

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)*

Volume 15, Issue 6

June 2017

## Church: Structure & Function

### Introduction

When you read the title of this Teaching Letter I hope you did not think of the church building on the corner of your street. The Church is not a building but a spiritual reality. Our problem is that since the King James translators introduced the Scottish word “kirk” as the translation for the Greek word “ekklesia” in our English bible, church has meant a place rather than a people. As long as you think of church as a place you will never come to understand the biblical meaning of “Church, the Body of Christ”.

The Church has structure as a living temple, a dwelling for the Holy Spirit [*Eph. 2:19-22*], built from living stones [*1 Pet. 2:5*]. The Church has function as a Body, the living, organic Body of Christ [*Col. 1:18, 24*].

### Man Made or God Built?

In the Old Testament we have an example of how man does things compared with how God does things. We have in this a type of man made earthly religion.

**Genesis 11:3-4 NASB** They said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. (4) They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."

They built by substituting brick for stone and tar for mortar. The problem with tar is that it melts when heat is applied.

They built to “reach into heaven” and to make a name for themselves. They built a structure with foundations on earth with the purpose of reaching into heaven—**an earthly structure with a heavenly purpose**. The basis of this structure was religious but the method was a substitute for God's requirements to reach into heaven. This is the product of religion. They ignored God's way and His heavenly purpose. The end result was that God destroyed their work and confused their

language.

**Genesis 11:9 NASB** Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.

Babel, which is also called Babylon, is a picture of counterfeit religion and human effort to reach into heaven. In the book of Revelation Babylon is called the great whore. Very religious but earthly in its structure and counterfeit in its function. It is self serving and self exalting in its purpose.

God's true structure, the building that He is building, is made of living stones and not man made bricks. It is held together through His person. Tar melts and runs in the fire of trials. The church's foundation is in Christ Jesus. The foundation is in heaven, but its purpose is to reach the earth. It is **a heavenly structure with an earthly purpose.**

The church is built from heaven with one living stone joined with heavenly mortar to another living stone. It is built upon the foundation of Christ only. Its goal is to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth where the will of God is being done in the same measure that it is being done in Heaven.

The church is a spiritual structure. It functions by supernatural means through the power of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit the church will operate by natural means becoming another Babel using methodologies that will only result in confusion and scattering.

## **Work of the Church**

We have all heard many sermons about the Church when we all get to Heaven. But if the Church is a heavenly structure with an earthly purpose then there must be work for the Church to do before we all get to Heaven. What do you think it is?

Would not the work of the Church as the Body of Christ be a continuation of the work of the Lord while He was in the earth in His physical body? The Old Testament prophets spoke of the anointing for His work.

**Ezekiel 34:15-16 NASB** "I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD. (16) "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.

**Isaiah 61:1-2 NASB** The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; (2) To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

Ezekiel said that it was God's intention to

feed His flock,  
lead them to rest,  
seek the lost,  
bring back the scattered,  
bind up the broken,

strengthen the sick.

Isaiah said the anointing was to

to bring good news to the afflicted,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to captives,  
to proclaim freedom to prisoners,  
to proclaim the favorable year of the LORD, and  
to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God.

This is the work of the Church, His Body in the earth. To fulfill this anointing requires the Church to function fully with every member involvement.

Individually our growth process requires that we become unshakable in **identity, placement** and **function**. The same is true corporately also. The Church must come to a full realization of her identity, who she is in the earth. Then, the Church must come to a full realization of the fact that she is placed in the earth for a reason. The Lord has not returned for us yet. This will lead the Church to function as the Lord intended—His anointed doing His work in the earth.

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