

What is the church?

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- **begin short series** on the church:
 - What is the church?
 - What is the organization of the church?
 - What is the work of the church?
 - What is the worship of the church?
 - How is the church unified?
- **importance:** young people, new members, reminder to all

➤ Origin of the church.

- **Eph. 3:11-12** God originator of church, **eternal purpose**, carried out **in Christ**
- - **Mi. 4:1-3** church **prophesied** of in the OT
- - **Dan. 2:31-35, 44-45** church prophesied to be **established during Roman** reign
- - **Acts 2** church **established on Pentecost**
 - **Acts 1:6** had not been established when Jesus ascended
 - - **Acts 1:6-8** it began when the apostles received power from the Holy Spirit
 - - **Acts 2:1-4** church began on Pentecost, when apostles received power from the Holy Spirit
 - **Acts 2:16-21** the prophesy of Joel was fulfilled that day
- **application: trace the origin of a church - if not Pentecost, can't be the Lord's church**

➤ The church is the *called out body*. – What is the church?

- **Matt. 16:18** church is the body of people who respond to God's call **through Christ – His church**
 - “church” translation of *ekklesia* meaning a **called out body – used of a religious and civil assembly in Bible**
- - **2 Th. 2:14** called through the gospel – **rf - Mk. 16:15**
- - **1 Cor. 12:12, 14, 27** church is **composed of Christians** – not a building
- - **Matt. 16:18** universal
- - **Matt. 18:17** local
- - **PP some names** identifying the Lord's church
- **application: the church is about people, not about buildings**

➤ Membership in the church.

- **Acts 2** Lord adds when obey gospel
 - **vs. 38** repent, baptized, forgiveness, gift of Holy Spirit
- - **vs. 40** saved
- - **vs. 41** baptized, added
- - **vs. 47** added to their number (**saints, church KJ - diff. in Greek texts**)
- - **1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23** when baptized - **baptized into body, church**
 - **Jn. 3:3, 5** born of water and spirit
 - **Acts 2:38** repent, baptized, forgiveness, gift of Holy Spirit
- **application: Lord adds to church when obey Jesus to be baptized**

➤ end Part I

- **summary:** origin, called out body, membership - **inv.:** you can become a members, added by the Lord

➤ **5 Pt. II:**

- intro (above) / summary Part I (above)

➤ **The church is. . . .**

- **Jn. 3:3; Acts 8:12; 14:22** the church is the **kingdom of God**

- **kingdom:** denotes the **domain of the king**

➤ - **Col. 1:13-14** the church is the **kingdom of Christ – redemption, forgiveness in kingdom**

➤ - **Col. 2:12-13** forgiven when **baptized – enter into kingdom when baptized - Col. 1:14**

- **Matt. 28:18** Christ has **all authority**, church - **1 Tim. 6:15** Lord of lords and King of kings

➤ - **Col. 1:16-18; Eph. 1:22-23** the church is **Christ's body – which is the church**

➤ - **Eph. 5:24** church is **subject to Christ in everything**

➤ - **Eph. 5:23** Jesus is **Savior of the body – must be a member of body to be saved - Acts 2:40-41, 47**

➤ - **1 Tim. 3:14-15** the church is the **household (house) of God – family**

➤ - **Heb. 3:6** Jesus is **over** God's house

➤ - **Heb. 2:11-12** Christians are **Christ's brethren**, brethren of one another

➤ - **1 Pet. 4:17** **judgment begins with** God's household

➤ - **2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:19-22** the church is the **temple of God** – God dwells in the Spirit – **worship, service**

➤ - **1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:15a, 17, 19-20** since the church is composed of Christians, **each Christian** is a temple, God dwells in Spirit

- **1 Cor. 6:20** **not own, bought with price, glorify God in your body**

➤ - **2 Cor. 11:2** the church is the **bride of Christ – marriage, duty, emotion (1 Cor. 16:22)**

➤ - **Rom. 6:3-5; 7:4** **joined** to Christ when we are **baptized** into Christ - **1 Cor. 6:17**

- **1 Cor. 6:17** **one spirit** with Him - **1 Cor. 12:13** **baptized into** one body by Holy Spirit

➤ - **Rev. 21:1-3** **Christ's bride eternally dwells** with Him in heaven

- **summary:**

- **church is:** God's kingdom, Christ's kingdom, Christ's body, God's household, temple of God, bride of Christ

- **all these expresses relationships with God and Christ** – if in the church. . . . - if not. . . .

➤ **The church is not. . . – contrast with above**

- **Acts 17:24** the church is not a **physical building** – **it is a spiritual building (above)**
- - **Rom. 14:17** the church is not a **social club** (not eating and drinking)
- - **1 Cor. 11:22** **eat in houses**, not when assemble, not as work of church (context)
- - **Acts 2:46** sharing **common meals is work of individual Christians** – **not church**
- - **1 Pet. 4:8-9** **hospitality work of individual Christians**, not church

- - **1 Cor. 1:10-13** the church is not a **denomination**, often identified by wearing man-made religious names
- - **denominations:**
 - **the act of naming** or designating a person or thing (dictionary.com)
 - **wearing name designated by man rather than God**
 - A large group of religious congregations united under a common faith and name and organized under a **single administrative and legal hierarchy** (American Heritage Dictionary).
 - **human organization**
 - a group of religious congregations **having its own organization** and a distinctive faith (WorldNet)
 - **self organization**
- - **1 Cor. 3:1-4** **reason behind** denominationalism: **fleshly** rather than spiritual minds, **carnal** (KJ)
- - **Col. 2:20-23** **Christians do not submit** to human decrees – denominationalism, etc.

➤ **Summary / Inv.**

- **summary:**
 - **church is:** God's kingdom, Christ's kingdom, Christ's body, God's household, temple of God, bride of Christ
 - **church is not:** physical building, social club, denomination
- - **inv.:** God calls everyone to become a member of His church, through the gospel, will you respond. . . .