



DYING CHURCH RISING HOPE

Higher Things Conference 2026

2026 Higher Things PRE-CONFERENCE BIBLE STUDY

What does the world think of when they hear the word “church”?

What do you think of when you hear the word “church”?

Let’s take a look at a few Scripture passages:

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-3

How does St. Paul describe the church?

ACTS 2:42-47

What is the church doing in this passage?

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27; MATTHEW 18:20; AND COLOSSIANS 1:18

Who makes up the church?

EPHESIANS 4:1-6, 11-16

What are the attributes that make up the church?

What are the gifts Christ gives to His church here?

VIDEO #1

READ MATTHEW 16:15-19

What is the rock upon which Christ will build His church?

Why can the “gates of hell” not prevail against this confession?

READ EPHESIANS 2:19-22

Who builds the church?

On what is the church built?

This church is built on Christ Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, through the Gospel rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered. It can not fail.

But there are things in the church on earth, a church filled with sinners who sin, that must die, as well as things which must remain. Take a look at the list below. Draw a line through those things that must die, and draw a circle around those things which must remain.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Pride | Lust | Sin |
| Absolution | Praying to the saints | Organ |
| Processions | Jesus | Guitar |
| Lust for Power | Creeds | Opinions |
| Pulpit | Artwork/Icons | Law |
| Skipping the Divine Service | Ties | Worldly Culture |
| The Lord's Supper | Idolatry | Gospel |
| Prayers | Hypocrisy | Genuflecting |
| Arguments | Teaching | Higher Things |
| My wants | New Life | Lies |
| Confession | Head coverings | Pastor |
| Screens | Good Works | Suffering |
| Sweat Pants | Dying | Kneeling |
| Baptism | Church calendar | |
| | Rising | |

So there are clearly things which must be put to death and die within the church and our lives as Christians.

READ GALATIANS 5:19-21

What do these sorts of behaviors do to the church of Christ Jesus?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:3-8

St. Paul has a similar list here with more behaviors. What does he say must be done with them?

So how do we put these things to death? Let's read the Fourth Part of The Sacrament of Holy Baptism. What does such baptizing with water signify?

How do we put sin to death?

READ ROMANS 6:1-10

What happened in your Baptism?

There are also many things that must be retained in the church.

Read the following passages to see what we must keep:

MATTHEW 28:16-20

LUKE 22:14-20

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-27

ACTS 2:37-39

JOHN 20:19-23

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-4

ACTS 2:42

MARK 13:31

COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

EPHESIANS 4:1-6

JUDE 1-3



VIDEO #2

As we conclude this pre-conference study, let's look at a few more passages about Dying Church Rising Hope.

HEBREWS 10:22-25

What is the Day that is drawing near?

As this day draws near, what are you to be doing?

EPHESIANS 2:4-10

What has God done for you in these verses?

ROMANS 6:1-10

We previously looked at these verses. We concluded with them again. What has God done to you in the waters of Holy Baptism?

What happened to our old, sinful self?

What came out of the water with Jesus?

What must we do daily?

So every day, remember what must die — sin and all the trappings of the devil, the world, and your own sinful flesh — and there is resurrection, new life now and for eternity in Christ Jesus, whom God did not spare but gave Him into death so that you are forgiven.

“Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24-25)

