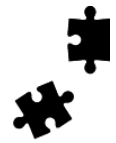


WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THE CHURCH



Lesson 4: The Birth of the Church

Reggie Coe, Family Pastor

- I. **Christ's promise:** In His earthly ministry, Christ clearly stated His plan to give birth to His church.
 - a. Christ promised to build His church according to His statement to His disciples—**Matthew 16:15–19**.
 - b. The Scriptures clearly teach that the church is a “mystery,” meaning it had not been prophesied or revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures—**Ephesians 3:1–7**.
 - c. Paul clearly states that Christ's building of the church began with Christ as the cornerstone and the human foundation of the apostles and prophets—**Ephesians 2:20–22**.

- II. **Christ's process:** The birth of the church occurred on the Day of Pentecost through the baptizing and indwelling work of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit places a believer into the church, the body of Christ—**1 Corinthians 12:12–13; Ephesians 1:22–23**.
 - b. The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit had not begun at the inception of Christ's ministry—**Matthew 3:11–12**.
 - c. Peter testified that the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit began on the Day of Pentecost—**Acts 11:15–18**.
 - d. The Scriptures begin referring to the church as being in existence shortly after the Day of Pentecost—**Acts 2:47; 5:11**.

- III. **Christ's purpose:** Christ gave birth to His church, made up of believing Jews and Gentiles in one body, in order to bring glory to Himself and to provoke Israel to faith in the Messiah.
 - a. The Lord prophesied that He would provoke Israel to anger and jealousy through the Gentiles—**Romans 10:19–20**.
 - b. God has not rejected Israel but He is working through His church as those who have been granted His mercy—**Romans 11:25–32**.
 - c. Paul clearly distinguishes between Israel and the church, which means that the church is not the new Israel nor is it a continuation of the nation of Israel—**1 Corinthians 10:32; Acts 4:8–12**.
 - d. Through the mystery of the church, Christ receives glory and honor—**Romans 16:25–27**.