

## **A Word of Explanation**

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#### **1. What is the Church?**

*Simply called-out ones or believers gathered together.*

#### **Colossians 1 verse 18**

*He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.*

*The Body of Christ, He is the head, we are the body.*

#### **Hebrews 12 verse 28-29**

*Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire.*

*The Kingdom of God, Christ is the King, we are His subjects.*

#### **1 Peter 2 verse 1-10**

*Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. 4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," 8 and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.*

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**9** But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

The Royal Priesthood, we are all His priests.

### **Romans 16 verse 1-5**

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; **2** that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well. **3** Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, **4** who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; **5** also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

The Local Church, the National Church, the Universal Church.

### **Ephesians 4 verse 4-6**

There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6** one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

There are many churches, all part of One Church.

### **Romans 12 verse 4-5**

For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, **5** so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

There are many members in one Body with different functions.

### **Psalms 127 verse 1**

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain.

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God will bring all the different churches together - if we let Him! The Kingdom of God has come since Christ brought it in nearly 2000 years ago.

### **Psalm 110 verse 1-4**

*The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." 2 The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies." 3 Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew. 4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."*

We, His Church, are to establish His Reign on earth. This means we are in a war!

### **John 14 verse 12**

*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.*

We are God's weapon of war to destroy the works of the devil.

### **1 John 3 verse 7-8**

*Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.*

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## **2. How is a New Church Born?**

In view of the fact that there are so many churches at the present time, should we in fact build any new ones? Is this not simply dividing the Church even more?

### ***Isaiah 9 verse 6-7***

*For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.*

Yes, we can justify new churches, His work is eternal.

### ***Romans 8 verse 29-30***

*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*

The child Jesus was the firstborn of many sons.

### ***Matthew 6 verse 9-13***

*"Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 'Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'*

His ministries, His gifts will continue until His Kingdom is established on earth as it is in heaven.

## **Revelation 19 verse 7-8**

*Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

Jesus will return when the time is right and we, meanwhile need to carry on with our righteous works to build with God, His kingdom.

The birth of a new Church is like the way a child is born, it begins as an embryo formed by the fusion of a sperm from the Father and an ovum from the mother, when fusion takes place the embryo has been conceived and the development of the child continues until it is ready for birth. During its development the child is fed and sustained by the mother.

The birth of a new church is just the same, Father God plants His Word into the mind and heart of a *mother* and fusion takes place, a church in embryo is started. The mother in this case would biblically be an Apostle called of God, having had an intimate spiritual relationship with Him. The family or church of God is based on fatherhood, without fathers there can be no family either naturally or spiritually. True sons have a father, otherwise they are called something else! How are Apostles appointed? The simplest explanation of an Apostle is *one sent to do a particular job*. The Apostle Paul gives us some guidance.

## **Galatians 1 verse 1-5**

*Paul, an apostle (not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen.*

Jesus appoints them.

## **Ephesians 4 verse 11-13**

*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*

Apostles and Prophets are initiating ministries, who have the first job to do in building the new Church.

## **1 Corinthians 12 verse 28-30**

*And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. 29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?*

## **John 13 verse 12-17**

*So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

Parents serve their children, they love them and train them, its a servanthood as well as a parenthood, all ministry must be on this basis. Jesus had strong words to say about serving, He washed His disciples feet.

## **Mark 9:46-48**

*An argument started among them as to which of them might be the greatest.*

*47 But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side, 48 and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great."*

This was Jesus' response to the disciples arguing about who was the greatest amongst them. So Apostles are receivers of children, at least rearers, they raise families for God. He initiates the work until there is a plurality of parents establishing His Kingdom in their lives and the lives of others. We need more and more churches to be established everywhere, all of us subject to Jesus and the pattern God has laid down in His Word.

## **Hebrews 8 verse 1-5**

*Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."*

Stevenage Christian Fellowship was born in the way described, we are in an embryonic stage, development has begun\*\* and praise God for the ministries and gifts - parenthood that that will emerge to serve a growing church.

If we took all the members of all the churches in and around Stevenage they would represent a very small percentage of the total population.

\*\* This was March, 1985.

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We need more and more to get it together as His Church to let our light shine and to be the salt of the earth. Unfortunately the church has become less and less of the light and at best can be described as a glimmer. The Holy Spirit can and will change that image as we fix our attention upon Jesus and put aside every encumbrance.

### **Hebrews 12 verse 1-3**

*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

The Lord planted His Word into my mind and heart in 1981. He said that I was to be able to be a co-worker with Him and that if I had any personal plans they would have to go! The plan was to be according to His pattern and part of His plan was to establish His order in our families, family being the biblical pattern and example that that the Church was all about, not so much where we went on Sundays but what we were to become at home. God's order and authority His love ruling in our homes, we are seeing some fruit but have some way to go yet.

### **Ephesians 5 verse 22-33**

*Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.*

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**28** So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; **29** for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, **30** because we are members of His body. **31** FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. **32** This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. **33** Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

### **Ezekiel 34: 1-10**

Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, **2** "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? **3** You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock. **4** Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them. **5** They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered. **6** My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek for them.'" Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: **8** "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock; **9** therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

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*10 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them."'"*

During our three years of development we have seen a body of believers being joined together by His love. He has caused the survivors from other churches, people who were injured, bruised, disillusioned and stunted in their growth in God. He has also joined to us people from different backgrounds who will add to the infinite variety of our fellowship. He intends that we are made in the image of our original self - in the image of His Son Jesus, this is His goal for us. Not photocopies of anyone else or any other situation.

### ***Ezekiel 34 verse 11-16***

*For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day. 13 I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. 14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD. 16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.*

He promises to care for us always and some healing has taken place already. In order to understand His way more fully a study of His instructions are necessary, do read the scriptures for yourself.

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### **Exodus 24 verse 3**

*Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do!"*

The people affirmed their personal covenant with God.

### **Exodus 24 verse 12**

*Now the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction."*

God called Moses to the mountain to tell him of His plans.

### **Exodus 24 verse 18**

*Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.*

Moses spent 6 weeks with the Lord.

### **Exodus 25 verse 2**

*"Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution.*

God is testing the Israelites in their commitment to Him.

### **Exodus 35 verse 21 -29**

*Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought the LORD'S contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments. 22 Then all whose hearts moved them, both men and women, came and brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and bracelets, all articles of gold; so did every man who presented an offering of gold to the LORD. 23 Every man, who had in his possession blue and purple and scarlet material and fine linen and goats' hair and rams' skins dyed red and porpoise skins, brought them.*

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*24 Everyone who could make a contribution of silver and bronze brought the LORD'S contribution; and every man who had in his possession acacia wood for any work of the service brought it. 25 All the skilled women spun with their hands, and brought what they had spun, in blue and purple and scarlet material and in fine linen. 26 All the women whose heart stirred with a skill spun the goats' hair. 27 The rulers brought the onyx stones and the stones for setting for the ephod and for the breastpiece; 28 and the spice and the oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense. 29 The Israelites, all the men and women, whose heart moved them to bring material for all the work, which the LORD had commanded through Moses to be done, brought a freewill offering to the LORD.*

Those whose hearts stirred them responded by giving themselves and their skills, time, money and gifts.

### **Exodus 25 verse 8**

*Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.*

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