

## What is the Church Part I

© Mance J. Davis Jr. January 2007

West High Street Church of Christ Sunday AM January 14, 2007

### ***Introduction***

The Church is one of the themes of the New Testament, one of the most important subjects that man can study. In spite of that fact, it is one of the most misunderstood subjects found in Scripture. Man has many ideas about what Church is, but what does God have to say about it? Let us consult with His Word, the Bible, to discover not what man has to say, but what God has said about his Church.

### ***The Church Belongs to Christ***

- I. **Matthew 16:18** Christ promised to build it
  - A. In Jesus' words we can see several things:
    - It is *His* Church
    - There is only one Church (notice the singular form: My Church)
  - B. Speaking to His Disciples, Jesus said, **“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5**
    - Notice here that the Lord speaks of himself as the vine and his disciples as branches.
    - From this we know that the branches of the Church are individual disciples, or Christians, not various denominations with competing views, understandings, and doctrines.
    - Far from this idea of each denomination having its own doctrine and yet all being part of the same Church, Jesus called his Church to be in unity, **John 17:20-21.**
- II. The Bible calls the Church by several names, all of which are descriptive of what it is.
  - A. **Romans 16:16** Churches of Christ
  - B. **Hebrews 12:23** Church of the Firstborn
  - C. **Acts 11:28** purchased with Christ's blood; called the Church of God
  - D. **I Timothy 3:15** Church of the living God

## What is the Church Part I

© Mance J. Davis Jr. January 2007

West High Street Church of Christ Sunday AM January 14, 2007

- E. Local congregations are sometimes referred to by the name of their location in the Scriptures; i.e. the Church of Ephesus. More on this later.

### ***The Church Is Both Universal and Local***

#### **I. The Church Universal**

##### **A. Matthew 16:18-19** The Universal Church

- My Church
- Keys of the Kingdom

##### **B. The Church and the Kingdom are used interchangeably in Matthew 16:18-19.**

- Jesus spoke of the kingdom coming while those who lived at the same time as he yet were alive. **Luke 9:27**
- All of These things were fulfilled when Peter preached at Pentecost, using the keys of Jesus' identity, which he himself had confessed, and the preaching of the fact that Jesus was the Son of God to open the Kingdom, the Church, to the people in **Acts 2**.

##### **C. The Church and The Body are the same.**

- **Ephesians 5:23**
- **Colossians 1:18; 24**

##### **D. Various passages speak of local congregations as the Church of the given location. For example, the Church of Ephesus.**

- Church of the Laodiceans, **Colossians 4:16**
- Church of the Thessalonians, **I Thessalonians 1:1, II Thessalonians 1:1**
- Church of Ephesus, **Revelation 2:1**
- Church of the Laodiceans, **Revelation 3:14**

### **The Relationship of Christ and the Church**

#### **I. Christ and the Church Ephesians 5:22-32**

- A. The Church is to be in submission to the will of Christ.
- B. Christ had such love for the Church that he gave his life for it.
- C. The Church is therefore to be without spot, wrinkle, or blemish, having been sanctified by the blood that Christ gave for it.

#### **II. The Church is purchased through the Blood of Christ.**

## What is the Church Part I

© Mance J. Davis Jr. January 2007

West High Street Church of Christ Sunday AM January 14, 2007

A. Acts 20:28 The Church is purchased with his blood.

B. I Peter 1:18-21 We are not purchased with corruptible things.

### Conclusion

- The Church Belongs to Christ, not to any man.
- It is often named in the Bible with descriptive terms, most often denoting the ownership of Christ.
- The Church is universal, that is, world wide, but is composed of individual groups. There is no worldwide headquarters; Christ is the head of the Church.
- It was purchased and sanctified with his own blood.