

THE CHURCH

Matthew 16:13-19

Introduction: Through the years, the Church that Jesus established has certainly changed, not only in name but in doctrines and beliefs with many things added and many things forgotten or taken away. There are numerous denominations with each being just a little different from the others in one way or other. Just what are the fundamentals, the basics that the Church started with?

1. THE FOUNDATION AND HEAD OF THE CHURCH

1. *"...and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ, Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:20-22)*
2. *"...but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)*

2. THE CHURCH DESCRIBED

1. As an assembly.
 - *"...God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him..." (Psalm 89:7)*
2. As a body.
 - *"...so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every member one of another..." (Romans 12:5)*
 - *"...now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular..." (1 Corinthians 12:27)*
3. As the bride.
 - *"...let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him; for the marriage supper of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she would be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints..." (Revelation 19:7-8)*
 - For there to be a bride, there had to be a marriage service.
 - "Do you take this woman whose hand you now hold, to be your lawful and wedded wife? Do you promise to love and cherish her, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and forsaking all others keep thee only unto her so long as you both shall live...?"
 - A similar agreement is made with Jesus Christ whenever a person is saved.
 - *"...Thou shalt have no other gods..."*
 - Could a person expect his/her wife/husband to stay with her/him if he/she was treated as many Christians treat their Church?

3. GOD'S LOVE AND CARE FOR THE CHURCH

1. *"...Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord' for I am married unto you and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion (back to God) and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you, with knowledge and understanding.."*
(Jeremiah 3:14-15)

4. CHRIST'S LOVE FOR THE CHURCH

1. *"...I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep..."* (John 10:11)
2. *"...Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it..."*
(Ephesians 5:25)

5. HOLINESS AND THE CHURCH

1. *"...For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ..."* (2 Corinthians 11:2)
2. *"...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..."* (Ephesians 5:27)
3. *"...Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that you may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless..."* (2 Peter 3:14)

6. THE GLORIOUS HOPE OF THE CHURCH

1. *"...Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven..."* (Matthew 5:12)
2. *"...Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing..."*
(2 Timothy 4:8)

CONCLUSION:

1. The Church is quite different from any other organization in the world.
2. The Church of today is quite different from how it was when Jesus started it.
3. People didn't start the Church, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.
4. The Church of today needs to go back to it's original intent and guidelines.
5. Rejoice if you are a part of the BRIDE of Christ, which is the true Church.