

Christian Doctrine

The Church (Part 2)

The Early Years of the Church

When Did the Church Begin?

During Jesus' earthly ministry, He spoke of a future date in which He stated "I will build my church" ([Matt. 16:18](#)). The church began when the Holy Spirit came and baptized believers into the Body of Christ ([I Cor. 12:13](#)). When did this first happen? Followers of Christ had been awaiting this event ([Matt. 3:11](#)), and at Jesus' ascension to heaven He said it would happen in just a few days ([Acts 1:5](#), note [Eph. 1:19-23](#)). On the Day of Pentecost in [Acts 2](#), this came to pass as the Holy Spirit came upon the believers in Jerusalem. Peter would later recognized this event as the fulfillment of what the people had been waiting for ([Acts 11:15-17](#)). This same baptism (which happens at conversion) places believers in the Body of Christ today. Thus, we see that this event in Acts 2 is when the universal church began. The concept of the local church began there as well, as the initial 120 believers formed the Jerusalem Church ([Acts 1:15](#). Note, it grew to 5,000 people – [Acts 4:4](#)).

Jesus Christ, the Cornerstone and Foundation

Jesus Christ is considered the cornerstone and foundation of the church. This is because He started the church, He builds it, and He is the Head of the church. The church completely revolves around Jesus Christ. ([Mark 12:10](#); [I Cor. 3:11](#); [Eph. 2:20](#); [Col. 1:18](#))

Basic Marks and Purposes of a True Church

Marks of a church
Preach the Word of God (John 8:31 ; II Tim. 4:2)
Administer the Ordinances (Matt. 28:19 ; I Cor. 11:23-30)
Practice Discipline (Matt. 18:15-17 ; I Cor. 5:1-5)

Purposes of a church
Worship God (John 4:24 ; Col. 3:16)
Minister to Believers (Eph. 4:11-13)
Evangelize the World (Matt. 28:19)