

ἐκκλησία

called out | called together

Ekklesia – Part 3

Pastor Rich Harris

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Ephesians 2:18-22 (NLT, TPT)

18 Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.

19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. **21** In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. **22** And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. **And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

Sōzō = to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction, to preserve one who is in danger of destruction

John 3:16-17 (VOICE)

16 For God expressed His love for the world in this way: He gave His only Son so that whoever believes in Him will not face everlasting destruction, but will have everlasting life. **17** Here's the point. **God didn't send His Son into the world to judge it; instead, He is here to rescue a world headed toward certain destruction.**

Three Ways We Build the Ekklesia

1. Build the Bridges (Make It As Easy As Possible)

- **Acts 15:19 (NIV)**

19 "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God."

- City of Refuge provisions from the Talmud (Jewish rabbinical writings)
 - ⇒ Each of the cities of refuge were placed in strategic locations so that no one in Israel would have to travel more than a day to reach them.
 - ⇒ The roads leading to cities of refuge had to be twice the width of normal roads
 - ⇒ The roads leading to cities of refuge had to be repaired each year in Spring
 - ⇒ The roads leading to cities of refuge had to have bridges crossing ravines to offer the shortest and quickest possible route to the city

2. Post the Signs (Your Life Is the Advertisement)

- **1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)**

*9 ...you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. **As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.***

3. Let Them In (No Matter Who They Are)

- **2 Samuel 4:4**

4 ...He was five years old when the report came from Jezreel that Saul and Jonathan had been killed in battle. When the child's nurse heard the news, she picked him up and fled. But as she hurried away, she dropped him, and he became crippled. And his name was Mephibosheth.

TALK IT THROUGH

1. Pastor Rich suggested many people outside the Church view it as "sick." What was your view of the Church prior to being part of it?
2. Read Acts 2:42-47 together and discuss the various aspects of the early church in Jerusalem. Is this description appealing to you? If so, what especially is a draw?
3. What is one or more ways in which your experience at TFH has been like the early church experience? What's an area of the church that you'd like to be part of to add value?
4. If you could build any bridge to reach a person, or people, far from God, what type of bridge would you build? What would you use to reach these people? Who are the people you'd like to reach?
5. If your life was a billboard, an advertisement, what would you be promoting or "selling"?
6. Discuss how Pastor Rich described Mephibosheth. Who is the Mephibosheth in your life?