

## The Church Jesus Built

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### ➤ Intro:

- **Henderson Blvd. summer lecture series:** The Church Jesus Built (series title, intro lesson title)
  - thanks for asking me to participate
- **introductory lesson to the series:**
  - **broadly discuss the church** – not talk about specific NT churches, covered later in the series
  - **note:** a lot of material to cover, little time for illus, be careful to stay engaged in lesson – **overview**

### ➤ Review: two fundamental truths considered during the summer series

- **church Jesus built is the most important organization**
    - **illus.: Ralph Walker, preparatory info given to lectures**
      - Can you imagine an earthly organization so important that its CEO died for it?
      - And all of its original “board” followed Him into martyrdom?
  - **church Jesus built is the most unique organization**
    - **illus.: Ralph Walker, preparatory info given to lectures**
      - The church of Jesus Christ has survived time, persecution, internal conflicts and wars. It has crossed national borders and survived the rise and fall of nations.
      - Maneuvering through cultures, civilizations and centuries, it remains the pillar and support of Biblical truth.
- **consider both of these truths in this lesson, as this summer series begins**

### ➤ What is the church that the Lord built?

- church (ekklesia): *called out body*, composed those who obey God and come out of world, into kingdom of God, added by the Lord when baptized
- **illus.: Pentecost, Jerusalem, beginning of the church**
  - **salvation:** those who had received the word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls
  - **worship:** they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer
  - **added by the Lord:** people, added to church by the Lord
- **the church is the people (saved, Christ's disciples)**
  - **not a building** – a building is something the church uses – it's not the church
  - **illus.: Kiwanis club, met at restaurant** – club was the people, not the restaurant

- **Four distinct features of the church Jesus built** – value, importance, purpose, function
  - **most highly valued organization** (church, body of people) – most highly valued organization – **most costly**
  - **illus.: young man buying car**, not want \$500, \$1,000, \$2,000 car – wants \$10,000 car – price pay, value
  - **illus.: property for sell**, no one buy, raised price \$25k, sold almost immediately – price pay, value
  - **Acts 20:28** value of **church, purchased with Jesus' blood** – price, cost, highly valued
    - **bears Jesus' name:** church of Christ, Lord, firstborn – **price paid**
    - **bear's God's name:** church of God, household, field, building – **price paid**
- - **1 Pet. 1:18-19** value of each **Christian, redeemed with Jesus' blood** – price, cost, highly valued
  - **illus.;** price of church / Christian
    - **God, sent Jesus:** loved world, sent only begotten Son, be propitiation for our sins, knowing how much pain and agony He'd experience
    - **Jesus, left heaven:** existed in the form of God, didn't regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, made in the likeness of men (**Phil. 2:6-7**)
    - **Jesus, garden:** offered up prayers and supplications, loud crying and tears, prayed not have to be crucified but Father's will be done, learned obedience from the things He suffered (**Heb. 5:7-8**)
    - **Jesus, cross:** despised the shame, interrogation, slapping, spitting, crown of thorns, scourging, crucifixion
- - **1 Pet. 1:14-16** our responsibility: **be holy in all our conduct**
  - **2 Cor. 6:16-17** **come out of the world and be separate**, as God's children – **be different**
  - **1 Cor. 6:20** **glorify God in our bodies**, because we're not our own, bought with price – **blood**
- - **Who are the most highly valued people?** Christians – because of the cost, washed in the blood of the Lamb
  - **illus.:** **angels rejoice** when one sinner repents and obeys God
  - **so, the most important thing anyone can do, is obey and become a Christian** and faithfully serve God
    - **illus.:** **conversion**, come forward and make confession, baptized
      - **with God life has purpose**, fulfillment, true joy and happiness
      - **without God, life is empty** and unfulfilling
    - **illus.:** **long time friend, Christian, fell away**, last time talked to him said he made a million \$, confessed that his life was empty, miserable

- - **most important organization** (church, body of people) – **most important organization**
  - **illus.: What's the most important organization in your life?**
    - company work for, school attend, club, church
  - **Eph. 3:11-12 church only organization God ordained from eternity, eternal purpose, carried out in Christ**, in whom we have **boldness and confidence to access God** through faith in Christ
    - **Eph. 3:16 strengthened with power** through His Spirit in the **inner man**
    - **Eph. 3:20 God, able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think**, according to the **power that works within us**
- - **Col. 1:13-14, 18-20a church only organization wherein there is salvation, saved, transferred into kingdom of Christ, body of Christ, blood of cross**
  - **illus.: friend's house, dog swimming in pool**, started to drown, asked me to grab, rescued (snatched) and transferred to place of safety – **pool darkness, rescued, transferred**
  - **Eph. 5:23 Jesus is Savior of the body**
    - **people in the church are saved, having a proper relationship with Christ**, others do not
    - **one body, church (Eph. 4:4)** – don't be ashamed of it
- - **without the church we would not be saved, we'd still be in sin** – *ekklesia (called out body, composed those who obey God and come out of world, into kingdom of God, church, added by the Lord when baptized)*
  - **we're saved if** we're a faithful member of Christ's church
  - **if not**, we're lost, and miserably doomed without hope

- - **most important mission, purpose** (church, body of people) – **most important mission**
  - **illus.: many worthwhile organizations**
    - **save** children from disease, **feed** the hungry, **house** the homeless, **protect** unborn children, **protect and aid** abused mothers and children. . . .
    - **the church (ekklesia) has a more important mission than all of these**
  
- - **1 Tim. 3:15 truth: pillar, support**
  - **Ja. 1:22, 25-27 doers of the word**, living by and judged by the **law of liberty** – e.g., **controlling tongue, benevolent**
  - **2 Tim. 3:5; 2 Pet. 1:3 empowered by godliness**, through **knowledge** of God’s word, partaking of His **divine nature**
  - **Jude 1:3 people earnestly contending for faith**, once delivered to the saints
  
- - **Jn. 4:23-24 worship: church, true worshipers**, God is seeking to worship Him in spirit and truth
  - **Heb. 10:24-25 assembling, worship (Lord’s Supper)**, **stimulating** to love and good deeds
  - **Eph. 4:11-16 equipping saints for service** (edifying)
  
- - **Rev. 12:11 evangelism: evangelistic testimony empowers** us to overcome Satan (**Matt. 28:18-20**)
  - **illus.: empowerment of human organizations:** school board, major, governor, President US
  - no human organization empowers it’s members like the church
  
- - **the church Jesus built is the most “important” organization**
  - **our membership and work with the church is more important** than with any other organization
  
- **Are you a member, and doing your work in the church?**

- - **unique way of functioning** (church, body of people) – most unique – sets it apart for other churches
  - price paid / value: blood of Jesus, son of God (above)
  
- has a heavenly head, not earthly head – unique
  - **Jesus is the head** – heavenly headquarters – church organized by Jesus, we must obey Him
    - **Col. 1:18** Jesus head of the body, which is the church
    - **illus.: Kiwanis:** men set standards of admittance, work to be done
      - **man made religions:** men set standards of admittance, work to be done
      - **Jesus' church:** He set the standard of admittance, work to be done
  - **not denomination, but a congregation accountable directly to Jesus**, Chief Shepherd
    - **Eph. 5:22-24; 1 Pet. 5:1-4** Christ head of church, Chief Shepherd, elders in local congregation
  - **each member has direct access to God, Christ intercedes**, not have to go through man or dead saint
    - **Eph. 3:12** we have confident access to God, boldness, through Christ
  
- - **freedom** – unique
  - **members of the church have been set free from sin**
    - **Rom. 6:3-7** baptized, buried, raised, newness of life, united, body of sin done away with, no longer slaves of sin
  - **church of liberty, not bondage**
    - **Ja. 2:12** speak and act, those judged by law of liberty – law of Christ
    - **Gal. 2:4** not in bondage to human teachers, false teachers
  
- - **servants are greatest in the church Jesus built** – unique
  - **Eph. 5:21** subject to one another in fear
  - **Matt. 23:11** Jesus: greatest among us serves his brethren
  - **Rom. 15:1-3** serving one another, as Jesus serves us
    - **illus.: elders, deacons, teachers**
  
- - **everyone is equally important, has important work to do** – unique
  - **Eph. 4:16** every person, doing their individual work, is necessary for the growth of the body
  - **Rom. 12:1-8** everyone, and their work, equally important – each member dependant on the others
  
- **the church Jesus built church is very different from the religions of men that bring people into bondage, and esteem those who make a good show in the flesh**
  - **illus.: Jones family, Thomasville, Ga.**, husband and wife, barely able to read, had been studying with various churches, visited Lord's church, could tell the church was different from all others, investigated, learned the truth, converted to Christ, became members of His church, faithful today, have brought many to Christ through his word
    - **poor:** if lived above poverty line it was just barely
    - **barely able to read:** used to go over and help with church Bible lessons so they would be prepared for class
    - **hard workers:** church, personal work
    - **set up many Bible studies:** several converted to Christ
    - **they are as important and as highly esteemed as the most prominent person in the brotherhood**, some would say even more important

➤ **Summary / Inv.**

- **the church Jesus built:**

- **church: called out body, Christians, saved (people)**
- **most highly valued organization**
- **most important organization**
- **has the important mission of any earthly organization**
- **most unique organization**

- **most important decision in life: be a member, and do the work you can do – How?**

- **inv.: How do you become a member of the church? - become a Christian**

- Henderson lecture - no invitation - 45 minute, followed by Q&A