

Answering Basic Questions (Part 6): What Is the Church?

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: 1 Peter 3:15

In our text, Peter explained that each Christian needs to be ready to give an answer for what we believe. Giving a defense for the HOPE within us requires an ability to articulate the basics of our faith. In this series, we are going to discuss some basic questions that may arise. This is to help reinforce our own faith and help prepare us to teach others as opportunities arise.

What Is the Church?

- When people hear the word “church,” they may have different ideas come to mind
- We need to be aware of how the church is described in the New Testament – this is how we find the Lord’s church

The Church Was Built by Christ

- Jesus promised to build His church (Matthew 16:18) – “Upon this rock...”; the “rock” (foundation) was the fact confessed by Peter (Matthew 16:16), Jesus’ identity as the Son of God
- Not only would He build His church, He would also purchase it with His blood shed on the cross (Acts 20:28)

The Church Was Established on the Day of Pentecost

- On Pentecost following Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, Peter preached (Acts 2:14ff) – he declared Jesus to be “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36)
- The people asked what they needed to do (Acts 2:37) – Peter answered (Acts 2:38); three thousand responded (Acts 2:41); God continued to add to the church (Acts 2:47)

The Church Is the Body of the Saved

- God added to the church those who were being saved (Acts 2:47) – Jesus is the head of the church and the Savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23)
- The body is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23) – those who are saved are those who are in the church

The Church Is the Kingdom of God on Earth

- Jesus made a connection between church and kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19) – kingdom can be broadly defined as the domain of God, but it is visibly seen on earth in the church; this also pointed to Pentecost (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4)
- We can be rescued from darkness and transferred to His kingdom (Colossians 1:13) – this happens when we are saved and added by God to the church (Acts 2:47)

Conclusion

- So what is the church? – it is the institution built by Christ and established on the day of Pentecost
- It is the home of all the saved and represents the kingdom of God on earth – we need to be an active part of it today