

# The Church of the Bible—No. 6

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The church of the Bible is not time- or earth-bound. Its destiny reaches beyond both. The church/kingdom of Jesus Christ has an eternal destiny.

After writing of the church in Hebrews 12:23, the inspired writer then describes it as “a kingdom that cannot be shaken” (v. 28). This statement about the kingdom meshes perfectly with Daniel’s fifth-century-B.C. prophecy:

And in the days of those kings [a reference to the Roman emperors] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (2:44).

Jesus is “the head of the church, being himself the savior of the body” (Eph. 5:23b). Since *the body* is another way of referring to the church (Eph. 1:22–23), Jesus is therefore the “Savior of the church.” Since “the church” denotes the human beings who compose it (not the building where they meet), in what sense will He save it? (Obviously, He does not save its members from such things as dread diseases, grievous accidents, or bankruptcy.)

- **First**, He saves those who are in His church from the guilt and condemnation of their sins: “And the Lord added to them [the church, KJV] day by day those that were saved” (Acts 2: 47b, KJV). Beginning at Pentecost, as individuals are saved, the Lord adds them to His church. The church is thus the “depository” of God’s saved/redeemed people (20:28). This is one sense in which Jesus is the “Savior of the church.”
- **Second**, He will save the church eternally. Upon His return, “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10). This spectacle will end all material things and institutions – including false religions (Mat. 15:13). The church, the eternal spiritual kingdom, however, will “not be shaken.” Rather, at the Lord’s coming, He “shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father” (1 Cor. 15:24; cf. 1 The. 4:16–17).

One must be in His church to be saved at last, for He has promised to save it alone. How then does one enter it? On Pentecost, its “birthday,” people responded to the Gospel by confessing their faith in Christ, repenting of their sins, and being baptized

unto the remission of their sins, whereupon the Lord added them because they were saved (Acts 2:37–41). The Bible gives no other means of entrance.

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