

# THE CHURCH

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**SSOT**

**CALIFORNIA-WIDE**  
**SUMMER SCHOOL OF TRUTH 2021**

**The Church**  
Group Time Packet

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SUMMER SCHOOL OF TRUTH 2021

## THE CHURCH

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All scripture reading verses are quoted from *The Recovery Version of the Bible* unless otherwise indicated. *The Recovery Version of the Bible* is published by Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, CA.

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## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### Lesson 1: The Vision of the Church

#### Lesson Focus

We are not only individual Christians, we are also a corporate entity—the church. God’s full salvation is to redeem, regenerate, and transform His chosen people for the church.

#### Key Verses

##### Eph. 3:9-11

**9** And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things **10** In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, **11** According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### Outline

- I. God’s eternal purpose being the Church
- II. The church being the building up of all God’s chosen, redeemed, regenerated, and transformed people, not a physical structure.
- III. The church being the organism of the Triune God, not an organization
- IV. The essence of the church is of life, not of knowledge
- V. The nature of the church being of heaven, not of earth
- VI. The foundation of the church being Christ
- VII. The church being glorious

#### Ministry Excerpt References

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 1*

- God’s Eternal Purpose Being the Church
- The Church Being the Building Up of All God’s Chosen, Redeemed, Regenerated, and Transform People, Not a Physical Structure
- The Church Being the Organism of the Triune God, Not an Organization
- Conclusion

#### Questions for Fellowship

1. What do you “think” of when you hear the word “church”?
2. Is the church “precious” to you at this point of your life? Why or why not?
3. Do you feel like the church is “home” to you? Why or why not?
4. What do you struggle with in embracing the church life? Discuss.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### Lesson 2: God's Purpose for the Church

#### Lesson Focus

In God's dispensation, in God's administration, in God's arrangement, in God's governmental stewardship, He has eternally planned the church. The church is the central matter in God's economy. Putting it into human terms, the church is God's business.

#### Key Verses

**Eph. 1:5** Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

**Eph. 3:10** In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church.

**Eph. 1:10** Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him.

#### Outline

- I. To express God through the sonship
- II. To make God's wisdom known to the enemy
- III. To head up all things in Christ

#### Ministry Excerpt References

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 2*

- To Express God Through the Sonship (first 3 paragraphs)
- To Make God's Wisdom Known to the Enemy (first 3 paragraphs)
- To Head Up All Things in Christ (First, second, fourth, fifth and last paragraph)

#### Questions for Fellowship

1. What kind of confusion have you recently witnessed in your own life, in school, or on social media and in the news?
2. How can we be those who are filled with Christ as life and under the light?
3. Pray for each other, that the life within us would swallow up any death, and expel any darkness in our lives.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 3: The Two Aspects of the Church— Universal and Local**

#### **Lesson Focus**

The two crucial aspects of the church—the universal and local aspects. The truths in the Bible always have two sides. Brother Govett called it “the twofoldness of the truth.” A sheet of paper has two sides as it cannot exist with one side only; likewise, the church has two aspects.

#### **Key Verses**

**Matt. 16:18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

**Rev. 1:11** Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

#### **Outline**

- I. The universal aspect
- II. The local aspect
- III. The believers living in the local churches
- IV. The genuine ground

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 7*

- The Truth According to the Bible (first paragraph)
- As Revealed by the Lord in Matthew 16:18
- To Local Aspect (including A, B & C)
- The Ground of Locality—One City, One Church (first 3 paragraphs)
- Conclusion

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. How do you know that the church mentioned in Matt. 16:18 is the universal church?
2. How do you know that the church mentioned in Matt. 18:17 is the local church?
3. Mention to the others in your group in which local church you meet. Take a few minutes to thank the Lord that you are part of the universal church and that you are in a local church today.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 4: The Seven Churches in Revelation Signifying the Seven Stages of the Church**

#### **Lesson Focus**

Revelation is a book of prophecy (Rev. 1:3; 22:7). The seven epistles to the seven churches in chapters two and three, in the sense of signs, are prophecies regarding the church on earth until the Lord's coming back.

#### **Key Verse**

**Rev. 1:20** The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

#### **Outline**

- I. The church in Ephesus depicts the end of the stage of the initial church during the last part of the first century.
- II. The church in Smyrna prefigures the suffering church under the persecution of the Roman Empire from the last part of the first century to the early part of the fourth century.
- III. The church in Pergamos pre-symbolizes the worldly church, the church married to the world.
- IV. The church in Thyatira pre-symbolizes the apostate church from the ordination of the papal system in the latter part of the sixth century to the end of the church age.
- V. The church in Sardis prefigures the protestant church, from the reformation in the early part of the sixteenth century to Christ's coming back.
- VI. The church in Philadelphia prefigures the church of brotherly love, the recovery of the proper church life, from the early part of the nineteenth century to the second appearing of the Lord.
- VII. The church in Laodicea foreshadows the degraded church life of the brothers from the latter part of the nineteenth century to the Lord's return.

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church* — Lesson 11

- The Church in Philadelphia
- The Lord's Promise to the Overcomers of This Stage (Last paragraph)

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. Write a short prophecy (one paragraph) for one of the churches, the time period the church covers, the significance of its name, how its condition can be applied to us today, and what is the reward for the church. Include the verse reference.
2. Take a couple minutes to consecrate to the Lord to be an overcomer in the church today.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 5: The Status of the Church (1)** **The Assembly, the House of God, and the Kingdom of God**

#### **Lesson Focus**

The church as an assembly is separated from the world; the church as the house of God is composed of those who have been born of God; and the church as the kingdom of God, is the reality and living of the church today. We all need to grow in the divine life in the church life so that in the coming age we may have a rich entrance into the kingdom of God.

#### **Key Verses**

**1 Cor. 1:2** To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, [who is] theirs and ours.

**1 Tim. 3:15** But if I delay, [I write] that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

**Rom. 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

#### **Outline**

- I. The assembly of the called out ones—ekklesia
- II. The house of God
- III. The kingdom of God

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 3*

- The Assembly of the Called Out Ones—Ekklesia (paragraph that starts “We need to be impressed with the fact)
- The House of God (paragraphs that starts “The church has a twofold function” and last paragraph)
- The Kingdom of God (last paragraph)

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. How does the first status of the church show that the church is not a physical building, but the built-up believers?
2. In this age the church is the reality of the kingdom. What is God’s requirement for us to be in this kingdom today?
3. What is required of us in this age to enter into the manifestation of the kingdom in the next age?
4. We have seen that the Body of Christ is composed of organic members. Could you hire or fire anyone for a particular function in the Body? Why?



## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 6: The Status of the Church (2) The Body of Christ**

#### **Lesson Focus**

The very abstract and mysterious God has an organism. God is invisible, yet He has a visible organism, the Body of Christ. The church as the Body of Christ is for His fullness, His expression.

#### **Key Verses**

##### **Eph. 1:22-23**

**22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him [to be] Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

#### **Outline**

- I. Christ being the Head
- II. We being the members of the Body of Christ
- III. The Body receiving from the Head
- IV. The fullness (expression) of Him who fills all in all

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 4*

- Christ Being the Head
- We Being the Members of the Body of Christ
- The Body Receiving from the Head
- The Fullness (Expression) of Him Who Fills All in All

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. Take a couple minutes with your group to pray-read Ephesians 1:22-23.
2. Explain how a person's body can be his fullness, his expression.
3. How is the church as the body something greater than merely a congregation?
4. Using food as an illustration, what is needed for the riches of Christ in Ephesians 3:8 to become the fullness in verse 19?

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 7: The Status of the Church (3) God’s Masterpiece, the New Man, and the Counterpart of Christ**

#### **Lesson Focus**

God has made many things, but none of them is as dear, precious, valuable, and desirable as the church. The church is God’s masterpiece. As God’s masterpiece, the church is the Body of Christ, the fullness of the One who fills all in all. Furthermore, the church as God’s masterpiece is the corporate and universal new man.

#### **Key Verses**

**Eph. 2:10** For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we would walk in them.

**Eph. 2:15** Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, [so] making peace.

**Rev. 19:7** Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

#### **Outline**

- I. God’s masterpiece
- II. The new man
- III. The counterpart of Christ

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 5*

- God’s Masterpiece
- The New Man (First 3 paragraphs)
- The Counterpart of Christ

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. What does the term “masterpiece” imply when referring to the church?
2. Explain the parallel between Christ and the church and Adam and Eve? Support your answer with verses.
3. Using the tune from one of your favorite hymn write a short stanza or chorus using the content of this lesson.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 8: The Status of the Church (4) The Golden Lampstands**

#### **Lesson Focus**

The golden lampstands are the final aspect of the status of the church. This aspect is very exciting because the same symbol was used for the Triune God, the children of Israel, and the church. We will be mingled with Him to such an extent that we will express Him in full.

#### **Key Verses**

**Rev. 1:12** And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands.

**Rev. 1:20** The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

#### **Outline**

- I. The golden lampstands typifying Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God
  - A. Gold signifying the Father's divine nature, the divine substance, essence
  - B. The form signifying the Son as the embodiment of the Godhead in His humanity
  - C. The seven lamps signifying the Spirit as the expression
- II. The golden lampstands signifying Israel as God's testimony in the Old Testament and in the millennium
- III. The golden lampstands signifying the seven local churches as God's testimony in the New Testament

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 6*

- The Golden Lampstands Typifying Christ as the Embodiment of the Triune God (including A, B and C)
- The Golden Lampstands Signifying Israel as God's Testimony in the Old Testament and in the Millennium
- The Golden Lampstands Signifying the Seven Local Churches as God's Testimony in the New Testament (including A without subpoints and B)

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. Explain how the symbol of lampstand reveals the Triune God.
2. Why is the lampstand an appropriate symbol for the church?
3. Take a few minutes to pray individually to be part of the Lord's testimony to shine in this dark age.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### **Lesson 9: The Direct Building Up of the Body of Christ by the Perfected Saints**

#### **Lesson Focus**

In this lesson we will see that God's intention is to give the gifted persons—the apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers—to perfect the saints that all the saints may participate in the work of the building up of the Body of Christ. These gifted persons perfect the saints to be what they are.

#### **Key Verses**

##### **Eph. 4:12-13**

**12** For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ, **13** Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

#### **Outline**

- I. Being willing and ready to be perfected
- II. The saints being perfected by the perfecting gifts with the life supply as the nourishment for the growth in life
- III. Unto the work of the ministry—unto the building up of the Body of Christ
- IV. Until we (the gifted persons and the saints) all arrive

#### **Ministry Excerpt References**

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 14*

- Being Willing and Ready to Be Perfected (third and fourth paragraph)
- The Saints Being Perfected by the Perfecting Gifts with the Life Supply as the Nourishment for the Growth in Life

#### **Questions for Fellowship**

1. What does it mean to be willing to be perfected? Are you willing to be perfected?
2. How are the saints perfected?
3. How is a “teachers college” a good picture to show how the perfecting of the saints should be carried out?
4. Pray individually that one day you can participate of the Full-time training to be perfect. Write down this date.

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### Lesson 10: Our Entrance into the Church

#### Lesson Focus

In this lesson the burden is to reveal how we came into the church. We are in the church because of the work of the Triune God. We can never leave the church, nor can we ever be dismissed from the church. We were destined to be in the church. We are in the church. The church is our home for eternity. Hallelujah!

#### Key Verses

**Acts 26:19** Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

**2 Cor. 4:1** Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart.

#### Outline

- I. Entering the church by believing and being baptized
- II. Having no exit from the church
- III. Being absolute for the building up of the church
  - A. Not disobedient to the heavenly vision
  - B. Not discouraged
  - C. Always pursuing the goal

#### Ministry Excerpt References

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 20*

- Entering the Church by Believing and Being Baptized
- Having No Exit from the Church
- Being Absolute for the Building Up of the Church (including A, B and C)

#### Questions for Fellowship

1. Take a couple minutes to pray-read 2 Corinthians 4:1.
2. Do you feel you have “entered into the church” and if so, explain when and how that happened?
3. What role did the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, have in our entrance into the Church?
4. We have seen in this lesson that it is impossible to leave the church. Explain

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

### Lesson 11: Young People for the Building Up of the Church

#### Lesson Focus

We hope that all the young people will have a burden for the building up of the church. In order to do the building-up work, they need to be caught and occupied by God, to purpose in their heart not to be defiled, and to flee youthful lusts with their companions. The Lord will prepare these young ones for His move, His recovery, and for the building up of His church.

#### Key Verses

**2 Tim. 2:22** But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

**Dan. 1:8** But Daniel set his heart not to defile himself with the king's choice provision and with the wine that the king drank, so he requested of the leader of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

#### Outline

- I. God calling the young people for His move
- II. Being caught and occupied by God
- III. Purposing in our heart not to be defiled
- IV. The need for companions
- V. Praying and seeking the truth with companions

#### Ministry Excerpt References

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church — Lesson 22*

- God Calling the Young People for His Move
- Being Caught and Occupied by God
- The Need for Companions

#### Questions for Fellowship

1. What are you living for right now? Why?
2. What captures your heart at this point of your life? Discuss.
3. Does giving your life to the Lord appeal to you? Why or why not?
4. Do you have a companion that you can pray and seek the Lord with?

## The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church

# Lesson 12: Our Need to Serve for the Building Up of the Church

### Lesson Focus

God desires all men to be saved for His purpose. We who love the Lord and want to serve Him should go and preach the gospel of the kingdom until there is no place left to go.

### Key Verses

**Matt. 24:14** And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

**1 Tim. 2:4** Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

**Matt. 28:20** Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.

### Outline

- I. We must pray for His move
- II. We must go to disciple all the nations
- III. We must go and establish local churches throughout all the earth

### Ministry Excerpt References

*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church* — Lesson 23

- We Must Pray for His Move
- We Must Go to Disciple all the Nations
- We Must Go and Establish Local Churches Throughout All the Earth

### Questions for Fellowship

1. Memorize 1 Timothy 2:4 together.
2. Why must we pray before going out to disciple all the nations?
3. Make a list of friends you're burdened to be saved. Pray over each other's list and fellowship about how to reach out to them.