

Title

by Wayne Goff

There are hundreds of man-made churches which claim to be followers of Jesus Christ and the Bible. There are thousands more man-made religious bodies which claim to be following some god or no god. But when we read the New Testament and learn that Jesus Christ said, "I will build My church" (Matt. 16:18), we are left with two important questions that need to be answered: (1) "Did He build His church?" (2) "Where is the church Jesus built?"

As we continue to read the New Testament, we learn that after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the apostles preached in Jerusalem salvation in the Name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:14-36). Those who believed were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:37-41) and were added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47). So Jesus did build His church and it began on Pentecost, A.D. 30! Prior to Acts 2 you only read of the church mentioned in prospect. After Acts 2 you read of the church in existence. It's not hard to figure out that the church Jesus built began in Acts 2.

Where is the church Jesus built today? It is right here in the world, among the thousands of man-made churches which are only imitations of the real thing. But how can you know which one belongs to Jesus? The same way you would find a lost person or thing. Obtain the identifying marks of the church Jesus built, and when you find it on the earth today, then you have it!

Get out your New Testament, search these Scriptures and see for yourself what the church which belongs to Jesus Christ looks like.

Name: Church of Christ, Romans 16:16

Terms of Entrance: Faith in Jesus, Repenting of sins, Confession of Jesus, Baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Romans 10:9-10; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33)

Organization: Elders, Deacons, Members, Philippians 1:1

Work: Evangelism, Edification, Benevolence, Ephesians 4:16

Worship: Teaching (Acts 2:42), Praying (Acts 2:42), Breaking of Bread [Lord's Supper] (Acts 2:42), Giving (1 Corinthians 16:1-2), Singing (Ephesians 5:19)

Teaching: The New Testament (Hebrews 1:1-2; Galatians 1:6-11)

Character: Morally pure, doctrinally correct, spiritually obedient to Christ (1 Peter 1:15-16; Ephesians 5:1-33)

The above list is a generalization of the points to be considered and studied further as you read the New Testament. However, the list gives you a quick reference to the ingredients essential to be a church which belongs to Jesus Christ. Anything less than this is not a church of Jesus Christ!

You also read in the New Testament that honest people readily received the Gospel message while checking it against the Bible to make sure that it was true (Acts 17:11). God expects you and me to do the same thing today. It will take a little time and effort, but it will be well worth it.

Jesus Christ will not accept human imitations or substitutes for the church Jesus Christ built and for which He died (Acts 20:28). Jesus Himself said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted" (Matthew 15:13). Those who doggedly refuse to accept the church which Jesus designed and built will be rejected by God (Matthew 15:14). Read the warning of Jesus in Matthew 7:21-23 about His acceptance of those who do His will versus those He rejects who practice lawlessness. In the words of Psalm 127:1, "Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it..."

Finally, take the time to read Acts 17:1-4 and 1 Thessalonians 1:6-9 to see how normal, every day people were converted to Jesus Christ and became a church of Christ. By that same process men and women today are converted to Jesus Christ and become a church belonging to Him.

Yes, those of us who are Christians here at the Church of Christ on Roanridge Road claim to be a local church built by Jesus -- but you need to read your Bible and see for yourself!

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