

Roots Pt 4 The Church and Christ's Return

I. Roots Pt. 3 recap

A. Last time we talked about what man is.

1. That man is the pinnacle of God's creation.
2. That God created man to look like Himself.
3. That God has given man the responsibility to be His representative on earth.
4. and that man was created for God's glory and one way we bring Him glory is by simply knowing Him and enjoying Him.

B. We also talked about salvation.

1. Salvation is when God changes the standing of sinners from unacceptable to acceptable.
2. That salvation is the work of a good and loving God.
3. That salvation is regeneration
 - a) and regeneration is the result of conviction and conversion.
4. It's God forgiving us, embracing us, making us His children, and infusing us with new life.
5. Tonight we're going to talk about **the church** and **the return of Jesus**.

II. What is the church?

A. The church is the _____.

1. It's made up of all the men and women who have been, are, or ever will be true believers in Jesus.
2. The church is massive and includes believers from all of history to all of the future.

B. Jesus established the church in Matthew 16:18 when He said, "**and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.**"

1. The church was God's idea and He intended for it to be a powerful, advancing force.
2. Just as in the Old Testament, God called his people to be a _____ before Him, so Christians are called to do the same today.

C. What makes a church a church in the sense that we understand a church to be?

1. There are two major activities that every church must perform to truly be considered a church.
 - a) The first is _____ (free from false doctrine).
 - b) The second is the administration of the sacraments of _____ and the _____.
2. There are two characteristics true churches should pursue.
 - a) The church should pursue _____.
 - (1) In Ephesians 5:26-27, Paul says that Christ "**gave up his life for her ²⁶ to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. ²⁷ He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.**"
 - b) The church should pursue _____.
 - (1) God wants us to be free from division.
 - (2) Free from divisions among ourselves and free from divisions with other churches.
 - (3) Jesus prayed for the church to be in unity in John 17:21, "**I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you.**"

D. What is the church supposed to do?

1. The church is supposed to minister to _____.
 - a) Colossians 3:16 tells us to “Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.”
 - b) Worship isn’t preparation for something else (like the message), it’s the fulfillment of a major purpose of the church.
2. The church is also to minister to _____.
 - a) Colossians 1:28 says, “So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ.”
 - b) The church is to nurture and build up it’s members, in the faith.
 - c) The responsibility of church leadership is to “equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.” according to Ephesians 4:12.
3. Lastly, the church is to minister to _____.
 - a) Spiritually
 - (1) Jesus commands us to “go and make disciples of all the nations” in Matthew 28:19.
 - (2) In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells us to tell people about Him everywhere, even to the “ends of the earth”.
 - b) and physically
 - (1) To keep helping the poor (Galatians 2:10)
 - (2) To care for widows and orphans (James 1:27)

III. The return of Jesus

- A. There have been a lot of debates over what happens during the last days, but one thing is for sure, we know that Jesus is _____.
 1. Jesus said in John 14:3, “When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.”
 2. Acts 1:11 tells us “someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”
- B. No one knows the exact time of Jesus’ return.
 1. Mark 13:32 says, “However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.”
 2. The important thing is that we’re _____ when He does come! (Mark 13:33)
- C. What will happen when Jesus returns?
 1. He will gather his people to take them home.
 - a) Mark 13:26-27 says, “Then everyone will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And he will send out his angels to gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.”
 2. The devil will be _____.
 - a) Revelation 20:10 says, “Then the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”
 3. There will be a final judgement
 - a) Revelation 20:12 tells us, “And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books.”

- b) Those who rejected Jesus will be sentenced to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:41)
 - c) Those who accepted Jesus receive _____.
 - (1) In John 5:24 Jesus says, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”
4. And that’s all just the beginning!