


The Church

God's Special People

Identifying The Church

Introduction

“You have to get in the church to get saved.” “Of course I’m in the church, but I’m really waiting for the kingdom.” Such statements betray a lack of understanding about the identity of the church. This lesson will explore the foundational matter of exactly who or what the church is. We will consider the way the word “church” is commonly used in the English language and then note its use in the Scriptures.

Scriptures

Matthew 16:13-19

1 Peter 2:9-10

Colossians 3:15

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

Ephesians 2:13-16

Matthew 18:15-17

Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17

Zechariah 6:12-13

1 Timothy 3:14-15

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

Acts 20:28

Acts 2:40-47

Colossians 1:13-14

1 Thessalonians 2:10-12

Acts 12:5

1 Peter 1:17-19

1 Corinthians 16:19

Romans 3:22b-26

Romans 6:3

Galatians 3:26-27

Ephesians 1:7

Acts 5:11

Revelation 1:9

Acts 8:3; 9:1

1 Corinthians 1:9

Discussion Questions

1. According to Webster, what meanings does the word “church” have? What is its derivation?

2. What is the literal meaning of the Greek word translated “church”?

- 3. List at least two scriptures which use the figure of the “kingdom.” What aspect(s) of the church is being emphasized by that figure?**

- 4. List at least two scriptures which use the figure of the “house” (household, family) of God. What aspect(s) of the church is being emphasized by that figure?**

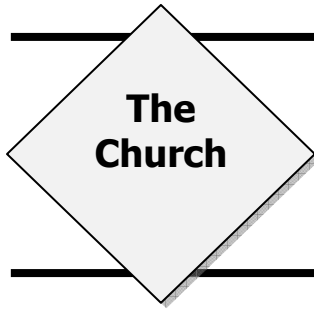
- 5. List at least one scripture which uses the figure of the “vineyard” to describe the church. What aspect(s) of the church is being emphasized by that figure?**

- 6. List at least two scriptures which used the figure of a “temple” to describe the church. What aspect of the church is being emphasized by that figure?**

- 7. How does one become a part of the family of God?**

- 8. When did Christ become king?**

- 9. What can we learn about the nature of the church from such passages as John 18:36 and Romans 14:16-17? What is the implication of such a principle?**



God's Special People

Establishment Of The Church

Introduction

The establishment of Lord's church was a momentous event for the history of mankind. Just when and under what circumstances did it occur? As one might guess, such an event in God's scheme of redemption did not go unannounced or unheralded. In this lesson, we will pinpoint this event using scriptural arguments. The time of the establishment of the church has implications for the church in the matter of kingdom law and it also has implications for denominationalism.

Scriptures

Daniel 2:1-45

Hebrews 1:1-2

Mark 9:1

Acts 2:1-4

Luke 19:11

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

Isaiah 2:1-3

Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17

Luke 24:44-49

Matthew 11:2-11

Acts 11:15

Acts 22:16

Acts 2:14-21

Acts 2:37-47

Acts 1:4-8

Luke 22:17-18

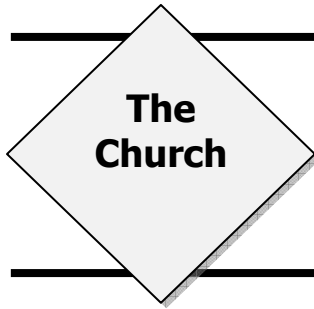
Matthew 16:13-19

Acts 11:19-26

Discussion Questions

- 1. According to the prophecy recorded in Daniel 2, during what general period of time would the fifth kingdom be established?**

- 2. Identify from the Scriptures the period of time described as the "last (latter) days."**



God's Special People

Entrance Requirements

Introduction

The relationship between salvation and church membership is often misunderstood. Can a person be saved and not be a member of the Lord's church? If so, why did Christ establish the church? What does it take to become a member of the Lord's church? The scriptures below will answer these and other important questions about salvation and church membership.

Scriptures

Mark 16:15-16

Acts 8:26-39

Romans 3:21-26

Romans 10:9-10

Ephesians 2:4-16

Hebrews 11:6

John 3:3-5

Acts 9:23-28

Romans 6:3-4

Galatians 3:26-27

Ephesians 5:23-27

Acts 2:37-47

Acts 17:30-31

Romans 6:17-18, 23

Ephesians 1:3-14

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14

Discussion Questions

1. Can one be saved outside of Christ? Support your answer with scripture.

2. Can one be saved outside of the church? Support your answer with scripture.

Introduction

Religious groups have adopted a variety of names to describe themselves, including such names as “Church of the Humanitarian God,” “American Catholic Syro-Antiochean Church,” “Faith Tabernacle Church,” “First Christian Faith Missionary Baptist Church” and “Church of Jesus Lamb of God.” Does it make any difference what we call ourselves religiously? Or is it only important that we belong to some church (whatever it is called!)? This lesson will address those questions.

Scriptures

Matthew 16:18

Acts 11:26

Acts 20:28

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

Ephesians 3:21

Colossians 1:2

1 Thessalonians 1:1

James 2:7

Acts 4:5-12

Acts 15:1, 23, 32-33

Romans 16:1, 16

2 Corinthians 11:2

Philippians 1:1

Colossians 1:13, 18

1 Timothy 3:15

1 Peter 4:16

Acts 6:1-3, 7

Acts 15:17

1 Corinthians 1:1-2

Ephesians 2:21

Philippians 4:21-22

Colossians 3:17

1 Timothy 4:12

Discussion Questions

- 1. According to 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, what is the implication of having been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ?**

- 2. List, with accompanying scriptures, some of the designations given in the New Testament to God's people as individuals.**

Introduction

How did God intend for the church to be organized? Some churches have a governing board of deacons; others are governed completely by the local evangelist (evangelistic oversight). Most denominations have some kind of authoritative supra-church governing body. Is the organization of the church to be dictated by our own wisdom? Since the church belongs to Christ, in this lesson we will consulting the word of God for answers about the organization of the church on both universal and local levels.

Although the discussion in this lesson will necessarily be brief, no study of the organization of the local church would be complete without some attention paid to the work and qualifications of elders and deacons. The work of these men is so important to the spiritual health of the local congregation that they must be selected with great care and complete respect for scriptural instructions.

Scriptures

Ezekiel 34:1-10

John 10:1-27

Acts 20:17-18

Ephesians 4:11

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

Titus 1:5-14

1 Peter 5:1-4

Psalms 23:1-4

Acts 6:1-6

Acts 20:28-31

Philippians 1:1

1 Timothy 3:1-13

Hebrews 13:17

Luke 22:25-26

Acts 14:23

Ephesians 1:22-23

Colossians 1:18

1 Timothy 5:17-20

James 5:14

Discussion Questions

1. What is the organization of the universal church? The local church?

Introduction

As blood-bought people, the church has good reason to worship their God. He saved us and provides us with all things that pertain to life and godliness. Has God simply left us to our devices and opinions in the matter of acceptable worship? Is all worship acceptable? The premise of this lesson is that God has left us instructions concerning proper worship. This lesson will also focus on what “worship” is and how that concept is applied to the various acts in which Christians engage on an individual and collective basis.

The subject matter of this lesson is a broad one, with the consequence that the “relevant” list of scriptures is more extensive and our discussion will cover general principles rather than covering detailed and numerous specific questions about our acts of worship.

Scriptures

Leviticus 10:1-2	1 Chronicles 15:16-24	1 Chronicles 16:4-6
Matthew 5:23-24	Matthew 6:1-15	Matthew 7:7-11
Matthew 15:7-9	Matthew 17:1-8	Matthew 26:17-29
Matthew 28:18	Mark 14:12-25	Luke 21:1-4
Luke 22:7-20	John 4:20-24	Acts 2:42-47
Acts 4:32-37	Acts 11:27-30	Acts 12:12
Acts 20:6-12, 16	Romans 7:1-6	1 Corinthians 10:14-16
1 Corinthians 11:17-34	1 Corinthians 14:15, 26, 40	2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15
Galatians 1:6-9	Ephesians 2:14-16	Ephesians 5:18-21
Philippians 4:6	Colossians 2:13-17	1 Timothy 2:1-4
Hebrews 1:1-3	Hebrews 8:6-13	Hebrews 10:24-25
James 1:5-8	James 5:13	1 Peter 4:11
1 John 5:14-15	2 John 9	

Discussion Questions

1. Define the verb “worship.”

9. Do we have any examples in the New Testament of Christians offering instrumental music as worship to God?

10. For what purpose(s) should Christians observe the Lord's Supper?

11. When should disciples take the Lord's Supper? Cite scripture(s) to support your answer.

Introduction

We learn from Jesus in Matthew 20 that the church is a place of work. But what work does the Lord expect His church to be doing? Are we free to choose whatever “good works” appeal to us or seem appropriate for our cultural circumstances? The last several generations of Christians in this country have seen the assets, time and energy of the Lord’s church diverted to many things which are not properly the work of local congregations as collectives. Institutionalism, the sponsoring church and the social gospel are all issues which have created tension and division among the Lord’s disciples. As in previous lessons, we will focus our study on what the word of God identifies as the work given to His people.

This lesson will necessarily discuss the fundamental question of whether a local congregation can do anything that an individual Christian can do. Although many of the scriptures listed below have been listed and discussed in previous lessons, they are repeated here because of their relevance to this topic also.

Scriptures

1 Samuel 15:10-23

Acts 4:34-37

Acts 13:1-3

Romans 1:14-17

Romans 15:25-31

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

2 Corinthians 8:1 – 9:15

Ephesians 3:20-21

Philippians 4:10-19

1 Thessalonians 5:11-14

1 Timothy 5:3-16

James 1:26-27

1 John 1:1-7

John 6:1-15, 23-27

Acts 6:1-8

Acts 14:26-28

Romans 12:13

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

2 Corinthians 11:7-9

Ephesians 4:7-16

Colossians 3:17

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

2 Timothy 2:2

1 Peter 2:17

Jude 12

Acts 2:42-47

Acts 8:4

Acts 20:6-12

Romans 14:14-23

1 Corinthians 9:1-14

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Galatians 6:10

Philippians 1:5

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

1 Timothy 3:15

Hebrews 10:24-25

1 Peter 5:1-4

Discussion Questions

1. Do the Scriptures make any distinction between what the local church collective and the individual Christian can do? Cite scripture(s) to sustain your answer.

2. In general, what is the work of the local church collective?

3. List scripture(s) which indicate that each of the following activities is authorized as a part of the work of the local church collective:
 - a. Financial support of a preacher as he preaches the gospel

 - b. Edification of one another by singing

 - c. The stirring up of one another unto love and good works

 - d. Corrective discipline for wayward members

 - e. Benevolence toward needy members of the same congregation

 - f. Benevolence toward needy members of another congregation

 - g. Edification of the church through preaching

 - h. Sending a preacher to preach the gospel

4. Is there any authority in the New Testament (command, example or necessary inference) for the bishops of one local church to oversee/do the work of another local church?

