

Church Without Walls - Raw transcript of interview:

2025-02-23 CWW Week 26 - What Is Church?...

Published February 23rd, 2025 4:00 pm WST

Hi

everyone and welcome to Church Without Walls and we're doing our week 26 presentation this week. What is church? I'd like to thank you all for your patience. We have been a little bit tardy with getting presentations to you. It's been a very busy time with lots of traveling in recent months and it's really taken a toll on us as far as our energy levels are concerned and just our availability to continue doing what we really dearly want to do.

So I want to thank you all for your patience, your love and kindness and your support and most of all your prayers. Let's bring the Holy Spirit into our conversation with prayer. Dear Lord Papa God, we thank you so much for being present with us at this time, Father, as we discuss an issue describing the Bride of Christ, which is His Church.

Father God, as we open your word, we pray that you will guide and lead us. I pray that those people hearing this message will be uplifted and be further enlightened as to practical ways that they can deal with this new journey they're finding themselves in, this journey to a relationship with Jesus. We pray in His precious name.

Amen. So our topic has been, and you would have, many of you would have listened to the devotionals for group 26, uh, what is church? And uh, it's, it's been a very interesting topic because of recent times, uh, church as we know it, and that is corporate church, denominational church has been somewhat under attack and under the microscope.

Uh, simple reason being is that there is a always. There always has been a reason why church and state should be separated. And since the pandemic started, we've seen a lockstep movement between church and state when the church should be holding the state to account. We've seen liberty of conscience denied.

We've seen churches locked down. Employees of churches are fired because they couldn't go along with mandates and couldn't give informed consent. And we've seen a whole bunch of issues that have really caused us to ask the question, what is church? But how will a church go? Will it survive? Well, let's first of all examine what church is all about.

And let's go first of all to Matthew 18 and verse 20. And it reads, For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them. So what is church? Church is the house of God. And what Matthew 18 20 tells us, when two or three or more are gathered in his name, he is there. He is present, and that is church.

But there are several aspects to church, and let's start looking at them. One is church as the body of Christ. Our first, uh, scripture for this particular, uh, aspect of what is church is 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12 to 13. And it reads, For just as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

For in one spirit, we were all baptized into one body. Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and all were made to drink of one spirit. Now this passage emphasizes the church of the body of Christ with many members working together as one. I liken this to a symphony orchestra. If you listen to a full symphony orchestra playing a certain piece, the richness of the sound is over overwhelming and breathtaking.

It is magnificent. The orchestra is comprised of several sections, woodwind, percussion, strings. Brass, woodwind, and, and we can understand clearly that all these things come together in harmony under a good conductor with a good piece that's been composed to create a musical piece which is resounding in its emotional experience and its pleasure to listen to.

There are many members of a symphony orchestra that have vital roles that are seen as the most important. Well, the conductor, perhaps the lead violinist, the pianist, all these people seem to be sitting at the front of the orchestra, and they seem to have the focus put on them. But in the background we have percussion, and we have woodwind, and we have the oboe, and we have things like the cymbals or the triangle.

These roles would appear to be minor. But when we listen to the symphony played in full with a full symphony orchestra and note the rich sound, if we were to remove those minor instruments, like the cymbals, the triangle or the oboe for example, I mean no disrespect to any of these musicians, and listen to the symphony again, it loses its texture.

It's not as good. And so is the body of Christ as in church. There are those who are gifted to speak at the front. There are those who, um, who minister through teaching and hospitality. There are those who greet at the door, those who do the cooking, those who do the groundwork for administration behind the scenes, making sure that everyone's needs are met.

The whole body of Christ requires every member to play its part. And to that end, churches should be, especially if we're following and being led by the Holy Spirit, harmonious places.

Just as a symphony orchestra is meant to be harmonious. Let's look at Ephesians chapter 4 verses 15 and 16. I hope by now you've all got a Bible and you're getting used to reading it. Rather speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head. From whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

What's the primary focus here? It's love. The Church is depicted as a living organism where every believer plays a crucial role in growing and strengthening the body. But it needs to be done in love, using certain mantras like tell the truth faster, be open and honest, avoiding gossip, Would you be talking about this person in the way that you are if you knew Jesus was standing next to you?

All these things need to be considered. And when a church, when a body of Christ as in a church behaves itself in such a way, the Holy Spirit is uplifted as is Christ and it attracts more people and people come for healing. Churches are hospitals for sinners. They're not museums for saints. But too often we see this happening in organized institutional churches around the world, in all denominations.

The bit I like here is the church is the household of God. Now let's go back to the beginning a little bit here. When you hear the word church, what words are conjured up in your mind? Most of you will be thinking a cathedral, a temple, uh, you'll be thinking a church on the street corner, a building. You might be thinking of the church as a denominational corporation, but what we're describing to you is the church as a body of believers.

It can be anywhere. It has nothing to do with the building. The temple is us as the individuals and the body of Christ who come together in that. So let's see the church as the household of God. Now that could be in a constructed church style building or it could be under a tree in a park. It could be in a cafe.

It could be on a beach where people gather and meet. It could be in your home, in a private home. Let's look at Ephesians chapter 2 verses 19 to 22. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens. Don't you love that? You're no longer strangers and aliens because you're in the body of Christ. But you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

In him, you are also being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit. Can you start to see the difference now between looking at a church as a cathedral or a building on the corner? to seeing

it as a gathering of people. That's why we're talking about, we're talking to you about this subject from Church Without Walls.

It's a church without a building, even though we're recording obviously in a building. And we've just had a wonderful meeting, a wonderful weekend of Sabbath reflection here with 50 odd people. And it was an amazing weekend of fellowship and, and joining as one with the Holy Spirit, being of one accord, even though we had differences of opinion, we still loved each other through it.

And when everyone leaves, it's always a bit of an anti climax for Michelle and I. Here the church is described as a spiritual house built upon the teachings of the apostles and Christ as a cornerstone. A spiritual house, not a bricks and mortar house. Let's look at 1 Timothy 3 15. If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God.

So in other words, if I'm a bit tardy in coming back by your recollections, you should know how to behave until I get here, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. I'll read it again. If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God. There are certain manners.

Which is the church of the living God a pillar and buttress of the truth. The truth and love is the foundation of the church. The church is not just a gathering of people, but the very household of God upholding truth. And the household requires certain duties take place. The house needs to be kept clean, and that refers to us doing the best we can to eliminate sin in our lives, knowing that we will never ever properly do that.

But bless to those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires, and that's what we should be doing. We are a work in progress, and we should turn up every day for work knowing that we'll be a better person today than we were yesterday. That's the spiritual growth of character development that we see.

If we're to keep the household clean, are there rooms in our house that we keep locked up because they're too untidy and too dirty to go into? If Jesus walked to your front door today and knocked on the door, would you be happy to show him every room in your house or only certain rooms? What are you keeping locked away?

It's interesting to see the church as the household of God. The third aspect is the church as a place of worship and fellowship, and this is what I love most about church, the gathering that we have here. And we, we can have that inside the building if the weather's not good or we can be out in the garden with our chairs under a tree.

We even baptized someone in our dam yesterday and it was beautiful. The church is a place of fellowship and worship. Let's go to Matthew 18, 20. Chapter 18 and verse 20. Jesus emphasizes that the church is a place where believers gather to worship, to pray and experience his presence. And we had that here in abundance in the last two days.

I can tell you, at Church Without Walls, in our, in our monthly get together with people who've traveled many hours to come here and spend the weekend with us. It's a wonderful thing. Let's look at Hebrews 10, verses 24 and 25. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Stir up one another, build the passion, build the energy, build the desire to follow God's will in our lives, to spread the gospel message. That is our great commission. Churches have traditionally become too inward looking and not focused enough on outreach, and it's vitally important. You know what? I like to reach those of you who are looking at church through the windows from the outside, not those who are on the inside, although you need to hear this message too.

It's all about you who are on the outside who are wondering, is it safe to come in? The walls need to be pulled down so that everyone can come as they are to Jesus. We're invited to do that. Come as you are to God. 25 says, And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. It's kind of a nice concept, isn't it?

To see a group of fellow believers as being the household of God. Who's the master of the house? Well, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Who are the butlers? Who are the housekeepers? Who are the housemates? Who are the cooks? Who are the press secretaries? It's an amazing concept. I love looking at church through these different aspects.

Number four is the church is a witness to the world, and this is where we're at. We're at the beginning of its history, and I can tell you, I've lost count of the number of atheists who have asked me to pray for them in recent times. Everybody's noticing that something's not quite right. Everyone has a feeling that there's a darkness creeping in, they've lost faith in all the institutions that they used to have faith in, and they're now looking towards the heavenly government for support.

Matthew 5 verses 14 to 16. You are the light of the world, a city on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. But on a stand. And it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

We are saved by, we are saved by grace through faith alone. But that faith and that character development should require us to love others, to do the works, to help others and support them in their journey as well. That's what the works means. It's all about spreading the gospel. And sharing the good news, because in spite of the darkness that I, that I confront every day in the world, there's a sense of peace in me because I know that God is still in control and I want you all to experience that sense of peace.

It's going to be okay, because we're with Jesus, and most of all, Jesus is with us. The church's role is to be a beacon of light, reflecting God's glory to the world. Let's look at Acts chapter 1, the book of Acts chapter 1, and verse 1. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

I love being a witness for Jesus. I've done it at rallies in front of hundreds of thousands of people. I've prayed for them. I've told them stories about Jesus and I've told them that he is in control and I've seen their faces light up. There's something about that and I, I have felt the recipient of being the recipient of the Holy Spirit when I've spoken.

I've walked up to a microphone in front of hundreds of thousands of people not knowing what I was going to say. But praying before I get there, and then praying when I get there. And when I hear hundreds of thousands of people yell out Amen, I know that people are searching for something. We're at a time in our history where this has never been more prominent.

People are looking for God, and they're looking for God in some, in some cases in all the wrong places. We have to keep it simple, we have to keep it pure, and we have to keep it compassionate. Spread the message of Jesus Christ throughout the world. Can there be anything better to do? And I love doing it because I'm finding more and more people ready to receive the message.

It's all in how we do it. We don't have to Bible bash people. Our faith should be based in a one on one relationship with Jesus Christ, not through the filter of a corporate denomination. We've gone past that now. Corporate denominations have let us down. They've all marched in lockstep. We have to rethink the way we did church.

Number five is the church is the bride of Christ. Let's look at the book of Ephesians chapter 5 verses 25 to 27. This is always a controversial one. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, the Bible, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

In other words, if you go out to the world and say you're a Christian, people are going to be looking at the way you behave, and you need to behave as Christ. But that takes development, and it takes time, and sometimes

it's one step forward and two steps back. But don't be discouraged. The Church is portrayed as the bride of Christ, loved and cherished by Him, and being prepared for His return.

That is the people who have made their bodies the temple of the Holy Spirit, who keep to the commandments of God and keep the testimony of Jesus. That's the body of Christ. That's the bride of Christ. Let's look at the last book of the Bible, Revelation chapter 9. Let us rejoice and exalt and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

It was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure, for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. That means that we're progressively eliminating sin from our lives, progressively. To the point is, as we develop our character every day by praying for the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us in that journey, without freaking out and without, you know, feeling like we're never going to be good enough, allow the Spirit to take you on the journey.

And when the time comes, When the groom returns to take us all home, you'll be clothed in the finest linen. How good is that? Completely cleansed. This passage looks forward to the ultimate union of Christ and his church in heaven. Christ and his people. You know, heaven is not just the exclusive stronghold of certain denominations.

The three angels message of Revelation talks about coming out of her, my people, come out of Babylon. Many churches will stray into the Babylonian system and there will be a remnant come from each of these denominations and they will form as one, the church of Christ, the bride of Christ, and we will be the ones waiting for him to return.

When he comes back to take us all home, that's a beautiful piece of understanding of what I'm talking about today. Christ is preparing us to go home with him and I can't wait for that day. The last thing I want to discuss is the church as a place of service and ministry, and that's what it is. Our service should be based on others scent of love.

Not for ourselves. Love is something you do for somebody else. It means loving your neighbor as you love yourself. Remember Jesus said when he was asked about which were the most important commandments, he said, first of all, love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your strength and love your neighbor as you love yourself.

The first one covers the first four commandments, which are about loving God. And the last one covers the last six. including keeping the Sabbath day. That's the seventh day Sabbath. That's Saturday. Keeping that holy and remembering always that loving our neighbor is not just loving the good guy next door who always lends you his lawnmower when yours breaks down, but the one who throws his empty beer bottles over your fence from all the wild parties that he has.

Loving him is the test. That's the hard love, but that's the thing that changes lives and characters. That's where our development comes from. 1 Peter 4, chapters, uh, verses 10 to 11, As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever speaks as one who speaks oracles of God, whoever serves as one who serves the strength that God supplies, in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

It's all about Him, not us. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen. The church is a place for believers to use their spiritual gifts in service to one another and to glorify God. God has given you unique gifts to come together like a jigsaw puzzle to make the whole picture look beautiful.

You are made in the image of God. God does not make junk. You are not junk. God loves you. God is ready to protect you. God is ready to take you home. All you have to do is turn up for work. In conclusion, the Bible presents the Church as a community of believers united in Christ, tasked with worship, fellowship, service, and the mission of spreading the gospel.

It is the body of Christ, where each member plays a vital role, and the Bride of Christ, loved and prepared for eternal union with Him. Through the Church, that's the body of believers, not the building, God reveals His presence and His purpose in the world. As we think about The way church has gone and we look at the powerful forces arrayed against Christ believing Christians, we need to examine some things.

Many of the corporate denominational churches have marched in lockstep with the government. We know that. We also know that these churches, having committed themselves through the pandemic, have set the course for future actions. They're now in a perilous position. Let's imagine that there's another pandemic.

The churches are either committed to uphold the same restrictions as they did with the first one and therefore run the risk of losing their membership. And alienating those people who love and support them or alienating the government, which can then effectively, as things get darker and darker, disband them and break them up.

We have to face the fact, and I had to say this because I love my church. I love it. And I hope it repents and I hope it comes to terms with the things that it's done and reorganizes its structure for the benefit of the spreading of the gospel, but we need to face facts. Folks, if you're a member of a corporate denomination, the chances of that being around much longer is going to be diminished because of the way it behaved during the pandemic.

It'll either lose its membership or it'll lose its credentials and be banned by government. If your corporate church is disbanded and no longer around, will your body of Christ survive? That's you and your friends, the Fellowship of Believers. Will you survive? Of course you will. You will do what we do here.

You will do home church. I still love going to my own church, the one that I was baptized in, in Queensland. I love going there. It's beautiful. It's growing. It's a beautiful group of people. But we have to face facts. There is coming a time when churches may have to go underground. And that's why Church Without Walls and organisations and ministries like it are so important.

We need to prepare ourselves to stand in strength, to support one another, but most of all to spread the gospel and carry the testimony of Jesus by keeping his laws. Are we up to the task? I happen to think we are. I happen to think we are. And you know what? There are many who have said to me, we'll probably be better off when that does happen.

Because then we can really go to town spreading the gospel without all the restrictions placed on us by corporate governance. I pray that you take this message on board, that you find it uplifting and that you share it. Because there is coming a time when decisions will have to be made. There is a train coming.

We know that. And I'm looking forward to its arrival and I'm preparing for it. Today. Because it might happen. Tomorrow. Let's close with a prayer. Dear Lord, please grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can and the wisdom to know the difference, living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardship as a pathway to peace.

And taking as Jesus did this sinful world as it is, and not as I would have it, trusting that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will, so that I may be reasonably happy in this life, and supremely happy with you forever in the next. Lord, I pray you will protect your church. If we are your church, Lord, then you will protect us.

We thank you for that. We pray that we follow your footsteps and we march in lockstep with you and not with corporate governance and governments around the world who are mandating our losses of liberty of conscience. Please be with us and help us to share this message as we embrace each other in faith, grace, and mercy.

Here's my prayer in your precious name, Lord. Amen. It's a great, it's great to be back sharing this time with you again. I'm sorry for the absence that we've had in the last few weeks, but I look forward to getting more devotionals out to you and more great talks as we discuss the topics that as they unfold.

I'm looking forward to going to America in March with my wife, Michelle, to speak at the, will you be made whole conference. I'll be sharing a stage with Dr. Ben Carson, Dr. Peter McCullough, Charlie Kirk, Pastor Ron Kelly, and a couple of dozen other immense speakers. It's a real honor to be called to do this.

And then we'll be heading to Tennessee where we'll be running a three day Recovery Road program for the people in Tennessee and launching our Recovery Road program in the United States. What a blessing that will be. In the meantime, we're going to continue doing what we're doing right here, and that is spreading the gospel and coming together.

Many of you watching this are people that are baptized. That baptism holds good. You have been washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. Listen carefully for a moment. Hear that? That's forgiveness calling out your name. God bless you all. Thank you for being part of this. I hope you're enjoying the conversations with Carl.

The first episode's just gone up and there are eight in the series and we'll probably do some more with other incredibly spiritual people that I've come across in my journey and maybe some more with Carl. He's an incredible man. So God bless you all. Stay close to Jesus. and I'll talk to you hopefully next week with another presentation from Church Without Walls.

Love you so much and bye for now.