

Ephesians 1:22,23, 2:20-22; Lord's Day 21

FAITH ABOUT THE CHURCH

- I. What it is.
 - A. The church of Jesus Christ is an object of faith.
 - B. As an object of faith, the church is composed of only true believers from the beginning to the end of the world.
 - C. It is the church "of God" (Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; II Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:13).
 1. It is chosen by God in election (compare I Cor. 1:2 with Eph. 1:1,4,5).
 2. It is built by God through Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18)
 3. Its earthly manifestation takes place by it being "called out" of the world and into conscious fellowship with God.
- II. Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is His body.
 - A. This figure implies that the church is a living organism, sharing one life.
 1. It is one whole with a definite number of members, each in their own place and each serving the purpose of the whole.
 2. As an organism, unlike the unity of a building, each member has the common life, and each grows from it.
 - B. Christ is the Head.
 1. He is the life of all the members (Gal. 2:20).
 2. The relationship of Christ and the members is extremely close, never separated and almost indistinguishable.
 - C. The body is so intimate that the church is the "fullness of Christ" (Eph. 1:23).
 1. Jesus is incomplete without His church.
 2. Jesus' being in us means that He fills us; and our being in Him means that we fill (complete) Him.
- III. Implications.
 - A. The church's existence, nature, and calling are determined by his Head (not by the judgments of the members).
 - B. Christ works all things in the history of the world "to the church," i.e., for the church (Eph. 1:22).
 - C. The church and every member must live in the conscious, total dependence on her Head.
 - D. And then we are to strive to do the will of our Head.