The One Church Jesus Died To Save

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday November 6th, 2022

Text: Matthew 16:16-19; Ephesians 4:4-6

### **Intro**

1. A common question is, “Why are there so many churches?”
2. The next question is oftentimes, “How do I know which one is right?”
   1. When church shopping, many people ask, “What do you offer?”
3. The question people should be asking is, “Is it the church Jesus died to build and save?”
   1. Jesus said He would build His church (singular, not plural: Mt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6: One body) and save those in that one body (Ephesians 5:23)
   2. If Jesus built only one church, then why are there so many churches?
4. In a world full of many churches, how can I identify the church that Jesus died to build & save?

#### **It Was Built By the Right Founder**

* 1. Jer. 23:5-6; Mal. 3:1-3: Branch of David foretold; fulfilled in Jesus – Mt. 1:21; John 1:29; Acts 20:28 (John the Baptist is the 1st messenger & Jesus is the 2nd Messenger in Mal. 3)
  2. Mt. 16:18: Jesus said, “…upon this rock I will build My church.”
     1. *Ekklesia (G1577):* “called out, calling out.” *(II Thess. 2:14: By the gospel)*
     2. The “church” is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), made up of the “called out.”
        1. “Called out” of the world *(Eph. 2:1-3; II Cor. 6:14-18)* by the gospel!
     3. Built on the rock of Jesus being the Son of the Living God (Mt. 16:16; Acts 8:37) – Mt. 17:3-5: Peter not allowed to make a “Tabernacle” to men!
  3. There is only one church Jesus built! (Jn. 15:1-8)–Jesus is the Vine & saints the branches
     1. “My church” (Mt. 16:18) indicates possession, so the church He is Savior of *(Eph. 5:23)* is the church of Christ, that is to say “the church that belongs to Christ.”
     2. Mark 9:1; Acts 2:47; 20:28: Jesus built His church as promised in the 1st century on the Day of Pentecost!
     3. He gave His blood to build His church *(Acts 20:28).*
     4. He never promised any other church – just His own church, bought with blood, and Spirit-filled all over the world! (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16)
     5. He promised to save those in His church (body) – Eph. 5:23 *(Eph. 1:22-23)*
  4. Mt. 15:13-14: Jesus also said any “plant” not planted by God will be uprooted.
  5. There have been many people who have founded churches (They are the vine of their own religion), but if built by men then not built by Jesus & will be uprooted!
  6. If not built by Jesus Christ, then that church is from man, and not God!

#### **It Was Built in the Right Place**

* 1. Isaiah 2:1-3: God made the choice to build His church (house) in Jerusalem.
  2. Jeremiah 31:31-34: God would forge a new covenant within the hearts of men!
  3. The N.T. records that the church was founded in Jerusalem!
     1. Mark 9:1; Acts 1:9-12; 2:1-5, 47: Just as was promised the church began in Jerusalem! *(Acts 11:15: “…at the beginning”)*
  4. Ps. 127:1: God must build the house or its building is in vain! *(Mt. 15:13-14)*
  5. Any church that had its beginning in any place other than Jerusalem is not the church Isaiah prophesied about being built in Jerusalem, nor the church Jesus built!
  6. The church Jesus built started in Jerusalem as was foretold!

#### **It Was Built at the Right Time**

* 1. Dan. 2:44: The eternal kingdom Daniel saw would be built in the days of the Romans.
  2. Acts 11:15: Notice the wording, “…as upon us at the beginning.”
     1. This points back to the day of Pentecost *(Pente* = 50; *cost* = day) in Acts 2.
     2. Thus the church was established 50 days after Christ rose from the dead (Pentecost is 50 days after the Passover, at which time Christ was crucified).
     3. This was long before the denominations came into being!
  3. Any church not built in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost in 1st c. is not the church Jesus built! (*The days of the Romans are long gone – Gal. 4:4: When the “fullness of time came”)*
  4. The church Jesus built was in the 1st century *(“days of those kings” – the Romans)* as God foretold through the prophets!

#### **It Was Built on the Right Foundation & Doctrine**

* 1. Is. 28:16: God said He would lay in Zion (Jerusalem) a foundation stone.
     1. *Many today erroneously believe Peter was the foundation of the church (Mt. 16:16-18) – Jesus is the Son of God & is the Rock or Foundation (Acts 8:37)*
  2. Scriptures teach Jesus Christ is the foundation!
     1. I Cor. 3:10-11: The foundation is Christ, and no other foundation can be laid!
     2. I Pet. 2:4-6: A living foundation upon which living stones are being built! (Quotes from Is. 28:16)

#### From the time of its establishment the church of Christ teaches the correct doctrine.

* + 1. Acts 2:42: They continued “steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.”
    2. II Tim. 3:16-17: The Scriptures are “profitable for doctrine.”
    3. Jn. 8:31; II Jn. 9: Must continue (abide) in the words (doctrine, teaching) of Jesus Christ! (I Tim. 4:6, 16; Titus 2:1: Hold fast to “sound doctrine” and “Continue in them” [NKJ] to save both teacher & hearer!)
    4. II Pet. 1:3: God’s word, through the knowledge of Jesus, provides “everything pertaining to life and godliness.”
  1. No creed or manual of men; IE: Apostle’s Creed; Nicene Creed; etc. is necessary!

#### The church built by Jesus was founded by and on Jesus (no other foundation can be laid) & the church that belongs to Jesus teaches no other doctrine than that of Jesus *(II Jn. 9)!*

#### **It Wears the Right Name**

* 1. Mt. 16:18: “MY” is a personal pronoun that denotes possession – the church belongs to Christ! (Rom. 16:16: The churches of Christ greet you”)
  2. Names given for the church:
     1. Church(es) of Christ (Rom. 16:16); church of God (Acts 20:28); church of the Living God (I Tim. 3:15); church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23).
     2. Christians are the “branches” to Christ’s “Vine” (Jn. 15:1-8) – Eph. 4:4: One body!
     3. Its members are called Christians! (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Pet. 4:16)
  3. Any church called by a different name is not the church that belongs to Jesus!
  4. The church built by Jesus wears no other name than what is given in Scripture!

#### **It Has the Right Head**

* 1. Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18: The Lord is the Head and the Savior of the body!
     1. The body metaphor is important to the relationship of the church and Christ!
     2. The head controls the body, thus the church is subject to its Head, Christ.
  2. Some believe in one body with two heads (Catholicism).
     1. Those in the Catholic Church are taught the Pope is the head of the church.
     2. They teach Christ is the spiritual head but the Pope is the physical head.
     3. The picture one gets then is one body with two heads!
  3. Some believe in one Head with many bodies (denominations).
     1. Many people in the religious world are taught Christ is the Head but there are many bodies!
     2. “Ecumenical” is an umbrella term that encompasses all people who claim belief in God and Jesus and disregards doctrine!
  4. The church built by Jesus neither recognizes nor submits to any other Head than Christ!

#### **It Practices the Right Baptism**

* 1. Mk. 16:16: The doctrine of Christ teaches one must be baptized in order to be saved!
     1. *Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; 10:48; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; I Cor. 12:13; I Pet. 3:21:* Jesus said it & the apostles taught it!
  2. Baptism is:
     1. *Baptizo (G907):* “To immerse, submerge; to make overwhelmed.”
     2. *Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:11-12:* “Down into water” & “buried.”
  3. When the church of Christ was established Peter answered the question, “What shall we do?” with, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” *(Acts 2:37-38).*
     1. Acts 2:47 (NKJ): After being baptized, God added them to the church.
     2. Acts 10:47-48: Peter “ordered” the household of Cornelius to be baptized!
     3. Acts 22:16: Ananias told Saul (Paul) that baptism washes away sins!
     4. Gal. 3:27: Paul taught that that baptism was how one became “into” Christ!
     5. I Cor. 12:13: Paul taught that baptism was means to enter the “body” (church)!
  4. The church built by Jesus teaches the means of salvation, having one’s sins washed away, and entrance into the church is baptism as Jesus and the apostles did!

#### **It Is Grounded in Love & Truth**

* 1. Eph. 4:15: Saints “are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14) but to “speak the truth in love.”
     1. I Cor. 16:14*:* “Let all that you do be done in love” *(I Tim. 1:5).*
  2. I Tim. 3:15: The church is the “pillar and support of the truth.”
     1. We are to defend and support the truth *(Jude 3)* out of love! *(Eph. 4:15)*
  3. The church that belongs to Jesus ought to be known by our love for God and for one another – *Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12; Col. 1:4; 3:12-14; Phil. 1:9; III Jn. 5-6*
  4. The church built by Jesus will be known for their love and steadfastness to the truth!

#### **It Has the Right Organization/Leadership Structure**

* 1. Elders & Deacons (Phil. 1:1) – No boards, no Popes, Kings or Queens, no one-man rule
  2. The characteristics of these men (I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9)

## Conclusion

1. Despite the many “churches” in the world (confusion) we can search the Scriptures and know if we have found the right one *(Eph. 4:4-6: One body!)!*
   1. Denominational churches were built by men 600-1900 years after Jesus built His church!
      1. The members who call themselves after men are their “branches!”
   2. ***The church that belongs to Christ is too old to be a denomination, and the oldest denomination is too young to be the church Jesus built!***
2. It is important to know if we are in the church Jesus built and died to save!
   1. Acts 20:28: Jesus died to purchase one church (exclusive) – need to be in the church He died to build and to save!
   2. Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18: Jesus will save those in His body: ***No other church!***
3. Obey the gospel God’s way and enter the church Jesus built and will one day reward!
4. If you are not a Christian, you are outside His body and salvation. Repent and be baptized!
5. If a Christian in error, remember from what you have been saved! Repent & be renewed!
6. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!

**Sources:**

<http://www.truthforsaints.com/Christian_Denominations/Christian_Denominations.html>

<http://www.topicalbiblestudies.com/resources/Articles/The_Church/Church%20Timeline.pdf>

<http://klcc.faithsite.com/content.asp?SID=655&CID=43145>

<http://www.wvbs.org/>

<http://www.wvbs.org/video/>

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| **Founder** | **Place** | **Time** | **Foundation** | **Name** |
| ***Christ*** | ***Jerusalem*** | ***Pentecost – 1st c. AD*** | ***Christ*** | ***church of Christ*** |
| Pope Boniface III | Rome | 606 AD | Catholic Catechism & Apostle’s, Nicene & Athanasian Creeds | Catholic Church |
| Muhammad | Medina | 610 AD | Koran (Others) | Islam |
| Martin Luther | Germany | 1517/1526 | Augsburg Confessions (1530) | Lutherans |
| King Henry VIII | England | 1534 | Book of Common Prayer, Catholic Creeds & Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion | Church of England |
| John Knox | Geneva & Scotland | 1560 | Book of Common Prayer & Calvinism | Presbyterians |
| John Smyth | Holland | 1609 | Baptist’s Manual | Baptists |
| John Wesley | England | 1739 | The Book of Discipline | Methodists |
| King Henry VIII/Samuel Seabury | U.S.A. | 1783 | Book of Common Prayer, Catholic Creeds & Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion (Tailored to USA) | Episcopal |
| Joseph Smith | U.S.A. | 1830 | Book of Mormon (Others) | Mormons |
| Ellen G. White | U.S.A. | 1844-1863 | The Great Controversy (Others) | Seventh Day Adventists |
| Charles Taze Russell | U.S.A. | 1870 | The Watchtower Society | Jehovah’s Witnesses |
| Mary Baker Eddy | U.S.A. | 1875 | Science and Health (1875) | Christian Scientists |
| Charles Parham | U.S.A. | 1901 | Assemblies of God Statement of Fundamental Truths (Direct operation of Holy Spirit) | Pentecostals (Many Variations: Assemblies of God (Church of God)  Church of the Nazarene |
| L. Ron Hubbard | U.S.A. | 1953 | Dianetics | Church of Scientology (Scientology) |
| Chuck Smith | U.S.A. | 1965 | Broke from Pentecostals | Calvary Chapel |