

The Essentiality and Uniqueness of Christ's Church

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Introduction

1. Is the church of Christ essential for one's salvation?
 2. Many answer the question and say, "People can be saved anywhere."
 - a. Does the Bible say "anywhere" that good people can be saved anywhere? No!
 - b. The answer will have to be found in the Bible.
 3. Others say, "I can be saved out of the church because the church does not save."
 - a. Granted, the church does not save, but God through Christ saves.
 - b. The question is: Where does God save them? In the church or out of the church?
 4. Much of the confusion rests in that people do not understand what the "church" is.
 - a. The word "church" is from "ekklesia," meaning "to call out" (from *ek*—"out of" and *kaleo*—"to call").
 - b. The church is a body of baptized believers called out from the world over which Christ reigns as head and in which the Holy Spirit dwells.
 - c. It is not a denomination. A denomination is a sect or group of dissenters who have pulled away from an orthodox group holding to some particular creed or practice.
 - d. The question is not, "Is a denomination essential to one's salvation?" The question is, "Is the church essential for one's salvation?"
- I. If One Can Be Saved Out of the Church, Then One Can Be Saved Out of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 18:3; 19:14; Col. 1:13).**
- A. Paul wrote to the Colossians—who were in Christ, or in the body, the church—that they were in the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13).
 - B. If one can be saved out of the church, the kingdom of God, then:
 1. One can be saved without becoming a citizen of the kingdom.
 2. One can be saved without submitting to Christ as King.
 - C. There are only two kingdoms—God's and the devil's. If one can be saved out of the kingdom of God, there is only one kingdom left and that is the devil's.
 - D. How does one enter the kingdom? (John 3:1-5)
- II. If One Can Be Saved Out of the Church, Then One Can Be Saved Out of the Family of God (1 Tim. 3:14-15; Eph. 2:19; 3:15).**
- A. Noah built the ark for the saving of his family (Heb. 11:7a).
 - B. As we said about the kingdom, there are just two families on earth—God's and the devil's. If one can be saved out of the family of God, then the only family left is that of the devil.
 - C. How do you enter that family? (Gal. 3:26-27)
- III. If One Can Be Saved Out of the Church, Then One Can Be Saved Without the Blood of Christ (Acts 20:28).**
- A. If you say you can be saved out of the church, you say you can be saved without the blood of Christ which forgives us (Col. 1:14; cf. Heb. 10:4; 9:22).
 - B. If we are going to be saved by the blood of Christ, we must get where it is (Rom. 6:1-5).
- IV. If One Can Be Saved Out of the Church, Then One Can Be Saved Out of the Body of Christ (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23).**
- A. Paul addressed the Colossians as "in Christ" and "called in one body" (Col. 1:2; 3:15).
 - B. Since the church is the body of Christ and one cannot be saved apart from Christ, one cannot be saved out of the church, which is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 5:23).
- V. If One Can Be Saved Out of the Church, Then One Can Be Saved Without Any Spiritual Blessings.**
- A. As we noted above, the church is the body of Christ.

- B. In Christ are all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3, 7, 11; Col. 1:14; Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 1:20; 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:10). Out of Christ you have none of these.
- C. To obtain the spiritual blessings, in Christ, you must pass from outside to inside (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:26-27).

Conclusion

- 1. Some claim the church is not essential to one's salvation.
- 2. Some think one can be saved based on one's good character. This view fails to understand the power of God for salvation (Rom. 1:16).
- 3. Some want Jesus but they do not want the church. It is clear that one cannot be saved by separating Jesus from the church for which He died.
- 4. It is clear that the church established on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ from the dead is essential.
- 5. Have you been added to this glorious institution?