



Lesson 17

The Holy Christian Church and Local Congregations

Catechism Questions 205-215



1 Samuel 16:1-13

**Samuel Is Sent to Anoint
the Next King of Israel**

1. The Israelites had lived in the Promised Land for approximately 350 years before they demanded a **King**, over God's objections (see **1 Samuel 8:10-22**). Saul was their first **King**. Though his reign had started well, how far had his relationship with God fallen as he ruled as **King** (v. 1)?

God had rejected Saul as king.



2. Read **1 Samuel 9:2**. What do we know about Saul when he was chosen to be **King**?

He was handsome and very tall.



3. How did God make it clear that the next **King** would be different (**vv. 6-7**)?

The next king would not be chosen based on appearance but on the condition of his heart.



4. Why did David's own father not consider David for the role of king (v. 11)?

He was the youngest and was just a shepherd.



5. How does God differ from people in the way he makes decisions? See v. 7.

God is able to read the heart. He knows things we can't.



6. As he observed each of Jesse's sons, Samuel learned that he couldn't see what was truly important (**v. 7**). To what extent can we judge people's **Faith**, by looking at them?

We can't see a person's faith; only God can read the heart.



Key Term

Holy Christian Church (Invisible Church):

All believers of all times.



7. While the **Holy Christian Church** is invisible, we can see parts of it. Our church home is one of many, many different **Local Congregations** in the world. Sometimes these are called **Visible Churches** because, unlike the **Holy Christian Church**, we can clearly see who is a member.

Key Term

Local Congregation (Visible Church):

A group of people who gather to worship and share God's Word.



8. Even if we know someone in our church well, why can't we be 100 percent certain that he or she is a Christian?

It is possible that they are just pretending to be or are lying about being a Christian.



Key Term

Hypocrite:

Someone who pretends to be a Christian but is not.



9. Why might someone choose to be a **Hypocrite**?

They might do this to look good, make someone happy, etc.





1 John 4:1-6

**Test to See if What
You're Hearing Is True**

10. One of the things we need to do before we join a congregation is to “**test the spirits**” (v. 1), that is, test to see that the church is teaching the truth. How would we “test spirits”?

Compare what they teach with what God says in the Bible.



11. When we test a church, we will find them to be either **Orthodox** or **Heterodox**.

Key Term

Orthodox:

A church that teaches God's Word completely accurately.



11. When we test a church, we will find them to be either **Orthodox** or **Heterodox**.

Key Term

Heterodox:

A church that doesn't teach God's Word accurately.



12. Read how Jesus describes false teachers in **Matthew 7:15-16a**. How dangerous is a wolf in a sheep costume to a flock of sheep?

He could easily kill the sheep.



13. How dangerous is someone who teaches God's Word improperly?

Even more! A false teacher can threaten a person's eternal life.



14. Read **Matthew 28:19-20a**. How much of his Word did Jesus command us to teach others?

Everything.



15. If we find that a church is not teaching God's Word completely accurately (**Heterodox**), what should we do with that church? Read **Romans 16:17**.

We should keep away from it and go somewhere else.



Key Term

Church Fellowship:

We join to work and worship with Christians with whom we have complete agreement on God's Word.



16. When we note that a person or church is not teaching God's Word accurately, what should we do for that person or church? Read **Ephesians 4:11-15** and **Titus 3:10-11**.

Warn and correct the person or group *in love*, but if they will not listen, move on.



17. Give three reasons why we would want to warn them.

(1) Concern for their souls. (2) Concern for the people they teach. (3) So we are protected from their teaching.



18. Why wouldn't we want to join other Christians for worship or for work in the church if we are not in full agreement with them?

That would imply the errors don't matter.





Lesson Question

Lesson Question:

How is the holy Christian church (HCC) different from a local congregation?

The HCC is invisible; local congregations are visible. All members of the HCC are believers; local congregations may have members who are not believers. A local congregation may teach God's Word improperly.





Homework