

The Church Jesus Built

Matthew 16:15-19

With so many churches that are so different, how can we know which _____ really wants? Today we're examining the church that Jesus built as it's _____ in the Scriptures. The Lord Jesus in Matthew 23:34 _____ to send forth prophets, wise men, and scribes, who would teach His will but would suffer persecution. The Lord wasn't content for His Word merely to be _____. He sent scribes to _____ His words for all time, and His teaching is found in the New Testament.

Occasionally someone asks, "What does your church _____ about...?" and then he mentions a topic. The church Jesus built doesn't have a board that dictates _____ doctrine. It doesn't have a hierarchy of men with a _____ written church manual or creed. The Lord never _____ the church to make its own policy or doctrine. The only _____ of the church is Jesus Christ Himself; and He said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). He instructed His apostles in verse 20 to make disciples and teach "them to _____ all that I have commanded you." What He taught was for _____ age and the _____ world.

The church that Jesus built _____ its doctrine from the Lord Himself and the Scriptures. The church has no authority to _____ doctrines. No human or group of humans can overrule, edit, or change what the _____ teaches. The church draws its beliefs and practices from the Lord and the _____ teaching found in Scripture. When someone asks what does the church teach, we point them instead to what the Lord _____ in Scripture. The Lord Jesus said that he will judge us by His _____ (John 12:48). Let's _____ to Him!

Our reading today comes from the Gospel According to Matthew 16:15-19.

If you open the yellow pages, there are churches everywhere; and they have _____ names, beliefs, organizations, and practices. Since churches aren't all alike, it poses a _____ to those who are searching for an authentic church that follows the Bible. Churches of today differ greatly from the church we _____ about in the New Testament. They _____ in belief, practice, name, organization, worship, and their source of authority.

The Lord Jesus never designed His church to be so _____ or so mixed up with human ideas and ways. He wanted His people to be one and to _____ Him. The _____ belongs only to Jesus; and the church is made up of _____ who belong to Jesus. Since we are His,

we need to _____ Him and Him alone. We must not be trapped by human beliefs or practices that _____ His teaching.

The word "church," (ekklesia) means "a _____ out assembly" (that is, a group of people who have been called together for a purpose). Christians have been called by the _____ to serve Jesus. When the New Testament uses the word church, it never refers to a _____. The word "church" refers to _____. Acts 8:3 describes the church this way, "But Saul began ravaging the _____, entering house after house; and dragging off _____ and _____, he would put them in prison." The church in the first century was _____ of men and women. The New Testament never speaks of little _____ as members of the church.

God calls people to be _____ of the church through preaching and teaching the gospel. **Read what Paul said to the church at Thessalonica in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.** People enter the church when they _____ the truth and they put their faith in the Lord.

Sometimes the word "church" is used in a _____ sense, speaking of every person who belongs to the Lord and has his name written in the Lamb's book of life. Jesus said He would _____ His church (Matthew 16:18). In this sense, every person who is _____ by the blood of Christ has been _____ to the church that He built. The Bible says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the _____ of the church, He Himself being the _____ of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). The church is indeed made up of those whom Jesus has _____. The Lord has added _____ saved person to His church, His body. Used in this universal sense, the word "church" _____ refers to some nebulous collection of denominations and sects. Rather it refers to those who have _____ the Lord according to the _____ of Scripture. The church is _____ denominational or interdenominational; the church Jesus built is actually undenominational. The New Testament has no _____ of the idea of denominationalism that's so prevalent in our world today. In the New Testament, the church was _____ the church.

Sometimes the word "church" is used in reference to a _____ congregation as in 1 Corinthians 1:2, where Paul writes "To the church of God that is in Corinth." When Paul speaks of "churches," he's not talking about denominations with _____ doctrines and practices, but rather individual congregations in different locations. For instance, in Galatians 1:2, Paul _____ to the "churches of Galatia." These were local congregations in the various _____ of the province of Galatia. They believed the same _____; they practiced the same things; and they fellowshiped each other as brethren in the universal church.

Sometimes the word “church” has reference to the _____ of a local congregation. Paul spoke of the Corinthians coming _____ as a church in 1 Corinthians 11:18. In 1 Corinthians 14:34 he said to the women that “they are to keep silent in the churches,” referring to that time when the church _____ as a congregation for worship. The very word “church” implies a calling together of people for a _____. Being part of a church means that one assembles together with other Christians for _____.

The Lord Jesus is deeply _____ to His church. Our relationship with the Lord is always in the context of being _____ of His church. The Lord Jesus and His _____ are inseparable.

First, we must realize that the Lord _____ His church (Matthew 16:18). People are not the builder of the church; they are _____ is built. They are the _____ in the building. **Read 1 Peter 2:4-5.** Our task is to _____ as living stones in what the Lord has built.

Second, Jesus _____ the church. Jesus didn’t purchase the church with gold or silver, but with His own _____ (Acts 20:28). Jesus must love and treasure the church beyond measure to _____ Himself for it. You may not think much of the church, but Jesus laid down His life so He might _____ it.

Third, the Lord is the _____ of His church. **Read Ephesians 1:22-23.** God likens the relationship of Jesus to the church as a head to its _____. The two are inseparable. Jesus _____ and _____ through His body, the church, in this world today. All _____ resides in Him as the head. If He is to work in your life, you have to _____ and _____ Him.

Fourth, the church is the _____ of Christ. **Read Ephesians 5:25-27.** The relationship of Christ to His church is like that of a _____ to his wife. Notice that Jesus has but _____ wife; and He has only _____ church. This passage _____ just how much Jesus cherishes the church and how He has made the church holy and blameless by the washing of water with the word. No husband would _____ someone abusing or slandering his wife, and neither will the Lord Jesus tolerate someone slandering or abusing His church.

The Scriptures describe the church Jesus built as a _____ – God is our Father, Jesus is our Lord and our older brother, and you and I are brothers and sisters. **Read what Paul wrote to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3:14-15.** A household in Biblical times was a family that was living together, loving and supporting one another, the older taking care of and training the younger in the _____ of the Lord.

The Scriptures also describe the church as a _____. The Lord’s church is not a democracy; people can’t _____ on Jesus or on His teaching. Jesus is the only King and Lord

of His church. In Acts 20:28 the Bible says Jesus purchased the _____ with His blood; but in Revelation 5:9-10 the Lord purchased _____ to be a kingdom. Paul said in Colossians 1:13-14 that God “rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the _____ of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” The church is the kingdom of God on _____ today. If you wish to go to God’s heavenly kingdom, you must _____ God’s earthly kingdom, the church. We enter that kingdom by being _____ of water and the Spirit according to John 3:5. That new birth takes place when people who _____ and love the Lord _____ and are _____ into Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures also describe the church as God’s dwelling place, the _____ of God. **Read Ephesians 2:19-22.** God _____ in His people, and He expects them to be His _____ servants. In the New Testament Christians were _____ "Christians." God didn’t _____ of divisions among them. He _____ suggested or permitted man-made names, creeds, practices, or a hierarchy. They simply _____ the Lord and held fast to His teaching. Christians _____ lived holy lives, worshiped according to the teaching of Christ, and served the Lord by preaching the truth and being zealous for good deeds.

The marvelous thing is that you can be a member of the church Jesus built by _____ and _____ the Lord's instructions in the New Testament. If you follow Christ, you’ll _____ every man-made belief or practice. **Read what the Lord said in John 8:31-32.** Truth and freedom are not _____ in the traditions or commandments of men, or in religious groups established by men. If you want the _____ of the Lord follow His way found in Scripture. The Lord Jesus said, “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the _____ I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” (John 12:48). Being in the church Jesus built means _____ every man-made doctrine, idea, practice, name, or organization. It means carefully _____ what Jesus commands.

To be in the church Jesus built is a great _____! It means His _____ purchased you, and you belong to Him. It means that He has _____ you and made you one of His family. It means that every promise and blessing given in Scripture is a promise that you can _____! We can be true and authentic Christians by returning to the Lord and His teaching. **Read 1 John 2:5-6.** If you _____ the Lord, keep His commandments, _____ with Jesus!

You can’t _____ the church that Jesus built; the Lord must _____ you to it. If you’ll hear the gospel, _____ with all your heart, turn away from _____, and out of love _____ Jesus as the Christ, then you’re ready to take the step where the Lord adds you to His church. That step is _____ (Acts 2:38). Just as the Lord added the people at Pentecost to the church, He will add you to His church (Acts 2:41, 47).