

Class #4 - The Bride of Christ: A Look at the Church

Heritage Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. What is the church? Why does it exist? What is a congregation? A church is made of members...or is it? Is membership biblical, or required? Can't I just be a Christian?

1Pe 2:9-10 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

I. The Church: What is it?

A. **Terms:** *called, chosen, and faithful*

B. **A Body** (organism)

1. Texts

a. Colossians 1:17-18 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (18) And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

b. See also 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22-23

2. Image

C. **A Nation** (organization)

1. Description (1 Pet 2:9-10 key here!)

Question: Are all members of a church true Christians?

2. Distinction

a. Visible Church

b. Invisible Church

D. **God's Dwelling Place: Temple!** (Eph 2:19-22)

1. **The Triune God**

a. **Father**

b. **Son**

c. **Spirit**

2. **The Spiritual Temple** (2 Corinthians 6:16)

II. The Church: Why is it?

A. **For Worship** (John 4:23-24, 1 Peter 2:9)

B. **For Discipleship** (Matthew 28:18-20)

C. **For Witness** (Matthew 5:14, Acts 1:8, Revelation 1:20)

D. For Spiritual Companionship

1. **Christian Service** (Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 6:2)
2. **Hospitality** (Romans 12:24)
3. **Confrontation** (Matthew 18:15-18, Hebrews 3:12-13)
4. **Encouragement** (Hebrews 10:24-25)

III. The Church: Do I have to?

A. Jesus Commanded Church Membership

B. The Old Testament Teaches Church Membership

C. The New Testament Presupposes Church Membership

D. Salvation Involves Church Membership

E. Church Order Implies Church Membership

F. Many Bible Commands Imply Church Membership

G. Pastoral Care Requires Church Membership

H. Practical Church Life Involves Church Membership

I. Biblical Evangelism Demands Church Membership

J. God's Love Cries Out for Church Membership