

I love the Church! She is the apple of heaven's eye. Jesus loved her so much he gave his very life for her. There is no perfect church, but the Church will be made perfect and ready for her groom when Christ returns. I can't imagine anything more valuable to give your life to than the local church and her mission in the world ... come to think of it, neither can the Bible. Biblical Christianity is all about the march of the Church in making the Gospel known to the ends of the earth. Join it!

· Leroy Community Chapel Statement of Faith – Article VII

“We believe that the Church is commissioned by Christ to ‘preach the gospel to every creature’ and to ‘make disciples of all nations.’ Having received the gospel, every member is an ambassador of the gospel to his or her world. The mission of the local church is to disciple its members to be able to pass on the truth to others as they share the gospel in all they do.”

• Historic Church Documents

- Augsburg Confession (1530)

“Also they teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered. And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike.” [Article VII]

- Belgic Confession (1618)

“We believe and confess one single catholic or universal church-- a holy congregation and gathering of true Christian believers, awaiting their entire salvation in Jesus Christ being washed by his blood, and sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit. This church has existed from the beginning of the world and will last until the end, as appears from the fact that Christ is eternal King who cannot be without subjects. And this holy church is preserved by God against the rage of the whole world, even though for a time it may appear very small in the eyes of men-- as though it were snuffed out. And so this holy church is not confined, bound, or limited to a certain place or certain persons. But it is spread and dispersed throughout the entire world, though still joined and united in heart and will, in one and the same Spirit, by the power of faith.” [Article 27]

“We believe that we ought to discern diligently and very carefully, by the Word of God, what is the true church-- for all sects in the world today claim for themselves the name of ‘the church.’ We are not speaking here of the company of hypocrites who are mixed among the good in the church and who nonetheless are not part of it, even though they are physically there. But we are speaking of distinguishing the body and fellowship of the true church from all sects that call themselves ‘the church.’ The true church can be recognized if it has the following marks: The church engages in the pure preaching of the gospel; it makes use of the pure administration of the sacraments as Christ instituted them; it practices church discipline for correcting faults. In short, it governs itself according to the pure Word of God, rejecting all things contrary to it and holding Jesus Christ as the only Head. By these marks one can be assured of recognizing the true church-- and no one ought to be separated from it. As for those who can belong to the church, we can recognize them by the distinguishing marks of Christians: namely by faith, and by their fleeing from sin and pursuing righteousness, once they have received the one and only Savior, Jesus Christ. They love the true God and their neighbors, without turning to the right or left, and they crucify the flesh and its works. Though great weakness remains in them, they fight against it by the Spirit all the days of their lives, appealing constantly to the blood, suffering, death, and obedience of the Lord Jesus, in whom they have forgiveness of their sins, through faith in him. As for the false church, it assigns more authority to itself and its ordinances than to the Word of God; it does not want to subject itself to the yoke of Christ; it does not administer the sacraments as Christ commanded in his Word; it rather adds to them or subtracts from them as it pleases; it bases itself on men, more than on Jesus Christ; it persecutes those who live holy lives according to the Word of God and who rebuke it for its faults, greed, and idolatry. These two churches are easy to recognize and thus to distinguish from each other.” [Article 29]

- Baptist Confession (1689)

“The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan; nevertheless Christ always has had, and ever shall have a kingdom in this world, to the end thereof, of such as believe in him, and make profession of his name.” [Paragraph 3]

“The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, in whom, by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order or government of the church, is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” [Paragraph 4]

* All of Chapter 26 in this Creedal Statement deals with the Church and there is good, clear data concerning God’s plan for the Church, its leaders, and its mission.

· Key Terms & Definitions

Ekklesia ® This is the Greek term translated “church” in the New Testament. The word literally means “assembly” and is used throughout the Bible to describe the people of God. When did the Church begin? Certainly on one hand it is right to speak of Acts 2 and the coming of the Spirit at Peter’s Pentecost sermon as the beginning of the Church. Jesus had come, died, arisen, ascended to heaven, and the Spirit had come. The Gospel message was now fully revealed and the indwelt people of God post-cross was now a reality ... this is who we are today – the Church. And yet the term *ekklesia* has its roots in the Old Testament and even Stephen refers to the people of Israel in the wilderness as the *ekklesia* (Acts 7:38). So, on the other hand God has always had ‘His people’ and while the nation of Israel is distinct from the New Testament Church, we must recognize that the people of God (assembly, congregation, or *ekklesia*) is not unique to the New Testament. Listen to R.C. Sproul, *The Greek work for church, ecclesia, is made up of a prefix and a root. The prefix is ek – out of. The root is the verb coleo, to call. The church in the New Testament is made up of those who are called out from the world, from darkness, from damnation, from paganism, to become members of the body of Christ.*

Visible & Invisible Church ® The visible Church is not the same as the invisible Church. Only God knows who are His, who have genuinely embraced the Gospel as their greatest delight, and worship Him alone. And since only God knows who the true worshippers are, in this sense it is ‘invisible’ to mere men. We call that group of true believers from all over the world the invisible Church ... and not one of them is an unbeliever. Now, there are gatherings of churches all over the planet, both of true believers, and those who merely profess faith in Christ but are not truly regenerate. This is the visible church ... and it is made up of both believers and unbelievers. Shocker ... not everyone who attends a church gathering is a true believer. Just because someone is a part of the visible church, they very well may not be a member of the invisible Church. Church attendance or membership doesn’t save, only Jesus’ work on the cross does!

Local & Universal Church ® In the New Testament the word Church is applied to both local assemblies and the corporate Church throughout the entire world (universal). Every local church is a part of the universal Church. And conversely, if you are a member of the Invisible Universal Church, you should be actively functioning in a visible local church. I think it’s incredibly cool to think that Leroy Chapel (a local church) is

connected in heart and spirit to local churches on every continent as together we make up the Universal Church.

Sacraments ® Often referred to as ‘ordinances’ these are the taking of communion, or the Lord’s Table (the bread and the cup), and baptism. These are the two activities that the Scriptures commend to the Church to practice until the Lord returns, and have become the marks of an assembly being the Church and not just a “Bible Study.” Of course there are other essential marks of a true Church, but the practicing of the sacraments establish an organized commitment to identify as a local church. Interestingly, we are never instructed to practice these privately or individually, but they are to be a part of the public, corporate worship of the local church.

Elders ® In 1 Timothy 3, Paul lays out the leadership positions of the local church. First, he identifies elders. The apostle Paul lays out the qualifications for eldership, and the elders are to then function as the overseers of the local church. As Paul planted churches throughout Asia Minor, he appointed qualified elders to lead those local assemblies. Church leadership is distinct and unique from mere business or corporate leadership. These are to be men set apart by God, and qualified to shepherd His people.

Deacons ® Secondly, Paul describes deacons within the leadership structure of the church. Likewise, deacon’s qualifications are listed in 1 Timothy 3 and are to be heeded as one is appointed to serve as a deacon. The primary distinction between elders and deacons appears to be that of the role of teaching. Some have pointed to Acts 6:1-7 as the appointing of deacons, and while the word is not specifically used, it seems that these men do fit into the role and function of deacons as described later in 1 Timothy 3. That being the case, deacons appear to fill the role of practical helps of service and administration in conjunction with the elder’s role of shepherding and teaching.

Pastors ® Pastors should not be seen in distinction from elders, but functioning as elders within a local congregation. The term used for pastor is mostly connected to “teacher” and the function of shepherd. All elders are pastors and all pastors should be qualified to be elders. This being said, in the modern church, the distinction is often that we set apart an elder to devote his time to the position of pastor, freed up from another occupation and asked to take a role of greater leadership within the local body. Pastors, elders, and deacons are given to local churches as those who have proven faithfulness within the Church to serve the Church.

Priesthood of all Believers ® This term has been used to describe the Biblical teaching that all those who have trusted Christ have the same access to God. That is to say, they don’t need a priest (or pastor) to mediate for them between God and man. The term became popular during the Reformation era, as the true Church came out from under Rome where only popes and priests were able to commune with God. The Reformers argued that every believer has full and free access to relationship with the Father, has gifts to use in the service of the Church, and has been brought near to the throne of grace by the blood of Jesus Christ. The Church is made up of ministers, not a few ministers and a lot of observers.

Church Discipline ® The process of church discipline is most clearly described in Matthew 18:15-20. The purpose of church discipline is to restore a sinning brother, preserve the unity and purity of the true Church, and advance the mission of the Gospel in the lives of all its members. Far from being unloving or cruel, this process is to be handled with grace and truth, and is one of the most loving things a church body can do for the brother or sister who has gotten trapped in a particular sin (see also Galatians 6:1). If sin keeps us from intimacy with God and effectiveness in mission, then every one of us should desire the loving and truthful input of the body of Christ as we live life to the glory of God.

· Foundational Biblical Data

Matthew 16:18 ® **“I will build my church”**

Jesus took a hike with his disciples from the Galilee up north to Caesarea Philippi where, against the backdrop of a pagan temple, asked them who they thought he was. Great question ... was he just a good teacher, a helpful rabbi, or something more? Peter then speaks with heavenly wisdom declaring that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. Correct answer! The promise then comes from Jesus that he will build his Church upon Peter's declaration. Let me make a couple key observations as it relates to our study of the church. First, the church is built upon the central doctrine that Jesus is the Christ (the promised Messiah, seed of the woman, coming Savior), the Son of God (God very God, deity, divine). Any church that deviates from the centrality of the person of Jesus heads toward destruction and irrelevance. Preaching Jesus is not just *a* way of church ministry, it is *the* way ... the truth and the life (John 14:6). Secondly, Jesus promises to build *His* Church. It's His and He will build it. It's not man's, not a pastor's, not a board's ... but Christ's. And He will build it, what a promise. He makes no promise to build anything else ... Not a Christian college, not a Christian camp, not a mission agency, not a club, not a prayer meeting, but the Church, His Church! A. W. Tozer expresses this quite zealously – *The highest expression of the will of God in this age is the church which He purchased with His own blood. To be scripturally valid any religious activity must be part of the church. Let it be clearly stated that there can be no service acceptable to God in this age that does not center in and spring out of the church. Bible schools, tract societies, Christian business men's committees, seminaries and the many independent groups working at one or another phase of religion need to check themselves reverently and courageously, for they have no true spiritual significance outside of or apart from the church. May God build His Church at Leroy Community Chapel as we proclaim the excellencies of Jesus Christ!*

Ephesians 1:22-23 ® **“And he ... gave him as head over all things to the church”**

Jesus is the lead pastor of the church. A group of men called to lead the church (elders) are only as faithful to the call and commission of the church as they submit to and seek the face of the Lord Jesus Christ. This text compels church leaders to turn to the Scriptures in determining what a church is to be and do, not the culture. The church

doesn't take its cues from the world, but rather is to point the world to Jesus. So many "so-called" churches seem to have forgotten this and have turned the church into a three-ring circus in an effort to attract unbelieving people. In the process they have denied the power of the Gospel which is what actually attracts people and transforms lives. Got a good quote for you here ... *Whatever means you use to get people into the church is precisely what you must use to keep them. If you get them with a "religious circus," then you must keep the circus going – keep up the entertainment. If you get them with biblical preaching and teaching, then that will keep them and you will not need the entertainment (Ernest Reisinger).* Lead on oh Savior, head of the Church!

Ephesians 2:19-22 ® **“members of the household of God”**

When God redeemed us from the old life of slavery to sin, He placed us into a family, a household – that's the Church. This text is rich in describing the Church. It is a group of people who are no longer aliens and strangers (v19) but citizens and saints (v19). The church stands on the shoulders of the apostles and prophets to whom God delivered the message of truth about God's love for mankind through His Son (v20). The Church is joined together, members of one another, because the same work of Jesus has been accomplished in each member's heart (v21). We belong to one another, our mission is the same, and our goal is to be holy unto the Lord (v22). Big deal? You Bet! The church isn't a building, it isn't programs or events. It is people, a household of people, a family. It is a family that works together for a common purpose with a common head. And it is all built on Christ Jesus, the cornerstone (v20). The cornerstone was the first stone laid in a building. It was the stone by which every other one was to be aligned. It provided the direction and standard for the entire building. Sorry, but we're hit with it again, the Church is all about Jesus, without Him as the main character in the story, we lose – the Church flails and fails.

Ephesians 4:11-16 ® **“each part working properly makes the body grow”**

Are you seeing a theme yet? Ephesians is a book rich in teaching regarding the Church. This passage in Ephesians is so chock full of more solid insight into church life, let me just list them out:

- v11 → God has always provided the leaders that the Church needed in order to understand God's plan for them.
- v12 → The pastors role in the church is to equip its members to serve.
- v12 → Every member is to be engaged in the work of ministry, it's not just the job of a few professionals.
- v12-13 → The goal of everyone using their gifts is to see the body become mature and unified.
- v14 → The proper equipping coupled with the healthy functioning of the whole body keep the members from being deceived by false doctrine and swept away by ungodly schemes for the Church.

- v15 → Members engage in meaningful relationship with each other by speaking truth, God's truth not their own opinions, and by doing so with the love and grace that God has shown each one of them.
- v16 → Guess what? Here it is again ... Jesus, the head of the Church who holds all things together, causes the body to grow so that it is built up in love.

The Church is as effective as every member is willing to use his/her gifts together for their mutual edification and the advancement of the Gospel. We function at our best when we function in humility together looking unto Christ our head!

Ephesians 5:25 ® “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”

Yep, this is that marriage passage of Scripture. What does it have to do with the church you ask? The love of Christ for the bride (that's the Church) is the foundation and motivation for a husband's love for his wife. So how much does Jesus love the Church? So much he gave up his life for her! Who did Jesus give up his life for? He died so that men and women would be redeemed from the wrath of God and adopted into the family of God. Jesus died to create the Church. The Church is made up of those who are the redeemed of God. The love of Christ was unreserved, radical, and effective in accomplishing the reason for which it was given. What is the most precious thing on earth to Jesus? His Bride! The Church ... YOU! Pretty crazy, pretty cool. Do you love the Church like that?

1 Timothy 3:15 ® “the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth”

A decent portion of the apostle Paul's writing was to instruct the churches he had planted on how to think, live, and pursue mission. Timothy was a young pastor whom Paul had disciplined and then set in place as the pastor at Ephesus. In 1 Timothy, Paul is writing to help the church and its young pastor know how to do church. In 3:14 Paul says he'd like to talk through these things in person, but if he doesn't get a chance he wants to make sure they get taught this stuff. It's interesting here in verse 15 how Paul speaks of the church. He describes it as the “church of the living God” and the “pillar and buttress of the truth”. Those are two profound descriptions of the church from the pen of Paul.

Church of the Living God → The church, far from being some dead, stale museum, is a living, breathing organism under the life-giving power of the living God. If God is alive, and He is the head of the Church, the Church ought also to brim with life. What does that mean? That means it's always on the move, like a 2-year old. That means change is inevitable, like the 2-year old that becomes an adolescent. That means growth, transition, movement, struggle, change, and words like that should always be a part of the life of a church.

A Pillar and Buttress of the Truth → The Church, as central to her existence, is to teach, defend, and stand up for truth. The Church must never back away from any of the doctrines of the Bible out of fear. Courage and faithfulness are marks of a church's commitment to Word-revealed truth. If the Church doesn't preserve and defend the truth,

who will? If pastors and elders don't clearly teach Bible, who will? If congregants don't have a hunger for learning the doctrines of God and yearning for more and more ... the church lets its very foundation crack, pillars fall, and the truth is diminished to nothing more than antiquated religious suggestions.

John 17:20-21 ® “that they may all be one”

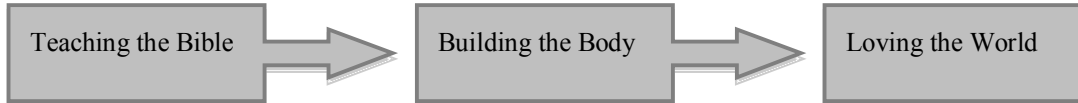
Question: Which church did Jesus lay down his life for? The independent churches ... the Baptist churches ... the Presbyterians, or some group of people in the early church that no longer are living? Answer: The Universal, Invisible Church. That's right, not a denomination, not a home Bible study, not a group of missionaries to the Gaga tribe in East Asia. He died for One Church ... The Church. All those who have trusted in the finished work of Jesus for salvation throughout all of human history. What does that mean then that “they may all be one”? It means that it matters that we love, serve, and partner with The Church in the world. That's right, you may have to be friends with Baptists and Anglicans. Yep, you are connected to Ethiopian and Iranian believers. We are the Church together. Differences are healthy and serve the greater accomplishing of the great commission, so long as there is humble and purposeful unity centered on the Gospel. In our differences God will use us to reach different people, and in our unity He will win many to the same message – that Jesus died for sinners. Jesus' prayer to the Father that all members of the Church be one is not a teaching to be taken lightly, or one to be overlooked if we don't like the other Christians down the street. We have a part to play in this prayer of our Savior being accomplished. We must work through our differences differently than the world does. We must love the Gospel more than we love our independence. We must love the Gospel more than our styles and preferences. We must love the Gospel more than unity. It is then that the Gospel unites us and gives us a selfless, laser-like focus on the mission for which the Church exists.

· Frequently Asked Questions

1- What are the marks of a true Church?

I'm gonna start and end my answer with two quotes that provide nice bookends for what a true church is, and for which churches tend to fall on one side or the other, but it must be both. The first from my friend Dr. John MacArthur, *The basic task of the church is to teach sound doctrine. It is not to give one pastor's opinion, to recite tear-jerking illustrations that play on emotions, to raise funds, to present programs and entertainment, or to give weekly devotionals. In Titus 2:1 Paul writes, "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine."* If a church doesn't teach the Bible (I believe exposition is the best method) it is not a true church. I tie into this category qualified elders who are able to teach, since the function of leadership is to shepherd, protect, love, and teach the sheep. Along with having a high view of Scripture, a true church builds up the body. This involves participation in the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's table), practicing the “one-anothers” of Scripture, and Biblical church discipline. As the body grows, the final mark of a true church is an outward focus that sees the world as God sees it. The church is not a country club that labors to keep its members warmed

and filled. It is a Kingdom-building force in the world for the joy of all peoples. Now for my second bookend quote, *A church that is busy ministering to itself, building itself up, edifying itself, and reaches no farther than its own four walls is self-centered. Training, edification and equipping of the saints is not an end itself, but is a means to an end. God's goal is that the church be built up SO THAT it can effectively function in the world and carry out Christ's will on earth (J. Delaney).* Amen to that. Teaching and Body-building must always lead to Mission in the world. Any church that forsakes one of these forsakes what Christ has called the Church to be.



2- Who's supposed to do the ministry of the Church?

YOU! That's not a cop-out because I don't want to work hard. It's Bible. Ephesians 4:12 speaks of the role of the pastor-teacher as equipping the saints for the work of ministry. The role of your pastors is not do the ministry; it's to equip us all to do the ministry. Notice how I said, "equip us all" including the pastors and elders in that grouping. We all, leaders included, do the serving. The leaders are both shepherds and sheep. We come to be taught by the Word, instructed by God, and we love and serve one another so we grow up in the faith. And then we all move out in creative, thoughtful, and faith-filled ways into the world to make disciples of all nations to the glory of God. This is church ministry, this is missions, this is normal Christian living, this is fulfilling the great commission. This process of ministry in and outside the church is to be repeated over and over in the lives of others so that worshippers of God are multiplied in the world.

3- Can a local church really make a difference in the world?

It can and it must! Robert Saucy writes, *Throughout the course of history God has worked in a variety of ways through individuals, nations, and peoples. The focus of His present work is the church. That which was begun in the Scriptures, as men and women were called to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ, continues today in fulfillment of Christ's promises to build His church. Not only is Christ building His church, but also it is the primary instrument through which He ministers in the world. As the Father sent Christ, so the church bears the ambassadorial role for its Lord as sent ones with a message of reconciliation.* We have that message of reconciliation and it's too good to keep to ourselves. The size of a church matters little in its willingness to embrace the call to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. The only difference is in the scope of resources it has at its disposal. Have you forgotten that this all started with twelve fairly ordinary men? No excuses, we are called to mission, what will you do?

4- What is the point of spiritual gifts in the Church?

Spiritual gifts are NEVER to be worn as a badge of spirituality. That goes against the very purpose for which they were given. 1 Corinthians 12-14 is the largest portion of Scripture devoted to teaching on the gifts, and chapter 13 happens to be the famous “love” chapter in the Bible. Did it get misplaced? No, Paul’s whole point in this section is that the gifts are given for the edification of the Body ... for Love! If your gift doesn’t build others up, it’s not spiritual, but fleshly. If your gift only edifies you, it’s not spiritual. The diversity of gifts is given to the Body, and is meant to function like a body. No arm saying to the toe, “I don’t need you”, nor the eye saying to the intestine, “you don’t act spiritual like me” (my paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 12:15-21). Honestly, for all the hubbub about spiritual gifts, gift inventories, and the sign gifts, the bottom line is more about their use to build up the body and not the individual. The surest sign of a misuse of the spiritual gifts (whichever one it is) is the member being puffed up with pride toward other members, rather than humbly serving the other members. Should you find out what gifts you have? Of course. But mostly focus on using them in a way that builds the Body and advances the mission of Christ in the world. We can never let factions develop in the church either by what some believe about the gifts or by not using them for the benefit of the whole Body. Bottom line – serve one another in love.

5- What’s the deal with church membership ... is that in the Bible?

Nope, no chapter and verse about becoming a church member. It doesn’t earn you more favor with God to have your name called on the roll of a congregational meeting. But might I suggest, that to not joyfully commit your heart and resources to a local church is selfish, independent, and completely foreign to the tone of New Testament Christianity. Here’s a good word from Wayne Mack, *I believe that one major reason that the church of Jesus Christ in the United States is very close to being in sheer chaos today is because so many people think themselves as individuals rather than as part of the body of Christ. Christianity is not “every man for himself;” it’s every man together for Christ.* Our Western culture prides itself on individualism and self-reliance, and unfortunately that has permeated the fabric of the Western Church as well. Christianity is a middle-eastern religion based on, among other things, community and interdependence. The idea of a follower of Christ in the early church not connected and committed to a local assembly would have been thought of as un-Christian. Today with Christian radio, Christian television, Christian podcasts, Christian music, Christian crusades, and Christian coffee-houses many feel that there is no need for a solid, loyal connection to a local church. They love Jesus, they say, but not the Church. To which I think the apostle Paul would say, “No Way ... you can’t have Jesus without the Church.” I get it. I know many feel burned by the institution of the Church, but the problem isn’t the Church, it’s those leaders (and followers) who have abused their call to love people in and outside the Church. Don’t date the church ... get married ... go all in!

· What Do I Do With This?

In My Head

A couple thoughts: 1- Read Church History, it's rich, compelling, and glorious to see how God has indeed built the Church over the centuries and used it to accomplish His purposes. 2- Know what is going on at your church. Don't just listen to the things that seem to pertain to you, know what God is doing in your local body, and through your local body to reach the world. Read the bulletin, ask questions about the children's ministry, get to know the world missions staff serving around the plant. Perhaps you'll find stories of people like you, and places where you can use your gifts to bless others.

In My Heart

Jesus laid down his life for the Church, will you? Tertullian, the early church father, once said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. Don't be casual about the church, be committed. You don't like something about the Church? Don't run away from it, run to it with a heart of humility and a desire to encourage. We don't need more critics, but we always need more courageous lovers of the Bride. Is the Church on the fringe of your life or woven into the very fabric of your existence?

· For Further Study

Nine Marks of a Healthy Church. Mark Dever. Crossway. 2000.

The Church in God's Program. Robert L. Saucy. Moody. 1972.

The Deliberate Church. Mark Dever and Paul Alexander. Crossway. 2005.

Sharpening the Focus of the Church. Gene Getz. Victor. 1984.

· For Family Discipleship

Questions for Discussion

- (1) What simple, true statements can you make about the church?
- (2) What are some of the marks of a true, God-centered church?
- (3) Discuss what it means to love the Church and be a part of her mission?

Memory Verse

"... I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
– Matthew 16:18b

Song

[Verse 1]

The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation
by water and the Word.
From heaven he came and sought her
to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her,
and for her life he died.

[Verse 4]

Mid toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation
of peace forevermore;
till, with the vision glorious,
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest.

A Catechism for Young Children

Q. Who are Christ's people?

A. They make up His Church.

Q. What are the traits of His Church?

A. The Word, discipline, and sacraments.

Q. Is His Church perfect?

A. It is being perfected.