Part 1. **THE CHURCH – THE BODY OF CHRIST**  

**an analogy** = a comparison based on the similarity of different things for the purpose of explanation or clarification.

**The goal, and purpose of this study** is to increase our vision of Christ and His church; and to be all that we can be “in Christ” and His church because of His great love for us. (Eph.1:18-19; 3:14-19; 5:25-27).

1. **The church is the body of Christ.** It is made up of all those who place their trust and faith in Jesus Christ. It does not center on man and what he does, but on God and what He does in and through His church.

   The Greek word which is translated ‘church’ is the term ‘ekklesia’, and means ‘those who are called out’, not necessarily called out of the world, but called out of society for some particular function or purpose; they are ‘called together’-- an assembly.

   What is the relation of the church to the Kingdom of God? **K of G = rule of God.**

   **Rom. Cath. teaching** = church is the K of G, therefore the church is supreme and has the right to rule and dominate the whole of life in every respect ....people, countries and nations.

   **Protestant teaching** = church is not the K of G, but a part of the K of G. God’s kingdom is much wider than the church because God rules everything and everywhere, even outside of the church.

2. **There is One Body of Christ.**

   The church is biblically referred to as the body of Christ. There is one body of Christ (1 Cor.12:12), even though there is a distinction in theology between the visible church and the invisible church.

   - A good analogy of the visible (physical) and the invisible (spiritual) church is one of ‘man’ who has a body (can be seen) and a soul (cannot be seen but everyone knows he has one).

   - As Christians we live in a state of ambivalence between the **physical** and **spiritual** (Rom.12:2; 1Pet.2:11; Gal.5:25; Rev. 21: 2, 3; between what theologians call the ‘Already’ and the ‘Not Yet’ (1Jn.3:2, 3); by **faith** and by **hope** (Rom.1:17; 10:17; 8:23-25; 1Jn.3:2, 3).....all at the same time.

   - We need to lift our vision higher to see the glorious church of Ephesians 2:6, 7, 22; 3:10; 5:25-27.

   **a) The Church Defined as Visible.**

   The first conception of the visible church may be stated as follows: It is that body of persons who sincerely profess faith in Christ — as God and Saviour, ii) who make this profession to certain men called church officers and are subordinate to these properly appointed officers, iii) and persons who profess faith in Christ to these duly appointed officers are received into the fellowship of like-minded persons. This fellowship constitutes the church.
A person may be excommunicated, that is, he may be cut off from the communion of the church and no longer be considered a member for unbiblical conduct and refusal to submit to church order and discipline. Within the visible church there may be those who truly possess, as well as profess, faith in Christ and those who do not as described in Matt.7:21-23; 13:37-43; 1 John 2:19. As well, the visible church may be distressingly and sorely fractured and fragmented into all kinds of different denominations and groups, but the invisible church is one and the true body of Christ.

b) The Church Defined as Invisible.
Everyone who is in Christ, and in whom Christ dwells, is a member of this one universal church. Christ said: “I will build my church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16: 18). The powers of Hell not only stand against but they often make conquests of the visible church. It is only the invisible church of which Christ’s description is true. Surely nothing false or evil could be part of the body of Christ, in whom God is well pleased.

In addition to the description already given of the true, invisible church we find other characteristics mentioned in Scripture. The invisible church is:

1. **Infallible** (it knows its Master’s voice and will not follow a stranger, John 10:5).
2. **Indestructible** (nothing shall separate it from “the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus,” Rom.8:39; no one shall take it out of His hand, John 10:28).
3. **Indivisible** (“that they may be one, as we are,” John 17:11; “I am the vine, ye are the branches,” John 15:5).
4. **Invincible** (“the gates [defensive weapons] of hell shall not prevail [or stand] against it,” Matt.16:18; “the meek shall inherit the earth,” Ps. 37:11).
5. **Universal** (“out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,” Rev. 5:9; “the field is the world,” Matt. 13:38; “God so loved the world,” John 3:16).

Putting everything together, a comprehensive definition of the church of Jesus Christ would be:
It is the invisible, infallible, indestructible, indivisible, invincible, and universal body consisting of all those who truly believe in and adhere to their Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church is not a building nor is it any particular denomination. The church is made of people all over the world who have discovered the love of God as demonstrated by Jesus Christ.

3. **How do we become part of the body of Christ?**

Ephesians 2:13-22 (NIV) makes it abundantly clear how we become part of the body of Christ; also known as the household of God.

In Vs’s.13-18 the apostle is saying: that faith in the shed blood of Jesus brings a person into the household of God, not nationality. We have access to God through Jesus. Repenting and forsaking of sin can only take place when we accept that Jesus died to pay the price for our peace with God. We are members of His Church, His body. We are forgiven. We have new life.
Vs’s. 19, 20 – Here Paul uses the analogy of a ‘building’ rather than a ‘body’. Christ is the chief cornerstone, the main corner from which all the rest of the building takes its line and symmetry.  
– He is the foundation on which the church is being built. Jesus is the revelation, the rock and the foundation of Mt.16:16–18; Eph.2:20; 1 Cor.3:11.
Vs’s. 21, 22 - We are in Him. There is this absolute unbreakable union! We are not merely forgiven! We are not just believers! We not only have new life but we are united to Christ….”in Christ!” Bound to Him, and one another, with bonds that cannot be broken.

4. **How does the body of Christ function?**
The church as a body is a living organism. Just like our physical bodies are made up of different parts such as hands, legs, ears and eyes. So is the body of Christ made up of different parts.  
Each part is essential to the proper functioning and growth of the body. Our stomachs are essential to our well being.  
They may not be prominent, and much of the work they do is not always obvious, yet few of us would doubt their importance.  
We all need to play our roles no matter how insignificant they may appear. Those singing, those praying, those ushering and so on, all are playing vital roles. (each person is gifted for their particular function 1 Peter 4:10).  
**1 Corinthians 12:12-27**(NIV) sheds more light on our roles as individuals in the body of Christ:

5. **How does the church grow?**
Acts 2:40 – 47. The church as Christ’s body, is supposed to grow like our physical bodies. Growth in the body of Christ should be in three vital areas:
**Physically** – a numerical growth, with people getting saved (Acts 2: 40-41)  
**Spiritually** – a greater awareness and understanding of the all-powerful God we serve. A greater love for God and a desire to serve Him sacrificially is evidence of spiritual growth .(Acts 2:43 – 47).
**Mental growth** – a clearer understanding of the teachings of Jesus. This is essential if we are to witness unity in the church. It will also help us in presenting the gospel to the world. (Acts 2:42-44).

Measuring the growth of the local church by only one of the above criteria can lead to error.

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**Part 2.**

**CHRIST AND THE CHURCH**

**EPHESIANS**

**EPHESIANS 1 – 3**

- Doctrine
- Work of God

**EPHESIANS 4 - 6**

- Practice (conduct)
- Walk of Christian
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key word</strong>: “Know” (1:18).</td>
<td><strong>Key word</strong>: “Unity” (4:3,13).</td>
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<th>Chapter 2</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key word</strong>: &quot;Remember” (2:11,12).</td>
<td><strong>Key word</strong>: “Submit” (5:21, 22, 24).</td>
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<th>Chapter 3</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key words</strong>: “Grace” (3:2, 7, 8) / “love” (3:17-19).</td>
<td><strong>Key words</strong>: “Put on / Stand” (6:11, 13, 14).</td>
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that God wants His church to be (3:14-21).

**Notes:**

- 3 -

**Christian Unity – Ephesians 4:1-16.**

This passage can be logically divided into four parts as follows:

i) **Paul’s appeal for unity (4:1-3).**

This unity of which Paul wrote is not one which the Christian needs to create, but one which already exists because of the Holy Spirit’s work of regeneration, and must be diligently preserved (vs. 3) by an attitude of humility and love for one another.

It is a spiritual unity based on the truth of the gospel of Christ (doctrine). It cannot be produced by man (meeting together – social), but it can, and will, grow into perfect unity in the faith (Vs.13).

ii) **The nature (character) of the unity (4:4-6).**

It is based upon our sharing life in one body, the universal church, the body of Christ (vs. 5, cf. 2:15,16).

All Christians are sealed, and indwelt by the same Spirit and look forward to the same hope (vs. 5).

We possess one Lord, that is, one Supreme Commander, one common faith (one system of fundamental truth) held by all true Christians, and one baptism (i.e. spirit baptism, cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).

iii) **God’s grace for diversity of gifts (4:7-11).**

Unity does not imply uniformity. It does not mean that all Christians will think alike or perform identical ministries.

It does imply a common purpose and interdependence within the body of Christ. To every individual within the body of Christ is given a particular capacity for ministry. This capacity is commonly called ‘spiritual gifts (grace gifts – charismata) (vss.7-11); and are not given primarily for the benefit of the individual, but for the edification, of the entire body (vss. 12-16).

Paul did not deal with all of the spiritual gifts in Ephesians 4 (see also 1 Cor.12; Rom.12). Rather he concentrated upon those gifts which are sometimes referred to as the ‘ascension gifts’ or equipping gifts. These gifts are the gift of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher (vs. 11).
iv) Diversity leads to perfected unity (4:12-16). The function of the ‘ascension gifts’ is to equip all the saints (members of the body) for the work of the ministry (service), for the edifying (building up) of all the body of Christ (vs.12). These gifts are given to the church to bring us all into a proper unity and maturity in our ‘Head’ the Lord Jesus Christ (vs.13), whereby we all are so well-grounded in doctrine that we can discern or recognize truth from error (vs.14). Our unity grows out of our mutual comprehension of those doctrines which constitute ‘the faith’ and out of our ever-increasing intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ the “head’ is the object and goal to which our growth is to be directed (vs.15). Under the control of ‘Head’ the members of the body, joined together by every supporting ligament, function harmoniously in love, increase in sharing the life of the ‘Head’ and attaining maturity and stability, as each and everyone does its part (vs16; Col. 2:19).

And that is the biblical description of the ministry of Christ’s body in the glorious Church of Jesus Christ.

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Part 3. THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

1 Cor.12:1 “Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.”

**Fundamental Definitions:**
- Grace (freely given, unmerited favour) = ‘Charis’ (in Greek).
- Gifts = ‘Charisma’ - a specific portion of God’s grace related to the function we have within the body.
- Spiritual Gifts (‘grace gifts’) = ‘Charismata.’

Every true church and every Christian is gifted (Eph.4:7,11,12; 1 Pet.4:10) There should be no absence of grace and no unemployment line in Christ’s church.

**The Different Categories of Spiritual Gifts (1Cor.12:27-31)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Cor.12:4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Different gifts</td>
<td>Different service</td>
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<td>workings</td>
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1. **Motivation**

2. **Ministry**

3. **Manifestation**

---|---|---|---|
- PROPHESYING | - APOSTLES | - TONGUES |
- SERVING | - PROPHETS | |
- INTERPRETN. OF TONGUES |
- TEACHING | - EVANGELISTS | - PROPHECY |
- EXHORTING | - PASTORS | - WORD OF |
- KNOWLEDGE |
- GIVING | - TEACHERS | - WORD OF |
- WISDOM |
- RULING | |
- DISCERNING OF SPIRITS |
- SHOWING MERCY | - HEALING |
- WORKING |
- OF MIRACLES | - FAITH |

**Note:** LOVE is the reason, and means, by which all the gifts are to operate (1 Cor.13:1 – 14:1).

1. **The “Motivational Gifts” – Romans 12:4-6.**

   Every Christian has one of these ‘grace gifts’ (1 Cor.15:10; 1 Peter 4:10, 11). It is the responsibility of each member to know and put to use their motivational gift or gifts. It is the church’s responsibility to confirm ministry gifts, and the Holy Spirit’s function to reward the use of the gifts for the good of all (1 Cor.12:7).

   - i) **Prophet** *(Prophesying)* – Dynamic preaching and teaching that exposes sin, proclaims righteousness, and warns of the judgment to come; but also gives the ‘good news’ of salvation.
   - ii) **Serving** – Gives practical assistance to the church and its members needs. Gets things done.
   - iii) **Teacher** - Brings in-depth Bible studies with special emphasis on the precise meaning of words.
   - iv) **Exhorter** – Counsels and encourages members and assists them in applying Scriptural principles to their daily living.
   - v) **Giver** – Gives generously financially to the church, to missionaries, and other ministries.
   - vi) **Ruling** – Has the ability to organize so that every phase of the church will be carried out efficiently and in proper order. Has the ability to organize programmes.
   - vii) **Mercy** – This person has an outreach and concern for the feelings of individuals with a readiness to meet the needs of hurting people.
2. The “Ascension Gifts”- Ephesians 4:11,12.
The gifts are the persons themselves. They are responsible to equip, perfect and to edify the members of the body; to bring them into maturity, relationship (with God and one another) and ministry or service.

i) Apostles. In the most restricted sense an apostle was one who had seen our Lord (1 Cor. 9:1) and who had been with our Lord during His earthly ministry (Acts 1:20-22). These men were given the task of proclaiming the terms of salvation and establishing the primitive church. One of the signs of an apostle was the possession of signs wonders and miracles, and the power to confer them on other believers. (Rom.1:11; 2 Cor.12:12; Heb.2:3, 4).

ii) Prophets. Prophets were those men through whom God spoke directly. Although in a lesser sense there are men today who are instrumental in establishing churches and proclaiming God's word, I believe that apostles and prophets are no longer needed or to be expected as we now have the Canon of Holy Scripture, God's authoritative, inerrant and infallible Word.

iii) Evangelists.
Are those whom God has enabled to proclaim the gospel in such a way that men respond in greater numbers. These gifts are still very necessary and still very important today.

iv) Pastors and teachers. Are vital today as well as they are gifted not only to communicate the truths of Scripture, but are also qualified to pastor the flock of God. While teaching communicates the principles of God's word, pastoring applies it to the lives of individuals in specific situations. Pastor-teachers are teaching shepherds given by God to His church. While the evangelist is instrumental in bringing about the numerical growth of the church, the pastor and teacher are more concerned with the spiritual growth of the church.

3. The “Manifestation Gifts”- 1 Cor.12:7-11.
The purpose of these charismatic gifts is the edification of the whole Church (1 Cor.12:7), and, secondarily, the conviction and conversion of unbelievers (1 Cor.1421-25, cf. Acts 2:12).

i) Tongues - A supernatural utterance in an unknown tongue as a sign to unbelievers (1 Cor.14:21, 22); for speaking to God (1 Cor.14:2); and for prayer and praise to God (1 Cor.14:15-17).

ii) Interpretation of tongues – The supernatural giving forth of the meaning of utterances in other tongues for edification (1 Cor.14:6-13); for understanding and participation of the hearers (1 Cor.14:14-16).

iii) Prophecy - In the New Testament era it is the revelation of Jesus Christ to His church –(the spirit of prophecy proceeds from the testimony of Jesus Rev.19:10). It is a supernatural utterance for announcing events (Acts 11:27-30); for imparting ministry (1 Tim.4:14); and for edification (1 Cor.14:3).

iv) Word of knowledge – a supernatural knowledge given by the Holy Spirit concerning persons, places and events (1 Sam.1:19,20; 1 Kings 19:18; John 1:47,48; 4:18; Acts 9:10,11; 27:10; Rev.1,2,3).

v) Word of wisdom – a supernatural application of God’s mind (Exod.25:40); for divine aid in persecution (Luke 21:12-15); to minister the Word (Acts 6:8-10); and to escape a snare (Matt.22:15-22).


vii) Healing – supernatural healing of diseases by the operation of the Holy Spirit and not by human aide. To heal: progressively (John 4:46-52); unconditionally (Matt.20:29-
viii) Working of miracles – supernatural prevalence over the laws of nature for:
rerecovering a lost item (2 Kings 6:1-7) providing in need (1 Kings 17:1-16); mastery over
the elements (Matt.14:22-33).
ix) Faith – it is not the faith for salvation, nor the faith spoken of as a fruit or grace of the
Spirit. It is “special faith,” an impartation of divine faith for: protection against enemies (2
Kings 6:13-17); Divine intervention (1 Kings 18:17-39); preservation from beasts
(Heb.11:33).

Study Questions.

The body of Christ - Ephesians 2:11-22.

1. What does the Bible mean by the Church? - Eph 2:19.


3. What other words or phrases are used to describe the church.
   1 Cor. 12:14 - 
   Eph. 2:19 - 
   Eph. 2:21 - 
   Eph. 3:14 – 15 -
   Eph. 5:25 – 32 -
   Col. 1:12 -
   Heb. 12:22 - 23 -
   Rev. 21:2 -

4. What do you like about the church?

5. How has the church helped you?

6. How can you contribute to the ministry of the church?

7. The church is also described as a family. How should members of a family
treat one another? (Eph 4:31-32).

8. What is the most important ingredient that holds a family together? - 1
   Cor.13:13.

   How the body functions - 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

1. What parts of the body are mentioned in the above verses?

2. Do you think any part of your natural body is insignificant? Imagine what would
   happen if your eyes said they no longer want to see your mouth on your body?

3. Why are you important to the body (verse 18)?
4. How should the members of the body of Christ treat one another (verse 25-26)?

5. What qualities does the bible request of overseers (leaders) in the church? (1Tim.3:1-7).

6. How are church members expected to treat overseers (elders or leaders) in the church? (1Tim.5:17-19).

**The growing Church - Acts 2:40-47.**

1. How many people were added to the church (verse 41)?

2. Mention the things they devoted themselves to (verse 42)?

3. Why are these things important?

4. How can we be devoted to the things of God and also be effective in other areas (e.g. work, home etc.) of our life?

5. What two meeting places are mentioned in verse 46?


7. Do you think God has a purpose for your being in a particular church or fellowship? What is it?

**Christian unity in the Church – Ephesians 4:1-16.**

1. Name the characteristics of a “life worthy of your calling”(verse 1,2); give a definition for each.

2. Name the sevenfold unity from verses 3-6?

3. Explain the One Hope from verse 4 – 1 John 3:2, 3; Titus 1:3; 2:13; 1 Tim.1:1; 1 Thess.5:8.

4. What are the “ascension gifts and their function (verses11-16)?

**The Gifts of the Spirit in the Church – Romans 12; Ephesians 4; 1 Corinthians 12-14.**

1. Does every individual Christian have a gift of the Spirit? Give a Scripture to support your answer.
2. Why do you think the gifts of Romans 12:6-8 are often referred to as ‘motivational gifts’?

3. There is no one specific spiritual gift which every Christian possesses? True or false? Give a Scripture to support your answer.

4. Briefly explain what the gift of the word of knowledge ‘is’, and what it ‘is not’?

5. Is it possible for a Christian to have more than one gift? Explain your answer briefly.

6. What does a Christian possess, and should exercise, that is more important than all the gifts? Give a Scripture to support your answer.