

An Introduction to Ecclesiology (The Doctrine of the Church)

Lecture 1. The Nature of the Church: Universal and Local.

1.1 The New Testament word for “church”: ἐκκλησία “ekklesia”.

1.1.1 Use in the Old Testament: Translating קָהָל (qahal)

1.1.2 Use elsewhere in the ancient world

- e.g. The democratic assembly in Athens.

1.1.3 Use elsewhere in the NT

- Acts 7:38 Heb 2:12 – OT assembly

- Acts 19:32, 39,40 – secular assembly

1.1.4 Use in the NT when referring to the church.

1.1.4.1 Gospels:

- Matthew 16:18
- Matthew 18:17
- Cf Matthew 28:18-20

1.1.4.2 Acts

Local Church(es) 5:11, 8:1, 11:22, 26, 13:1, 14:23,
14:27,15:3, 15:4, 15:22, 15:41p,
16:5p, 18:22, 20:17, 20:28

Universal Church 8:3, 9:31?, 12:1, 12:5?

OT Assembly 7:38

Other Assembly 19:32, 39, 40.

1.1.4.3 Paul.

1.1.4.4 General Epistles / Revelation

1.2 The Universal Church

Nicene Creed. AD 381

“We believe in One Holy, Universal and Apostolic Church.”

1.2.1 One. Ephesians 4:1-6

1.2.2 Holy. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

1.2.3 Universal (Catholic). Galatians 3:26-29

1.2.4 Apostolic. Ephesians 2:19-22

1.3 The Local Church

1.3.1 The Marks of a True Church.

Calvin: *“Wherever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we cannot have any doubt that the church of God has some existence, since his promise cannot fail, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20)*

- The preaching of the true word
- The administration of the ordinances
 - o Including the exercise of biblical discipline.

The Didache *On the Lord's own day gather together and break bread...
Therefore appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons... for
they too carry out for you the ministry of the prophets and
teachers...
Furthermore, correct one another, not in anger but in peace,
as you find in the Gospel; and if anyone wrongs his
neighbour, let no one speak to him, nor let him hear a word
from you, until he repents.*

The New Testament

- Acts 2:42
- Matthew 28:18-20

1.3.2 The Right Preaching of the Gospel

1.3.3 The Right administration of the Sacraments

1.3.4 The Right exercise of biblical Discipline

“God’s people gathered around God’s word under God’s rule”

1.4 The Relationship between the Universal and the local church.

1.4.1 the relationship between Heaven and Earth. Matthew 18.

- The local church is how the universal heavenly church is depicted on earth
- The local church is called to reflect and display the universal church.
- sometimes it is hard to see whether local / universal or both are being talked about.

1.5 Biblical Pictures & Descriptions of the Church

1.4.1 Relational pictures: The People of God

1.4.1.1 Familial

Bride

Family / household

1.4.1.2 Political

Nation / people / citizens / kingdom / new creation

Royalty

Priesthood

1.4.1.3 Social:

Business “Fellowship”

Workers

Disciples

Covenant people

1.4.2 Agricultural pictures

Flock

Field

1.4.3 Architectural pictures

Temple

Building

1.4.4 Ethical

Holy

1.4.5 Biological pictures

Body cf Acts 9:4

An Introduction to Ecclesiology (The Doctrine of the Church)

Lecture 2. The Purpose of the Church: Mission and Mandate

2.1 The Aim of the Church (Ephesians 3)

2.1.1 Bringing Glory to God

2.1.2 Through faithful display of

2.1.2.1 His wisdom

2.1.2.2 His glory

2.2 The Mission of the Church (Matthew 28)

2.2.1 Great Commission Great Commandments?

2.2.2 Is the Mission of God the mission of the Church?

2.2.3 Is the Mission of every Christian the Mission of the Church?

John Piper: "Mission exists because worship doesn't"

1. "Mission exists because corporate worship doesn't"
2. The church as means AND ends

An Introduction to Ecclesiology (The Doctrine of the Church)

Lecture 3. The Worship of the Church: Gathered and Scattered.

3.1 Old Testament Worship

3.1.1 Worship in Genesis

3.1.1.1 In Eden

3.1.1.2 Post Fall: temporary sanctuaries and sacrifices

3.1.2 Worship in Exodus

3.1.2.1 The people saved to worship (3:12)

3.1.2.2 Sinai

3.1.2.3 Tabernacle

Presence, Priesthood & Sacrifice

3.2 New Testament “Worship” language

3.2.1 Worship is all of life (e.g. Romans 12:1-3)

3.2.2 Worship is not located in “sacred space” (John 4)

3.3 New Testament Gathered Church

3.3.1 “Worship” is not used of the corporate Gathering.

3.3.2 Why do we gather?

3.3.2.1 Edification

3.3.2.2 Equipment FOR worship

3.3.2.3 Elements of cultic worship ARE transferred to the Gathering

E.g. Singing, praise, bible reading, prayer, instruction.

AND the special presence of the Lord.

cf. Matt 18:20, 1 Cor 10:16

3.3.3 Avoid clumsy use of “worship” language.

e.g. ‘worship leader’. ‘a time of worship’

If you use the language at all, use it carefully

(For a very helpful conversation on whether it is appropriate to use the term ‘corporate worship’ see the conversation between with Don Carson & Tony Payne

<http://beginningwithmoses.org/bt-articles/206/is-the-church-a-house-of-worship>)

3.4 What should we do when we gather?

What is commanded?

Biblical elements of the Gathered Church.

3.5 What is permitted?

3.5.1 The normative principle (Hooker / Luther?)

3.5.2 The regulative principle (Calvin)

3.5.2.1 Argument from the second Commandment

3.5.2.2 Argument from Conscience

3.5.3 Normative / regulative: which is more restrictive?

3.6 Scattered to worship

How Does God equip the church for its mission?

3.6.1 The gifts of the Spirit

3.6.2 Diversity in the body of Christ

3.6.3 The Life of the Family outside of the Weekly gathering.

3.6.3.1 Sharing the word

3.6.3.2 Sharing life

3.6.3.3 Worshipping in

3.6.3.3.1 Family

3.6.3.3.2 Work

3.6.3.3.3 Neighbourhood

3.6.3.3.4 Nation

3.6.3.4 Worshipping through

3.6.3.4.1 Being faithful

3.6.3.4.2 Speaking God's word.

An Introduction to Ecclesiology (The Doctrine of the Church)

Lecture 4. The Order of the Church: Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Offices of the Church. (Eph 4:1-16)

The Unity of the Church

Served by the “Gifts of People” (vv 8, 11)

4.1.1 Apostles (recap lecture 1)

4.1.2 Prophets

4.1.2.1 Acts

(Of 31 references to prophets in Acts only 4 refer to contemporary prophets in 11:27, 13:1, 15:32, 21:10)

4.1.2.2 Paul

1 Cor 12:29, 14:29, 32, 37

Eph 2:20, 3:5, 4:11

4.1.2.3 Rest of NT

2 Peter 3:2

Rev 11:10? 18:2?

4.1.3 Evangelists cf Acts 21:8, 2 Tim 4:5

4.1.4 Pastor / Teachers

4.1.4.1 One office

Elder / Pastor-Teacher / Leader / Overseer

1 Peter 5:1-2

Acts 20:17,28

Titus 1

1 Tim 3

4.1.5 The Saints

4.1.6 Christ

4.1.7 Deacons

Acts 6

1 Tim 3

4.2 The Responsibilities of the offices.

Elders, Deacons and The Saints.

4.2.1 Deacons

4.2.2 Elders

4.2.3 Saints

Church membership

A centred set?

A centred and bounded set?

Does the congregation have responsibilities that mean a bounded set is a necessity?

4.3 How to put it together.

4.3.1 Liberty (Hooker's normative principle again)

4.3.2 No coherent model so liberty forced

4.3.3 There is a coherent model, and it is

4.3.3.1 Episcopal

Timothy / Titus as a model

4.3.3.2 Presbyterian

Acts 15 as a model

4.3.3.3 Independent

4.3.3.4 Congregational. Arguing from

4.3.3.4.1 Matt 18

4.3.3.4.2 1 Cor 5

4.3.3.4.3 Galatians 1

4.4 Conclusion