

THE CHURCH

Pastor Doug Clay | December 5, 2021

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CHURCH

- It is possible to be committed to church, but not Christ; but you cannot be committed to Christ and not the church.
- When you are born-again you are **automatically** part of the global, worldwide Church. But when you join a local church, that is **voluntary**.

A. People can leave a church service with a smile on their face, but a huge void in their life.

B. The church, in this unique time of history, is struggling with an identity crisis.

1. Corporate Labels

- The church was never intended to be a business with a cross on its roof, tweaked by a bunch of professionals.

2. Critical Comments

3. Various Expectations

c. What Jesus said about the church

Matthew 16:18

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.

1. The church is Christ's idea.
2. Christ has authority and ownership of the church.
3. The church will survive.

I. BIBLICAL TEACHING ALWAYS TRUMPS POLITICAL RHETORIC

A. *The Bible is God's idea, it's His Word, His Truth, and . . .*

- It is a perfect revelation to us.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

- It is a complete/sufficient revelation to us.

Jude 3

Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.

- It is a living revelation to us.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

B. *The Bible when used correctly is transformational, but when used incorrectly can be horribly dangerous.*

- God did not give us the Bible to make us smarter sinners, He gave us the Word to change our lives; to guide us.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON TO BE EXPERIENCED.

A. *The Holy Spirit Protects You from Yourself and the Wrong Thinking that the Enemy Tries to Trick You With*

Romans 8:1-2

*So now there is **no condemnation** for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the **life-giving Spirit** has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.*

Romans 8:5

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.

Ephesians 6:18

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

Joshua 1:9, NIV

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

B. The Holy Spirit Initiates the Miraculous in Our Lives at Just the Right Time.

- The Holy Spirit is not an idle spectator of the Trinity; He brings the presence of Jesus to you.

III. MISSIONS PARTICIPATING CHURCH

- There are 7,000 unreached people groups in the **world**. (An unreached people group is a community of people of less than 2% Christian.) Over 42% of the world's population are part of these 7,000 unreached people groups.
- *"The church that doesn't evangelize will fossilize."* - Oswald J. Smith,

IV. WHERE EVERY GENERATION IS EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

- "Most Americans tend to worship their work, to work at their play, and to play at their worship." - Gordon Dahl
- One thing that is unique about church is that it encourages us to take a break from looking at life from a **horizontal** perspective, and look **vertically**.

Psalm 150:1

Praise the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

Psalm 149:1

Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people.

A. So we don't forget who He is and all He has done

Psalm 150:2

Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

B. So that we don't forget the power of His Word

Psalm 106:24-28

*Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe his promise. **They grumbled in their tents and did not obey the LORD.** So he swore to them with uplifted hand that he would make them fall in the wilderness, make their descendants fall among the nations and scatter them throughout the lands. **They yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor** and ate sacrifices offered to lifeless gods.*

C. So we can learn to sing a little louder in the middle of our mystery.