

# Claiming the Faith

## Lesson #21

### *Why do we Love ?*

#### \*\*Resources Needed\*\*

#### *Why Do We Love the Church?*

0:00 Welcoming Prayer: from John Calvin's *Catechism of the Church in Geneva*

My good God, Father, and Savior, grant me aid by your Holy Spirit to now work fruitfully in my vocation, which is from you, all in order to love you and the people around me rather than for my own gain and glory. Give me wisdom, judgment and prudence, and freedom from my besetting sins. Bring me under the rule of true humility. Let me accept with patience whatever amount of fruitfulness or difficulty in my work that you give me this day. And in all I do, help me to rest always in my Lord Jesus Christ and in his grace alone for my salvation and life Hear me, merciful Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

0:05 Key Concepts

The Bride of Christ

0:10 Key Scriptures

Revelation 21: 2

*2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

Revelation 21: 9-10

*9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.*

#### *The Church's One Foundation* by S. J. Stone

1.  
The church's one foundation  
is Jesus Christ, her Lord;  
she is His new creation,  
by water and the word.  
From heav'n He came and sought her  
to be His holy bride;  
with His own blood He bought her,

4.  
The church shall never perish!  
Her dear Lord to defend,  
to guide, sustain, and cherish,  
is with her to the end;  
though there be those that hate her,  
and false sons in her pale,  
against the foe or traitor

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and for her life He died.

2.  
Elect from every nation,  
yet one o'er all the earth,  
her charter of salvation:  
one Lord, one faith, one birth.  
One holy name she blesses,  
partakes one holy food,  
and to one hope she presses,  
with every grace endued.

3.  
Though with a scornful wonder,  
men see her sore oppressed,  
by schisms rent asunder,  
by heresies distressed,  
yet saints their watch are keeping,  
their cry goes up, "How long?"  
and soon the night of weeping  
shall be the morn of song!

she ever shall prevail.

5.  
Mid toil and tribulation,  
and tumult of her war,  
she waits the consummation  
of peace forevermore;  
till with the vision glorious  
her longing eyes are blest,  
and the great church victorious  
shall be the church at rest.

6.  
Yet she on earth hath union  
with God the Three in One,  
and mystic sweet communion  
with those whose rest is won;  
O happy ones and holy!  
Lord give us grace that we,  
like them, the meek and lowly,  
on high may dwell with Thee.

0:15          Exposition

0:30          Discussion and Reflection

1. What are some aspects of Christian life and God's expectations for his people that we cannot accomplish alone?
2. List a few benefits of living in Christian community within a congregation.
3. If we are each part of the church, what does it mean to 'love the church?'

0:45          Concluding Remarks

The Church is the term we use to describe the part of humanity that is redeemed and welcomed back into right relationship with God. From the very beginning of creation, God wanted only for relationship with humankind. Following the Fall of Adam and Eve, humanity has rejected that relationship with God for millennia. With Jesus' death and resurrection, and the Holy Spirit's guiding, we now live within the framework of God's New Creation. As the Church, we are collectively the Bride of Christ, His chosen and precious Love.

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0:50      Sending Prayer: from John Calvin's *Catechism of the Church in Geneva*

Lord God, I give you thanks for all the benefits and gifts you constantly shower on me. Thank you for sustaining my physical life through food and shelter; for giving me new life through the gospel; and for the certainty of the best and perfect life, which is yet to come. In light of all these blessings, I now ask that you would not allow my affections to be tangled in inordinate desires for the things of this world, but let me always set my heart on things above, where Christ, who is my life, is seated at your right hand. Hear me, merciful Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

*Notes*