

Part 4. Jesus our Redeemer

Lesson 3: Ecclesiology – The Church, The Body of Christ

Lesson Summary

Ecclesiology is the study of the Church—God’s masterpiece in this present age of grace (Matt. 16:18). The Church is not man’s invention but God’s redeemed people—born of the Spirit, purchased by the Son, and established for the Father’s glory.

Scripture describes the Church as both universal—all believers baptized into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13)—and local, visible assemblies for worship, fellowship, and mission (Acts 2:42–47). Christ is the Head (Col. 1:18), believers are His Body (Rom. 12:4–5), and the Church is also His Bride, being sanctified and awaiting union with Him (Eph. 5:25–27; Rev. 19:7–9).

The Church’s mission is the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts 1:8), its foundation is God’s Word (2 Tim. 3:16–17), and its power comes from the Spirit (John 16:13; 1 Cor. 12:4–11). Leadership includes elders or pastors who shepherd (1 Tim. 3:1–7) and deacons who serve (1 Tim. 3:8–13).

All believers are priests (1 Pet. 2:9), called to serve, guard the truth (1 Tim. 3:15), exercise discipline when needed (Matt. 18:15–17), and remain faithful until Christ returns (1 Thess. 4:16–17).

The Church is Christ’s chosen instrument to display His wisdom, proclaim His truth, and disciple His people for His glory.

Key Takeaways

- **Definition:** The Church = God’s called-out people, universal and local (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:13).
- **Identity:** Christ is Head, believers are His Body (Col. 1:18; Rom. 12:4–5), and the Church is His Bride (Eph. 5:25–27).
- **Mission:** Make disciples through evangelism, baptism, and teaching (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts 1:8).
- **Worship & Fellowship:** Gather for teaching, prayer, fellowship, and ordinances (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:23–26).
- **Leadership:** Elders shepherd; deacons serve; all believers are priests before God (1 Pet. 2:9).
- **Authority:** Scripture is final; false teaching must be resisted (2 Tim. 3:16–17; Acts 20:29–30).
- **Spiritual Gifts:** The Spirit empowers believers for service and unity (1 Cor. 12:4–11; Eph. 4:11–12).
- **End Times:** The Church must remain faithful, pure, and mission-focused until Christ returns (1 Thess. 4:16–17; Jude 24–25).

Questions & Answers

1. **Q:** What is the difference between the universal and local church?
A: The universal Church is all believers across time (1 Cor. 12:13); the local church is a gathered body in a specific place (Acts 2:42).
2. **Q:** Who is the true Head of the Church?
A: Jesus Christ (Col. 1:18).

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3. **Q:** How is the Church described in Scripture?
A: As Christ's Body (Rom. 12:4–5) and His Bride (Eph. 5:25–27; Rev. 19:7–9).
4. **Q:** What is the mission of the Church?
A: To make disciples, baptize, teach, and bear witness to Christ (Matt. 28:19–20; Acts 1:8).
5. **Q:** What are the biblical offices of leadership in the Church?
A: Elders/pastors who shepherd (1 Tim. 3:1–7) and deacons who serve (1 Tim. 3:8–13).
6. **Q:** What is the “priesthood of all believers”?
A: Every believer has direct access to God and is called to serve in His kingdom (1 Pet. 2:9).
7. **Q:** Why is church discipline necessary?
A: To restore the sinner, protect the body, and maintain purity (Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 5:6–7).
8. **Q:** How does the Spirit equip the Church?
A: Through diverse gifts for edification, unity, and service (1 Cor. 12:4–11; Eph. 4:11–12).

“The Church is Christ’s Body and Bride—built by Him, empowered by the Spirit, anchored in His Word, and sent into the world until He returns.”