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Eternal Purpose Transcriptions  
Class 5 – 130915

## **The Creation of the Church**

Last week we talked about Israel and how Israel is a picture of the church. If I can, I try to avoid things that I know are emotionally charged subjects, but this is one that I just can't avoid. It needs to be said very clearly, that Israel is the body of Christ in the old covenant, it is the church, it is the assembly of God. There's only ever been one corporate body; there's never been two in God's mind. If I avoid saying that really clearly, then we have to avoid talking about the entire Old Testament because that's what the Old Testament is! Understanding that 'Israel is my Son, even my Firstborn', as God says in Exodus 4:22, that understanding is the key to unlocking what Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy is about. If you don't understand that God is dealing with a corporate view, a corporate body of Christ, then you are lost in the Old Testament. Then it is just a bunch of random rules and laws and ceremonies and kingdoms and kings and victories and losses. The whole thing is just a bunch of disconnected and random stories.

We must understand that God created out of one Seed the increase of that Seed, a corporate body of that Seed, a living harvest of one Seed. And then He started to relate to that increase as the body of the Source, the body of Christ, the body of the Life that went into the ground and came forth. Then everything about His relationship with Israel, all of the laws, they are understood as the definition of the relationship. They are not just a bunch of do's and don'ts and right's and wrong's. They are the boundaries of that relationship. They are the ways that God sees and relates to that corporate being, that corporate body. That's what the old covenant laws are.

Then you also understand all the aspects of the priesthood. Those are the ways that God is receiving something from this body and the body is receiving something from God. That's the way that the relationship is working. It's going two ways, two directions. And God is receiving from them something, and they are receiving from God something. That's what the priesthood is all about. It's not just that God likes bloody sacrifices or that you have to wave something in

front of God or He will strike you dead. All of those details are about God's relating with His own Son in resurrection. That's what it is!

Then you get into the kingdom and the victories and the losses and increase and decrease of their boundaries. All of that has to do with Israel my Son, the whole thing. And that's why I just can't say it strongly enough. If you miss the fact that Israel is My Son, even my Firstborn, then I think you miss everything. I think you are going to have to redefine Israel, redefine the laws, redefine the priesthood, redefine the kingdom, redefine everything according to something that is not God's Son. And one way or another, if you miss the true Man, you're going to apply these things to the wrong man. You are going to apply it all to the natural man, you are going to apply it to natural time and events. You might get excited about it, but it has nothing to do with the reason why God put these things in Scripture. These are the 'all things' that are gathered up in Christ that Paul speaks of. These are the fragments that are all gathered together into this one Person and now have become spiritual realities for us in Him.

So, we are going to start looking at the birth, or the creation of the church. Or you could say the creation of Israel. As far as I can see right now, there are three major pictures that I am going to be referring to as I talk about the creation of the church. I am going to be going in and out of these three major pictures of Israel's birth in the Old Testament. In one, which we have been talking about in the Types and Shadows class, you have Jacob coming out from his father, coming out from Bethel, the house of God, going into this hostile land which is the land of Laban, Laban's territory. He wrestles against Laban; he wrestles against man and he wrestles against God. And he comes out with an increase. He comes out with a bride, with sons, with a flock, all these pictures of what the body of Christ is. He comes out with this great increase. And it's when he comes out, after having wrestled with man, after having wrestled with God, he comes out and God puts a new name on him. He says, 'No longer shall you be called Jacob, you shall be called Israel'. So, what is Israel? It is this newly created camp that comes out from a hostile environment. And this camp consists of a bride, sons, a shepherd with a great flock, and that is our first picture of Israel. That is the first time God uses the word Israel in Scripture. It's not just a name change. These details are so significant in Scripture. Israel is always the same thing in God's mind. It is always this corporate increase of Christ. That is what the church is; that is what we are, what we are meant to be. It's always this way – God gathered a people into His Son, and then formed Christ in them, gave them this increase, this glory; Israel, my glory. I read some of these verses last week in Isaiah, God calls Israel, 'Israel My Glory'. And so that's the first picture that we will be referring to from time to time as I go through the birth, the creation of the Church.

The second picture of Israel is similar. I think you have to stand back a bit because some of these stories overlap. They overlap because God's doing them in time. For instance Joseph; we see Joseph going into Egypt and he is sold by his brothers and then thrown into a pit. That is clearly of picture of Christ, His rejection by His own brethren and thrown into the earth, crucified. His coat of many colors is brought back to the father and the father recognizes the blood and says 'My son is dead'. Then further on in the story Joseph is thrown into prison—another picture of his death. And then there are the dreams with the cup and the bread. There is another picture where Joseph is raised up to the right hand of Pharaoh and you see him becoming the savior of the whole land and the one who buys Israel with bread for Pharaoh. But in the midst of that whole story there is another story going on, another picture. This picture involves Joseph going into Egypt, dying there, but before he dies he says 'Don't leave my bones here; when you leave this land, take my bones out'. And then you never hear anything about that for a long time. Four hundred years goes by, and then all of a sudden, when Moses is leading this huge company out of Egypt, that have all gone into the door, and come out in the morning, and they are all marching out of Egypt in the morning, it says,

***Exo 13:19*** *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you."*

So, you have this picture of this one dying seed that comes into Egypt, and when you see him come out of Egypt he has become a huge company, and he is in the midst of this company. A seed goes in in one form, and the form that comes out is this multiplied, enormous, greater form, greater expression. And Joseph comes out as a corporate body of Israel, My Son.

The third one is the one that we talk about more than any other and that is Exodus 12 and 13 where God tells them to paint the blood on the door and to go into that death; go through the door, eat the dead lamb and stay in their houses until the new day. Then they all come out as one new man in the morning.

These are the three (and there are others) that have the word 'Israel' tied to them. In these stories God shows us something of His view as to where the church comes from. What is its origin? Its nature? How did He create it? What is it in His view? That's what the Old Testament is. It's a testimony of God's view of spiritual life and reality as it is in Christ. These are three really important pictures and I'm going to be dipping in and out of them as I talk about the church.

Here is a question: 'What is the church'? I wish we would all just forget what we think we know, turn our hearts to the Lord this morning, and say "I have no idea!" I say that because immediately we begin to answer that question with a million ideas and experiences and definitions and good and bad experiences of what we've thought the church is. All of our ideas and opinions and information comes rushing into our mind and before we even have time to look at this question. Our mind is already cram-filled with ideas and definitions and experiences, good and bad, whatever.

I am going to have to use words here to try to define the church but I know with myself and with you, the Lord has to be the one to bring definition and substance to these words. **If I were to define the church in a few words I might say: the church is the resurrected body of Jesus Christ.** I'm not saying that we are Christ in substance or in source. In fact, even having to qualify that, there is a wrong understanding involved, because as soon as I say 'the church', people start thinking 'we'. People just immediately think 'WE are the church'. And therefore, when I say 'the church is the resurrected body of Christ', people want to say "No, I'm not! I'm not the resurrected body of Jesus Christ'. Right here we are demonstrating our misunderstanding.

There is certainly a sense in which we can be called the church, but we do not *define* the church. We are not the substance of the church. The church is defined by Him and what He works in you and what He is made unto you. So, we are not the substance of the church; Christ is. The church is Christ's corporate body; the church is the resurrected of body of Christ.

It's like this – I could cut off my finger and put it on the table here, but I couldn't say, even though that's my finger, I couldn't say 'That's Jason'. I could say it's Jason only if it's on me, if it's living by my life and connected to me and doing nothing but expressing my life. Then I could point to my finger and say 'That's Jason'. But I couldn't cut off my finger, put it over there and say "Oh, Jason's over there'. Why not? **Because my life defines my body; my body does not define my life.** My life defines my body. And that's what I'm trying to say about the church. Christ's life defines His body. The people involved do not define it.

The church is something that God created. To create it He used something that He always had and always knew, which was the life of Christ. It's the same way He created Eve; He created her out of the life of something that was already there. He created her using life, a life He had already created. In the case of Christ, God created His bride using an uncreated life, but in either case there was already a life, He took from that life, He formed a body for that life, a rib in that case, and then gave it back to the source. That's what the church is. The church is

something that God created using a life that He had always known. And yet, He gave that life a new form, a form that was specifically created for the increase and the glory of the source of life who is Christ Himself.

The church is something that God created through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In His death, Christ gathered a people to Himself, brought that people into judgment, and then one new life came out of the tomb, one new life. And the name of that new life that came out of the ground, the corporate name of that thing that came out from among the dead, is the body of Christ. Or, you could say, the name is the church. Christ is the Head, Christ is the Life, Christ is the Source, and yet there is a body, a company, that is attached to the Head, the body of the Head that bears His life and is defined and made alive by Him, and that corporate thing is the church.

Now, again, I'm not trying to describe what you've *experienced* to be the church; in fact, I'm trying to describe something that is contrary to what most of us have experienced so that we can let some ideas go. Rather than us try to define the church, we can let Christ, who is the Life of the church become the defining of the church in us. But Jesus, speaking of His death said in John 12, 'When I am lifted up, I will draw all men to myself'. And then right after that John makes the comment, 'He said this indicating the kind of death He would die.' Let me quote the scripture here: 'Now judgment is upon this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out and I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself'. Then verse 33, 'But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.' It was not a normal death. That's the point. It was not just any old death. It's not like the death of just one individual; it's not even just the death of the Son of God. He is indicating the kind of death He was going to die and the kind of death that He was going to die was the death of all who He would gather unto Himself. It was the death of the entire Adamic man, the entire Adamic world. It was God's righteous judgment and separation of all of that from Himself in the cross. Many entered into one death, or, as Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5, 'When one died, all died with Him'. Many went into one death, and all died that one death. They didn't all die a bunch of natural deaths. God didn't say to Israel, 'Everyone at twilight take a knife and kill yourself so that you can come back in the morning'. No, He provided a lamb; He provided one way for all of them to die. They all killed the lamb at the same time, they all painted the blood on the door, they all had to go into and partake of that exact same death, and they all had to eat that lamb, according to their own hunger. Part of that story that is so awesome is they ate that lamb ready to go, prepared to go, with their sandals on their feet, their loins girded – ready to go. Eating that lamb, in God's mind, was synonymous with leaving Egypt. So He says, 'You can't just sit down and eat it'. First of all, it's not a very pleasant meal. You have to eat the guts and the hooves and the horns too,

as much as you can. And anything you can't physically eat, burn it so that nothing is left in the morning. It wasn't supposed to be like a nice tasty Thanksgiving meal. It was disgusting and roasted over fire with all its parts included and mixed with bitter herbs. And they had to eat it ready to depart. We don't think about this in very much detail, but it is such a strange picture because they eat the lamb standing with their sandals and coats on, waist girded, and they eat it with unleavened bread with bowls on their shoulders so that as soon as they are done eating it, Pharaoh says 'Get out. Moses, rise up. Christ, rise up. You take all your people with you and get out of my land! You don't belong here'. It's like Egypt vomits them out. In the middle of the night it says 'A cry rises up and Pharaoh says, 'Get out of here'. It's like the land of death, the world of death. That's what eating the lamb is; it's an exodus.

Whether you realize it or not, whether faith has seen it or not, the moment you eat the lamb you are vomited out of a world of death. You are projected out. There is no more government of Satan and sin over the man who eats that death. You've been judged and you come projected out of that land with your sandals on, your coats on, carrying vessels of unleavened bread. And that's how you leave. And not only that, but you pillage and plunder that world, taking out of it the things that God uses to build His house. You take out of it the gold, the silver and the thread that God then uses to construct His tabernacle. He takes out of the enemies' camp the very thing He uses to build His dwelling place. 'Make Me a tabernacle that I may dwell among you'. And they use the things that they take out from among Egypt. That's a picture of God taking your soul out of the enemy's kingdom and building His own dwelling place.

And so God made the church in a very specific way. He didn't just say the church is a bunch of people that believe in Jesus Christ. That's not what He said. The church is a bunch of people that go to church on Sunday and do certain things and believe certain things and act in certain ways. That's not God's definition of the church. That's our blinded understanding of the church. God's understanding of the church is this resurrected thing that was expelled from the realm of death, shot out without leaven, because leaven is the nature of sin that was left behind. For seven days they could not partake of any leaven as a picture of the perfection, the leavenless-ness of this new creation. And part of the ceremony from that point on was searching their dwellings, not just no leaven in their bread, but no leaven in their houses. They had to search their houses with these little lamps, and it became a ritual. They would search for any crumb of leaven and get it out of their dwelling places because it was a completely new creation with no trace of the old in it. So, we are approaching a little bit of God's understanding of this corporate body.

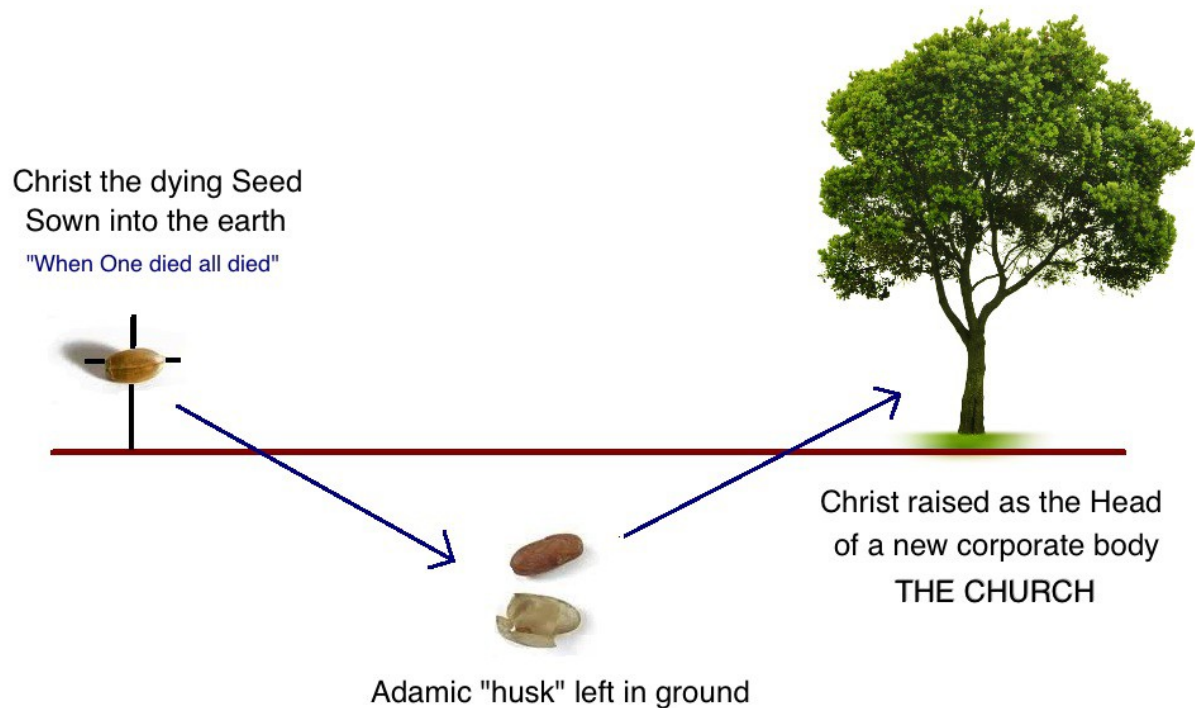
Let me say it a different way: **the church is the name of Christ's body in resurrection.** Jesus the Nazarene was the name of Christ's body in death; the church is the name of Christ's body in resurrection. He went into the ground in one form, He came out of the ground in a different form, with a different body. Just like anything that we sow into the ground. Now, no one has ever put a seed into the ground and then watch the same seed three days later, three weeks later, come out of the ground and call that a harvest. That's never happened, and if it did happen you would not call it a harvest and you would not be glad about it. You would not be thinking it's a harvest because the same form doesn't come out after you plant it. It's the same *life*, and maybe when it first pops its little head out of the ground you can't tell how different it is because you are just seeing a tiny little bit of the head of it. But if you let that thing increase, you know that it's not even remotely of the same *form*. It's the same life that went in but it's a greater harvest.

This is exactly what Jesus said. 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified'. What does that mean? It means the hour has come for the Seed to turn into something a lot bigger, for the same life to have a greater expression. The glory that Jesus was looking toward at the cross was not just the expression in His physical pain of God's heart of love. It was the understanding that now is the time to plant the Seed; now is the time that I am going to take this tiny little thing that nobody recognizes, and I'm going to put it in the ground. They have despised this little acorn and thought it's no different than any other seed. They have thought to themselves, "I think I have a better seed than that" The hour has come for me to put this Seed in the ground and something far greater is going to come. The hour has come to glorify the life in the Seed!" It's the same exact nature, the same DNA and yet it's going to have a greater body, a much greater form. And so, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone".

This is what God said to Adam in the beginning; 'It's not good for this seed to remain alone. I'm going to make something that's going to bring forth its increase. I'm going to make something so that it won't be alone'. It wasn't because of loneliness, but because of increase. But, if it dies it bears *much fruit*. And then, right away, Jesus talks about how we follow Him from the one side to the other. "He who loves his life loses it; he who hates his life in this world keeps it unto eternal life'.

Here is what I am trying to make really clear: there are two kinds of bodies that we are looking at. There is the body that is sown into the ground and dies and the body that is raised. Unless a grain of wheat goes into the ground in one form, it cannot come out in another form. And that is so hard for us to understand. We always talk about Jesus died and then He got His life back

and that's what we think resurrection is. He died, because He had to pay the price for sins and then He came back. And we think the resurrection is Jesus coming back. Yes, He did come back and He did appear in a physical form, but that's not what resurrection is. Resurrection is the new life that is the life of the whole body. It's not just the reappearance of the Seed, it's a new body that is far greater than the Seed form. The new body does not have a greater life. It's not greater in substance, but *it's greater in form, a greater body*.



Paul gets into this in 1 Corinthians chapter 15:35: "But someone will say how are the dead raised and with what kind of body do they come? You fool!" I like that he says that because this is the kind of question we are always asking. 'Will I be able to fly in heaven?... and will my broken ankle be better?... and will grandma be there?' Those are the kind of questions that we ask about the resurrection. We don't ask whose body it is or what is the greatness of the body, we just think about our own body coming back in a different form. And Paul says, 'You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies and that which you sow you do not sow the body which is to be but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else.' And verse 42: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body'. We're not talking about 'bodies' here, it's talking about 'a body'. It never says 'bodies' in this entire chapter. 'It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also, it is written 'The first man became a living soul; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit'. You can see we have two corporate men in view here. 'However,



the spiritual is not first, but the natural. Then the spiritual'. So he is saying 'You fool' because you don't understand the resurrection. It's a totally different *form* of life. It's the same life but it comes forth in a new form with a new body. It's a body of glory; that's probably the best way to say it.

One form goes into Egypt, as just one man, Joseph the rejected brother, the man who goes to prison for something he didn't do. It goes into Egypt like that, it comes out this glorious resurrected people with him in the midst. Do you see? Jacob says, 'I left my father with just my staff in my hand and I have come back to him as two companies'. It goes in with one form, it comes out in another form. And we catch the bus, so to speak, in the death of Christ. We are joined to Him in that death. We are put away in that death. We are part of the form that gets put away. We are the husk. We are actually that thing that He gathers unto Himself to put away; the nature of Adam; the man of Adam, so that He can be the Life and the newness, and so we can walk in newness of life.

What is newness of life? Well, Christians say, "It's *my* new life". No, it's Christ as your life. Christ is the newness of the new creation. He is the newness of the new life. I think the church benefit from looking at what happened when Jesus came back from the dead. People say I am calling the church the resurrected body of Jesus Christ, but Jesus had a body when He popped out of the grave. And that's true; I'm not denying that. Of course He had a body, some kind of a body. But, have you ever noticed that first of all He didn't want anyone to know Him after the resurrection in the same way that they knew Him before the resurrection? He was the Head of a new creation, He was the Head of a corporate body, but He specifically did not let people relate to Him after the resurrection in the same way that they related to Him before the resurrection. He wanted them to know Him and be joined to Him in a new way. Mary right away tries to throw her arms around Him and He says don't cling to Me like that. That's the way you used to cling to Me, the way you used to know Me. But don't cling to Me like that because I have not yet ascended to My Father. When I ascend to My Father, then you are going to know Me as the Head of this corporate body. You are going to be able to cling to Me alright, but it's going to be a spiritual union; a way of knowing Me as the spiritual life and head of a corporate people.

So Christ appears to show Himself having raised from the dead, to show Himself having come back, the sacrifice being accepted of God, the blood being shed, the old man put away. He appears in a form but here is another thing we should notice when Christ rose from the dead; nobody could recognize Him with natural eyes. Nobody! And that's not because He wore a disguise. It's because He was the firstfruits of a different form that can't be recognized or

known according to the flesh. Mary Magdalene, who maybe knew Him in the flesh as good as anyone did. Mary Magdalene, He cast seven demons out of her and then He went to her house many times and raised up her brother from the dead. She could not recognize Him and thought He was the gardener. Peter and John, on the boat, they see Him on the shore and they don't know who He is until they pull in 153 fish. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus walk an entire day with Him and don't recognize Him until He breaks the bread. In other words, these two need to see Him in the cross, they see what He has done, and then they recognize Him. And as soon as they recognize Him in a spiritual way, as soon as they see Him with different eyes, He vanishes from these natural eyes. He doesn't want us to know Him this way. It's the same thing with Thomas and even Paul said He appeared to 500 but some doubted. Why did they doubt? Because it wasn't a matter of recognizing the old form; it was a matter of beholding the new form. So for forty days, Jesus popped in and popped out. He proved Himself alive and then disappeared because He was helping them make this transition between knowing Him in the flesh and knowing Him in the spirit, between knowing Him in the first form and then knowing Him as the Head of this second form. And He did that for forty days. And even as they tried to keep seeing Him in the sky, the angels rebuked them because He was just about to come and fill up His body, the church.

What I am trying to say is that Christ, the Nazarene, was the Word of God, the only Word, the only begotten Son of God. I am not trying in any way to suggest that we are equal to Christ at all. But we are given the only begotten Son of God as our life and that is exactly what the church is: it is the corporate body, the new body of the resurrected Jesus Christ. You can't look at what we call the church and try to define Him. You have to look at Him and see Him to understand what the church is. You can't recognize it with natural eyes. Mary couldn't even recognize Him with natural eyes and she walked with Him for years. John and Peter couldn't recognize Him; the disciples on the road to Emmaus couldn't recognize the new form. The new form is revealed just like everything spiritual needs to be shown to spiritual eyes in spiritual light. The church also is the same way. It's a new body of the same Man.

I want to read a couple verses in Ephesians chapter two because what has just been shared, Paul says in this chapter, starting in verse 11: "Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- (he is saying all this to show that these distinctions don't exist anymore) remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into

one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. (Now skipping down to verse 21) ...in whom the whole building being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit." There is a great definition of the church right there. What does He do? He takes Jew, He takes Gentile, He puts them both away. How does He do it? He does it in the body of Jesus Christ. When I am lifted up I will draw all men to myself. He takes the Jew and Gentile, puts them into Christ and kills them both. He leaves them in the grave and raises up one new life, that is neither Jew nor Gentile, but Christ all and in all, and this one new life is the life of one new man. And this one new man is neither Jew nor Gentile, nor slave nor free, nor male nor female. It is a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. It's the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. And from God's perspective, the name for that dwelling place of God in the Spirit, for that one new man, for that thing that is Christ, all and in all, it's called the church. That's what the church is. That's not what we experience as the church because we look at from the wrong eyes, from the wrong man, and usually full of misunderstandings and false expressions. But, from the Lord's perspective, that is what He created at the cross.