

The Dignity of the Church

What is the Lord's Church?

-- A Church of Christ is an assembly of baptized believers joined together in the doctrine and fellowship of the gospel.

What is the Kingdom of Christ?

-- The Kingdom of Christ is the organized government over which Jesus Christ is sole law-giver and ruler.

-- The Lord's laws are administered through His Churches as His executives.

Who are the Subjects of the Lord's Kingdom?

-- The scriptural subjects are those who, having been born of God, have been introduced into the Church and Kingdom by baptism.

-- Though born again, a person is NOT a subject without scriptural baptism.

Page 85 - 87: The importance of the Church in the Kingdom is seen by:

First: The Church is the light of the world.

-- The Lord said, Ye are the light of the world ..., Mat 5:14.

-- Of the Lord it is said, But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings; ..., Mal 4:2.

Second: The Church is the salt of the earth.

-- Ye are the salt of the earth: ..., Mat 5:13.

-- The saving knowledge of Christ is to be sent into the world by the Church

Third: The house of God which is the Church of the living God – 1 Tim 3:15

-- The Church is the Lord's house where He is pleased to dwell.

Fourth: The pillar and ground of the truth – 1 Tim 3:15

-- As the deep pillars hold up the lighthouse to protect ships in a storm

Fifth: The organic body of Christ on earth over which Christ is the head

-- [Eph 1:22-23] And hath put all [things] under His feet, and gave Him [to be] the head over all [things] to the Church, 23 Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Sixth: The real spiritual temple of the Lord

-- [Eph 2:19-22] Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner [stone]; 21 In Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Seventh: The affianced "Bride, the Lamb's Wife"

-- [Eph 5:26-27] That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Page 88-91: The Mission of the Church

The Church has the most important mission of any institution on the earth.

First: The Church is to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God

-- [Psa 107:22] And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing.

-- [Heb 13:15] By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of [our] lips giving thanks to His name.

Second: The Church is to give the gospel to all nations

-- [Mat 24:14] And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Third: The Church, possessing the keys, administers the laws of the Kingdom

-- The Church possesses the sole authority to administer the laws of Kingdom

-- Officers of the Church are to serve it and NOT the other way around

-- [2Co 4:5-7] For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to [give] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

-- In *The Papal Controversy*, "*The Baptist* constantly appeals to its meaning of the scripture as the infallible measure and standard of doctrine. Will it not then expedite the entire controversy to determine whether the Bible alone is the sole measure and standard of doctrine and whether *The Baptist* interpretations of its text are its true and authoritative sense? *The Baptist* declares it is looking for the truth. Why not take the shortest road to the desired goal? IF THE BIBLE BE THE SOLE RULE OF FAITH, THEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS NOT THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD.

QUESTIONS for REVIEW

1. What is the Lord's Church?
2. What is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ?
3. Who are the subjects of the Kingdom?
4. Are all saved people subjects of the Kingdom?
5. How is the dignity of the Church revealed by it being the "Salt of the earth"?
6. How is the dignity of the Church revealed by it being the "House of God"?
7. How does the Church offer "spiritual sacrifices"?
8. What does the Church do with the "keys of the Kingdom"?
9. What role do the officers of the Church perform?
10. What results in the Catholic church NOT being the true Church?