

Some Things the Bible Teaches About the Church

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In the midst of so many religious bodies teaching conflicting doctrines, one finds himself with the difficult task of locating the true church. We can easily locate the right church by examining the distinct marks of identification of the church as revealed in the New Testament, and then finding one today that has these same marks of identification.

The Church Was Planned by God. The church was in the “...eternal purpose of God” (Ephesians 3:10-11). The church was not just an afterthought, but planned by God from the beginning.

The Church Was Predicted in the Old Testament. The prophets of the Old Testament predicted that the church would be established. One outstanding prophecy is that of Isaiah 2:2-3: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

The Church Is Revealed in the New Testament. The prophecy of Isaiah 2 is fulfilled in the establishment of the church as recorded in Acts 2. Read Acts 2 and notice the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy. The apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel.

Men heard it, believed it, and obeyed it. As a result, the Lord “...added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). For the first time the church is said to be in existence. Always before this time the church was spoken of as being in the future. This was shortly after Christ arose from the dead around AD 33.

The Church Was Built by Christ. The psalmist said, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it...” (Psalm 127:1). The house is the church (1 Timothy 3:15). Jesus said, “...and upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). Christ is the foundation of the church (1 Corinthians 3:11). Any church built by somebody else is not the Lord’s church.

The Church Is Headed by Christ. Paul said, “And he (Christ) is the head of the body, the church...” (Colossians 1:18). Christ is the head and the church is His body. Since this is true, then the church must be in subjection to its head, Christ. “Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing” (Ephesians 5:24). The church has no man for its head here on earth. Christ has all authority (Matthew 28:18), which leaves none for anyone else.

The Church Was Purchased with the Blood of Christ. The great value of the church

can be seen when we realize that it took the blood of Christ to purchase it. Paul told the Ephesian elders, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,...to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Peter said that we were purchased "...with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

The Church Belongs to Christ. There is no exclusive name given to the Lord's church. It is certainly proper to refer to the Lord's church by the names given in the Scriptures. Paul said, "...the churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16). A church that does not wear the name of Christ must not belong to Him. The members of the church belong to Christ and thus wear the name God gave His people to wear - Christian (Isaiah 56:5; 62:2; 65:15; Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). The Bible will make you only a Christian, nothing else. Let us respect Christ by wearing only His name for the church.

The Church Is Independently Organized. Every church in New Testament times was independent of every other church. Elders were ordained in "every church" (Acts 14:23). Each church had its own elders, deacons, and members. Paul's letter to the Philippians was addressed to "...all the saints

in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1). Elders and deacons are men who meet the qualifications laid down in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The elders oversee the flock, only their own (1 Peter 5:1-3), while the deacons serve the local church. There is no organization larger or smaller than the local church through which the church is to function. State and nation-wide church groups are foreign to the Bible. Elders are also called bishops or pastors; not the preachers.

The Church Is Guided by the Bible. The Bible completely furnishes us with all that we need religiously (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3). The church has no other creed book to follow.

The Church Worships in Truth. Worship must be as God has directed or it is vain (Matthew 15:9). "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The church worships only as Christ has authorized.

Jesus established His church to provide salvation. It is vital that we be part of the Lord's church. We invite you to investigate us. Many churches claim to be true, but do not follow the Bible in these matters.

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***The Bible
Is Our
Only Guide!***