What is the church?

- **begin short series** on the church:
  - What is the church?
  - What is the organization of the church?
  - What is the work of the church?
  - What is the worship of the church?
  - How is the church unified?

- **importance**: young people, new members, reminder to all

**Origin of the church.**
- Eph. 3:11-12 God originator of church, eternal purpose, carried out in Christ
- Mi. 4:1-3 church prophesied of in the OT
- Dan. 2:31-35, 44-45 church prophesied to be established during Roman reign
- Acts 2 church established on Pentecost
  - Acts 1:6 had not been established when Jesus ascended
  - Acts 1:6-8 it began when the apostles received power from the Holy Spirit
- Acts 2:1-4 church began on Pentecost, when apostles received power from the Holy Spirit
  - Acts 2:16-21 the prophesy of Joel was fulfilled that day
  - application: trace the origin of a church - if not Pentecost, can’t be the Lord’s church

**The church is the called out body.** – What is the church?
- Matt. 16:18 church is the body of people who respond to God’s call through Christ – His church
  - “church” translation of ekklesia meaning a called out body – used of a religious and civil assembly in Bible
- 2 Th. 2:14 called through the gospel – rf - Mk. 16:15
- 1 Cor. 12:12, 14, 27 church is composed of Christians – not a building
- Matt. 16:18 universal
- Matt. 18:17 local
- PP some names identifying the Lord’s church
  - application: the church is about people, not about buildings

**Membership in the church.**
- Acts 2 Lord adds when obey gospel
  - vs. 38 repent, baptized, forgiveness, gift of Holy Spirit
  - vs. 40 saved
  - vs. 41 baptized, added
  - vs. 47 added to their number (saints, church KJ - diff. in Greek texts)
- 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23 when baptized - baptized into body, church
  - Jn. 3:3, 5 born of water and spirit
  - Acts 2:38 repent, baptized, forgiveness, gift of Holy Spirit
  - application: Lord adds to church when obey Jesus to be baptized

**end Part I**
- **summary**: origin, called out body, membership
- **inv.**: you can become a members, added by the Lord
The church is . . .

- Jn. 3:3; Acts 8:12; 14:22 the church is the kingdom of God
  - kingdom: denotes the domain of the king

- Col. 1:13-14 the church is the kingdom of Christ – redemption, forgiveness in kingdom
- Col. 2:12-13 forgiven when baptized – enter into kingdom when baptized - Col. 1:14
  - Matt. 28:18 Christ has all authority, church - 1 Tim. 6:15 Lord of lords and King if kings

- Col. 1:16-18; Eph. 1:22-23 the church is Christ’s body – which is the church
- Eph. 5:24 church is subject to Christ in everything
- Eph. 5:23 Jesus is Savior of the body – must be a member of body to be saved - Acts 2:40-41, 47

- 1 Tim. 3:14-15 the church is the household (house) of God – family
- Heb. 3:6 Jesus is over God’s house
- Heb. 2:11-12 Christians are Christ’s brethren, brethren of one another
- 1 Pet. 4:17 judgment begins with God’s household

- 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:19-22 the church is the temple of God – God dwells in the Spirit – worship, service
- 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:15a, 17, 19-20 since the church is composed of Christians, each Christian is a temple, God dwells in Spirit
  - 1 Cor. 6:20 not own, bought with price, glorify God in your body

- 2 Cor. 11:2 the church is the bride of Christ – marriage, duty, emotion (1 Cor. 16:22)
- Rom. 6:3-5; 7:4 joined to Christ when we are baptized into Christ - 1 Cor. 6:17
  - 1 Cor. 6:17 one spirit with Him - 1 Cor. 12:13 baptized into one body by Holy Spirit
- Rev. 21:1-3 Christ’s bride eternally dwells with Him in heaven

summary:
- church is: God’s kingdom, Christ’s kingdom, Christ’s body, God’s household, temple of God, bride of Christ
- all these expresses relationships with God and Christ – if in the church. . . - if not. . .
The church is not... – contrast with above
- Acts 17:24 the church is not a physical building – it is a spiritual building (above)

- Rom. 14:17 the church is not a social club (not eating and drinking)
- 1 Cor. 11:22 eat in houses, not when assemble, not as work of church (context)
- Acts 2:46 sharing common meals is work of individual Christians – not church
- 1 Pet. 4:8-9 hospitality work of individual Christians, not church

- 1 Cor. 1:10-13 the church is not a denomination, often identified by wearing man-made religious names
  - denominations:
    - the act of naming or designating a person or thing (dictionary.com)
      - wearing name designated by man rather than God
    - A large group of religious congregations united under a common faith and name and organized under a single administrative and legal hierarchy (American Heritage Dictionary).
      - human organization
    - a group of religious congregations having its own organization and a distinctive faith (WorldNet)
      - self organization
- 1 Cor. 3:1-4 reason behind denominationalism: fleshly rather than spiritual minds, carnal (KJ)
- Col. 2:20-23 Christians do not submit to human decrees – denominationalism, etc.

Summary / Inv.
- summary:
  - church is: God’s kingdom, Christ’s kingdom, Christ’s body, God’s household, temple of God, bride of Christ
  - church is not: physical building, social club, denomination
- inv.: God calls everyone to become a member of His church, through the gospel, will you respond. . .