

# ***DRILLING BIBLE BASICS (VIII)***

## **THE CHURCH**

### Introduction

- 1) **Ephesians 3:1-12** – God’s eternal purpose revealed in Christ through the gospel
- 2) The *church* is a vital part of God’s eternal purpose accomplished in Jesus Christ
  - a) The “manifold wisdom of God” is made known by the church
- 3) Many misunderstand the church today – we need to get back to Bible basics about the church

### **I) The Church in Prophecy**

- A) Kingdom of God to be set up in the days of the Roman Empire (Dan. 2:44)
- B) Lord’s house established in the latter days; word goes forth from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-4)
- C) Tabernacle of David to be raised up and repaired; Gentiles will be in it (Amos. 9:11-12)

### **II) Time of Establishment**

- A) Jesus announced that the time had come (Mk. 1:15; Lk. 3:1-2)
- B) Jesus linked establishment of the church with opening of the kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19)
- C) Word to go forth from Jerusalem to all nations (Lk. 24:47-49)
- D) Gospel preached in Jerusalem on day of Pentecost (Acts 2)
- E) Church in existence from that time forward (Acts 2:47; 5:11)
  - 1) Any “church” that has come into existence at a later date and under different circumstances is not the church that belongs to Christ

### **III) Related Figures**

- A) House of God (1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:19)
- B) Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 12:13-14)
- C) Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:23-24)
- D) Kingdom (Col. 1:13-14)

### **IV) Its Nature**

- A) ***Divine ownership*** (Acts 20:28)
  - 1) No earthly headquarters; the head/king is in heaven
- B) ***Unique*** – only one way – one church built by Christ (Eph. 4:4; Jn. 10:16)
  - 1) Confusion of a multitude of denominational churches is unknown in God’s word
- C) ***Spiritual building*** made up of persons who belong to Christ (1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 8:3)

### **V) Membership**

- A) Penitent, Baptized Believers (Acts 2:37-38, 41; 1 Cor. 12:13)
- B) Registered in heaven (Heb. 12:23)
- C) Identifiable (1 Cor. 5:12-13; 6:1; 2 Jn. 9-11)

### **VI) Terminology**

- A) ***Individuals*** (Acts 2:41)
  - 1) Christians (Acts 11:26)
  - 2) Disciples (Acts 11:29)
  - 3) Saints (Rom. 1:7)
  - 4) Sons of God (Gal. 3:26)
  - 5) Brethren (Rom. 12:1)

- B) **Local Congregations** (2 Cor. 11:28)
  - 1) Churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16)
  - 2) Churches of God (1 Cor. 1:2; 11:16)
- C) **Universal** (1 Cor. 12:13, 28)
  - 1) Church of God (1 Cor. 15:9)
  - 2) Church of the firstborn [ones] (Heb. 12:23)

## VII) Its Organization

- A) **Head – Christ** (Col. 1:18)
  - 1) His word is authority (Matt. 28:20; Col. 3:17)
- B) **Local Church**
  - 1) Elders and Deacons (Phil. 1:1; qualifications – 1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1)
  - 2) Each local congregation independent and self-governing (Phil. 4:15-16)

## VIII) Its Work

- A) **Edification** (Eph. 4:16 – teaching, discipline, growth)
- B) **Evangelism** (1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Cor. 11:8 – spread the word to a lost world)
- C) **Benevolence** (1 Tim. 5:16; Rom. 15:26 – care of and fellowship with needy saints)
- D) No authority to provide social services to world or build and maintain human institutions

## Conclusion

Near the end of the first century and afterward, men began to move away from the pattern of the New Testament church – changes in organization, membership, terminology, doctrine, etc. [*apostasy* – falling away 2 Thess. 2:3; depart – 1 Tim. 4:1]. Over time the religious world broke into different man-made religious bodies separated by creeds, names, and practices. This is the denominationalism we observe today,

### **Denominationalism says:**

“One church is as good as another”  
 “One way is as good as another”  
 “One faith is as good as another”  
 “We are all going to the same place”

### **The Bible says:**

“There is one body – one church (Eph. 4:4)  
 “There is one way” (Jn. 14:6)  
 “There is one faith” (Eph. 4:5)  
 “Not everyone religious will be saved” (Mat. 7:21)

### **Denominationalism and Christ’s Church differ as to:**

Origin, Foundation, Membership, Head, Name, Organization, Doctrine, Practice, Destiny

### **Christ’s Question to Denominationalism:**

“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not the things which I say?” (Lk. 6:46)

### **Must I be a member of the church of Christ to be saved?**

If the only way to salvation is by Christ... (Jn. 14:6)

And Christ’s church is the body of the saved... (Eph. 5:23)

...Then yes, **I must be a member of the church of Christ to be saved**. No hope can be extended to those who have rejected God’s will in Christ. His word will judge us in the last day (Jn. 12:48). Submit to His will and become a member of His body, the church, today!