

Paul uses the word “church” amongst many other possibilities...

- + First, the Greek word behind our “church” is ekklesia
- + Second, usage of the term “church” reveals a tighter connection to kingdom
- + Third, the term “church (ekklesia, ἐκκλησία) refers to Israel expanded throughout the Roman Empire, now gathered out of the world and over against the world

The term “fellowship” (koinonia, κοινωνία) refers to the inner life that creates unity of life in the ekklesia in the world. The term “church” then defines a community under the God of Israel and King Jesus, over against those who are not part of that people of God.

The church is a community that becomes a family.

Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35 Characteristics:

- + Fellowship, formed by the apostolic Gospel
- + Family, formed by fellowship with one another
- + A fellowship formed by table fellowship, Eucharist/communion and prayer
- + A family formed by the presence of God through the Spirit
- + A family formed by evangelism

Kingdom mission is church mission, church mission is kingdom mission, and there is no kingdom mission that is not church mission (McKnight, KC, 96).

FINAL THOUGHTS

We are about belonging to a new family, new kingdom, and sustained by new ways of thinking about others (Covenant).

We are about three major concepts of belonging: Covenant, Kingdom, and Church.

These are all centred on Jesus. When they are not, they cease to be church, kingdom of God, and covenant.

These are empowered by the Holy Spirit, not simply our will. This is what makes them possible. God’s power at work in and through them.

KINGDOMS + COVENANTS

The Church: Plan A (There is no Plan B)

REVIEW: KINGDOM

John 18:35 “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed You over to me. What have You done?” ³⁶Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world; if it were, My servants would fight to prevent My arrest by the Jews. But now, My kingdom is not of this realm.” ³⁷“Then You are a king!” Pilate said. “You say that I am a king,” Jesus answered. “For this reason I was born and have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice.”

The Kingdom of God is most basically: the people governed by Jesus.

“The Kingdom is the people who are redeemed and ruled by King Jesus in such a way that they live as a fellowship under king Jesus. That is, there is a king (Jesus), a rule (by Jesus as Lord), a people (the church), a land (wherever Jesus’ kingdom people are present), and a law (following Jesus through the power of the Spirit). Kingdom mission is about creating and sustaining that kingdom community, the church (McKnight 99).

CHURCH = JESUS + PEOPLE

The church then is what is present and peopled in the realization of the kingdom[of God] now... There is no kingdom now outside the church... I contend kingdom and church need to be seen as much closer than most see them today (McKnight, KC, 87). (CF Matthew 13:16-17, Colossians 1:13, 4:11; Revelation 1:6).

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing[b] her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.