

LESSON 5: LEARNING ABOUT: THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION: The dictionary gives lots of meanings for the word “church.” 1. A building in which church services are performed. “Mom, I’m going to play basketball at the church.” 2. One of a group of Christians who have their own distinct form of worship and doctrine. “Salt Lake City has a strong LDS church presence but the Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, and Catholics as well as many other smaller churches can also be found there.” 3. A body of people who attend a local church. “Our church is having a trunk-or-treat on the night before Halloween. 4. An ecclesiastical organization, power and affairs as distinguished from government organization, power and affairs. “The state department sent Tom Rasband to the Philippines which was co-incidentally, the same place the church had sent him on his mission.” 5. The body of all Christian believers. Christendom. “The church is under attack from a new militant form of atheism.” 6. A definition used by Paul in which he called the church “the Body of Christ,” metaphorically representing the way in which the church serves as Christ’s hands, feet, mouth, etc. in doing His work on the earth now that Christ’s actual physical body is ascended to heaven. 7. And finally, the definition that we will be looking at in this study: The organization set up by Jesus Christ himself, consisting of those who have joined themselves in covenant to Christ by the ordinance of baptism and the receiving of the Holy Ghost, that they might support and help one another and might carry out the work of the Lord on the earth.”

1. **Read ACTS 2:41-47**
 - a. How many different denominations existed during this time in Christian history?
 - b. Which of the above definitions fits the church as found in this passage of Acts?
2. **CHALLENGE QUESTION:** What is the origin of all the hundreds of different Christian churches or denominations found in the world today? (In other words, what do you know, if anything, about the Apostasy?)

Read 1 Nephi 14: 8-15

3.
 - a. In God’s eyes, how many churches are there?
 - b. Name them:
 - c. What is the relative size of these two churches?
 - d. The word “church” is never used in the Old Testament. What phrase from verse 14 identifies those who followed the true God in ancient times and how did they “join” this group?
4. **Read 1 Peter 5: 2-3** The apostle Peter never uses the phrase “body of Christ” in describing the Christian church. What metaphor does he use to describe the church?
5. **Read Ezekiel 34:1-11, 28-31** **Read D&C 6:32-37**
 - a. What does Christ call his people?
 - b. What does the Lord condemn the shepherds of the flock for in the first part of Ezekiel 34?
 - c. Can you think of a way that you are a shepherd over any of Christ’s flock?
 - d. Which verse from D&C 6 was your favorite and why?

d. How did the coming forth of the Book of Mormon" prove to the world" that God is the same "yesterday, today and forever"?

10. a. Which verses in D&C 20 describe the creation? _____

b. Which verses describe the fall? _____

c. Which verses describe mankind's redemption? _____

11. a. Who was permitted to be baptized into the church?

b. What does it mean *to you* that you have "taken upon you the name of Jesus Christ"?

12. **Read D&C 20: 68-84**

a. What do you think verse 68 is saying about how prepared people should be before joining the church?

b. Describe in your own words what the "duties" of a member of the church should be as outlined in verse 69.

c. What are the three things that you "witness" or promise, every time you take the sacrament?

d. What blessings or advantages come to the church from having the instructions of verses 80 through 84?

13. Look through all the verses you have read in Section 20. Find all the phrases that show some relationship between members of the church and the "**name of Jesus Christ.**"

14. A Matching Game! On the left are various ways that a person can take on another's name. Match them up with the things on the right hand side that apply to this action. More than one may apply.

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| 1. Adoption | A. Gives ability to act as an agent for someone else. |
| 2. Taking a spouse's name at marriage. | B. Show that you have become one with another person |
| 3. A servant or employee acting in the name of his or her boss or master. | C. Honor a person who has that name already. |
| 4. A child receiving the last name of the family. | D. Shows that you have been taken into a new family |
| 5. A child receiving a first name in honor of an illustrious ancestor or famous person. | E. Gives you something to live up to. |
| | F. Shows that you want to identify yourself with someone in the eyes of the world. |

15. Much of the Doctrine and Covenants concerns what we might call the destiny of the Church. Before we look at specific scriptures, name two or three things that you think the church is destined to do or become in the latter days.

16. What do you see in the following scriptures that indicate God’s design for the future of the Church:

a. D&C 115:1--6

b. D&C 45:65-75 and Article of Faith #10

c. D&C 103:8-10

17. Identify the responsibilities of the church expressed in the following four scriptures.

D&C 128:22 _____

D&C 124:143 _____

D&C 39:11 _____

D&C 52:40 _____

18. Read D&C 10:67-70. What do you think this means?

19. Name two or three of the greatest blessings that have come into your life because of your membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Here’s a wonderful quote that you might share with your family as the world seems to be spinning out of control around us. President John Taylor said: “In relation to events that will yet take place, and the kind of trials, troubles, and sufferings which we shall have to cope with, it is to me a matter of very little moment; these things are in the hands of God, he dictates the affairs of the human family, and directs and controls our affairs; and the great thing that we, as a people, have to do is seek after and cleave unto our God, to be in close affinity with him, and to seek for his guidance, and his blessing and Holy Spirit to lead and guide us in the right path. Then it matters not what it is nor who it is that we have to contend with, God will give us strength according to our day.” (In *Journal of Discourses*, 18:281.)