

WHAT IS A VALID CHURCH? IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH THE ONLY TRUE CHURCH?

A Biblical Study of The Catechism of the Catholic Church:

*Bible Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions
about Catholic Beliefs and Practices*

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Passages of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* to Consider:

- **“The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit”** (CCC 809)
- **“This is the sole Church of Christ” (CCC 811)**
- “The sole Church of Christ [is that] which our Savior, after his Resurrection, entrusted to Peter’s pastoral care, commissioning him and the other apostles to extend and rule it. ... This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in (*subsistit in*) the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him.” (CCC 816)
- **“For it is through Christ’s Catholic Church alone, which is the universal hope toward salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained” (CCC 816)**

Scriptures to Consider:

- 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, [20] for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (ESV)
- 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 “Do you not know that **you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?** [17] If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” (ESV)
- 2 Timothy 3:15 “the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” (ESV)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9–10 “For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.” (ESV)
- Hebrews 10:24-25 “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near”
- Ephesians 1:22-23 **“the church, which is his body”**
- 1 Corinthians 12:20 “As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 “Now **you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.** 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”

Questions to Consider:

- Is God’s Spirit constrained to a building or a denomination?
- What is a church? What is the purpose of a church?
- **Are all churches valid? What constitutes a true church?**

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- **Does salvation come through a church or through Jesus?**
- How do we most accurately learn about Jesus?
- How do we ensure our faith is true?