

What is the Church?

(Ephesians 1:22-23)

Unfortunately, we live in a world where many people abuse Bible words. Many people don't realize that the word "reverend" refers to God (Psalm 111:9). The word "pastor" refers to shepherds or elders of a local flock (1 Peter 5:2). The word "fellowship" refers to a sharing or joint participation in a spiritual relationship (1 Corinthians 1:9). The word "baptism" refers to immersion and only immersion (Acts 8:35-39).

Another word that many people abuse is the word "church." In Matthew 16:18 Jesus makes it very clear that He has a church. Yet, if we were to ask people what the word "church" means, most wouldn't be able to tell us.

What if someone asked you: "What is the church?" What would you say to them? Would you be able to effectively tell them from the Bible what the church is? We want to attempt to answer this very important question. Let me share with you three things the church is not and three things the church is.

- **What the church is not:**

- The church is not a building.
 - "So great fear came upon all the church..." (Acts 5:11).
 - "At that time a great persecution arose against the church..." (Acts 8:1).
 - "Then the news of these things came to the ears of the church..." (Acts 11:22).
- The church is not a denomination.
 - Jesus prayed that His followers be one (John 17:20-23).
 - Paul taught that believers are not to be divided (1 Corinthians 1:10).
- The church is not a social club. Too many people today are not concerned about...
 - Whether or not the church is following the Bible.
 - Whether or not the church is teaching the Bible to the young people.
 - How God wants men to worship Him.

- **What the church is:**

- The church is the people of God (Acts 5:11).
 - Fear cannot come upon a building, but it can come upon people (Acts 5:11).
 - A building cannot be persecuted, but people can (Acts 8:1).
 - A building does not have ears to hear news, but people do (Acts 11:22).
- The church is one body. Denominations attempt to make the church into many bodies. But the Bible speaks...
 - Of one body!
 - Of one faith!
 - Of one Lord - the Lord Jesus Christ!
- The church is a spiritual family. The Lord's church is concerned...
 - With promoting the truth - the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - With worshiping God in spirit and truth.
 - With taking care of the most important thing: souls.

Conclusion: Are you a member of the Lord's church? If not, why not? You can become a member of the Lord's church today the same way people did 2,000 years ago (Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47).

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