

CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS

LESSON 12

BUILDING THE CHURCH

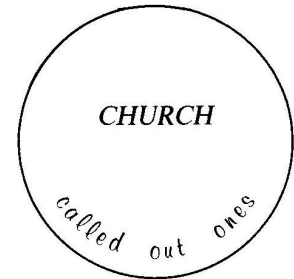
The English word "church" has two meanings. One meaning is a building where people meet to worship God. The other meaning is a group of people who worship God. In this lesson we will talk mostly about a group of people who worship God.

The word "Church" means "called out ones". Those who have had their sins forgiven through the blood of Christ are the "called out ones". Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. Christians have been called out from the old sinful life. They have been called out from the sinful way of the world. Now they want to live for God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church is seen in two ways: the invisible Church and the visible church. By invisible Church we mean - it cannot be seen as a group of believers. By visible church we mean - it can be seen as a group of believers.

Do you remember the two kinds of churches?

- The invisible Church
- The visible church



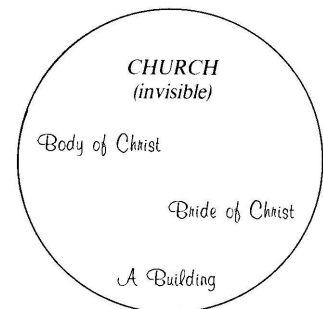
1. THE INVISIBLE CHURCH

The invisible Church has three pictures to describe it. They are Body of Christ; Bride of Christ; and Building.

A. The Body of Christ.

Read Ephesians 1:22,23. What is the Church called in this verse?

In Romans 12:4,5 we are told that there are many people who belong to Christ. Though each person is different, yet they are one body in Christ. Read 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12; and Colossians 2:18,19.



When we trust Christ as our Saviour, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives. The Holy Spirit makes us a part of the Body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13.

B. The Bride of Christ.

What does Paul say the Christians are like? 2 Corinthians 11:2

The Christians are as a clean bride. In Revelation 19:7,8 we read about the marriage of the Bride to the Lamb.

Who is the Lamb?

Who is the Bride?

This will be a wonderful day. It is coming soon. Are you ready?

C. A Building.

What are we like according to 1 Peter 2:5?

All Christians are the building where God's Spirit lives, Ephesians 2:20-22.

The invisible Church is shown to us as: the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, and as a Building. The invisible Church is found all over the world. It is not just a group of people meeting some place. It is all those who have been made a part of the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:12,13.

Each person who has trusted Christ as his Saviour is a member of the invisible Church. He may not be a member of a visible church. There may not be enough Christians nearby to make a visible church.

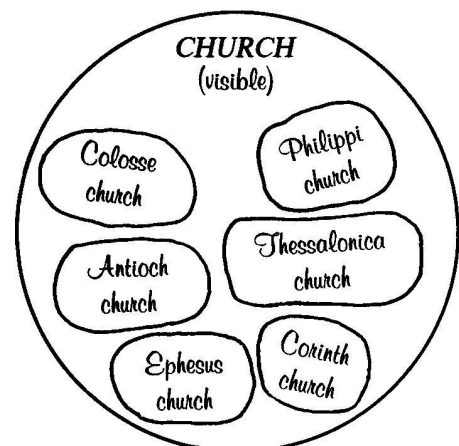
However, when there are other Christians around, what are we to do? Hebrews 10:25

What is the invisible Church like?

-
-
-

2. THE VISIBLE CHURCH

In what cities was the Church found?



Acts 8:1

Acts 13:1

Acts 20:17

Notice that we have groups of people meeting together in different cities. Each group is by itself. Each group is doing its own work. Each group is called a "church." We call this the visible church because we can see it. We can go to the place where these Christians meet. We can worship God together with them.

A. Reason for Christians to gather together.

- To help each other worship God, Romans 15:4-7.

How are we to worship God? Psalm 29:2

- To listen to the Word of God, 2 Timothy 3:16,17.
- To learn the will of God, Nehemiah 8:1-8.
- To help each other become strong in our spiritual life. We do this when we tell each other what God has done for us, Colossians 3:16.
- To learn how to work for the Lord, 1 Corinthians 12.
- To grow in faith by seeing God work in the lives of others, Acts 2:42,43.

It is important to spend time alone with God. But we must also spend time with other Christians in the house of God.

What should we be thinking of when we go into the church? Psalm 100:4

How did David feel when he went to church? Psalm 122:1

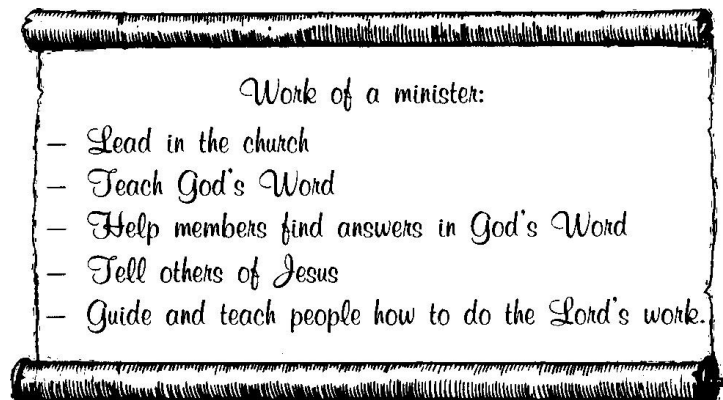
We should be glad to go to church even as David was glad. Our hearts should be filled with thanksgiving and praise.

B. Work of the minister.

God wants someone to take care of the people in the church.

Who is to take care of the people in the church? Jeremiah 3:15

A pastor is also called a minister.



Read the words which are written in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Also read Titus 1:5-9. These verses tell us how a minister is to live.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 (N.L.T.)

It is true that if a man wants to be a church leader, he wants to do a good work. A church leader must be a good man. His life must be so no one can say anything against him. He must have only one wife and must be respected for his good living. He must be willing to take people into his home. He must be willing to learn and able to teach the Word of God. He must not get drunk or want to fight. Instead, he must be gentle. He must not have a love for money. He should be a good leader in his own home. His children must obey and respect him. If a man cannot be a good leader in his own home, how can he lead the church? A church leader must not be a new Christian. A new Christian might become proud and fall into sin which is brought on by the devil. A church leader must be respected by people who are not Christians so nothing can be said against him. In that way, he will not be trapped by the devil.

In a few words tell how the minister should live.

A minister has a very important work to do.

- A minister is a leader in the church.
- A minister teaches God's Word.
- A minister helps the members of the church find God's answers to their problems.
- A minister also tells others about Jesus.
- A minister guides and teaches the people how to do the Lord's work.

Now, can you write down the things a minister should do?

A minister:

-
-
-
-
-

C. Responsibilities of the church member.

| | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Attend services | Be on time | Give to the church | Teach others |
| RESPONSIBILITIES of CHURCH MEMBERS | | | |
| Pray for the minister in the church | Work in the church | Tell Good News to all people | |

When people meet together, each person has something to do. If they do not do their part, the meeting will not be good. This is true in the church. We have different people meeting together. We meet together to worship God. We meet together to study God's Word. We meet together to help the church. We meet together to help others.

- **Attend services.**

We are to attend services and meetings. By going to church every week we can worship with other Christians. We can learn more from the Word of God. There will be times when we are too sick to go to church. But we should try to go as often as possible. Going to church should be more important to us than going to non church meetings or games. We should attend prayer meetings. If the Sunday school teachers meet, we should attend if we teach. We should work with other people. When we miss these meetings, we cannot help in the church work the way we should, Hebrews 10:25.

- **Be on time.**

We are to be on time for church services. When we are late for the service, we may cause the service to start late. This makes it hard for the children who come on time. When they have to wait a long time, children get restless. When we are late to service, we will miss part of the service. We will not be able to worship God the way we should. When we are late, we bother others who are worshipping God.

We are to be on time for other church meetings. When we are late to church meetings, we discourage those who want to get the Lord's work done. When we are late we will not know everything that is going on. It is hard for us to find out what happened at the meeting.

- **Give to the church.**

We are to give to the church. The church needs money to work as a group for the Lord, Malachi 3:10.

- **Pray for the minister.**

We are to pray for the minister. Paul asked the Thessalonians to pray for him, 1 Thessalonians 5:25. We are to pray for the minister so God will be able to use him. When we pray for the minister, God can bless us through him.

What are the responsibilities of church members?

-
-
-
-
- Work in the church.
- Take the Good News to all people.
- Teach others.

● **Work in the church.**

What is one good thing to remember when we work for God? Colossians 3:17

What is another good thing to remember? Romans 12:3-8

God's Word is taught in the church. The church is also a place where people can serve the Lord. They are to do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. God has given each one a gift or gifts to use.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and 29-31. Write the gifts the Holy Spirit gives to the Christians.

-
-
-
-

These verses tell about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Christians can have these gifts to do the work of the Lord. A Christian may have only one or two of these gifts.

What does 1 Peter 4:10 and 11 tell us to do?

Some people think that belonging to a church is all God wants them to do. Others think that going to church and giving money to the church is all God wants them to do. However, from the verses we have just studied, we can see there is a lot more to belonging to a church. It is not the minister's job to do all the work in the church. A minister who does all the work in the church robs his people of blessings God has for them.

The members can help in these ways:

- teach Sunday school;
- lead in singing;
- help in Young People's groups;
- visit the old people;
- visit the sick;
- go in groups to tell others about salvation.

In Acts 6:2-4, we are told how a church chose godly men to take care of some work in the church. Why did they choose these men?

-
-

- **Take the Good News to all people.**

The most important work of the church is to take the Good News to all people. Each member of the church is to have a part in this work. Here are some ways in which members can help.

- They can tell others about Christ, John 1:45,46.
- They can bring others to church, Luke 14:21.
- They can pray for those who are not living Christian lives (backsliders), Luke 22:31,32.
- They can pray for those who are not Christians, Matthew 5:44.
- They can send their children to the mission fields, Matthew 28:19,20; Matthew 9:37,38.
- They can give so others can go to the mission fields, Romans 10:15.
- They can pray for missionaries, Matthew 9:37,38.

Christ gave His last command in Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:19,20. What is this command?

- **Teach others.**

There are people in the church who know how to teach children and young people. When children learn the Word of God it can keep them from a life of sin. When a child trusts Christ as Saviour, he will be kept from living a life of sin. We should be willing also to teach older people. They also need to know more about Christ.

What are the responsibilities of church members?

-
-
-

-
-
-
-

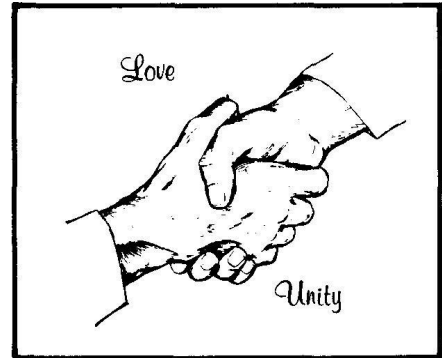
D. Love and unity in the church.

What did Christ do for the Church? Acts 20:28

What did Jesus pray for in John 17:21?

What is needed to keep the Church together? Colossians 3:14

Paul prayed for the Christians. What did he pray for? 1 Thessalonians 3:12



Jesus said,

"If you love each other, all men will know you are my followers," John 13:35 (N.L.T.).

Jesus bought us with His own blood. He wants us to be one or have unity.

When there is love in the church, how will the Christians think of their minister? 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13

How can Christians have good fellowship in the church?

-
-

E. Warning.

What are we warned about in James 3:8-10 and 4:11?

Many churches have been hurt by this sin.



What does 1 Corinthians 1:10 warn us about?

If people who are members in a church do not agree, they can divide. The devil wants this to happen in many churches.

When there is true love and unity in the church, people will come to Christ. Then God will be honored.

What two warnings have you learned about today?

-
-

MEMORY VERSE

Memorize: Psalm 122:1.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

1. What are the two kinds of churches?

-
-

2. What is the invisible Church like?

-
-
-

3. In a few words tell how the minister should live.

4. Write down the things a minister should do.

A minister:

-
-
-

-

-

5. What are the responsibilities of church members?

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

6. How can Christians have good fellowship in the church?

-

-

7. What two warnings have you learned about?

-

-

WORDS TO LEARN

1. backslider - a Christian who is going back into sin.
2. describe - to tell what something is like.
3. invisible - that which cannot be seen.
4. pastor - minister of a church.
5. unity - togetherness, oneness.
6. visible - that which can be seen.