

The apostle Paul writes in **Ephesians 5:25-27**. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Someone might ask, "Is this some denomination?"

The answer is no. The church that Jesus loved and gave himself for was not a denomination.

Would you like to know more about the church we read about in the N.T.?

First, it is the greatest institution on earth! There is nothing that begins to compare with it. The thing that makes it so great is the price that was paid for it.

Paul tells us in **Acts 20:28** that Jesus purchased it "with His own blood." What a price to pay. Yet, it was so important to the Lord that he was willing to pay the price. The church is made up of precious souls who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

That is why Paul could say, "It is without spot or wrinkle," because it has been cleansed by His precious blood.

Second, the church is united with Christ. In the church the Christian sustains a very interesting relationship with Christ.

Paul declares, "Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually" (**1 Corinthians 12:27**). At the same time, "He is the head of the body, the church" (**Colossians 1:18**).

With Christ as the head and Christians as the body they sustain a very close relationship with Him. They become subject to his authority. The physical head gives instructions to our physical body and the body obeys whatever commands are given.

This is the way it is in the Lord's body. His grace has done so much for us that it is a pleasure to obey Him. John says, "We love Him because He first loved us" (**1 John 4:19**).

There is no problem with rebellion with those who love the Lord. What a privilege to be in such a relationship with Jesus our Lord.

Third, to be in the Lord's church means we have been reconciled to God. The word "reconcile" means to reunite. When the Lord adds us to his church we become reunited with God.

Sin will separate us from God. **Isaiah** makes it very plain "Your iniquities have separated you from your God and your sins have hidden His face from you." It makes us aliens.

Paul reminds the Colossian Christians, "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and irreproachable in His sight" (Colossians 1:21, 22).

Paul speaking of the Gentiles in his day said they were, "alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart" (Ephesians 4:17, 18).

Those who have been reconciled are in his body. **Ephesians 5:23** says, "For as the husband is head of the wife as also Christ is head of the church, and He is the Savior of the body. "

It might surprise you that one does not join the Lord's church. We learn from **Acts 2:47** that "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

This was a result of their obedience to the command of Peter, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

Since we are reconciled and added to the church we have the assurance that our names are written in heaven. **Hebrews 12:23** says, "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled (registered, written) in heaven."

Is there anything more exciting than to know your name is recorded in heaven?

Fourth, being in the church means we have been called into a great fellowship. We become members of the family of God.

The word church means "called out." **Ephesians 3:14, 15** says, "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

God is our father and Jesus is our elder brother. Christians become brothers and sisters in the Lord.

While those I have fellowship with are not perfect, just as I am not perfect, yet, we have in common "a like precious faith." We share together this truth which can make us free. (See John 8:32.)

Paul says we are, "a peculiar people." Not that we are odd or eccentric, but rather we have something in common that others do not have. Some of the most precious moments in the life of a Christian are those times spent with brethren "of like precious faith."

Paul expresses this sentiment in 1 Corinthians 12:26, "And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

Fifth, the church gives us an upward pull. The world with its influences are constantly dragging and pulling us down. When we attend a worship service, a Bible class, or just get together for some social activity, it always lifts us up and pulls us away from the destructive forces of Satan and the world.

It is somewhat like a little boy walking along with his mother down a sidewalk. He darts this way and then in another direction. But there is always the alert eye and steady hand of his mother to pull him back onto the pavement.

Then when he gets too tired to walk she picks him up and carries him. She showers him with love when he is hurting and feels bad. She kisses away his tears. The church does this for us. It is a tremendous force of encouragement.

The church is somewhat like a hospital. It exists for sin sick people who are in need of special spiritual care. Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10).

We seek this abundant life which can only be found in Christ (in his body, the church) and no where else.

If you are looking for a perfect situation with perfect people you will not find it in the Lord's church. We are all human, imperfect and prone to make mistakes. The church exists for people who are in need of special spiritual care and can help us grow and become more like Jesus. Thus, this is one reason why we are in the Lord's church.

What a blessing it can be in your life. [Why not check it out?](#)