

# A Church that Moves with Jesus



**What is the Church?** Something you attend on a Sunday morning? A building? *Or is it more than that?*

The New Testament word for church literally means “the called-out ones”. When we look at the first followers of Jesus, we see a group of people committed to living out the fullness of God’s Presence in every aspect of their lives. They are passionate about sharing the love and wholeness they’ve found in Jesus. And they communicate a contagious joy about living. So they feel “called-out” of an old, self-centered lifestyle and into a new adventure with Jesus as their constant companion and guide. Therefore, the Church is a group of Jesus-followers who seek to move with Jesus as He loves and heals and restores people to the abundant living they were intended to have. It’s a little like dancing... following His lead!

Let’s look at the four primary signs of a church that is moving with Jesus:

1. **HOSPITALITY:** Jesus demonstrated true hospitality when He took a servant’s towel and washed the filthy feet of His disciples. He then challenged them to do the same to others. And if that weren’t enough, the New Testament word (Greek) means to “love strangers”. Hey, there’s some possible discomfort and risk involved here! If we want to be the Church, we are to learn the many ways Jesus is serving people and then do it. Be alert to your motives and attitude.

*“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” **John 13:35***

2. **ONENESS:** When God told Moses His Name (“I Am”), God was saying that He is the Presence which unifies all of creation. When I was a biology teacher, I’d try to help my students be amazed by how complex living systems work together, from large ecological webs to the smallest individual cell. Stuff works because God holds everything together. Made in the image of God, we have a built in oneness with His Spirit. We also have a deep connection with other humans and with this Earth we inhabit. The early church moved “with one mind” or purpose: To know and make Jesus known.

*Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

**Ephesians 4:1-3**

**(OVER)**

3. **METANOIA:** It’s a Greek New Testament word normally translated “repent”. Often, this term has been domesticated into something religious, like “feeling sorry” for bad stuff I’ve done. It actually means **changed thinking**. It is a choice to move away from your own self-oriented mind and align more with *God’s thinking*. This takes practice, for sure! As the Church begins to catch on to how God thinks and acts, we find that life is a whole new experience!

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is: good and acceptable and perfect. **Romans 12:2***

4. **EUANGELION:** Oops.... another Greek word. Used 99 times in the New Testament, it is the word normally translated “**good news**”. What is the Good News? It’s that **God loves you and invites you to live a whole new life in His Power!** The early Church lived this out passionately and humbly, serving others and welcoming the unwanted folks in town. We are living “good news” when we demonstrated a living hope to people. Be the candle that lights up the dark places!

*The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. **Matthew 13:44***

A church that moves with Jesus exhibits these essential signs:

**HOSPITALITY**  
**ONENESS**  
**METANOIA**  
**EUANGELION**

Encountering a church like that is like coming home, in the best sense of the phrase. It’s a warm, friendly place where everyone is accepted fully for who they are at the time. There is a real sense of being safe and supported. People are genuinely “for you”. And out of that rich experience of “home”, we are drawn to be changed more and more into the Source of that Love. Coming “home” means arriving at the place where you can be yourself (authentic) and can learn to be the person God has called you to be (alive!).

It’s time to come “home”, into the arms of Jesus! It’s time to grow arms of our own!



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