

Lecture 18 – The Doctrine of the Church: The Attributes of the Church

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17:20-23

Key Terms

Attribute, unity, sanctify, catholicity, apostolicity, objective reality & subjective unity

Lecture Objectives

- To list and describe the four attributes of the church
- To explore some of the important applications of these attributes for the life and ministry of believers and the church

Preview

Now that we have established the biblical rationale for the marks of the church: the Word, sacraments, and discipline, we will continue our study by discussing the attributes of the church. Prior outline points have been listed for continuity.

The Doctrine of the Church: The Attributes of the Church

I. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

II. The Doctrine of Election

III. The Doctrine of the Church

A. The nature of the church

B. The marks of the church: Word, sacraments, discipline

*C. Attributes of the church

1. Unity

a. John 17:20-23

1) Verse 20

2) Verse 21

3) Verse 22

4) Verse 23

b. Ephesians 4:1-16

1) Objective unities, verses 4-6

a) One body of Christ

b) One God the Holy Spirit

c) One hope

d) One Lord

e) One faith

f) One baptism

g) One God and Father of all

2) Subjective unities, verses 3, 7-16

a) Unity of the Spirit

b) Grace for each

c) Gifts for each

d) Use of gifts

e) Unity and maturity are the goals

3) Chiasm

A edification, v.12

B unity v.13

C maturity v.13

Word (truth) v.15

C' maturity v.15

B' unity v.16

A' edification v.16

c. Applications

- 1) Divisions in the local church obscure the church's unity
- 2) Bad attitudes towards other Christians hurt the church's witness
- 3) We need to make sure our lives promote unity.

2. Sanctity

a. Three stages

1) Initial, 2 Thessalonians 2:13

2) Progressive, 1 Thessalonians 4:3

3) Final, 1 Thessalonians 5:23

b. John 17:17-19

1) Verse 17

2) Verse 19

c. Ephesians 5:25-27

1) Verse 25

2) Verse 26

3) Verse 27

d. Applications

1) Initial sanctification

2) Church discipline

3) True love for Christ

4) Holiness and Godliness