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WHICH IS THE RIGHT CHURCH ?

Study 14

The Church

When you think of a "church" you may envisage a building with a steeple, and a cross, and pews, and an organ inside. Or else perhaps you may think of the 'church' as a particular denomination such as the 'Presbyterian Church,' or the 'Baptist Church,' or the 'Catholic Church.' If this is the case, which is the **right** church? After all, they can't be all right, can they?

THERE IS ONLY ONE CHURCH!

Complete these words of Jesus from John 10: 16.

"There shall be _____ flock and _____ shepherd"

Read carefully Ephesians 4: 3-6. How many times is the word 'one' emphasised?

_____ times

However this doesn't mean that only one church is the real church and all the others are wrong. The meaning of the word 'church' has nothing to do with denominations or religious organisations at all! 'Church' is translated from a Greek word (ecclesia) which simply means an assembly of 'called-out ones.'

So the 'church' in its broadest sense refers to **all** true Christians **everywhere** who have been 'called out' of the world to become citizens of God's kingdom. Verse 23 of Hebrews 12: 22-23 tells us that we have come to the church of those people ... *"whose names are _____"*

SO WHAT IS THE (REAL) CHURCH THEN?

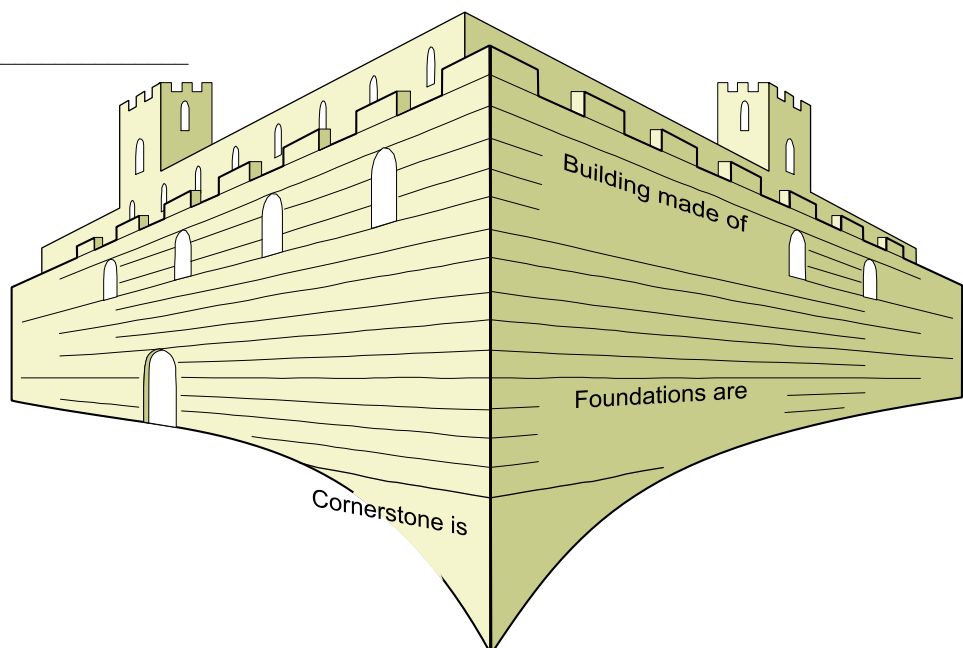
A spiritual understanding of the church is explained in the Bible in picture form.

- **The (real) church is a BUILDING made of living stones.**

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 3: 16)

This 'temple' refers to the unseen assembly of all God's people. Together, we are the church! Look up 1 Peter 2:5 and answer; What is God constructing his new 'temple' out of?

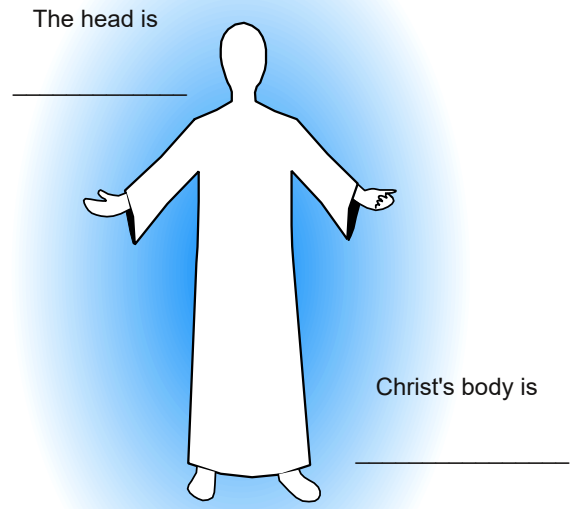
Look at the description of the church in Ephesians 2:19-22 then finish the illustration.



• **The (real) church is CHRIST'S BODY having different parts.**

The wonderful things which Jesus did in his natural body he wants to continue to do throughout the whole earth through his church. (See Mark 16: 15-18) In this regard the church has become Christ's 'body' except that, whereas Jesus could only be in one place at a time, his Spirit through his body, the church, is everywhere!

Look at the description of the church in Colossians 1: 18,24 then finish the illustration.



Of course, a body has many parts. So has the church. Study 1 Corinthians 12: 12-22 and answer these questions.

1/ Can the body (the church) have its parts divided from each other?

2/ Because the "foot" is not a 'hand,' does that mean it shouldn't belong to the body?

3/ Would the body (the church) operate very well if it was just an 'eye'?

4/ Can any part of the body (the church) say to another part, "I don't need you"?

Yes / No

Now write Romans 12: 4-5 here:

From these spiritual pictures we see that the (real) church is not denominational or political, but is an **invisible unity** of all (real) Christians. They may worship in different places, but as far as God is concerned they have been born into **one** body, and are being built into **one** living temple which is **HIS CHURCH!**

Answers here:
www.5loaves2fishes.net/pdfs/answers.pdf