

16. Ecclesiology in Pauline Theology

1. Purpose of the Lecture

- 1) To understand the biblical concept of the Church as revealed in the Pauline epistles.
 - 2) To provide a theological foundation for building a biblically sound and Christ-centered church.
 - 3) To learn the roles and relationships within the church as guided by the Spirit and the Word.
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2. Key Themes

1) The Nature of the Church

- (1) A community of those called by God (Rom 1:6–7)
- (2) The Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27; Eph 1:22–23)
- (3) United in the Spirit (Eph 4:3–4)

2) The Foundation of the Church

- (1) Jesus Christ as the only foundation and the Head of the Church (1 Cor 3:11; Eph 5:23)
- (2) Built on the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:20)

3) The Purpose of the Church

- (1) To glorify God (Eph 3:21)
- (2) To proclaim the gospel and make disciples (2 Tim 2:2; Col 1:28)
- (3) To serve one another in love (Rom 12:10; Gal 5:13)

4) Church Structure and Ministry

- (1) Offices of elders (overseers) and deacons (1 Tim 3; Titus 1:5–9)
- (2) Ministry distributed according to spiritual gifts (Rom 12:6–8; 1 Cor 12)
- (3) Qualifications and responsibilities of leadership (1 Tim 3:1–13)

5) The Church and Christ

- (1) The Church is the Bride of Christ (Eph 5:25–27)
 - (2) The Church is the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12)
 - (3) God's eternal purpose revealed through the Church (Eph 1:9–10; 3:10–11)
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3. Church Authority (Biblical View)

- 1) Christ is the ultimate Head and authority over the Church(Eph1:22–23)
 - 2) Apostolic authority is rooted in Scripture, not in institutional hierarchy (Gal 1:11–12)
 - 3) Church leaders are called to serve, not to dominate (2 Cor 1:24; 1 Pet 5:2–3)
 - 4) Discipline and decision-making are based on truth and love (1 Cor 5; Matt 18:15–20)
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4. Sacraments in Pauline Theology

1) Baptism

- (1) Symbolizes union with Christ in death and resurrection(Rom 6:3–5)
- (2) Marks entry into the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13)

2) The Lord's Supper (Communion)

- (1) Proclaims the death of Christ and fellowship with Him (1 Cor 11:23–26)
 - (2) Calls for self-examination and unity among believers(1Cor11:27–29)
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5. Issues in the Modern Church (According to Pauline Ecclesiology)

1) Institutionalization

Churches often resemble corporations rather than Christ-centered communities.

2) Abuse of Authority

Leadership has become hierarchical and power-centered rather than pastoral and service-oriented.

3) Theological Confusion

Departure from sound doctrine has led to confusion, division, and the spread of false gospels (Gal 1:6–9).

4) Loss of Community

The biblical model of mutual edification has been replaced by passive attendance.

5) Neglect of Church Discipline

Failure to practice biblical discipline has led to moral compromise and loss of witness (1 Cor 5).

6. Applications for Today

- 1) Restore the early church model: small, Spirit-led, Word-centered fellowships.
- 2) Train leaders in servant leadership, humility, and biblical teaching.
- 3) Reaffirm the sufficiency of Scripture and the centrality of the gospel in all ministries.
- 4) View the church not as a building or system, but as the living Body of Christ, called to love, serve, and grow in holiness.