

# Locating the Lord's Church

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# Locating the Lord's Church

We welcome you to this series of Bible studies concerning the Lord's church. It is the purpose of these lessons to assist the growing Christian in a better understanding of the Lord's church as revealed on the pages of the New Testament. Further, this study will help you to locate the Lord's church wherever you find yourself. After you have learned about Locating the Lord's Church, you will be in a better position to help others locate it.

Please take your Bible, look up the Scriptures listed, fill in the blanks where called for, and answer any questions. Remember Jesus said:

**“I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18).**

If you have any questions or comments as you study these lessons, write them down so you can remember to mention them at the right time and place. Write your name on your material as you will want to keep it for future study.

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Name

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Date and Place of Study

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## Learning About the Lord's Church

### Introduction

1. The greatness of the Lord's church has not been learned by most people. Many look upon the Lord's church as being an afterthought with God and fail to see its real importance.
2. The Lord's church was in the mind of God from eternity and is made known by the wisdom of God. The apostle Paul wrote concerning the church, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:10-11).

### Discussion

#### I. Attitude Toward Locating The Lord's Church

- A. The attitude and plea of the restoration movement was to "speak where the Bible speaks, and to be silent where the Bible is silent." This concept is based on the words of 1 Peter 4:11, "If any man speak, let him speak, as the \_\_\_\_\_ of God..."
  1. The early pioneer preachers were trying to restore the Lord's church by making their appeal to the word of God.
  2. We must do the same today.
- B. Not all have the proper attitude toward the Lord's church today.
  1. One preacher has been quoted as saying, "We are not trying to reproduce the first-century church." He then chided the brotherhood for what he called, "the old paths mentality." He also said, "We must get away from the self-governing notion that the true church existed, was lost, and we have it again."
  2. Another said, "Nowhere does the New Testament provide explicit Scriptural basis for a restoration principle - no text explicitly states that later generations should follow the primitive church or restore it."
  3. Some even believe and teach that there is no such thing as a church to be found on the pages of the New Testament.
- C. The New Testament reveals the marks of identity of the Lord's church. These marks of identity must be matched to locate the Lord's church, just as an escaped prisoner must match his description in an all points bulletin. These lessons are designed to help the "honest and good heart" locate the Lord's church without any difficulty" (Lk. 8:15).
- D. If someone came to you and said, "Take and show me the Lord's church," what would you say and where would you take them? \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. Meaning Of The Word "Church"

- A. The word "church" comes from the word "ekklesia," and means "the called out." The word "church" can be found 76 times in the New Testament.

1. The word “ekklesia” is not only translated *church*, but also *congregation* and *assembly*.
  2. The word refers to a particular people who are *called out*. Jesus used the word “church” to refer to a special called out people as “my \_\_\_\_\_” (Mt. 16:18).
  3. This calling is divine, since it is from God (1 Pet. 5:10). It is made possible by “the \_\_\_\_\_” (2 Th. 2:13-14).
- B. The word for *church* is used four times in a non-spiritual way.
1. Acts 19:32 “Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the \_\_\_\_\_ was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.”
  2. Acts 19:39 “But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful \_\_\_\_\_.”
  3. Acts 19:41 “And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the \_\_\_\_\_.”
  4. Acts 7:38 “This is he, that was in the \_\_\_\_\_ in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.”
- C. The word “church” is used in two senses in the New Testament.
1. It is used in reference to all of the Lord’s people. When Jesus said, “I will build my church” (Mt. 16:18), He was making reference to His people everywhere.
  2. It is used in reference to the Lord’s people in a definite locality like \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 1:2), or the church of the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Th. 1:1). A church may be referred to in a province such as the “\_\_\_\_\_” (Gal. 1:22).
  3. Please read the following passages and write in the blanks how you think the word “church” is used.
    - a. Matthew 16:18 \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Ephesians 5:23-25 \_\_\_\_\_
    - c. Ephesians 1:22 \_\_\_\_\_
    - d. 1 Corinthians 1:2 \_\_\_\_\_
    - e. Philippians 4:15 \_\_\_\_\_
    - f. Galatians 1:22 \_\_\_\_\_
    - g. 1 Thessalonians 2:14 \_\_\_\_\_

### III. **Entering The Lord’s Church**

- A. Since the church belongs to Christ, He has the right to decide the terms of admission into it. Just how does one enter the Lord’s church?
1. Hearing and believing is essential. The Bible says, “So then \_\_\_\_\_ cometh by \_\_\_\_\_, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Without \_\_\_\_\_, one cannot please God (Heb. 11:6). The gospel must be heard and believed (Mk. 16:15-16).
  2. Repentance is commanded. Paul told the Athenians that “God commandeth all men every where to \_\_\_\_\_” (Acts 17:30). Repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of action (Mt. 21:28-30).
  3. A confession of one’s faith is required. Jesus said, “Whosoever therefore shall confess

- \_\_\_\_\_ before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven” (Mt. 10:32). A good example of one making this confession is in Acts 8:36-38.
4. Baptism is for the remission of sins. Every case of conversion in the book of Acts required baptism. Read Mark 16:15-16 and Acts 2:38. When folks did what Jesus required, they were added to the \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:47).
- B. Becoming a member of the Lord’s church is described different ways in the New Testament.
1. Being born again. Jesus told Nicodemus, “Except a man be \_\_\_\_\_, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3).
  2. Believers added to the Lord. When discipline was practiced by the Lord on Ananias and Sapphira, “Fear came upon all the church...And believers were the more \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_, multitudes both of men and women” (Acts 5:1-11, 14).
  3. Obedient to the faith. “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_” (Acts 6:7). The word “faith” in this passage has reference to the gospel as used in Romans 10:16.
- C. One of the things which will help us in locating the Lord’s church is by the plan of salvation taught. A church that does not teach what is taught in the New Testament concerning entering the church is not the Lord’s church!

#### Conclusion

1. The Lord’s church can be easily located, when you learn its marks of identity.
2. These Bible-centered lessons are designed to help you in your search. We urge you to begin right now locating the Lord’s church.