



# Pentecost

## The Birthday of the Church

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### Sermon Discussion Guide

May 31, 2020

New Life  
Christian Church  
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#### STUDY NOTES

**Church.** The word that Jesus chose to describe His people was a Greek word, *ecclesia*. Our word “ecclesiastical” comes out of it, which means “relating to the church.” The word means the “called out ones.” The church, therefore, is composed of those who have been called out of sin into righteousness – out of the world into the church. Peter expresses this thought in 1 Peter 2:9, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

**Church belongs to Christ.** The church belongs to Christ because He purchased it with His own precious blood. Paul instructs the Ephesian elders “to fee the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 1:18 – 19).

In Matt’s message, he taught that the church is not the church because of its location. The church is not the church because it is a building. There were no designated church buildings for at least 300 years after the time of Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection. In Acts 17:24, Paul declares that God does not dwell in temples made with hands. In Acts 7:48, Stephen says that God does not live in houses made with hands. The foundation and the message are what makes the church the church. Its message is the good news of Jesus Christ and that salvation is possible through him.

1. Share a little bit about the church that impacted your life. What affect, if any, did it have on the ministries you serve in today?

#### Read 1 Peter 2:4 - 10.

2. In what ways are we like living stones? (v. 5)
3. What does it mean to you to be a part of a spiritual house? (v. 5)
4. In what ways is Christ a stone that causes men to stumble? (v. 8)
5. Did the early church see Christ as the cornerstone? Explain why you believe they did/did not.

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## STUDY NOTES

**A Divine Organism.** The church is not a human structure like a political or social institution. It is a divine organism. It has a divine found and a divine head. Jesus told the apostles, "I will build my church." It is His church. He is the builder. He is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). Paul calls it "the church of the living God" (1 Tim. 3:15). The church is the bride of Christ which has been saved and sanctified by Him for union with Himself (Eph 5:25ff.). The church is also referred to as the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22,23; 4:12; Col. 1:18). As the body, it is the fulness of Christ, who Himself fills all in all (Eph. 1:23).

**On this rock (Matt 16:18).**

Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God, Jesus replied, "upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18) Throughout Scripture, Jesus is referred to as a rock. For examples, in Isaiah 28:16, God says, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation . . . "(ASV). Peter quotes this in 1 Peter 2:6ff. and applies it to Christ. Jesus is referred to as the stone, which was cast aside by human builders, but God made Him the head of the corner (Acts 4:11,12). Paul settles the question of the foundation of the church when he says, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). Christ is the founder of the church. He is the foundation.

6. Do churches today "reflect" Christ as the cornerstone? Explain why you believe they do/do not.
7. How does being chosen by God for a special task make you feel?
8. Share a little bit about how you have impacted your church.
9. Does our church live up to God's expectation of it as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation?

Our small group?

Your daily life?

What can you do to *continue* to live up to that expectation or what can you do to *begin* to live up that expectation?