

The Church that Jesus Built

Matthew 16:13-20

Introduction

Jesus did not say what the church would be or when its construction will begin.

- It appears that **the Church began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-4)** after Jesus' ascension to heaven.
- Supported by Peter's reference to Pentecost as "the **beginning**" (11:15-16).
- **The Church is a Mystery**
—only revealed in the NT (**Eph.3:1-6**).

I. Meaning of Church

- A. The Church is not Spiritual Israel.
- B. The Church is not the Kingdom of God
- C. The Church is an Assembly of called-out people.
- D. What kind of Church did Jesus build?

II. Nature of the Church

- The biblical data indicates that there are two **Aspects** of the church.
- God requires, works with, rules and establishes both.

- A. The **Immortal (Universal) Church** is that company of people who have been saved and joined by the Holy Spirit's baptism to Christ and to one another in Him to form His mystical body of which He is the head.

- B. The **Temporal (Local) Church** is a company of baptized people belonging to a certain place, who profess to be saved by trusting in Jesus and His atoning work (Acts 2:41, 47), and who are organized according to N.T. principles.

III. Essence of the Church

- A. The Immortal (Universal) Church consists only of saved people who are joined to Jesus by a spiritual union.
- B. The Temporal (Local) Church might have among its members people who have not been regenerated (Rev.2:14-15)

Q: Of what then am I a member?

1. I am a member of the Body of Christ (Immortal Church) by regeneration.
2. I am a member of a local body of believers (Temporal Church) for the purpose of worship, evangelism, fellowship & service.

Conclusion

- You may belong to a local church but do you belong to the immortal church?
 - My friends, have you trusted Jesus as your personal Saviour?
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Questions for Reflection/Discussion

1. List Scripture verses to support the two aspects of the Church:
 - a) Immortal (universal) Church
 - b) Temporal (local) Church

2. How can we prevent people from wrongly assuming that they are saved because they are members of a local church?

3. How do you respond to a believer who tells you that because he is a member of the “universal” church, it doesn’t matter if he belongs to a local church or not?

4. Why is membership in a local church important?