



The Church is an expression of God's power and authority in the earth. We are not just a group of do-gooders. We are the people of God in covenant with Him through Jesus' sacrifice. Through the blood of Jesus, we are redeemed out of the hand of the enemy—justified and sanctified—set apart to God. Through the blood of Jesus, Satan has no further claim or authority over us so that we might invest our lives under the sun in the purposes of God. **We are the Church of Jesus Christ!**

### I. A RADIANT CHURCH

#### A. Unblemished, Holy, & Blameless

Ephesians 5:25–27 <sup>25</sup> ... *Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

Ephesians 1:4 *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love.*

Romans 6:22–23 <sup>22</sup> *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

#### B. Individuals, Together

Romans 12:4–5 <sup>4</sup> *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

1 Corinthians 12:26–27 <sup>26</sup> *If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. <sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

Ephesians 4:12–13 <sup>12</sup> ... *to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

1 Corinthians 12:20–21 <sup>20</sup> *As it is, there are many parts, but one body. <sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"*

#### C. A New Kind of Life

Ephesians 4:17–5:7 <sup>17</sup> *So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. <sup>19</sup> Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.*

<sup>20</sup> *That, however, is not the way of life you learned <sup>21</sup> when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. <sup>22</sup> You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; <sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds; <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

<sup>25</sup> *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup> "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold. <sup>28</sup> Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.*

<sup>29</sup> *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along*

**with every form of malice.** <sup>32</sup> **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

<sup>1</sup> Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children <sup>2</sup> and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. <sup>3</sup> But **among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.** <sup>4</sup> Nor should there be **obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.** <sup>5</sup> For of this you can be sure: **No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.** <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. <sup>7</sup> Therefore do not be partners with them.

## II. TRANSFORMATION — A TOTAL PERSON MAKEOVER

Romans 12:1–2 <sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

2 Corinthians 3:17–18 (NIV®) (Romans 8:29)

<sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, **are being transformed** into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Philippians 3:20–21 (NIV®) (1 Cor 15:43-53)

<sup>20</sup> But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, **will transform our lowly bodies** so that they will be like his glorious body.

1. **What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of church? What were your first/early experiences of attending church? Were those positive or negative experiences in your faith journey and why?**
2. **Describe a time when you held on to your own ideas and insisted on your own way rather than being open to conforming to the Lord's ways and thoughts. What was the outcome?**
3. **Christians have been set free from sin. What practical encouragement can you give someone when they are being tempted?**
4. **When seeking behaviors and attitudes that are Christ-like, what spiritual practices are most helpful regarding "putting on the new self"?**
5. **Discuss a time when you've seen a person unable to get past a wrong done to them by someone else. In what ways did that person's inability to move on affect him or her? What did you or could have said to this person to lead them towards forgiving that person?**

### PROCLAMATION:

<sup>16</sup> **I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,**  
<sup>17</sup> **so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,**  
<sup>18</sup> **may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,**  
<sup>19</sup> **and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

<sup>20</sup> **Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,**  
<sup>21</sup> **to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. — Ephesians 3:16–21, NIV®**