

The Church

Prayer – Lord do something about your church ...

Where does it come from?

Ekklesia translates *qahal* – assembly, called out/called together (to worship)

Did Jesus found the church?

Only 3 mentions in Gospels (Mtt 16.18; 18.17 (twice))

Resurrection as recalling disciples to community

Institutional arrangements going back to Jesus?

Founded by/founded on (Schillebeeckx cf. 1 Cor. 3.11)

The Kingdom and the church ('Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God and what came was the church' – Alfred Loisy, 19th C, France, RC)

Some images of the church

Ark (1 Peter 3.20-21)

All nations (Revelation 21-22)

Resident aliens (1 Peter 2.11)

Bride of Christ (Revelation 22.17)

Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12.13)

Fellowship/communion (*koinonia*)

Paul and the church

Ekklesia as local congregation – 'All the churches of Christ greet you' (Rom. 16.16)

Ekklesia as general term for Christians – 'I persecuted the church of God' (Gal. 1.18)

Ekklesia as body of Christ - 'He is the head of the body, the church' (Col. 1.18)

Ephesians

The church and God's plan (1.10)

The church as Christ's body (1.23)

The church as place of reconciliation (2.15-16)

The church as God's dwelling place (2.22)

The church as unveiling God's wisdom (3.8-10)

The church glorifies God (3.21)

Unity of the church reflects the unity of God (4.3-6)

Building up the Body (4.15-16)

The church and its members (4.28)

The church as the bride of Christ (5.21-32)

Is your church like this?

The marks of the church

From creed

Part of section about Holy Spirit

All relate to Jesus Christ

‘Christ exists as the church’ – Bonhoeffer (20th C, Germany, Lutheran)

The church is Christ’s ‘earthly-historical form of existence’ – Barth (20th C, Switzerland, Calvinist)

One

Reflects oneness of God

Reconciliation

Holy

Called out

Saints and martyrs

Catholic

Open to all

Linked together

Apostolic

Continuity with past

Proclaiming the Gospel

Where is the church to be found?

Where the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are rightly administered (Calvin)

Baptism

Eucharist

Can we see the church?

Augustine – mixed company on pilgrimage from earthly to heavenly city

Visible and invisible church

- Catholic visible vs Protestant invisible?
- Need for both
 - without visible we have an abstract church, no church
 - without invisible we have a bureaucracy, dehumanising systems
 - human community always has an exterior organisation, but is not limited to it