

K-541 One Church, One Body (2 of 2)

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the unity between the church and Israel, and living in that understanding, which is essential for the church's witness to the world and to Israel.

Duration: 36:03

Scripture: Matthew 25:41, Matthew 25:44-45, John 17:21, Romans 11:17-18, Ephesians 1:22-23, Ephesians 2:14-15, Ephesians 4:4-6

Topics: "Body Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his experience preaching in Germany and the importance of the church in shaping the direction of the nation. He discusses the rise of neo-Nazis and skinheads in Germany and suggests that this may be connected to the failure of Gentiles to recognize and extend mercy to God's people. The speaker emphasizes the need for the church to recognize and care for the least of these, as failure to do so separates us from God's context and condemns us along with the unbelieving. He calls for a radicalized message and witness from the church in Germany to bring the nation to repentance for its past and break its pride.

Transcript

So, praise God for a called-but. See, this is theological reflection. This is a man pondering.

Lord, what does the invisible cloud of witnesses mean? Why are they present? Do they constitute something? Are we missing something? Have we dismissed that too lightly? And we have to say, yes. What is invisible has threatened the church that is... The invisible has threatened those that are so taken up with the visible. It's icky.

Because it has been made phantasmal and speculative and eerie and others like the one you mentioned have exploited that realm. And so the church is kind of drawn back historically and, well, let's leave the thing alone. To its detriment.

We need the ennobling sense of the glory that the church is in both its visible and invisible realms. And so what Karl Barth is going to lead us in, now he says, if you can see that, now I want you to see this. That in the same way as the invisible church that has gone on before is vitally connected with the present church, so also is Israel vitally connected by the very same means the head.

And I wouldn't say that it's too far-fetched to suggest that we are receiving that benefit right now, this morning. That except that that benefit be exerted, there's no way that this view can even be put forth. Everything in the world and the flesh and the devil is opposed to it.

And unless there were an assistance coming from that realm, however it's expressed, we could not even come in to the consideration of it. See what I mean? So the church which was and the church which is are very concretely one church. All live unto Him.

Luke 20, verse 38. Not only on that side, but on this. Not only on this side, but on that.

And because they live to Him, they are one community, one church. For the same reason, now he makes the bridge, for the same reason the people of Israel in its whole history and the Christian church are two forms and aspects of the same thing. Of the one inseparable community.

This is a radical view of the connection between the church and Israel that has been lost to the church's consciousness today. We see ourselves as separate entities. The Lord says that the two shall be made one flesh and we agree to it.

Doctrinally, but we don't live as if we believe that. We're separate entities. The wife still wants her distinction and recognition of herself apart from her husband.

She doesn't see herself as being one entity with Him so that His distinction and His honor is also hers. Her gratification for being is in Him. So there's a real urgency to shift gears and come into the apprehension of these things and not merely allow them to sit as doctrinal statements in our minds.

And when we come into that reality that's the glory. I'm waiting to see the first couple who are one in that sense that they've been made one flesh. The fact that they are spatially separate does not alter the spiritual truth.

The spiritual truth needs to become the actual truth by faith. And now he's saying the same thing about Israel and the Church. It's a whole perception that is lost to us for the same reason the people of Israel in its whole history and the Christian Church are two forms and aspects of the one inseparable community.

Of course, Israel doesn't know that. It despises the Church. It sees it as something alien to itself.

It's Goyish. It's Gentile. It's alien.

But the Church also sees Israel as separate from itself. It does not see it as one inseparable community which it will be one day. One operating from the heavenly realm and the other from the earthly but one continuum.

Just as the husband and the wife are separate entities and spatially separate but are one in God's sight and need to be that in their own sight. The one inseparable community in which Jesus Christ has his earthly historical form of existence by which he is attested to the whole world. What is Barth saying? That it's only in this connection that the Lord that God is attested to the world.

Isn't that something the echo of that in the prayer of Jesus in John 17? That when we become one as he is one, the world will know that the Father hath sent him. That the revelation of God rests on the demonstration of the visible unity of God's people. And what Barth is saying is that in the like manner there's a witness to God that comes from the unity of the church and Israel as one that needs also to be

seen and to be demonstrated.

It attests to God though both segments do not recognize each other but need to. Not only does this attest to God to the whole world, but by which the world is summoned to faith in him. It's a witness that has a consequence that brings the world not only to the acknowledgement, but to the God who is revealed in it.

He himself is the one person the crucified Messiah of Israel who as such is the Lord of the church. What's the connection that makes one inseparable community the head? The one whom we call Lord is Israel's crucified Messiah. They don't understand that but the reality is not contingent upon their understanding.

See what I mean? It's a spiritual truth. It's a reality in God whether men have recognized it yet or not does not alter the reality. But when it is recognized, it becomes powerful.

God intends that it should be seen by those who have spiritual sight namely ourselves. So that changes the whole way in which we're viewing Israel. It's not merely a subject.

It's us. It's the one inseparable community of God's people. Though right now they are presently separated and don't recognize themselves as being inseparable.

In fact, there's a friction between them and from both segments even an alienation. And is that accidental? Satan recognizes this truth more than the church. And so he has actively worked to keep them separate and that they should see each other as not only being separate but in opposition.

So for example, in the church today in America in certain charismatic sectors the church not only does not recognize Israel as being part of itself it has replaced it and become it and sees itself as the Israel of God and that Israel has no further purpose with God. It's obsolete. It's cast off.

They blew it. They missed it. They crucified Jesus.

They're finished. We are it. Thinking they're doing God's service when they're actually cheating God out of his glory.

Very much in the same way as some Christian subscribing to unisex cheating God out of the glory that is his when that which is male and female is made one. Not by the loss or the blurring of that distinctiveness, but the coming together in the way of God's intention that reveals his glory. So he who is the crucified Messiah of Israel as such is also the Lord of the church the risen Lord who as such is the manifested Messiah of Israel and in this form of a servant was truly the Lord.

He whom we call Lord would not be Lord except he was also Israel's Messiah. That's what makes him the Lord. He had to be there promised Messiah but as the crucified and resurrected and ascended one is also our Lord.

On the one hand there is the promise, on the other it's fulfillment. There's Israel still identical as a nation and the church as a kind of separate entity but called to the commonwealth of Israel. Remember when Paul said you who were afar off and without God and hope in the world have been brought nigh by the blood of Jesus into the commonwealth of Israel.

Paul saw the church as this one community this inseparable community but with the advent of Catholicism the schism was made and the entities were split and the anti-Semitic thing that came with the Holy Roman Church because it was not really regenerate, had not really entered the spiritual commonwealth of Israel.

It could only be that by the spirit became an independent Gentile entity called the church and was opposed to and resisted everything that was Israeli, of Israel or Jewish or Hebraic so that Passover became Easter which is the name of a pagan goddess Ishtar and the thing became so blurred and distinctively different that Jews can no longer recognize it as being part of itself and that's the way it has come into modern times and the Reformation did not heal the breach it was not a complete Reformation and still kept the separate identity and antagonism between the parts that prevails largely till today but Barth sees it as one history the one covenant which stretches over the whole and we inherit their promises because we are them, we are one with them in one community their promises are

our promises we are the children of Abraham as they are and we have an inheritance with them in the things that were promised to their fathers it's therefore essential to the church from the very beginning and it always will be to represent this unity in itself and to exist in it this is I'm reading Barth this is the way he writes you have to lean forward you've got to come into his statement, it's essential that the church from its beginning to see this unity in itself, not only to see it but to exist in it it's not enough merely to mentally acknowledge the mystery of the inseparable community which has been made separate but to live in the understanding of that we'll give you a very different view of what the church is than what we presently hold and this is different from Christians

who say well now I'm a Jew, no you're not a Jew you're a Gentile who by the blood of Jesus have been brought nigh and brought into the commonwealth of Israel and its covenants and its promise with Abraham and with every saint of old and that's the glory you're part of the inseparable community of God the Israel of God and you need to live in that kind of consciousness and now he spells out what that will mean it has to do with the church in all its fullness for only as such can it attest to the whole world and summon it to faith in him that this recognition and the act of living in it is the church's most powerful witness to the world and including to Israel herself what a witness to Israel that the church does not see itself as some separate entity but part with it because its lord is

their messiah and that it's their history is our history and their completion and their glory and their consummation is ours wouldn't that if that was truly our understanding and we were living and existing in it what would our witness to Israel be? totally different totally different and I'm wondering if this has greatly to do with the last days issue by which Gentiles are judged when the king comes by our failure to recognize the least of these his brethren and be cast out into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels for the failure to extend mercy to give water, food, clothing, shelter to the least of these my brethren because when did we see you hungry or thirsty or in prison and so on it's a failure to recognize the lord in his people we did not recognize the brethren

as our brethren being inseparably connected with them even in their unbelief we saw ourselves distinct and different and separated and therefore we did not extend to them what we would have extended to each other and therefore we're judged for that because we did not see and we did not give shows we are out of the whole context of God and therefore we're condemned together with the unbelieving may I tell you just how tragic it has been historically for the church to recognize what Calabar is speaking there would not have been a holocaust there would not have been a history of Christian persecution of Jews and anti-semitism if we had seen ourselves in this continuum with them though yet in their unbelief the church in Germany did not see itself as being an inseparable community with the

Jews in its midst had it seen that it would have transfigured German Christianity the whole history of the relationship between the German and the Jew would have been different there would have been no room

for Hitler ever to have found a place let alone to make as his cardinal ideology the hatred of the Jew that the nation was unified on the basis of an anti-semitism against a people whom they should have recognized as being one with whom they are inseparably joined as the Israel of God so we're not talking about some light fiction the practical consequences of the loss of the view of the connectedness with Israel has been tragic in its consequence both for the Jew and for the church the church in Germany was denuded it was anemic it made room for every satanic demonic phenomenon that

came to be called Nazism because it did not have the vitality that would have been theirs had it viewed itself as being inseparably connected with the Israel that was even in its midst and moving together toward a glorious consummation for which it did not need a third Reich and that the thousand year rule that Hitler spoke about was already their inheritance with them in the scripture are you guys following that? we took their lives isn't the irony that we become the vehicle of their destruction rather than their salvation when we don't see as God intends that we should see and I know this better than you because I've studied it that the leading Nazi ideologues the spokesman for Nazism and all that preceded them in German theology that was anti-Semitic flows from the failure to see this

in fact they resented it and even hated Paul for bringing in what they called a Judaistic influence and that it was not a Christianity becoming to German nationhood they wanted a Christianity that was compatible with German national aspiration with supermen and they despised Paul because he brought to them a Christ crucified in weakness.

They didn't like this emphasis on weakness, they wanted strength and exaltation of men they lost in the word the Hebraic component and despised it for being that they wanted a Christianity that was voided of its Jewish influences had they received it as being their faith and would have given to the church a distinctive character it would not have been the arrogant Germany of modern times that not only in itself almost single handedly decimated the European Jewish community but almost destroyed Western civilization itself we're not talking about a little triviality here what we have paid for the failure of the church to be the church in the fullness of God's intention is tragic beyond all speaking and having seen that tragedy do we yet recognize what has been lost and have restored it this

was my message to the church in Germany even in the light of the visible tragedy that has taken place has the church in Germany yet been altered, yet repented yet made amends, yet been restored to what has been lost that made that tragedy inevitable and the answer is no and some of you know that I wrote a little summary of the last days of that six week ministry and how I came to the church in Frankfurt symbolic of so much of what had happened oppressed and feeling totally out of it and what have I to say and who am I, what's my qualification and what a strange message and no wonder people want to run the other way and stick their fingers in their ears to come to the church in that condition and to hear from the pastor he's already been warned, rumors have already reached him, that Cass

is bringing the church in Germany under condemnation and guilt and he said you need to know Brother Katz that I don't want that here I said well of course I don't blame you, I didn't know that that's what I was doing, but I let me off the hook I don't want to speak well he said well I know that I don't understand he says because I know that God wants you here so I said well I guess we got to go ahead and take the risk but well let's pray and we prayed and it was really earnest prayer and I felt the real release after the prayer because I was so discouraged to come in to hear that after being crunched from all the weeks of activity and spent and then we came down to the meeting on a Wednesday night in the basement of a commercial building and there were 400 people there oh my God where did

they come from and they're all young and all this now generation, the Pepsi Cola generation and all swingers and the worship was lively and I felt like a blob now I'm saying this not to exalt me but to give you a taste of what your calling is this is the nub of the work of restoration, the prophetic calling Elijah must first come and it's no picnic it's the cross every time and when I looked out I despaired, I said Lord no you bailed me out many times when I thought it was hopeless but this, no way look at them Lord listen to that music, listen to that worship it's totally out of keeping with the burden that I'm bearing they'll look upon me like some anomaly out of the past, some queer duck talking about the past and the holocaust and failed Christianity that made inevitable that tragedy

and that unless we look into that burning bush, there's no being called by name, there's no apostolic sending to Pharaoh, there's no releasing of the captives to bring them out what a strange word to a people who are so not at all related to their German past I know their German past as a Jew better than they do I was in Germany before they were born I was there in Munich in 1952 and watched the prostitutes come out from the heaps of ruin of the demolished and bombed city in an unbelievable surrealistic scene that that same heap of rubble today is where they go skiing that's called the Teufelbergen the devil's mountain and they don't even remember, it's the rubble from the judgment of God that bombed their city to smithereens they were born after the time now they're zipped up in their

ski outfits and got their skis over their shoulders and you're going to tell them what that rubble means forget it and I'll tell you if they were not an invisible cloud of witnesses giving you some kind of an assist an intercession from saints who are being stirred by the spirit in California without even knowing what's taking place there's not a hope and I began by speaking about the prophetic word and saying now listen you Germans, I know you're logical that's your bag that's what you're famous for but if you're going to try and hear this word through your logical mind forget it, this is a mystery it's got to be intuitive and apprehended not analyzed and critiqued and then I went on then I went into the message itself and remarkably they seemed to be listening they seemed attentive they

seemed to be hearing and when I finished the pastor got up and went on for ten minutes and my interpreter was telling me what he was saying and I remember him celebrating the word and saying this is God's very word for the church and for the nation and he went on like that and he said let us go down on our knees and receive this call of repentance and turn ourselves to the burning bush and look into it and receive the implications of the past for us which are still present with us and must be recognized where there's no apostolic future and whom, down they went 400 now generation kids and Germany is still the nub of the nations still the great pivot as Germany goes, so goes Europe it's at the heart of that compact federation of nations it's the most vital economy the most powerful and

energetic and dynamic people and the church is the key to which direction that nation will take will what is happening now, these little neo-Nazis these skinheads be just a passing aberration or like the Hitler time, though it's a sewer phenomenon from the dregs will it in short time rise to a place of prominence and acceptance and take over the whole structure of state as happened 50 years ago this is a live question and the church, it's prayer, it's intercession it's witness it's a fact that can be a fact now that was not then because of the preached word that has come to it so, we started this morning by talking about Lord, give us a respect for the word and the exaltation of the word that by the word, you're going to accomplish and in my 64 years of life and my almost 30 years as a

believer I'm grateful that we are finally coming to an hour where the word of God and the church of God is no more just a Sunday question but vitally affecting the issue of nations and the destiny of the world itself

we must come of age let me just finish this paragraph, accept that we see this and live in that reality can we rightly be the church in all fullness for only as such can the church attest to the world and summon the world to faith in him including summoning Israel, maybe Israel will never be moved to jealousy until it begins to see the church not as some alien phenomenon but as being not only an extension of itself, but more rightly itself than even itself is, it's more truly and more visibly the Israel of God than what Israel is because it's the spiritual truth of what

Israel is and it's being demonstrated by Gentiles you want to know what it is to be Israel, look at the church and I'm not saying by that messianic shticklach, like banging tambourines and Davidic worship and the we were now stars of David and the accoutrements of an external kind I'm meaning that without anything external that would indicate us as being Jewishly oriented there is something so authentically Hebraic something so authentically biblically Israel of the commonwealth that they see in us Gentiles what they ought to have been if they had not been broken off out of their own tree and to produce that is going to take a little bit more than wearing a star of David around your neck what a call for the church to be the church and I'm saying it cannot be it until it first sees this

you can't restore what you don't see first the vision then the fulfillment write it on the tablets make it plain that we might run after it and that's part if not a great part of what this school is about, it's not another school of discipleship it's conveying a vision of the things lost that need to be restored in a way that I don't know is being expressed anywhere because when I came back from a previous trip the Lord said and then brought me into these things so even not only the world needs to see that what the church attests to but Israel itself and had the church in Germany seen that or will still see that will affirm that it would revolutionize its perception of itself, radicalize its message, its witness, its power, its glory this is the key to the church being the church in

Germany and for the want of that the skinheads are now coming into view, there's a vacuum again as it was in the incipient Hitler time because the church is not the church in its fullness and whenever something is not full it invites something else to occupy that space, you remember what Peter said to Ananias and Sapphira why have you allowed Satan to fill your heart with a lie because you gave something in part that God intended be whole, whenever you only give a measure you open the door for the enemy to fill it, we must be full of the spirit we must be full of truth, wherever we're partial comes the path to destruction so therefore to fail them is to show we've not come in and therefore we're out and therefore it's perfectly logical that we should be cast out into a lake of fire we're

outside of God, outside of his purposes outside of his seeing, outside of his call that's why this one thing measures everything how can he make such an eternal judgment on the fact that we failed in this one thing because to fail in that is to fail in all, can you see then that just to embrace the subject of Israel from the level of sentiment or affinity because you like Jews or they're cute or it's exciting what's going on there and you want to be part of it is to miss the whole thing by a million miles you're just as much off target as if you were an anti-Semite the only one embrace that's the true embrace is this apostolic view because it requires all because it's central because it's the way that God intended we should see it it's transforming it transfigures us as the church we

cannot be the church except by it it's that key so to take it and just to see it sentimentally or not to see it is equally to have lost it and often I'll say to be sentimental about Israel is as much to oppose God and his purposes for Israel as to be opposed to Israel uh-huh we thought we were this when we go to the feast of tabernacles and we plant trees what are you talking about why because to plant the tree and go to a feast

does not require in terms of the cross what this requires this is an ultimate requirement to come into this perception of the faith and many would just rather be related on a sentimental basis than on this basis because this is real church this is the real McCoy this means we can no longer play with church as attending Sunday services or we can take it or leave it

or shop around or visit once in a while this means getting with it this means this is earnest this means coming into the grit of it and being what we ought to be to each other and this reality and being identified with the invisible cloud of witnesses and that our careers our businesses are secondary things to our calling and how many people have a stomach for that it means the end of your independence your self will your leisure what you're going to do well I can stay home and watch a telecast or listen to a tape I don't have to go to a service as if the issue is services are you joined are you bonded are you integral are you related are you in the body that is related to the head that you could be related to the church triumphant who is also joined to that head and receive its benefit

so I'm saying that for Germany that if they could see this and affirm this it would revolutionize its perception of itself radicalize its message its witness its power there'd be no room for skinheads they'd blow them right out of the saddle be a vital powerful church that has the message for the hour for the nation and bring the nation to a repentance for its past that is more than just paying reparations which the Germans like to do you know they don't mind some billions of marks but they do mind breaking in their pride and acknowledging that the horror of the Holocaust is the statement of their failed Christianity which still continues it is not for the want is it not for the want of this that we languish and grope for panaceas and fads and gimmicks and personalities and renewals why

we run after so called prophets and gimmicks and power evangelism and this has come up and that and we're a church looking for novelty but we're missing something fundamental and foundational that no little gimmick is going to ever answer to deny this unity would be to deny Jesus Christ himself because he is himself the head of it as the attestation of the one work and the one revelation of the one God and then I write myself isn't this in fact what the church has done it has denied the Lord if it has denied this reality it has not seen itself as being part and central to it so Lord this little four spice is getting to become the main dish and I hope we don't gag on it and we're asking for a mercy and a grace to consider the things that have been lost that have been absent from the

church's consciousness that you've intended as normative and we need a grace Lord, no wonder you came full of grace and truth bless these sons and daughters my God bless me, expand us Lord and grant us enablement pull up the stakes and lengthen our cords my God that we might hear, receive and be changed bless us as even bearers of this message to the church and the localities from which we come to be my God oracles and the Elijah band that restores what was lost, the ancient ways, paths for men to walk in give us a breather now and a recovery Lord and an ability to come back and to hear from your heart yet more and we thank you that you chose this morning to insert this at this time let not a syllable fall to the ground in Jesus name Amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23276.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/art-katz/k-541-one-church-one-body-2-of-2/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net