

The Doctrine of the Church

# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

*There is a word that to Protestants has the sound of something infinitely commonplace, more or less indifferent and superfluous, that does not make their heart beat faster; something with which a sense of boredom is so often associated, or which at any rate does not lend wings to our religious feelings—and yet our fate is sealed if we are unable again to attach a new or perhaps very old meaning to it. Woe to us if that word does not become important to us soon again, does not become important in our lives. Yes, the word to which I am referring is 'Church', the meaning of which we have forgotten and the nobility and greatness of which we propose to look at today.*

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, July 29, 1928, from a sermon on 1 Corinthians 12

## WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF THE CHURCH?

*What thoughts or pictures come into your mind when you hear the word "church"? Why?*

Unfortunately, our view of the church is often shaped by our culture and by our experiences rather than by God's Word.

### Four Common Myths of the Church:

1. It is a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. It is only our corporate gathering.
3. It is separate from my own spiritual life.
4. It is \_\_\_\_\_.

The church is infinitely valuable in God's eyes...so valuable that He gave His very blood to redeem it.

*Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with His own blood.*

—Acts 20:28

The church is the people of God, body of Christ, and temple of the Holy Spirit. It is the one entity on earth for which Christ has given His life, devoted His love, and committed His authority to **BUILD** for His glory (cf. Matthew 16:18).

The church is the community of all true believers in Jesus Christ, redeemed by the blood of Jesus, indwelt by the Spirit, blessed by God, and assembled in local congregations for worship, teaching, fellowship, and evangelism as a light, witness, and blessing to the nations.

*The True Church can never fail. For it is based upon a rock.*

—T.S. Eliot

*The day we find the perfect church, it becomes imperfect the moment we join it.*

—Charles H. Spurgeon

*The home and the church are the only two God-ordained institutions for carrying out His work. This is not to say that God does not use other organizations in His program, but it is to emphasize that the church is of primary importance in His purpose.*

—Charles C. Ryrie

*I believe wholeheartedly that the Lord Jesus and his church are the hope of the world.*

—Peter Scazzero

*The church is God's plan A. There is no plan B.*

—David Platt

1. **B** \_\_\_\_\_ **ON JESUS CHRIST.**

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. —Ephesians 2:19-21*

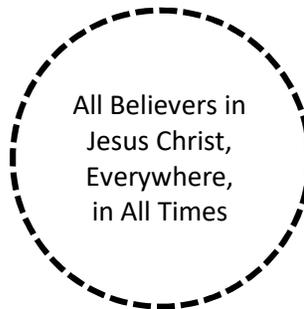
*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. —1 Corinthians 3:11*

2. **U** \_\_\_\_\_ **IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. —1 Corinthians 12:12-13*

3. **I** \_\_\_\_\_  
**IN NATURE, VISIBLE IN FORM.**

*But the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are His...” —2 Timothy 2:19a*



4. **L** \_\_\_\_\_ **GOD AND ONE ANOTHER.**

*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another. —John 13:34-35*

*If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. —1 Jn. 4:20-21*

5. **D** \_\_\_\_\_ **CHRIST TO THE WORLD.**

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. —Acts 1:8*

The English word “church” is derived from the Greek word, *kyriakon*, meaning, “belonging to the Lord.” The Greek word for “church” in the NT is *ekklesia*, meaning “called out ones,” called by Jesus Christ out of the world and into His kingdom.

*The Real Church is the assembly which is called, united, held together and governed by the Word of her Lord, or she is not the Real Church. —Karl Barth*

*Although the DNA code from cell to cell is the same, there are many different types of cells within the body, each with a specific function. —NOVA Online*

*The invisible church is the church as God sees it. The visible church is the church as Christians on earth see it. —Wayne Grudem*

*Relationship is at the foundation of God’s nature. Since we are created in His image, relationship is our most fundamental need, the very foundation of who we are. Without relationship, without attachment to God and others, we can’t be our true selves. We can’t be truly human. —Dr. Henry Cloud*

*God has ordained that difficult person to be in your life. —Paul David Tripp*

*After we have done our best to communicate to a lost world, still we must never forget that the final apologetic which Jesus gives is the observable love of true Christians for true Christians... If the world does not see this, it will not believe that Christ was sent by the Father. —Francis Schaeffer*