

Community Church Huddersfield
Roots of Restoration Notes

Session 3: A House For God's Glory
– What Kind of A Church Is God Looking For?

1. Jesus is passionate about building his church

I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

(Matt.16:18)

2. Like all spiritual realities, the church is foreshadowed and pointed towards in the Old Testament. (It might also be seen as being in seed-form in the OT with the full fruit coming in the NT).

a. A Covenant Community

i. Israel

1. God's chosen people, his treasured possession

Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'

(Exodus 19:5-6)

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God;

(1 Peter 2:9-10)

2. Separated to and bound to God (covenant-people)
3. The church is God's called out people (*ecclesia*) – called out and set apart to him

ii. A community is an extended **family** and the church is essentially God's family.

1. Not of natural descent but of spiritual new birth (John 1:12-13) – you have to be born again to be part of this church and all who are born again are part of it!

b. A Kingdom Community

- i. Kingdom of priests (Ex.19:6)
 - 1. Royal priesthood (1 Pet.2:9)
- ii. David's Kingdom is a model and illustration of the Kingdom community
 - 1. Demonstrates the importance of authority – godly rule and godly order
 - 2. The government or rule of God brings righteousness, peace and joy (Isaiah 9:7; Rom.14:17)
 - 3. Government of God enables community – diversity with unity (Eph.1:10)
 - 4. Extends God's rule (Kingdom) into all the earth (Ps.110:2)

c. The City of God

- i. Jerusalem/Zion – the capital of the Kingdom that takes on great spiritual significance

It is beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth. Like the utmost heightsis Mount Zion, the city of the Great King.
(Psalm 48:2)

- ii. We are longing for and on pilgrimage towards this Zion (Ps.84:5-7)
 - 1. This is what Abraham had been looking for (Heb.11:10)
- iii. It is the perfected, fully mature church pictured for us in the book of Revelation (Rev.21-22)
- iv. The restoration of the church is pictured in the OT books of Ezra and Nehemiah as the rebuilding of a city

d. The House of God

- i. The Temple that David desired to build was to be the house of God – God's dwelling-place (2 Chron.6:2)
- ii. But even then there was also the sense of house as people i.e. as household/family – refers back to the idea of the community of covenant people
 - 1. This was the kind of house that God promised to David – an on-going family, descendants, a dynasty (1 Chron.17:10-15)
- iii. But it was also a temple where God's Presence and glory could be known (2 Chron.5:13-14)
- iv. In the NT of course, it is not a physical building but it is the people, the church

In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

(Ephesians 2:21-22)

you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house

(1 Peter 2:5)

3. Other Images help us to see other dimensions of the nature and destiny of the church

- a. **Vineyard** – (Isaiah 5:7) fruitfulness of the church; to fill the world with fruit
- b. **Body** – extension of Christ in the earth
 - i. One Man (Eph.1:22-23; 4:13-16) – fullness, maturity
- c. **Bride** – devotion, covenantly bound to Christ, purity

4. For this study of the kind of church that God is looking for I want to focus on the Temple or House of God. We long to see a house built – a church that is fit for God’s Presence and Glory.

- a. Household, family, people, a community among whom God dwells
- b. Where Christ dwells by his Spirit (Eph.2:21-22)
- c. Therefore it has to be a house fit for God’s Presence and Glory

5. The key to understanding it is the idea of God’s dwelling place – this is central to the purpose of God.

- a. It is to be the place where God would feel at home!
- b. First seen in the Garden of the Presence (Gen. Isaiah 5:7)
- c. Pictured as the Tabernacle/Ark among the covenant community in the wilderness
- d. Pictured as the Temple in the city
- e. First fulfilled in Jesus living among men (John 1:14) – Emmanuel
- f. Ultimately fulfilled in the Age to Come (Rev.21:3) – God dwells among men!!

6. What kind of a house/dwelling place is God looking for?

- a. Built according to the heavenly pattern (Ex.25:40; 1 Chron.28:19; Ezekiel 43:11)
- b. A Spiritual House
 - i. Made of living stones – not institutional, organisational, man-made
 - ii. Where Spirit dwells (Eph.2:21-22)
 - iii. The Presence of God is there (Ps.23:6)
 - iv. The gate of the heaven (Gen.
 - v. A colony of heaven on the earth

- c. A Place of Worship (Ps.27:4; 134; Jer.17:26; John 4)
 - d. A place of joy and praise (Ps.42:4; 122:1; 135:1-2)
 - e. A House of Prayer – (Isaiah 56:7) – we are priests in the house
 - f. A Prophetic house (Jer.26:7; 28:1-5; Zech 7:2-3; 8:9)
 - g. Built with Foundations (Ezra 3:11; 1 Cor.3:11-13 Eph.2:19-20)
 - i. Built to last
 - h. Devoted and Pure (Deut.23:18; 1 Chron.29:23 – gatekeepers; Ezekiel 8:16-18; 11:1ff; Ezekiel 43:12)
 - i. United (Ps.55:13-14; Ps.122 – connected with city)
 - j. Mature - The place where God's people flourish (Ps.52:8; 92:12-14; Eph.4:11-15)
 - i. Reflecting the fullness of Christ (Eph.1:22-23)
 - k. Christ-centred and Christ-glorifying (Heb.10:21)
7. Zeal for the house of the Lord should consume us.

His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

(John 2:17)

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