

ROMANS 16:1-2

THE CHURCH

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

- Many, Catholics and Protestants, answer this question by talking about a building
- The church is no more a building than a house is a family
- Jesus spent three years talking about the church, and he never described it as a building
- Jesus, along with his disciples spent a lot of time building the church, but they never built a physical structure

YOU ARE THE CHURCH!

- Church is not a place where we go for an hour or so on Sunday
- Church is not *WHERE* we are, but *WHO* we are
- The church is people...people who have put their faith in Jesus Christ.

JESUS DESCRIBED HIS FOLLOWERS, NOT AS
A BUILDING, BUT LIKE THIS...

- You are the salt of the earth.
- You are the light of the world.
- You are a city set on a hill.

WHO IS THE FOUNDER OF THE CHURCH?

- As a Roman Catholic...
- As a young, born-again believer...

JESUS CHRIST
FOUNDED THE CHURCH

MATTHEW 16:13-18

THE CHURCH WAS BUILT BY OUR GREAT SHEPHERD, JESUS CHRIST

- The Great Shepherd willingly laid down his life for His sheep, that is FOR HIS CHURCH
- And you and I as believers, are his flock and WE ARE HIS CHURCH

IF I WERE GOING TO START A RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT, I MIGHT HAVE DONE IT DIFFERENTLY THAN JESUS DID

- Jesus didn't choose seminary graduates
- He chose ordinary people to be his first pastors, his first elders, and his first evangelists
- He chose fishermen, a tax collector, and even a political zealot
- And as the church grew, the diversity of the church members also grew

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE THE CHURCH?

- Paul's mention of an important believer named Phoebe can help us understand what it means to be the church
- Romans 16:1-2

ROMANS 16:1-2

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me.

I COMMEND TO YOU OUR **SISTER**, PHOEBE

- Being the church means we are all siblings, all part of the family of God
- Hebrews 2:11 says, "both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters."

AS THE CHURCH, WE ARE TO BEHAVE LIKE FAMILY...

- Love one another
- Be devoted to one another in brotherly love
- Honor one another
- Live in harmony with one another
- Accept one another
- Teach one another
- Be kind and compassionate to one another

RECEIVE HER (PHOEBE) IN THE LORD IN A WAY WORTHY OF THE ***SAINTS***...

- The Roman Catholic Standard for becoming a saint
- What does the bible say?
 - a saint is a believer in Christ
 - one who is set apart (sanctified)
- But is our behavior saint-like?

PHOEBE, A **SERVANT** IN THE CHURCH

- diakonos, deacon, minister
- *whatever* she was doing warranted Paul encouraging the church at Rome to “give her whatever help she may need”
- BECAUSE “she has been a great help to many, including me”—Phoebe was BEING the church.
- This is what should be happening in the church!
- Are you being the church today, serving others?

JESUS FOUNDED HIS CHURCH

- We are His church and family, *brothers and sisters in Him*
- We are saints, the Spirit of Christ, *working in us and changing us*
- We are His servants, created by Him and in Him *to do good works*

