

THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16)

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MARRIAGE – ITS PURPOSE

Marriage is as old as the family of man. It is, no doubt, the most important of all social arrangements.

The purpose of marriage is threefold in nature as follows.

1. Companionship.

Gen. 2:18 says: "**And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him.**" God took a rib from Adam and made a woman to be Adam's companion and helper. God said: "**Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: And they shall be one flesh**" (Gen. 2:24).

We can see that God intended for man and woman to have each other's companionship.

2. Procreation.

Speaking of Adam and Eve we read in Gen. 1:28: "**And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it...**" Also read and consider 1 Tim. 5:14; 2:11-15; Titus 2:3-5, etc.

3. To Avoid Fornication.

In 1 Cor. 7:2 Paul said: "**Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.**" Sexual desires should be fulfilled *only* in the marriage relationship. (CRS)

RICHARD K. (DICK) WARD

Dick Ward was born August 5, 1936 and he passed away July 18, 2010 after a lengthy illness. He married Mildred Mullins in February of 1957. She was a faithful companion to him until his death. Dick obeyed the first principle of the gospel of Christ in 1957. He sincerely endeavored to be a faithful Christian.

He began preaching the gospel in about 1960 and preached it faithfully until he became unable to continue in about 2005. He was very studious. He was a man of great faith and conviction. He was conservative in his views. He was courageous and bold in proclaiming the truth. His influence for good continues.

On July 21, 2010, the body of our beloved brother Dick Ward was laid to rest in the Elmwood cemetery in Birmingham, AL to await the resurrection and the judgment. (CRS)

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Editorial...

WHAT IS THE CHURCH? (No. 2)

This question should be carefully considered and studied in light of what is revealed in the Scriptures relative to it.

In our first article we showed what the church is from a negative viewpoint. We show that:

I. Negatively, THE CHURCH IS NOT:

A. An Old Testament Institution.

B. A Material (physical) Building or a Meeting House.

C. A Denomination.

D. A Combination of Denominations.

E. A Secret Order (such as Freemasonry) or a Human Institution of Any Kind.

Let us continue our study. THE CHURCH IS NOT:

F. An Earthly Kingdom.

1. While here on earth, Jesus refused to let some people (some Jews) make him an earthly king. John 6:14-15 says: **"Then those**

men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, (he had fed about 5,000 men with five barley loaves and two small fishes), said, this is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone."

2. Jesus did not come for the purpose of being an earthly king over an earthly kingdom.

In John 18:36-38 Jesus answered Pilate, saying: **"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all."**

3. Jesus could not serve as our High Priest (as He does now) if He were on earth. See Hebrews 7:11-28 and examine carefully.

Read Hebrews 8:1-4 giving special attention to verse 4 that says: **"For if he (Jesus', 'the Son', 'this man' – ed) were on earth, he should not be a priest..."**

II. Positively, THE CHURCH IS:

A. A New Testament Institution.

1. In Mt. 16:18 Jesus said: **"...And upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell (Hades – ed) shall not prevail against it."** NOTE: At this time the church was still in the future. It had not been built.

FURTHER NOTE: A short time before Christ was betrayed and crucified, He instituted the Supper to be observed later. He said of the bread, **"I will not anymore eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the the kingdom of God"** And He said of the cup, **"I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."** (See Luke 22:15-18).

We learn from 1 Cor. 11:20-34 & Acts 20:7 that the Lord's Supper was observed in the church. It would therefore follow that the church is the kingdom since Christ said that it would be eaten (fulfilled) in the kingdom. The church is also spoken of as **"the body"** (Col. 1:18.)

2. Acts 2 marks the beginning (or the establishment) of the Lord's church (or kingdom). This was the beginning of the New Testament era. We read a number of times about the church (or kingdom) after the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. The references to the church after Pentecost point to the church as being in existence in fact and in operation.

The church is a New Testament institution since it began in the beginning of the New Testament age or dispensation. It operates under the authority of the New Testament. See Hebrews 7:12 and Hebrews 9:16-17 and study them carefully.

B. A Spiritual House (Building).

1. In 1 Peter 2:5 Peter wrote to God's children, saying, **"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."**

NOTE: Christians make up the church which is **"a spiritual house"** (**"an holy priesthood"**) that is designed to offer up **"spiritual sacrifices"** to God by Jesus Christ.

2. In writing to Timothy, Paul said: **"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou**

oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:14-15).

3. In writing to the church at Corinth and to saints every where, Paul said: **"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."** It is pretty clear from this verse that the church is God's building! For further thoughts along the line of the church being a spiritual house, please carefully study Ephesians 2:19-22.

C. A Spiritual Kingdom! It is the Kingdom of Heaven! It is the Kingdom of God!

1. Jesus used the expressions **"my church"** and **"the kingdom of heaven"** interchangeably in Matthew 16:18-19. There he said: **"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven..."**

Heb. 12:28-29 says, **"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."** The kingdom was in existence when this passage was written.

The saved make up the church (see Acts 2:47). Those who have been delivered **"from the power of darkness, and hath been translated into the kingdom"** of God's dear Son have been redeemed by his blood and received the forgiveness of sins (see Col. 1:13-14).

The saved and the forgiven ones are the same group of people. They make up the church which is a spiritual kingdom!

2. The same process by which one enters the kingdom, he enters

(Continued on page 4)

the body of Christ which is the church.

To enter the kingdom of God a person must be born again. To be born again one must be born of water and of the Spirit. When one is born again he is saved from and forgiven of his past sins. (Read and carefully study John 3:1-7; 1 Cor. 4:15; James 1:18).

To enter the church, which is the body of Christ, one must be saved. To be saved one must be born again. One must be begotten by the gospel and be baptized by the Spirit (i.e., teaching of, the direction of, the instruction of the Holy Spirit). (Read and carefully study John 3:5; 1 Cor. 4:15; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Cor. 12:13, etc.).

D. The Body of Christ.

The body of Christ is a body of baptized believers. It is a body of which all the saved are members and over which Christ rules as the supreme Head. Consider carefully the following passages.

---Col. 1:18- "**And he is the head of the body, the church...**" Also see Col. 1:24.

---Eph. 1:22-23- **And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."**

---Eph. 4:4- "**There is one body...**" Also see Eph. 4:12.

---1 Cor. 12:18- "**But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.**" Verse 20 says: "**But now are they many members, yet but one body.**" Also see Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:23, etc.

NOTE: The church is indeed the spiritual body of Jesus Christ! He is its head and He is its Saviour!

(To be continued) CRS

WEBSITE: <eastalbertvillechurchofchrist.com>

NOTE: If you would like to receive a bound volume of 9 years of THE INSTRUCTOR, please request it. It is free.

NOTICE: My new e-mail address is: <sutton413@att.net>.

SENTENCE SERMONS

If you can't improve on silence, it may be better if you do not speak.

* * * * *

Is it not so – What little ears should not hear, big mouths should not speak?

* * * * *

If our ideal principles have become tarnished, we should restore them!

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It takes real effort to think properly, which is probably the reason why so few engage in it.

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When we have "a thorn in the flesh", we can know that God's grace is sufficient for us!

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