

Ye Shall Know the Truth about the Church
(John 8:31-32)

Introduction:

1. In John 8:31-32 Jesus revealed several important principles.
 - a. For one thing, He talked about "continuing [abiding] in His Word."
 - b. Continuing in the Lord's Word is a requirement for:
 - 1) being His true disciples
 - 2) knowing the truth.
 - c. He also showed why we must know the truth -- it makes us free.
2. This morning we are searching the Lord's Word for the purpose of knowing the truth about the church.
3. In our lesson we will see that:
 - a. the Lord's Word identifies the church as the one body
 - b. the Lord's Word identifies Christ as the head of the church
 - c. the Lord's Word identifies the members of the church.

Discussion:

- I. FIRST, WE LEARN FROM THE LORD'S WORD THAT THE CHURCH IS THE "ONE BODY"
 - A. See Ephesians 1:22-23
 1. According to Ephesians 4:4, there is "*one body*."
 2. The Lord's Word states that the "*one body*" is the church.
 3. Since there is only "*one body*" and that body is the church, according to the Lord's Word, there is only one church.
 4. The Lord never intended for many churches to exist (Matthew 16:18).
 - B. It is only in the "*one body*" that we are reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:14-16).
- II. SECOND, WE LEARN FROM THE LORD'S WORD THAT CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH
 - A. See Colossians 1:18
 - B. According to Ephesians 5:23-27, the Lord has a special relationship with His body.
 - C. To be the Lord's church we must submit to His will (Colossians 3:17).
- III. THIRD, WE LEARN FROM THE LORD'S WORD THAT CHRISTIANS ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH [THE BODY]
 - A. See Ephesians 5:30; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 27.
 - B. These passages show us that Christians are the members of the body.
 1. To be more specific, the body is composed of those who have been baptized into it (1 Corinthians 12:13).
 2. This harmonizes perfectly with Acts 2:38, 41, 47.
 3. Just as there is one body, Ephesians 4:5 states that there is "*one baptism*."
 4. A baptism that puts a person into a church that we do not read about in the Bible is not the baptism commanded by Christ.
 - C. Members of the Lord's body have responsibilities.
 1. (1 Corinthians 12:25) There is to be no "schism" [division] in the body.
 2. (Ephesians 4:16) Each member is to contribute his/her part to the edifying of the body.
 3. (Colossians 3:15) Members of the body are to be thankful.

Conclusion:

1. The church [the "*one body*"] is precious to the Lord -- He gave Himself for it, and He purchased it with His blood (Acts 20:28).
2. To know the truth about the church, we must "continue" [abide] in the Lord's Word.
3. From the Lord's Word we have seen that:
 - a. the church is the one body
 - b. Christ is the head of the church
 - c. Christians are the members of the church.