



God's Answers to Good Questions

Lesson 7 - Is the Church Important for Believers?

PREPARE

- Please read the following passages:
 - Acts 20:28
 - Ephesians 5:25-28
 - Matthew 16:18
 - 1 Timothy 3:15
 - 1 Peter 2:4
 - Matthew 16:19
- Watch the video lesson and complete the Study Guide while watching

STUDY GUIDE

I. Introduction

A. Question: Is the Church Important for Believers?

1. Increasingly, the answer to this question is, “_____ ... not really.”
2. _____ have tended to have a stronger appreciation for the church historically, but that appears to be waning in our own time as well ... _____ is a growing phenomenon

B. Let me give you a number of different reasons why the church is _____ for Christians

II. Because the Church _____ to God

A. Acts 20:28 - *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”*

1. When Christ died on the cross, a transaction was made where God _____ the church for Himself
2. Because He paid that _____ price, the church now belongs to Him

B. God is constantly _____ for the church ... _____ her, _____ her ... it's through the anointed servants, the elders and

ministers, that He would _____ the church, _____ the church, and _____ the church

III. Because Jesus Takes a Great _____ in the Church

A. Ephesians 5:25-28 – *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.”*

1. How did Christ show His _____ for the church ... He gave Himself up for her ... He laid down His _____ upon the cross for her
2. Christ also _____ her ... He sets her apart for himself ... He _____ her by the washing of water with the word ... so that she _____ to Him and He belongs to her

B. Matthew 16:18 – *“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.”*

1. Christ is _____ His church ... and He has been building it ... He continues to build it ... He will build it until it is _____ and _____ is over
2. If Christ is building His church, why would believers be _____ in this church? Why would they be _____ to the church? Why would they _____ from the church?

IV. Because the Church Is the _____ and _____ of the Truth

A. 1 Timothy 3:15 – *“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.”*

- B. The church of the _____ God is the pillar and support of the truth
1. This does not mean that the church _____ the truth, or that the church somehow _____ the truth, but rather the church _____ the truth that God Himself has revealed
 2. The church _____ God's truth and _____ God's truth, so that the truth is known by and through the church
 3. Because there are _____ and _____, we don't deny the truth of the real gospel and true teachers of truth; we recognize that these counterfeits can only have _____ because they're close to the real thing, the church
 4. _____ says that there is no overarching truth ... there is no big story to explain everything
 - a. Men and women know in their heart of hearts, there is an _____ out there, there is truth ... human beings in their heart of hearts still want to know that there is something _____ and _____ on which to base not only their lives here on Earth, but their _____ existence
 - b. The church should not begin doubting truth ... we should be _____ truth, _____ truth, _____ truth, no matter how challenging or difficult that might be

V. Because the Church Is a _____ Temple, a _____ House

A. 1 Peter 2:4-5 - *"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 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."*

1. Christ is the chief _____ and a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and _____ in the sight of God
2. God is building the walls of a holy temple with _____ who are living stones; it is becoming a _____ house, a _____

priesthood, where spiritual sacrifices are being offered up _____
to God through Jesus Christ

- B. A lot of people are tired of the _____, _____ megachurch movement that has defined evangelicalism for the last three or four decades ... there's a _____ in the human heart for something _____, something _____, something _____, something _____, and _____ and _____... that's exactly what the church should be

VI. Because the Church Holds the _____ and Dispenses the Means of _____

A. Matthew 16:19 - *"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*

1. Jesus granted to the church, these keys for _____ and loosing, for _____ and shutting, for _____ and putting out
2. The church, especially through her ordained _____, holds and exercises those keys
 - a. The keys have reference to _____ because whatever you _____ on earth shall have been bound in heaven ... whatever you _____ on earth shall have been loosed in heaven
 - b. As the church on earth exercises the keys, heaven _____ because heaven has even _____ that
 - c. Heaven works through the _____, to bind and to lose, to open and to shut, to bring in and to put out

B. God has given to His church means of _____ - the preaching of the Word, _____, the sacraments, _____, and fellowship

1. Christians grow through the means of _____

2. As the church exercises the means of grace ... i.e. preaching, the sacraments, discipline ... the church is _____ and _____ Christians

C. The church has the very means God has appointed for _____ in grace and progress towards _____ in Christ

D. Thinking that you can go off and do all those things yourself is a fool's _____

1. You'll be _____, you'll be _____

2. You'll be especially _____ to the devil, who loves to find lone sheep, who are away from the safety and security of the shepherds and the flock