

THE CHURCH

What is the Church? This is a very important question, for there are about 560 million Christians who use the word. Of these Christians there are 270 million Roman Catholics, 120 million Greek Catholics and, for argument, we will say 10 million Anglican Catholics, though, of course, there are many more. This makes a total of 400 millions out of the 560 million Christians, or, in other words, five out of every seven Christians are agreed as to certain points about the Church, viz., that it is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic; that it must have Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, who have direct authority from the Apostles of Our Lord; that these Priests administer in God's name to baptize for the remission of sins, administer the Holy Communion, and in God's name and by His authority to forgive sins. The remaining Christians do not hold all these points, or else deny some of them altogether. But it is a great and important fact that five out of every seven Christians belong to bodies of Christians who do hold them.

The word "Church" has two meanings, for it can be a place or a society. We speak of the Church on such a street, whereby we mean the "place and building" used for worship by certain people; or we speak of belonging to the Church of England, whereby we mean a "society" of people holding the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. If the place or building called a Church belongs to the Church of England it is usually named after some person, such as a Saint, or Our Lord, St. Mary's, St. James' or the Church of the Redeemer; but if it belongs to the Presbyterians, the Methodist Society or some other society, it is more frequently known as High Street Presbyterian, or the Central Methodist, or the King Street Baptist Church. This is a point worth notice, for the former shews a connection with our Lord and His Saints; the latter does not.

The word "Church" is derived from a Greek word meaning "belonging to the Lord"; it came to us through the Teutonic race, and is the same as the Scotch "Kirk." Being Teutonic, it is chiefly used by the Anglo-Saxon races, and it is not used in the New Testament in the sense of either a "place of worship" or a "society" of the faithful. In the New Testament there is no word for Church meaning a "place of worship," for the