THE CHURCH:

How Do We Enter The Church?

Part 1

Introduction

Last week, we began our look at the church by answering the question: what is the church. We saw that the church is not a building, but is made up of people – followers of Jesus Christ. And we saw that the church is something that belongs to Christ – He is the head of the church and He is our King. There is no person that we answer to – no one except Jesus. We also looked at how the church is something that is for everyone – it is intended for all. Everyone can and should contribute to the church, which is the body of Christ. And while we contribute to the church, the church will also contribute to us – we gain many wonderful blessings by being in the church, and as such we should not be forsaking the church.

This morning we will take a stab at answering another question regarding the church – and that is how do we get in? How do we enter the church?

Hear The Word

**Rom. 10:14-17**

* Being saved of course starts with the word of God and hearing the message contained within the word of God
* To know where to start our journey – to know where our path to salvation starts – we need to hear and read the word
* The question is posed in verse 14: how can you believe in someone you’ve never heard of?
* To know who to follow and trust in – to know where salvation lies – to know of whom holds the keys of eternal life – we need to hear the word of God – and we need to hear and understand that word

**Matt. 13:18-23**

* It is not enough to simply hear the word on a literal level – you can’t come to services and listen to someone preach the message and hope that is enough
* It’s not even enough to glance over the Scriptures when reading the Bible – we must hear the word and take it to heart – we need to listen to the word and let it take root inside of us
* Hear the word and produce fruit – take action – meaning there is more to do to obtain salvation – there are more steps to entering Christ’s church

Believe

**John 6:28-29, 35, 40**

* What is the work of God? What will cause us to never thirst again? What action can we take that will cause us to obtain everlasting life – entering into Christ’s church?
* Believe in Him whom God sent - believe in the Son - believe in Jesus Christ
* If we want to find ourselves in the church, then we need to have faith and believe in the head of the church, Jesus Christ

**Acts 16:25-33**

* What an incredible and inspirational story we find here
* The jail is opened with an earthquake – the jailer sees the open doors and grabs a sword to kill himself and then Paul calls out that they were all there
* The grateful jailer then inquires “What must I do to be saved?” And he was instructed to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ
* To enter the church and find salvation, one must believe on Christ
* And we see in verses 32 and 33 that the jailer heard the word – which we looked at earlier – and then he was baptized, which we will come to later

**John 20:31**

* When looking at what we need to believe in – at what kind of faith we ought to have – we see in this verse that we need to believe that Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God
* In believing that Jesus is who He claimed to be, we can find life in Him

**John 5:24**

* Indeed it is not a narrow, simple faith that we need to have – we need to believe in Jesus – in who He is and what He has done – we need to believe in the word of God that we hear and read – and we need to believe in the One who sent Jesus to us
* We must believe in God and the words of Christ and then we can experience eternal life, sweet salvation, freedom from sins, and a wonderful place in Christ’s church

Repent

**2 Corinthians 7:9-10**

* Paul writes about godly sorrow here – a sorrow that came for recognizing that wrong had been done and being sorry for the actions taken – and that produced repentance: a feeling or expression of sincere regret or remorse about one’s wrongdoing or sin
* In hearing the word and believing in Christ, the next step is recognizing that we have done wrong – as we read in Romans 3:23 that all have sinned – in recognizing that we have sinned, we should be sorrowful
* But not with worldly sorrow – we can think of Judas who was sorry for his betrayal of Jesus, but his sorrow led him to killing himself
* Instead, we want godly sorrow where we recognize our wrongdoings and correct our course, straighten our path, and change for the better
* And Paul says that this repentance leads us to salvation

**Luke 5:30-32**

* Jesus, Himself, here states that He came here to call sinners to repentance – He came to bring us into the fold – into His church and part of that call – another step in the process in repenting of our sins

**Acts 3:18-19**

* As mentioned before: we all have sinned – we all have sin stains on our spiritual garments – and they are dark stains that we cannot hope to get out on our own
* But Peter says here to repent – repent and be converted and those sins can be removed – they can be blotted out and we can be clean and refreshed in the church of Christ’s

Confess

**Rom. 10:8-9**

* If we confess Christ – if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe that He is alive – He died for us, but is risen – we will be saved
* Another important step laid out clearly for us: confess Christ

**Matt. 10:32-33**

* We see Jesus telling us that if we confess Christ before men, Jesus will confess us before God – to enter into the church we need permission – and through confession, Jesus will speak on our behalf and we will be granted that permission to enter
* And yet we also see that the opposite is true: if we deny Christ before men, Jesus will deny us before God

**Phil. 2:9-11**

* Everyone should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord
* Indeed at some point, someday everyone will recognize who Jesus is, but not all will be saved – we need to recognize Jesus and confess Him of our own choosing before it is too late

Be Baptized

**Mark 16:16**

* Jesus tells us of another step to becoming a part of His church and receiving salvation – He says that those who are baptized will be save – we must believe and be baptized, otherwise we will be condemned
* Will cover next we in more detail, Lord willing

Conclusion

So we have seen the necessary steps to entering the church and being saved. We must hear the word, believe that word – believing in Christ, we must then repent, confess, and be baptized.