

That Building? It's Only Headquarters For Church

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By Rev. Jamie Buckingham

Where is the church?

Ask the question of 10 people and nine of them would point to a building and say, "There's the church."

BUT TODAY there is a new movement abroad that is reminding people the church is not a building—but a group of people. Some churches are even changing their signs in front of their buildings to read correctly, "headquarters for the church of the Saviour." Refreshing!

Best definition I've heard for "the church" is it is a fellowship of people who are owned by Jesus Christ. People don't own the church. They may have title to the building; they may control the pastor's pocketbook and therefore control his tongue; but no one owns the church.

Did you ever "play church" as a child? Maybe you were the preacher and stood up and hollered. Maybe you were an usher and took up pennies in a pie plate. Maybe you were the organist and got mad and took your apple box and went home.

NOW RECALL the people who continue to "play church" in their adulthood. You can manipulate and control the play-church. But in Christ's

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church we are to be manipulated and controlled by His spirit.

Every church has its share of grippers and complainers who are "going to quit." They don't like the way things are being done. They threaten, in a childish display of petty power, to withdraw their financial support. But while they are talking about getting out of the church, the truth is they were never in it to start with. How can you quit something you were never a part of. Oh, their name may be on the roll, but the real church is those who are owned by Jesus Christ.

Church is not something you attend. You attend a ballgame, movie, parade. But church demands an entirely different relationship. It is the relationship of belonging. Christianity is

not a matter of attendance at a performance. It is a matter of being.

THE REAL test of vitality of a church does not occur primarily while the group is meeting. Nor does the real measures of a church's success depend on "how many" were present on a given Sunday. The Christian can never satisfy his religious requirements by "attending." He must be.

The church is not bricks and mortar. It is people, out in the community, loving, giving, sharing, serving their Master.

Williams Finishes Chaplain Course

MERRITT ISLAND — Pvt. Edward L. Williams, 23, son of Mr. and Mrs. Forrest E. Williams, 523 Palm Ave., has completed a four-week chaplain enlisted assistant technician course recently at the Army Chaplain School, Ft. Hamilton, N. Y.

MILK PRODUCTS

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