

IS SALVATION ONLY IN THE CHURCH?

Matthew 16:13-20

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Many today deny the essentiality of church
- B. Bible makes no distinction in describing relationship to Christ and to His church
- C. Considering this remember that terms as "house of God", "family of God", "temple of God" and "the body" are all synonymous to the New Testament term "church".
- D. Jesus' church, built upon the solid rock, became a reality on the first Pentecost after he arose Acts 2
- E. Why was the church built? Is it essential to be in the church that Jesus built to be saved?

DISCUSSION:

I. VIEWS REGARDING ESSENTIALITY OF CHURCH

- A. Masses believe one is saved out of the church; yet others declare salvation is in the church.
- B. In age of the "Electronic Church" many hold "church is not the savior"; "no denomination necessary"; "join church of your choice"; "morality is sufficient."
- C. One man affirmed, "I will be no more honest in the church than out; I will be just as truthful, sober and upright out of the church as in."
- D. If one can be saved outside church why be inside? Why sacrifice to build up church? Why promote with money, prayers, and time? Is church not important?

II. TO BE IN CHRIST IS TO BE IN THE CHURCH

- A. Bible makes no distinction in describing relationship to Christ and His church. True for two reasons:
 1. Enter one relationship is to also enter the other.
 2. Blessings found "in Christ" also found "in church."
- B. Get into Christ by baptism Rom 6:3; Gal 2:12; Gal 3:27
 1. Baptized believer begins new relationship in Christ
 2. He is in fellowship with Him and in union with Him.
 3. Not until he is baptized does he exist with Christ.
- C. The same is said of one's relationship to the church.
 1. Baptism puts one into "body" 1Cor 12:13, the church Eph 1:22-23 of which Christ is head Col 1:18,24
 - a. One cannot be joined to the head without being a member of body which is the church
 - b. When believer is baptized into Christ he is also baptized into the body, the church.
 2. To be in Christ is to be in His body, the church.

- a. In Christ Jesus, made nigh, by blood Eph 2:13
 - b. In One body, reconciled by Cross Eph 2:16
 - c. To be in Christ, is to be in His body, and to be in Christ, is to be in His Church.
3. Christ is Bridegroom; church bride Eph 5:23-32
 - a. The two are one. One cannot be related to Christ without being equally related to church.
 - b. Child by same birth belongs to father and mother
 4. Christ is King, the Church His Kingdom 1Tim 6:15; Col 1:13
 - a. Can't be subject of King & not be citizen
 - b. Therefore one is not in Christ if not in church

III. BLESSINGS EQUALLY IN CHRIST AND IN CHURCH

- A. **SALVATION** in Christ 2Tim 2:10, and Christ is the Savior of the body, the church Eph 5:23
- B. **REDEMPTION** in Christ Eph 1:7, and His church is the blood-purchased group of the saved Acts 20:28
- C. **REMISSION OF SINS** in Christ Heb 9:22; 10:19-22
- D. **JUSTIFICATION** in Christ Rom 5:9 (note Heb 12:23)
- E. **RECONCILIATION** in Christ Rom 5:10-11 Jews and Gentile (reconciled in church Eph 2:16; body 1:22,23
- F. **SANCTIFICATION** in Christ one "is called" 1Cor 1:1,2 and "calling" is "in one body," church Col 3:15; 1:18
- G. **MERCY** is found in Christ Tit 3:5-6, God's people 1Pet 2:10 His "house" 1Pet 2:5
- H. **HOLINESS** is in Christ Rom 12:1; Eph 1:4 and also part of being temple of God, the church 1Cor 3:16-17
- I. **AUTHORITY** is in Christ Matt 28:18 and his "house" or family Heb 3:6

More could be said about the blessings that are in Christ and in His church, but these are sufficient to show that what is found in Christ is also found in His church, His body

CONCLUSION:

- A. The church in His eternal purpose Eph 3:10-11, He built it Matt 16:18
- B. It was built upon Him as the foundation 1Cor 3:11-12
- C. He loves it supremely, gave His life, for her Eph 5:25
- D. He will come someday and present her back to the heavenly home as a bridegroom bringing home His bride Eph 5:27
- E. The exalted church is also spoken of as being the "house of God," the very family of God 1Tim 3:15
- F. Jesus died for the church Acts 20:28. Are you in it?