

Hello. /We will begin today's lecture with **Part 6, The Doctrine of the Church.**

/Chapter 1, Nature of the Church.

/I. Different uses of the word "Church" in Scripture.

/A. The word "assembly" of the Old Testament.

/Israel can be seen as the Church of the Old Testament. Israel is also the assembly of the LORD. /"Assembly" is "qahal" in Hebrew. /Qahal means, "congregation," "assembly," or "group." /Numbers 19:20; 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:22, 9:10.

/B. The word "ekklesia" of the New Testament.

/The word "ekklesia" is a Greek word, and it means, "called out by God." /It refers to a congregation or gathering called out by God. /Acts 19:32, 39. /The church is a group of believers gathered in a specific location for worship.

/This church is also called a local church. /Acts 5:11; 1 Corinthians 11:18. /The church also refers to a home church, a gathering in the home of an individual. /Romans 16:5, 23; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15.

/The spiritual church refers to a group of believers who have been spiritually united or will be united with Christ in heaven and on earth. /Ephesians 1:22; 3:10; Colossians 1:18.

/C. Figurative designations of the Church.

/First, the Church is called the body of Christ. /This symbolizes the believers' obedience to Christ with one heart and one goal. /1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 1:23.

/Second, the Church is called the temple of the Holy Spirit. /This symbolizes the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church, which leads to the believers' fulfillment of God's will by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. /1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Peter 2:5.

/Third, the Church is called the heavenly Jerusalem. /This symbolizes worshiping God in spirit and communication with God. /Galatians 4:26; Revelation 21:2, 9.

/Fourth, the Church is called the house of God. /The Church is a house where believers live together with God. /1 Timothy 3:15.

/Fifth, the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. /The Church is built on the truth, and it builds up the truth. /1 Timothy 3:15.

/Sixth, the Church is the bride of Christ. /The Church must give thanks for the love of Christ and must always obey Christ. /2 Corinthians 11:2.

/Seventh, the Church is the kingdom of heaven. /Joy and thanksgiving overflow in the Church, and the Church is a world of happiness in God. /Matthew 13:24-52.

/II. The essence of the Church.

/A. The Roman Catholic conception.

/Roman Catholicism claims that the essence of the Church lies in a visible organization. / They claim that the bishop, archbishop, and the Pope are the Church.

/They say that the bishop, archbishop and the Pope directly share glorious attributes like that of apostolates, as well as unity, holiness, purity, and universality of the Church.

/They say that there is no salvation apart from this external organization.

/They say that the community of believers is the Church where they receive teachings.

/They say that community of believers indirectly have glorious attributes like that of the apostolates, as well as unity, holiness, purity, and universality of the Church. /The claims of Catholicism do not agree with Scripture.

/B. The Reformed Church conception.

/The Reformed Church indicates all churches of the New Testament period that opposes the views of Roman Catholicism. /The Reformed Church claims that the essence of the Church lies in the spiritual union of all believers who have been saved. /Jesus said that He would build his Church, which indicates a spiritual church that has been united with Christ.

/The spiritual church includes all believers of all generations. There is no salvation apart from this spiritual church. /Again, the Church is the spiritual union of saved believers.

/III. The many-sided character of the Church.

/A. A militant Church and a triumphant Church.

/The “militant Church” refers to the earthly Church that continually engages in warfare against all evil powers and powers of darkness.

/It is also called a “triumphant Church.” /It is a triumphant Church because there is no war, but only songs of complete victory that glorify God in the Church in heaven.

/B. A visible and an invisible Church.

/The “visible Church” refers to the visible formalities and organization of the earthly Church. /The confession of faith and acts of believers, as well as God’s word and Christian ceremonies are all visible. /Politics and external organizations are all visible as well.

/The “invisible Church” implies that the spiritual union between Christ and saved believers is invisible. /1 Corinthians 12:13; 1 Peter 1:3.

/C. The Church as an organism and the Church as an institution.

/The “Church as an institution,” or the earthly Church, is made up of a pastor, elders, deacons and believers, and it also consists of the session, major assemblies, general council, the presbytery, and the general assembly, which form a political organization.

/The “Church as an organism” is a union of life with Christ that stems from eternal life

given through Christ. /Therefore, the Church receives guidance from Christ, and all believers in the Church must work together to carry out the will of God. /The confession of faith and the collaborative resistance against evil powers successfully describes the personality of the Church as an organism.

/D. The local Church and the universal Church.

/The “local Church” is a visible Church that is composed of a group of believers who have confessed their faith in a specific location. /For example, it refers to churches like the Church at Jerusalem, the Church of Antioch, and the Church of Ephesus.

/There is also the “universal Church.” /The spiritual church united in the body of Christ is the universal Church. /The universal Church includes all reborn believers of all generations. /Jesus built the universal Church, loved the Church, and gave Himself up for the Church. /Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:25.

/Jesus purified the universal Church and became the Head of the Church. /Jesus spoke of the universal Church in singular form.

/IV. Definition of the Church.

/What is the “**narrow meaning**” of the Church? The word “ekklesia,” which means “church,” means “to be called out” and is recorded 114 times in the New Testament Bible. /Those who have been chosen by God from this sinful world to belong to God are the Church.

/They have been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit, and they have become united with the body of Jesus Christ to form one body. /The Church is a spiritual organism of the union of life of born again believers and Christ.

/Thus, the Church must receive Christ’s guidance and live a holy life in order that they might glorify God.

/What is the “**broad meaning**” of the Church? /To put it broadly, those who have confessed their faith and their children are the Church.

/V. Establishment of the Church.

/Man does not build the Church. /The New Testament Church was founded at the Pentecost through the descent of the Holy Spirit. /1 Corinthians 12:13.

/A. The Church is the body of Christ. /Christ said that He would build His church. /Matthew 16:18.

/Both Jews and Gentiles, the enslaved and the free would become the body of Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

/B. The New Testament Church began through the Holy Spirit at the Pentecost. /The 120 believers who waited for the Holy Spirit received the Spirit at the Pentecost, and the

Church at Jerusalem was established. /Acts 1:12-15.

/Peter's evangelism added three thousand to the number of believers, and this was the work of Christ. /Acts 2:41, 47.

/C. Characteristics of the Church at Jerusalem. /The Church at Jerusalem received teachings of the truth. /Acts 2:42. /This means that they had a doctrinal standard. /The believers of the Church at Jerusalem also had fellowship with one another in love. /The believers had pleasant relationships with one another.

/They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread, which means that they performed Christian ceremonies. /They praised and worshiped God. /Acts 2:46. /Thus, the Church must become the doctrinal standard, believers must have good relationships with one another, and it is important that they praise and worship God.

/VI. Symbolic meanings of the Church.

/A. The Church is the house of God.

/The Church is a house where God resides, and the owner of the Church is God. /Christ became the cornerstone of God's house. /Matthew 16:18; 1 Peter 2:6-7. /God resides in the building.

/Believers carry out duties of the priest in this building. /1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6. /The most important calling of the Church is to worship and glorify God through obedience to God's word.

/B. The Church is the body of Christ.

/The Head of the Church is Christ. /Believers are His body. /1 Corinthians 12:12-27. /Therefore, the Church must always unite and walk with Christ, and receive Christ's guidance to live in holiness.

/The Church is the union of Israel and Gentiles to form the body of Christ. /Ephesians 2:14; 4:4. /Thus, the Church must transcend poverty and wealth and all peoples, and all believers must become one and love one another.

/Just as each part of the body perform different tasks, God gave each believer a gift. /Hence, all believers must use their given gifts, fulfill duties given to them, and work together to completely fulfill God's will. /Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

/C. The Church is the bride of Christ.

/The greatest duty a bride must fulfill is to maintain her purity for the groom. /Thus, believers must always stay away from sin and live pure and holy lives to please Christ. /Revelation 19:7.

/Christ died on the cross for the Church, forgave us of all our sins, and chose us to be His bride. Therefore, we must understand the Lord's great love for us and love and obey the Lord until we die. /Ephesians 5:22-23.

/D. The Church symbolizes the vine.

/Christ is the vine, and the Church is its branches. /John 15:1-5. /Therefore, the Church must bear fruit of faith in Christ that please God. /The fruit of faith is the fruit of light in Ephesians 5:9, and it is the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.

/VII. What is the foundation of the Church?

/A. The Roman Catholic conception.

/The Roman Catholic Church claims that the apostle Peter is the foundation of the Church. /Matthew 16:18 says, “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

/They claim that “this rock” is the apostle Peter. /However, this claim of Catholicism is wrong. /If “this rock” indicated the apostle Peter, the masculine noun “petros” would have been used.

/However, the original Scripture records the feminine noun, “petra.” /Therefore, it is wrong to assert that this rock is Peter. /This rock symbolizes Jesus Christ.

/B. The Reformed Church conception.

/The Reformed Church says that the foundation of the Church is Jesus Christ. /“Petra” of the New Testament Bible simply indicates a rock, or compares it to Jesus Christ. /Matthew 16:18; Romans 9:33; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Peter 2:8.

/It especially says that Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. /1 Peter 2:7; Ephesians 2:20. /Furthermore, the apostle Paul said that the Church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ. /1 Corinthians 3:11.

/VIII. Methods of establishment of the Church.

/First, Christ builds the Church. /In Matthew 16:18, Christ personally said that He would build His church. /The one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ. /Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8. /People evangelize, but Christ is the One who gives salvation. /Acts 2:47.

/Second, the Church is a group of those who have been born as children of God. /The Church is called the assembly of the firstborn. /Hebrews 12:23. /Therefore, the Church is not built by people. /It is born of God. /The Church is made up of children of God who have been born again through faith in the gospel.

/Third, the Church is a union of those who have been united in the body of Christ. /Saved believers unite with Christ and become the body of Christ. /1 Corinthians 12:13. /Hence, the Church must always receive the guidance of Christ who is always the Head. /Christ leads us to the truth and allows us to glorify God.

/IX. Attributes of the Church.

/A. There is unity in the Church.

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/The Bible speaks of unity in the spiritual church. /The Church is the body of Christ, and all believers are parts of Jesus Christ. /Therefore, there is a spiritual unity in Christ. /1 Corinthians 12:13-30.

/An external unity of the Church is displayed through the confession of faith and acts of believers, worship and a visible organization. /However, the most important thing is that all believers receive guidance of Christ and obey God's will with one heart and will.

/B. There is holiness in the Church.

/The Bible asserts the holiness of the spiritual church. /All believers have received forgiveness of sins in Christ, and received holy lives in Christ to become children of God. /This is holiness. /The holiness of the Church is externally shown through the believers' obedience of the truth and service to God.

/C. The catholicity of the Church.

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/The Bible says that only the invisible Church is the real catholic Church. /The invisible spiritual church does not discriminate against any peoples, male or female, or the rich or poor in any time period or place. This includes all believers. This is the universality of the Church.

/Therefore, people all throughout the world, whether rich or poor, who believe in Jesus and receive salvation become people of God.

/X. The characteristic marks of the real Church.

/The marks of the church is the standard in distinguishing true churches from false churches in the visible Church.

/A. The true preaching of God's word.

/The Church must preach the pure and true word of God, and God's word must have a dominant influence on the faith and acts of believers in the Church. /Therefore, a church that correctly believes and obeys God's word is a true church.

/It is unfortunate that many gather in the name of the Church but do not properly obey God's word. /John 8:3, 32; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 1 John 4:1-3.

/B. The right administration of the sacraments.

/Sacraments are the visible preaching of God's word and is also a confession of faith. /Sacraments must be administered by pastors in accordance with the divine institution, and only to believers and their children.

/Sacraments clearly became one mark of the Church in the early church. /Matthew 28:19;

Acts 2:41; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30.

/C. The faithful exercise of discipline.

/The discipline of the Church maintains the purity of doctrine, and it is necessary for guarding the holiness of the sacraments. /When there is a lack of discipline in the Church, there will be a loss of the light of the truth. /God's word emphasizes discipline in the Church. /Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.

/Here we will conclude the fifteenth lecture on systematic theology. /Thank you.