

The Church of Christ Is Distinct in Worship

John Isaac Edwards

These three things distinguish the worship of the Lord’s church from the worship of most denominations:

The Absence of Mechanical Instrumental Music. One of the first things some observe when they make their visit with the people of God is the absence of mechanical instruments of music in our worship. The church of God is instructed to sing praises to God and to teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Hebrews 2:12; 13:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). There is no authority anywhere in the New Testament for Christians playing on mechanical instruments in worship unto God. If so, where is the book, chapter and verse? _____

The Lord’s Supper Every Lord’s Day. The Lord’s supper was instituted by Christ to be observed by Christians in remembrance of His death (1 Corinthians 11:23-34). Acts 20:7 records the example of the church at Troas: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” Most churches observe the Lord’s supper only once a month, once a quarter, or once or twice a year, and some churches break bread on other days than the first day of the week. There is not an ounce of Bible authority

for eating the Lord’s supper any other day of the week than upon the first day of the week, and it is necessarily implied by the clear language of Acts 20:7 that the Lord’s supper is a weekly observance, just as the old command, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy”, included every seventh day (Exodus 20:8)!

No Collections, Except on the Lord’s Day. Taking up a collection is commanded in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” This command is to the church of God (1 Corinthians 1:2); thus saints alone are asked to give. A lot of churches take up collections about everytime they come together, and even beg business men of the city or listeners to a radio program to give to support their work. The church built by Christ respects the authority of Christ in funding the work directed by the Lord.

These things which set the church built by Christ apart from man-made churches have not been devised by men, but are simply the result of the body of Christ being subject to her Head, even Christ, and doing all by His authority (Ephesians 5:23-24; Colossians 3:17).

If the Church Was Established During The Personal Ministry of Christ...

John Isaac Edwards

Perhaps the most prevalent misconception as to *when* the church was established is the idea that the church of the New Testament was set up and organized by Jesus Christ during His personal ministry on earth. There are some real consequences, if this be true:

It Would Have Been Under the Limited Commission. Under the limited commission, preaching was only “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:5). The Great Commission was not given until after Jesus’ resurrection (Matthew 28:18-20) and was not executed until after His ascension (Acts 1 & 2). This would contradict that which was prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 2:2-3).

It Could Not Preach That Jesus Is the Christ. When Peter confessed Jesus as “The Christ of God”, Jesus “straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing” until “he be raised the third day” (Luke 9:18-22).

It Would Have Had No Apostles in It. “And God hath set some in the church, first

apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...” (1 Corinthians 12:28). When did God give some apostles, some prophets, and some teachers? After the ascension of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-11).

It Would Have Been Without a Foundation. The “household of God” is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:19-20). It was prophesied, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation...” (Isaiah 28:16). Christ was not completely tried and proven until His death, burial, and resurrection. Thus, it would have been a church without “a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation”!

It Would Have Been Without the Holy Spirit. According to John 7:39, the Spirit was not given until Jesus was glorified. When was He glorified? Not until after He suffered (Luke 24:26; 1 Peter 1:11). Without the Spirit, it would have been dead, inasmuch “as the body without the spirit is dead” (James 2:26).

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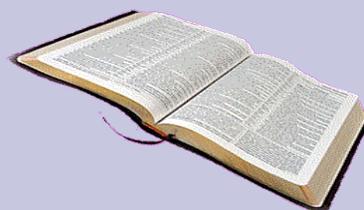
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Assembling Times:

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Is Our
Only Guide!***