

# The church – Why this study?

- The church is God's eternal purpose accomplished in Jesus Christ
  - Ephesians 3:8-11
- Jesus purchased the church with His own blood
  - Acts 20:28
- How important is the church to God?
- Then how important should the church be to us?

# The church – Why this study?

- Because of the religious division in the world
  - World
    - “It may surprise you to know that there are over 4,000 recognized religions in the world. These religions consist of churches, congregations, faith groups, tribes, cultures, and movements. Even though there are so many, three-quarters of the world’s population practice one of the five major religions. These include:
      - Buddhism
      - Christianity
      - Hinduism
      - Islam
      - Judaism”

(from National Day Calendar, “World Religion Day”)

# The church – Why this study?

- Because of the religious division in the world
  - Moscow, Idaho
    - About 40 categories, most with multiple listings
    - (from yellow pages of “Names and Numbers”, 2022)

# The church – Why this study?

- Because of the religious division in the world
  - John 17:17
  - Matthew 16:16-18
  - Galatians 1:6-8
  - Matthew 15:8-9
  - What does God think of the religious division?
  - What should we think of the religious division?

# The church – Why this study?

- Because the word “church” means different things to different people
  - Consider dictionary definitions
    - “a building for public worship”
    - “church services; divine worship”
    - “the organization of Christianity, as in a nation; esp., ecclesiastical power or government”
    - “the clerical profession”
    - “a body of Christian believers having the same creed, rites, etc.; a denomination; as, the Presbyterian Church”
    - “any body of worshipers; a religions society”
  - But what does the Bible say?

# The church – Why this study?

- Because of the divisions that come from within
  - Acts 20:29-30
  - Galatians 2:4
  - 2 Thessalonians 2:3-5, 7
  - 1 Timothy 4:1-3
  - What does God think about these divisions?
  - What should be our attitude toward these divisions?