Foundations

Session 7: What is the Church?

Although we may never completely understand God, He is knowable and wants to be known. God wants humanity to have a right relationship with Him. Because of sin, we cannot approach God directly. We need a Mediator to provide access to God. Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God provides the way for humanity to have a right relationship with Him. Jesus promised not to leave believers as orphans but to send a Helper like Himself. The Holy Spirit, God the Spirit, helps us to live the Christian life.

The Bible is a collection of books that are uniquely inspired by God. Organized into 2 testaments, the Bible has 66 books written by more than 40 authors, using 3 different languages. No original biblical documents have survived but copies of the original writings have survived. The Old Testament presents Israel as God's chosen people with the promise of the coming Messiah. The New Testament presents Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, and the creation of the church.

According to 2 Timothy 3:16, all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The Bible is absolutely trustworthy and a powerful influence for the believer. The Bible is food for the soul, the light of life, and provides moral guidance. The Bible is full of promises to encourage believers.

There are several elements of evidence supporting the reliability of the Bible. The eyewitness and documentation evidence of the Gospels support the reliability of the Bible. Additionally, no archaeological evidence has contradicted the Bible. However, many archaeological discoveries have confirmed biblical information. Biblical prophecy provides additional support for the reliability of the Bible.

Through the Bible, we get to know God better.

From the Bible, groups of Christians began to meet together and the Church was born. What is the Church? Is it a group of believers? Is it a building? What is the purpose of the Church? In this session, we discuss the Church.

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Share a biblical view of the Church
- Explain the importance of the Church
- List essential activities or characteristics of a healthy church

Please answer the following questions.

1. How do the following verses describe the Church?

1 Corinthians 12:12

Ephesians 5:25, 32

2. What truths about the Church do we learn from the following verses?

Ephesians 2:19-21

John 13:34-35

Galatians 3:28

3. What do the following verses say about church government?

1 Timothy 3:1

Acts 14:23

4. What type of church government does our church have?

5. What activities or characteristics of the church are listed in Acts 2:42? How would you define each activity or characteristic?

6. What is the mission of our church? (Check the church website) How do you fit into the mission of our church?

7. Based on the class session, notes, and your personal study, what has encouraged or challenged you from this session?

Additional Resources:

The Healthy Church by Greg Laurie