

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE CHURCH? (Ephesians 5:25-27)

- I. The church is important because God planned it from eternity (Ephesians 3:10-11).**
 - A. Before the world was formed by God, He had the church in mind.
 - 1. Sadly there are those that say the church was an afterthought.
 - a. If so, Jesus didn't know it (Mark 9:1).
 - b. Paul didn't know it either (Colossians 1:13).
 - 2. God always had the church in mind.
 - B. We can see this because the prophets foretold its establishment.
 - 1. Isaiah 2:2-3.
 - 2. Daniel 7:13-14.
 - C. God does not plan and have foretold unimportant things.
- II. The church is important because it bears a unique relationship with Jesus.**
 - A. Jesus loved it and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25-27).
 - 1. Jesus does not love the unimportant.
 - 2. Would Jesus die for something that was unimportant?
 - 3. What would you die for?
 - B. Jesus paid for the church with His blood (Acts 20:28).
 - 1. How important is the church to God if He would allow His only begotten Son to die for it?
 - 2. We value things in accordance with their purchase price many times.
 - C. Jesus built the church (Matthew 16:18).
 - 1. He is the Chief Cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).
 - 2. He is the foundation on which it is built (1 Corinthians 3:11).
 - 3. He only built one (Ephesians 4:4 + Colossians 1:18).
 - D. Jesus is the Head of the church (Ephesians 1:22)
 - 1. No mere man is fit to be the head of Christ's church.
 - 2. Jesus is the Head because He has all authority (Matthew 28:18).
- III. The church is important because to persecute it is to persecute Jesus Himself.**
 - A. Saul of Tarsus tormented the church (1 Timothy 1:13).
 - B. As he went to Damascus, the Lord confronted Him for his treatment of the church.
 - 1. He asked Saul, "...why persecutest thou me?"
 - 2. Saul had persecuted the church (1 Corinthians 15:9).
 - C. Jesus equated persecuting the church with persecuting Him.
 - D. This makes sense when you view the church as the body of Jesus (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23).
 - E. If one claims loyalty to Jesus yet fails to be a part of His body, he shows no concept of what it means to be a Christian.
 - F. You cannot separate Christ from the church for which He died.
- IV. The church is important because it is called the pillar and ground of the**

truth (1 Timothy 3:15).

- A. The church is that called out group of people that upholds and supports the truth.
- B. God's word is the truth (John 17:17).
 - 1. When we proclaim the truth we are upholding it.
 - 2. When we defend the truth we are supporting it (Jude 3).
- C. The church is as important as upholding the truth.
 - 1. Without the church, there could be no defense or proclamation of truth.
 - 2. There would be no one to go into all the world as we are commanded to do with the truth.
- D. It is truth that sets people free from sin (John 8:32), which shows just how important being the pillar and ground of the truth is.

V. The church is important because only the saved are added to it.

- A. Acts 2:47- American Standard Version renders it: "...those that were being saved..."
- B. You cannot join the church like you would a social or civil club or a denomination.
 - 1. There is no voting that allows one to become a member of the church.
 - 2. There is no application that has to be filled out.
- C. God does not add any unsaved person to the church.
 - 1. Again, the ASV has "those that were being saved."
 - 2. Only saved people are allowed to be members of the church.

VI. The church is important because all the saved are added to it.

- A. All saved people are in Christ (2 Timothy 2:10).
 - 1. You cannot find one person who is saved that is not part of the elect.
 - 2. All of the elect are in Christ, thus all saved people are in Christ.
- B. One gets into Christ by being baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27).
- C. This same process, that of being baptized, puts one into the church (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- D. All the saved are in the church and only the saved are in the church because it is the body of the saved.

Not an original but don't know the source of this outline.