

## The Church

"It must be held by faith that outside the Apostolic Roman Church, no one can be saved; that this is the only ark of salvation; that he who shall not have entered therein will perish in the flood." Pope Pius IX, Dec 9, 1854 (see also Pope Innocent II Dec 18, 1208; Pope Leo XIII in *Sapientae Christianae* Jan 10, 1890; Pope Pius X *Lucunda Sane* March 12, 1904; Pope Innocent III & Lateran Council IV AD1215; Pope Boniface VIII *Unam Sanctum* Nov 18, 1302; Pope Eugene IV & Council of Florence Feb 4, 1442)

Having shown that the Roman Catholic Church is not the "church" envisioned in the New Testament, we must now determine just who that church is. Our first step is the definition of the Greek word "*ekklesia*", translated "church". It is used 115 times in the NT. In the literal Greek, this word means "citizens called out from their homes into an assembly". In other words, Christians are those "called out".

1. How does "*ekklesia*" apply to the church when compared with Rev 18:4 and Rev 17:4-6?

The church (Matt 16:18) is referred to by a number of different terms. Jesus referred to it as his flock (John 10:1-18), over which he is the good shepherd (v 14). He called it vineyard (Matt 21:33 ff) of which He is the master gardener. The apostles use other images, such as the "body of Christ" (1 Cor 12:27, Eph 1:22-23, Eph 4:15-16), the "household of God" (Eph 2:19, Gal 5:10), the "people of God" (1 Peter 2:9-10, Titus 2:14), a building (1 Peter 2:4-8), and the Remnant (Rom 9-11).

2. Why is the church described using metaphors?

Our next task is to determine the membership of the church, regardless of the metaphor used to describe it.

3. How do we know that the "body of Christ" refers to the church? (Eph 1:22-23) What does this text say about the proper leadership and authority in the church?

4. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of the body of Christ. How does one enter the body? (v 18) Is this a physical or a spiritual event?

5. Why does Paul discuss different parts of the body with regard to membership in the church? (Compare vv 1-11 and 28-31 with vv 12-27. See Eph 4:10-16)

6. To whom is Paul's message regarding the "body of Christ" given? (See 1 Cor 12:1, 6) Is there any limitation on who can become a member of the body of Christ? (See 2 Peter 3:9)

7. Peter uses a different metaphor to describe the church: a building. Describe the structure of this building. (1 Peter 2:4-8) Make particular reference to the relationship of the parts of the building.

8. Jesus made His response in Matt 16:18 to Peter's statement in Matt 16:16. How does Peter's emphasis in 1 Peter 2:6-8 show Peter's understanding of the term rock (*petra*) in Jesus' statement? (See also Is 28:16, Psalm 118:22, Is 8:4)

9. How are the believers to be considered in this metaphor? (See 1 Peter 2:4-5, Gen 1:26-27, Matt 7:24-27) Compare this to Paul's description of the roles of believers in 1 Cor 12.

10. Paul uses the same metaphor. How does his description (Eph 2:19-22, 1 Cor 3:10-12a) clarify Peter's? To whom is he speaking?

11. The Jews were the chosen people of God at one time. What did Jesus say was going to happen to them? (Matt 21:43-44)

12. Who became the chosen people? (1 Peter 2:9-10) Was this an unexpected change? (Is 43:28, \*Is 66:20-21)

13. What condition must we meet in order to be part of the chosen people? (Ex 19:5-6, Acts 26:16-18)

14. Another metaphor is used to describe the number of those who will become the people of God. What does this say about the portion of the population who will follow God? (2 Kings 19:30-31 cf Is 37:31-32, Ezra 9:8, Is 10:20-24, Is 28:5, Rev 12:17 etc)

15. While it is clear that it is not necessary (if fact not helpful) to be a member of the Roman Catholic Church in order to be saved, is there a need for the believer to be involved with any church? (Luke 12:8, Acts 16:31, Rom 10:9)

16. Is there any personal benefit to membership in churches?  
(Eph 3:8-10, 4:14-16)

(Phil 2:1-4, Col 3:12-17)

17. What duties do we owe to the church?  
(Heb 10:23-25)

(Mal 3:10, 1 Cor 16:1-2)

(Rom 12:4-16)

(1 Tim 4:12)

(Eph 6:18-20, Col 4:2)

18. How is the church to be governed? (Eph 4:11-13, Acts 20:28-30, 1 Tim 1:5-7, Titus 1:5-11, 1 Peter 5:1-3) What is the attitude of those in authority to be?

19. How are we as church members to act in relation to established church authority? (Heb 13:7, 17, 2 Thess 3:6, 1 John 2:18-19, Gal 1:6-7, 2 Pet 3:14-17, Acts 17:11)