its element and sphere. Christ is the embodiment of the processed Triune God in all His fullness. Now we are in this Christ, and we have this Christ as our element and sphere. Just as wood is the element of a table, Christ is the element of the church. He is also the sphere, the realm, of the church.

BEING COMPOSED OF THE CALLED SAINTS

The church is composed of the "called saints" (v. 2d)—the church of the saints, the sanctified ones, who have been called out of the satanic world. We have been called by God to be sanctified in Christ. We are no longer in the world; we are in the church which is called by God and sanctified in a wonderful person, Christ, who is our element within and our sphere without.

WITH ALL THOSE WHO CALL UPON THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN EVERY PLACE

Verse 2 contains five qualifications for a genuine church. As we have seen, the church which is genuine is the church of God, it is the church in a locality, it is sanctified in Christ, and it is composed of the called saints. Verse 2e continues with the fifth qualification: "With all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place." This long phrase indicates that the church which is genuine is related with all the saints who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place around the globe. Paul does not address the church as being related to all those who have been baptized by immersion or all those who speak in tongues or keep the Sabbath. Rather, the church is related to all those—including the believers today, those who came before us and those who will come after us—who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place. Being related with all the saints keeps us from being sectarian, isolated, or divided. Regardless of their particular practices, we are related by God in Christ to every kind of Christian, and no matter where we are, we cannot be separated from them. Without this relationship we would become isolated and divided. If we have nothing to do with other believers, we are not a local church. Rather, we are a local sect, a local division. We must be open, and our openness must be in every direction. We are open to all those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, regardless of their particular practices.

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for YP that they will be companions with one another to pursue the Lord together.
- Pray for the English-speaking testimony in Campbell.
- Pray for the follow-up of door-knocking contacts in Campbell.
- Pray for gospel preaching on West Valley College campus.
- Pray for the growth of the feeling of the Body of Christ.
- For daily exercise in GOW training: prophesying on Lord's day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth and attend Lord's day meeting on time.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: 2011 Thanksgiving International Conference Message Six.
- YP Bible reading: Correspondence Course for Gospel of John
- Prayer meeting Tuesday (2/7) at Tien's place, 19070 Dagmar Dr., Saratoga, CA
- Boston Training Center financial needs.
- 2/12, ICSC re-speaking meeting at SC meeting hall, 4-6pm.
- 2/25 parenting conference at Berkeley 10am ~ 6pm with lunch and translation.
- Spring YP retreat 3/16 ~ 18, please reserve the time.
- Sister Conference 4/13-14, sister please reserve the time.
- Bible Camp 6/18-22, please reserve the week.
- SST for YP 7/22-27, please reserve the time.