

Chapter's 11 and 12 - Jesus Found His Church and The Church in our Time

Review of Last weeks Lesson:

1. We learned that Christ is the source of all grace.
2. This Grace which we receive through the 7 sacraments draws us closer to God
3. Jesus was sent on a mission by the Father to redeem us from all sin and the temptations of the devil.
4. Jesus fulfilled this mission through His life, death, and resurrection.
5. The Catholic Church recognizes Mary's role in our salvation → Mediatrix

Chapter 11 – Jesus Found His Church

- Through history we see that God chose certain people to reveal Himself and His salvation plan to the world.
- God created a covenant with His people (the Israelites) and promised them He would bring about the Messiah through them and that they receive a New Kingdom and a new King.
- With Jesus' death on the cross the old covenant was fulfilled and we entered into the new covenant where anyone who put their faith in Jesus now becomes one of God's chosen people. You no longer had to be a Jew to belong to His covenant.
- His new Kingdom on Earth would be the Church Jesus left us.

1. Jesus Calls the Twelve Apostles

- When Jesus was about 30 years old began preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God.
- **During this time Jesus chose twelve men known as the 12 Apostles to follow Him.**
- These 12 men would be the foundation members of Jesus' Church which he would establish.

- The twelve apostles were: Peter, James the Greater, John, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the Lesser, Jude, Simon, and Judas.
- These 12 men belonged to one of the 12 tribes of Israel to show that His Church was a continuation and fulfillment of the chosen people.

2. Jesus chooses a leader for His Church

- Jesus knew that he would suffer death and would return to Heaven to rule at the right hand of the Father.
- Jesus needed His Church to have a visible supreme leader on earth who would be His representative. Jesus chose Simon who He surnamed Peter. → This is important! God always gives His special chosen leader a new name. *Abram → Abraham Saul → Paul and so on.....*
- Throughout our salvation history, GOD has always provided a 'Father Figure' to guide His people. It's no different in the New Covenant! Why would it be?
- The name Peter means "Rock". This was to show that Peter had a new mission and an important authoritative role in Christ's Church.
- "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:18-19).
 - Jesus gave Peter the Keys to His Kingdom and also gave him the power to loose and bind.
 - What happened to these keys? Under protestant theology this is a mystery! They cannot explain this passage so they usually ignore it
- Peter would be the visible head (Pope) of the Church representing Jesus here on earth.
- The other Apostles recognized Peter's authority and it is also very evident in the writings and teachings of the early Christian's (church fathers).

3. Jesus Gives the Apostles His Authority

- After Jesus gave Peter the power to loose and bind he gave the other Apostles this same power.
 - He did not give them the Keys! Only Peter was chosen to be the leader → Pope → Papa/Father
- Jesus gave them special spiritual gifts that would help them carry out the Church's mission of teaching, ruling, and making holy the members of Jesus' Church. → The 7 Sacraments!
- The apostles were to be Christ's voice in the world.
 - In Luke 10:16 it says "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."
- By giving the other apostles these responsibilities Jesus made them the first Bishops of the Church!
- Bishops are chief shepherds who guard and protect their flock!

4. The Church of Jesus Christ

- The Church Jesus founded is an authoritative Church lead by the Pope and Bishops in union with him.
- The Church has a structure or hierarchy. This is how Jesus intended.
 - Pope → Bishops → Priests → Lay People
- The Church would be Jesus' voice in the world for all men to hear.
- We must obey the Church and the leaders which God puts into place to teach and guide us in matters of faith and morals. Jesus left His Church and His Apostles His authority!
- As members of Christ's Church we are really pilgrims on a journey travelling towards heaven.
 - The reality is that we will be in heaven or hell for eternity. Heaven is our goal!
- The Church is really a continuation of Israel.
- We can see it in three ways:

- **The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ.** The Head (Christ) directs and unifies the rest of the body. We are all part of this body. If one member suffers all suffer together. (1 Cor 12:26-27)
 - Sometimes people claim that they can do whatever they want as long as it doesn't hurt anyone else. This is not true. Adams sin has affected us!
 - Sin affects the whole Church.
- **The Church is the Bride of Christ** because it is like the relationship between a husband and a wife.
 - The Husbands love for his wife reflects the way Love Christ has towards His Church! The Church's love for Christ reflects the way a wife loves her husband.
- **The Communion of Saints** is yet another way of understanding the Church.
 - As members of Christ's Church we are all family members and are united those who have left this world.
 - Members of Christ's Church exist on earth, in purgatory, and in heaven.
 - **Earth** → Church Militant – we fight against sin and evil.
 - **Purgatory** → Church Suffering – souls are being purified and made perfect.
 - **Heaven** → Church Triumphant – members are in the Glory of God and are crowned with victory!

----[Class Video – 3MC – DVD #2 / Part 7 / Title 52: What is the Church?](#)----

5. The Four Marks of Christ's Church

- Today we see hundreds if not thousands of different churches in the world.
- In fact I've heard it said that there are 33,000+ different Christian denominations which exist today.
 - They all claim to be the church founded by Jesus.
 - They all claim to be guided by the Holy Spirit and based on the bible even though they all teach different conflicting doctrines.
 - This can't be! The Holy Spirit doesn't work this way!
 - Why would Jesus want His Church to be invisible and lack unity? He wouldn't!
 - While some of these churches do contain some of the truth taught by Jesus they do not contain all the truths as taught by Jesus. Can a partial truth save? Can a partial Jesus save us? No!
 - Jn 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."
- How do we know which church is actually the Church which Jesus founded in **Matt 16:18?**
- We look for the **4 marks or signs we find in the ancient Nicene Creed. "I believe in one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church." The four marks are:**
- **The Church is One:** Christ establish one Church not many. Nowhere does scripture indicate that Jesus found more than one Church.
- We have one faith, one baptism, one head (the Pope), and one sacrifice of the Mass.
 - Eph 4:4-5 says: "There is **one** body and **one** spirit, just as you were called to the **one** hope that belongs to your call, **one** lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism, **one** God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.." **One, one, one, one, one, one, one.....7 times in one verse! This verse screams of unity! NO room for different beliefs.**

- **The Church is Holy:** The Church was founded by Jesus who was Holy. This Church will have Holiness throughout it. It will have Saints, It will have Angels, and it will have the Sacraments. The Church exists to make us Holy. It contains the Sacraments which sanctify us or make us Holy.
- **The Church is Catholic:** The Church is Catholic or universal meaning that it will be everywhere and in every age.
 - Catholic means “Universal”
 - Be aware that some protestant church use the word catholic in their creed (a modified creed taken from the Catholic Church) but they use it in a different sense than we do. They say “catholic” with a little “c” meaning a universal but invisible church. Some have also changed and taken out other words of the creed to better suite their beliefs and make the creed seem less Roman Catholic.
 - Catholics use the term “Catholic” in our creed with a big “C” denoting a specific historical Church with specific unchangeable universal teachings.
 - “For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” (1Cor.15:9) **The Church had to be visible if Saint Paul persecuted it!**
 - St. Ignatius of Antioch (35-107 A.D.) an Apostolic Father of the Church, and the Bishop of Antioch, wrote the following letter as he was being taken in chains to Rome to be martyred and feed to the lions: ***“Where the bishop appears, there let the people be, just as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.”*** It is believed that in this letter, the words Catholic Church were used for the first time.
- **The Church is Apostolic:** The Church is historical and can be traced back to the apostles chosen by Jesus.
 - Protestant churches have to go through the Catholic Church if they want to trace their roots back to Jesus.
 - These churches are not the true Church which Jesus founded in **MATT 16:18!**

----Class Video – 3MC – DVD #2 / Part 7 / Title 53: What are the Four Characteristics of the Church----

So..... There are three possibilities regarding the Church of Christ: Which one sounds correct?

- 1. Jesus established more than one church.
- 2. Jesus established an invisible, abstract, spiritual church in which all believers, regardless of denomination, are members.
 - In this church, either:
 - (1) Doctrine does not matter, or
 - (2) Conflicting and contradictory doctrines are acceptable to God.
- 3. **Jesus established One Church, which is visible and in which doctrine matters and does not conflict. This church contains the fullness of truth as revealed by God; all others have partial truth, at best. → The Catholic Church!!**
- “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, **tell it to the church**; and if he refuses to listen even to the **church**, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” (Matt 18:15-17) **What church do you tell it to if they all teach conflicting doctrines? This Church must be the Church which Christ founded or you will not get the Truth.**

Finding the True Church by Arch Bishop Fulton Sheen: ““If I were not a Catholic, and were looking for the true Church in the world today, I would look for the one Church which did not get along well with the world; in other words, I would look for the Church which the world hated. My reason for doing this would be, that if Christ is in any one of the churches of the world today, He must still be hated as He was when He was on earth in the flesh. If you would find Christ today, then find the Church that does not get along with the world. Look for the Church that is hated by the world as Christ was hated by the world. Look for the Church that is accused of being behind the times, as our Lord was accused of being ignorant and never having learned. Look for the Church which men sneer at as socially inferior, as they sneered at Our Lord because He came from Nazareth. Look for the Church which is accused of having a devil, as Our Lord was accused of being possessed by Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils. Look for the Church which, in seasons of bigotry, men say must be destroyed in the name of God as men crucified Christ and thought they had done a service to God. Look for the Church which the world rejects because it claims it is infallible, as Pilate rejected Christ because He called Himself the Truth. Look for the Church which is rejected by the world as Our Lord was rejected by men. Look for the Church which amid the confusions of conflicting opinions, its members love as they love Christ, and respect its Voice as the very voice of its Founder, and the suspicion will grow, that if the Church is unpopular with the spirit of the world, then it is unworldly, and if it is unworldly it is other worldly. Since it is other-worldly, it is infinitely loved and infinitely hated as was Christ Himself. But only that which is Divine can be infinitely hated and infinitely loved. Therefore the Church is Divine.”

- **Arch Bishop Fulton Sheen**

- Lived from 1895 to 1979. Fulton sheen was born in El Paso, Illinois. He was one of the most influential figures in the twentieth-century. He authored more than 73 books. He created a popular radio show, 'The Catholic Hour' and later went on to host the TV show, 'Life is Worth Living' and 'The Fulton Sheen Program'. He is also a recipient of the Emmy Award. He is now referred to as the Venerable Servant of God, which was conferred upon him by Pope Benedict XVI. He is widely recognized as one of the first televangelists.
- It's obvious if you pay attention. The Catholic Church has been attacked since the day Christ instituted it.

Chapter 12 – The Church in Our Time

- 10 days after Christ ascended into heaven the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. We call this the Pentecost.
- This is when the Church was established.
- The Holy Spirit transformed the Apostle and gave them special graces and gifts so that they could go and grow Christ's Church within the world.
 - They could speak in tongues or different languages so they could be understood.
 - They were no longer afraid to preach the Gospel for fear of being killed.
 - In the first day scripture tells us that 3000 people were added to the Church.
 - What Church? The Catholic Church!!

1. The Church Spreads throughout the World.

- After Pentecost the apostles spread out and preached the gospel to various parts of the known world.
- Peter went to Rome and to this day the Pope still serve there.
- We know where some of the Apostles went, but not all of them.
- Scriptures tells us that:
 - Andrew → Spain and Russia
 - James the Greater → Spain and then to Jerusalem where he dies for the Faith.
 - Phillip → Asia Minor (Turkey, the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea – Between Europe and Asia.
 - James the Lesser → became the first Bishop of Jerusalem.
 - Bartholomew → Armenia
 - Thomas → India

- Matthew → Palestine
- Jude (Thaddaeus) & Simon → Iran and surrounding countries
- Matthias (Judas' replacement) → Ethiopia
- John → Turkey where he died and wrote the Gospel of John
- **All of these Apostles died as Martyr's for the Faith except for John!**
- The faith was eventually spread all over Europe and the rest of the world.

2. The Spirit's Gifts to the Church

- In order to His mission possible the Holy Spirit has given the Church two very special gifts.
- No other church or religion has these gifts!
- **1st Gift → Infallibility**
 - Means that the Church (the Pope and the Bishop united to him) will always be guided by the Holy Spirit and it will be protected from teaching error when it comes to matters of faith and morals. Only the Pope alone however can use this gift by himself.
 - “And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, (John 14:16)
 - Infallibility does not mean:
 - that the Pope cannot sin.
 - that everything the Pope says is infallible
 - that the Pope is all-knowing.
 - Protestants do not believe in the doctrine of Infallibility. Except when they read the Bible then they are infallible and we Catholics are not. Anyway.....

- This creates a problem! All protestants (and Catholics) believe that the Bible is infallible and that it contains no errors.
- If no one ever acts infallibly then how was the Bible compiled infallibly by fallible men? At the very least they have to admit that the authors of the Bible acted infallibly!
- The fact is that the Catholic Church infallibly compiled the Bible and because of this gift the protestants have the Bible.

- **2nd Gift → Indefectibility**

- Means that the Church will be present on Earth until the end of the world.
- Matt 28:20 “I am with you always, to the close of the age” Jesus promised his apostles that he would not abandon them or His Church.
- Jesus said in Matt 16:18 that not even the “Powers of Death” could destroy His Church.
- The mission of Christ’s Church will never change and it will always be visible and relevant in the world preaching the unchangeable Gospel.
- We see the gift of Indefectibility today → The Catholic has been around longer than any manmade institution or country.

3. The Church Brings Jesus to Every Age

- With the gifts of infallibility and Indefectibility Jesus brings His good news to the world.
- While the teachings of the Church never change some of the churches rules and traditions can develop and change.
- The Church must always represent Christ’s message to the world in a way that it understands it.
 - For example: the Mass is celebrated differently in some parts of the world.

- The Byzantine Catholics celebrate Mass in a different tradition than we do, but the reality is the same. The Sacrifice of Christ is offered up the Father!
- Some traditions such as fasting have changed over time. It used to be custom to fast from midnight until communion. Now we only have to fast an hour. We still fast out of reverence for Christ and this has not changed.

Review Questions:

- 1) **The Twelve Men Jesus called to follow him are called?** The Twelve Apostles

- 2) **Church members exits in three places?** Earth (militant), Purgatory (Suffering) and Heaven (Triumphant)

- 3) **What are the 4 marks of the True Church?** One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

- 4) **Infallibility means?** That the Church guided by the Holy Spirit cannot teach errors in matters of faith and morals.

- 5) **Indefectibility means?** That the Church will be present on Earth until the end of the world.