

The Church: Body, Building, Bride

1. The church is Christ's body



a. Be encouraged: we could not be more closely united to Jesus

⁴ And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

⁵ And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." (Acts 9:4-5, cf. Ephesians 4:15-16.)

b. Be a team-player: we need each other

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you", nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ... ²⁴ But God has so composed the body...²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. (1 Corinthians 12:24-26 cf. Ephesians 4:15-16.)

2. The church is God's temple



a. Be in awe: we are the place where the living God dwells

¹⁹...[you are] members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

b. Be careful: God cares about how we treat his holy people

¹⁶ Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

c. Be encouraged: our sacrifices are acceptable to God

⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4-5)

3. The church is Christ's bride



a. Be devoted: our bridegroom desires our purity

² For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. ³ But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:2-3)

b. Be hopeful: our future is a wedding banquet

² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (Revelation 21:2-3)