

Major Event: The Church

Lesson 1: What is the Church?

Central Text: Ephesians 1:22-23

Suggested Subjects For Teacher to Cover:

Three uses in the Bible of the word “church” ἐκκλησία [*ekklesia*]:

- 1 Assembly/Gathering of People
Acts 19:39 - Used for a gathering of people in a lawful or legal assembly.
Acts 7:38 - Stephen uses the word to refer to Israel in the wilderness after Moses had led the people out of Egypt.
- 2 Assembly of Christians in a Local Church
Acts 8:1 - Used for the assembly of Christians in Jerusalem - “And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem...”
1 Corinthians 1:2 - to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.
Also see Romans 16:1, 4, 5; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Colossians 4:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Revelation 1:4
- 3 The Body of Christ, the Universal Church
Matthew 16:18 - “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”
Ephesians 3:10 - so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 5:22-27 - Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Ephesians 1:22-23 - “And He (God the Father) put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head of all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

Colossians 1:18 - “He is the head of the body, the church, and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.”

What is the Body of Christ? - The body of Christ is a spiritual body formed through the baptism of the Holy Spirit during this present dispensation / administration that consists of all people who have trusted Christ as their personal Savior, without regard to race, gender, local church affiliation, status or position in life, or geographical location. This body began its formation on the day of Pentecost and will cease its formation at the Rapture or resurrection of the church.

Definition of the Local Church - “An assembly of believers in Jesus Christ under NT offices functioning in their spiritual gifts, united to engage in the public worship of God, the practice of NT ordinances, the edification of the saints, and the evangelism of the lost (unsaved).”

The Church Belongs to God - 1 Timothy 3:15 - but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.
Matthew 16:18 - “I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

Suggested Attributes and Characteristics of God:

Sovereignty - Christ is the Head of the body, the church (Ephesians 5:23)

Omnipotence - Nothing can overpower Christ’s church (Matthew 16:1)