

TH505 Ecclesiology
Question #1 - Sept. 5, 2000

1.

- a. Give several arguments for the existence of the church prior to Pentecost:

Heb. 12:23 refers to a church in the Old Testament.

The church began with Adam, or at least Abraham, seeing that the Church replaced Israel and consists of all believers before and after Christ.

Christ uses the term “Church” three times in His ministry.

The church began with the beginning of Christ’s ministry.

- b. Give several arguments that the church did not exist until Pentecost:

According to I Cor. 12:13, it is the baptizing of the Holy Spirit that unites believers with Christ and one another. This event was still future in Acts 1:5, but according to Acts 11:15,16 this happened at Pentecost in Acts. 2.

2. How would you define that entity prior to Pentecost? (i.e., what are some terms to use to better describe it?):

Assembly: “A company of persons gathered for deliberation and legislation, worship, or entertainment” -- Webster

Cult: “formal religious veneration: worship; a system of religious beliefs and ritual: its body of adherents” -- Webster

Sect: “A religious denomination; a group adhering to a distinctive doctrine or to a leader” -- Webster

3. Mat.. 16:18-19

- a. How do you explain “rock” in 16:18?

When Christ was speaking with Peter, He used a sort of “play on words”. He called him Peter or *Petros*, but then He says “on this rock *petra*”. The rock that Christ was referring to was Himself, the only unmovable foundation for the church to built on. Or more specifically, the testimony of Christ that Peter had just given in the previous verses “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”. On this fact, will the church of Jesus Christ be built. Every true church, must stand on this foundation.

- Nestle – Aland “Greek - English New Testament”
- J.C. Ryle – Commentary on Matthew
- Matthew Henry – Commentary on Matthew

- b. What are the “gates of hades” (16:18b)?

All the powers and policies of Satan’s kingdom. Eph. 6:12 – 20.

- Matthew Henry – Commentary on Matthew

- c. What are the “keys to the kingdom” (16:19)?

The true meaning of this phrase seems to be that Peter was to be the initial instrument that God would use to take the gospel to the World, and that by preaching the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles, he in essence was throwing open to gates of heaven for people to enter, by faith in the truth of the Gospel he was preaching.

J.C. Ryle “Commentary on Matthew” – Pg. 194

- d. What did Jesus mean when He told Peter he would be able to “bind” and “loose” people (16:19)?

As this passage relates to Matt. 18:18 and John 20:23, I believe that this is referring to the future authority of the church to practice church discipline.

For help, see especially:

Bible Knowledge Commentary- NT

Broadus, John. *Matthew*

Carson, D.A. “Matthew” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*