

The Church

OBJECTIVE:

To explain the purpose of the church, the student's involvement in the church, Christ's relationship to the church, and the leadership of the church.

GOD'S SUPREMACY

Colossians 1:15-18

15He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

-Who is the head of the Church?

-Why is that so important?

DIVISIONS AND FACTIONS

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

10I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. 11My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas^[a]"; still another, "I follow Christ." 13Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into^[b] the name of Paul?

-What is Paul teaching against in this passage?

-Divisions and denominations are not a part of God's plan for the church.

-The three major divisions in Christian churches, as they pertain to salvation are:

>One group of churches believes in infant baptism, which means that a person can be saved by being sprinkled with water as an infant.

>One group of churches believes that you need only to believe to be saved. This group believes that when a person prays "The Sinners Prayer" they are saved.

>The Bible teaches that a person must:

1. Hear the message (**Romans 10:17**)
2. Have faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (**Mark 16:15-16**)
3. Repent (**Acts 2:38**)
4. Be baptized (**Acts 22:16, Acts 2:38**) for the forgiveness of sins.

-Sincerely believing that you are right cannot save you. (**Proverbs 14:12, Romans 10:2-3, Matt 7:21-24**)

ONE CHURCH

Ephesians 4:4-6

4There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— 5one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

-How many churches does the Bible say that there are?

-Who is a part of the one church?

-If someone trusts in infant baptism to save them, are they a part of the one church?

-If someone trusts in praying “The Sinners Prayer” to save them, are they a part of the one church?

THE BODY OF CHRIST

I Corinthians 12:12-26

12The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13For we were all baptized by^[c] one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. 15If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 16And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 17If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 22On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

-At what point do you become part of the one body, the Church?

-Why do you think we need each other so badly?

-Every Christian brings to the church a whole set of strengths and gifts. What gifts or talents do you think God intends for you to bring into His church?

DATING & MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

14Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15What harmony is there between Christ and Belial^[b]? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."^[c]

17"Therefore come out from them
and be separate, says the Lord.

Touch no unclean thing,
and I will receive you."^[d]

18"I will be a Father to you,
and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

1 Corinthians 7:39

9A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. 40In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is—and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

-These passages teach that we must not be yoked with anyone who is not a disciple of Jesus and that we must not marry anyone that is not a disciple of Jesus. Why do you think God says that?

-Dating and marriage are both yoked relationships and are therefore reserved for disciples. According to these passages disciples should only date and marry disciples. Do you see why God wants it this way? How do you feel about it?

THEY MET TOGETHER

Acts 2:42-47

42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

-What were the first century Christians like?

-How often did they meet together? (**Hebrews 3:2-13**) Explain discipling.

-You need to make every effort to be at all of the services of the church and your family group, so that you can stay strong and give to the other Christians. (**Hebrews 10:25**)

-We need to open our homes to each other regularly, practicing hospitality.

-What are all of the weekly events and activities that you will be attending?

A JOYFUL WORK

Hebrews 13:17

17Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

- What does this passage teach about our attitude towards the leadership of the church?
- Having a submissive spirit enables the church to be united, and advance God's kingdom powerfully. Why do you think this is true?

GIVING TO GOD

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

- What does this passage teach about giving financially to the church?
- In the Old Testament we were commanded to give a tithe, a tenth of our income, to God's work. In the New Testament Jesus teaches us to give sacrificially. (**Luke 21:1-4**)
- We use a tenth as a guide knowing that in the Old Testament this was what God thought was reasonable, however, each man must wrestle in his own heart as to how much he gives.
However we know that God wants us to give joyfully and sacrificially.
- Other passages to study about giving financially to the church are: **Luke 6:38**, **Malachi 3:8-10**, **2 Corinthians 9:6-8**, and **1 Corinthians 9:13-14**.