THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

LESSON NO. 1

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, “…I will build my church.” In this text the Lord did not say WHEN and WHERE this promise would be fulfilled, but the Bible DOES tell us, and in this lesson, we will be concerned with learning this information. There are three reasons why we need to know the time of the establishment of the Lord’s kingdom or church. (These terms are interchangeable, since the Lord adds saved people to the CHURCH - Acts 2:47, or to the KINGDOM - Colossians 1:13).

1. That we may be able to determine if the church CHRIST BUILT can be found on earth today.
2. That we may know the CONDITIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP in the church - conditions laid down at the time of its establishment.
3. That we may properly identify the TRUE CHURCH, and be able to distinguish it from all institutions of modern origin.

The Time and Place Were Prophesied in the Old Testament

1. Isaiah 2:2-3: “And it shall come to pass in the _________ _________, that the mountain of the LORD’S _________ shall be established in the top of the mountains, …for out of Zion shall go forth the _________, and the _________ of the _________ from _________.”

2. From this passage (Isaiah 2:2-3), it is clear that the LORD’S HOUSE was to be established in the LAST DAYS in the city of JERUSALEM.

TWO QUESTIONS NOW ARISE:

a. What IS the LORD’S HOUSE? Bible answer: 1 Timothy 3:15: “…to behave thyself in the _________ of God, which is the _________…”

b. When ARE the LAST DAYS? Bible answer: Hebrews 1:1-2: “God…hath in _________ last _________ spoken unto us by His _________,” (The age or dispensation in which God speaks through Christ is the LAST DAYS: but according to this passage, God NOW does that, therefore, WE ARE NOW LIVING IN “These Last days”!!!) _________

We can even learn when “these last days“ Began! Observe:

1. On the day of Pentecost, 33 A.D., the apostles were together in Jerusalem when they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak the word of God. (Please read Acts 2:1-5). On this occasion, Peter quoted Old testament prophecy - Acts 2:16-17: “But _________ is _________ which was spoken by the prophet _________; And it shall come to pass in the _________ days…” (The prophet said it would be the LAST DAYS: Peter said THIS IS THAT which the prophet spoke; therefore, the last days had come at that time).

2. A few years later, Peter spoke of that occasion and called it “the BEGINNING.” (Please read Acts 11:15). The last days had their beginning on the day of Pentecost, 33 A.D., and that is WHEN the LORD’S HOUSE or CHURCH began.
1. In Matthew 3:1-2: John preached that the _________ was at _________.
2. In Mark 1:15: Jesus said, “…the _________ of God is at _________.
3. In Matthew 6:9-10: Jesus taught his disciples to pray - “…Thy _________ come.”
4. In Matthew 16:18: Jesus said “…I _________ build my _________…”
5. In Mark 9:1: Jesus said “…there be some of _________ that stand _________ which shall not taste of _________, till they have _________ the kingdom of God _________ with _________.”

(In all these passages, observe that the Kingdom or Church is always spoken of as being in the future. IT HAD NOT been established BEFORE Pentecost, 33 A.D.)

But, We Know the Church Was Not Built After the Day of Pentecost, Because:

1. In Acts 2:41: ON the day of Pentecost, “…the same _________ there were _________ unto them about three thousand souls.” In Acts 2:41, those who were added to the church were those who _________ his word, AND were _________.
2. In Acts 11:15: Peter called the day of Pentecost, “…___________.”
3. EVERY TIME the church or kingdom is mentioned from Acts 2:47 through the remainder of the New Testament, it is spoken of AS AN EXISTING INSTITUTION.

QUESTION: If the church was not built BEFORE Pentecost, and was not built AFTER Pentecost, WHEN was it built?

ANSWER: ________________________________________________________________________________________________

True or False (Circle One)

1. T F The KINGDOM was to come with POWER (Mark 9:1).
2. T F The apostles were to receive POWER with the coming of the Spirit (Acts 1:8).
3. T F The SPIRIT came on the day of PENTECOST in JERUSALEM (Acts 2:1-5).
4. T F Therefore, the KINGDOM came on the day of PENTECOST, in JERUSALEM.
5. T F A church founded in the days of Abraham is the kingdom of God.
6. T F A church established in 1730 A.D. is the church of the living God.
7. T F A church, which had its beginning in the United States, is the true church.
8. T F It would be wise to be a member of a church built AFTER Pentecost.

Is this lesson clear? Be sure to let us know if there is something you do not understand. Lesson No. 2 is on the subject of “NAMES APPLIED TO THE CHURCH.” Return this lesson by mail, fax or email.

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ADDRESS: ___________________________________________________________________________________________________
PHONE: __________________________________________________________________________ EMAIL: ____________________________
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Return to: Southside Church of Christ
1655 West Manchester Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90047
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Although many religious people say, “There is nothing in a name,” both scripture and reason prove this to be a wrong idea. Looking to the Old Testament, early in the history of man, God demonstrated His concern for the name man and woman should wear. He named them “Adam and Eve” (Genesis 5:2) in the very day He created them.

Read the following references carefully and fill in the blanks:

1. God changed Abram’s name to __________ and Sarai’s name to __________. (Genesis 17:5, 15).
2. __________ changed Jacob’s name to __________ (Genesis 32:27-28).
3. Paul condemned the use of different names when writing to the church at __________. He asked, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye __________ into the __________ of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:13).
4. Paul was glad he had not personally __________ many, “lest any man should say that ye were __________ into my __________” (1 Corinthians 1:14-15).

WHAT WAS THE CHURCH CALLED?

1. “__________ church” (Jesus speaking, Matthew 16:18).
2. “Church of __________” (1 Corinthians 1:2, showing ownership).
3. “The __________” (Acts 8:1, from the Greek word ekklesia, a group called-out).
4. “Churches of __________” (Romans 16:16, speaking of the various congregations or local churches.
5. “The __________ of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12, the __________ which belongs to Christ).
6. “The __________ of the __________ God” (Indicates ownership, 1 Timothy 3:15; also “the house of __________”).
7. “The __________ of the Son of His love” (Colossians 1:13, showing the rule of Christ as King over his church).

The members of churches of Christ speak of the Lord’s church only in scriptural terms (Acts 20:28). You can see by looking at the signs of other groups, that they wear names not to be found in the Bible (hundreds of such names as Presbyterian Church, Baptist Church, Lutheran Church, Pentecostal Church, Methodist Church, etc., etc.). Is this not a dishonor to God, Christ and the Bible? Yes, indeed (1 Peter 4:11).

WHAT WERE THE MEMBERS CALLED?

2. “__________.” (1 Corinthians 1:2) means holy in life and sanctified or set apart for God’s work.
3. “__________.” (1 Corinthians 15:6) shows their relationship to each other in a spiritual sense.
4. “__________ of God.” (Romans 8:14) shows their relationship to God, the Father.
5. “__________ of God.” (1 John 3:1) same as above.
6. “Royal __________.” (1 Peter 2:9) members may “offer up spiritual __________ as priests (1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 8:1-2).
7. “__________.” (Acts 11:26) relationship to Christ. This is the “new name” given by the mouth of __________ (Isaiah 62:2). See also Acts 26:28 and 1 Peter 4:16.

8. “There is no other __________ under heaven, that is given among __________, wherein we must be __________ “ (Acts 4:12).

**True or False (Circle One)**

1. T  F “Reverend” is a title referring only to God, and never to men (Psalm 111:9).
2. T  F “Pastor” is a term applying to the preacher of a church, and not to the plurality of overseers of a local congregation (Acts 14:23; 20:28; Ephesians 4:11).
3. T  F “Father” is a title Jesus said only a few unmarried men should wear (Matthew 23:9).
4. T  F Holding fast the “pattern of sound words” is a command from God, making it a sin to use unbiblical names and titles in religion.

**CONCLUSION**

The greatest leaders such as Martin Luther and Charles Spurgeon have urged people not to wear any man’s name but Christ’s. In wearing human names, men not only displease God, but also the men they attempt to honor.

Christ’s church collectively and His people individually must abide in the doctrine, wearing the names given by the Lord in His Holy Word, the Bible (II John 9).

We hope you are enjoying your study. If you have any questions please write them below and it will be a pleasure for us to help you in any way possible. The next lesson will be “THE BODY OF CHRIST.” Return this lesson by mail, fax or email.

YOUR NAME: ____________________________________________________________
ADDRESS: ______________________________________________________________
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THE BODY OF CHRIST

LESSON No. 3

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Ephesians 1:22-23

The purpose of this lesson is to aid the student in being able to identify the church, which is the body of Christ. In the maze of conflicting creeds, contradictory doctrine, and human denominations, many find themselves bewildered in searching for the identity of the true church. Yet, the cardinal principle in regard to the search is simply this: Find the marks of Christ’s church in God’s Word. The ONLY place the truth-seeker can find the marks of the New Testament church is IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. The trouble today is that most people are not seeking the identity of the church where it can be found.

The pattern for the church in organization, doctrine, and worship is in God’s Word. There we have the Divine blueprint for the church. If we will speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent, we can have this great institution exactly as the Lord designed it and built it. It was not a denomination when Christ built it, and if it follows His blueprint, it will not be denomination now. It would be impossible for a denomination to exist if people did not believe something, become something, teach something, do something, or have something NOT IN THE WORD OF GOD.

1. The church is called the body of Christ.
   a. Ephesians 1:22-23 - (Begin reading with verse 17 to see that this is revealing what God did for Christ) “And hath put all things under His feet, and gave him to be the __________ over __________ things to the __________, which is His __________, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.”
   b. Colossians 1:18 - “And He is the head of the __________, the __________.”

2. MAN says there are many churches - the BIBLE teaches there is only one.
   a. Romans 12:4-5 (Comparing the physical body of man to the spiritual body of Christ) “For as we have __________ members in __________, and all members have not the same office: So we, being __________, are __________ __________ in Christ, and every one members one of another.”
   b. 1 Corinthians 12:20 - “But now are they many members, yet __________ __________ body.”
   c. Ephesians 2:16 - “And that he might __________ both unto __________ in __________ __________ by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”
   d. Ephesians 4:4 - “There is __________ __________, and one Spirit…”

3. Christ is the Head of His spiritual body, the church.
   a. His dominion over the church is COMPLETE and ABSOLUTE. Ephesians 1:22-23 - “And hath put __________ things under __________ feet, and gave __________ to be the __________ over __________ things to the __________, which is his __________…”
   b. Ephesians 5:24 - “…the __________ is __________ unto Christ…” (Directions for the body, the church, MUST come from the Head, Christ Jesus)
4. **Christians are members of the body (church) of Christ:**
   a. 1 Corinthians 12:13 - “For by one Spirit are ________ ________ baptized into ________ ________.”
   b. Romans 12:5 - “So ________, being ________, are one ________ in Christ…”
   c. Ephesians 5:23 - “…even as ________ is the ________ of the ________; and ________ is the ________ of the ________.”

From the foregoing passages and others we shall see, we may draw some valid and vital conclusions. Study the following statements carefully and give the BIBLE answer.

**Multiple Choice (Underline the Correct Answer)**

1. The important consideration in searching for the New Testament church is to: a) study the New Testament; b) look for the church with the largest membership; c) accept your parent’s religion without question.

2. The complete and exact pattern for the church (body) of Christ is: a) found in the creed books of men; b) of little consequence since we can build the church to suit ourselves; c) in the Word of God and must be followed precisely.

3. The body (church) of the Lord is made up of: a) all saved people the world; b) rich people only; c) Buddhists, Hindus and Moslems (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).

4. According to Ephesians 2:16, a person: a) will go to heaven regardless of whether he is a Christian or not; b) can be reconciled to God in a man-made denomination; c) must be a member of the one church (body) of Christ to be reconciled to God.

**True or False (Circle One)**

1. T  F  If we follow the Divine blueprint, we will be in a human denomination.
2. T  F  The one body of 1 Corinthians 12:20 is made up of members who are the individual Christians in the church (see verse 27).
3. T  F  The one body of 1 Corinthians 12:20 is made up of members who are the different religious denominations.
4. T  F  What the Head (Christ) authorizes, the body (church) can do
5. T  F  What the Head does not authorize, the body cannot do.
6. T  F  Being a member of the body of Christ should be all important in a person’s life.
7. T  F  We can have peace with God in the “church of our choice” (Colossians 3:15).
8. T  F  Since the church is the Fullness of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), and all spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), then one must be in the church in order to be saved (have spiritual blessings).

HOW SIMPLE AND PRECIOUS IS GOD’S TRUTH WHEN WE THROW AWAY ALL HUMAN DOCTRINES, AND TAKE THE OBVIOUS FACTS AS THEY ARE SET FORTH IN THE BIBLE. Lesson No. 4 will be “THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.” Return this lesson by mail, fax or email.
In the New Testament, Christ has provided the complete and unchangeable pattern for the organization of the church. If man presumes to change this pattern, he violates the authority of Christ and declares his lack of faith in the word of God. God would not permit Moses to change even ONE MEASUREMENT of the tabernacle. When that tabernacle was constructed, Moses was admonished to “make ALL THINGS according to the PATTERN shewed to thee in the mount” (Hebrews 8:5). The same respect for God’s Divine pattern respecting the Lord’s church is needed today.

Man does not always think like God thinks (read Isaiah 55:8-9). Being dissatisfied with the simple New Testament organization, men have devised many different kinds of church government. But the same Divine authority which gave the doctrine, also gave the organization. If men cannot improve the TEACHING of Christ, by what principle can they improve HIS PLAN FOR ORGANIZATION? In this lesson we want to notice four great facts which the BIBLE teaches about the organization of the church.

FACT NUMBER ONE: In the New Testament, the church in each community was complete in itself, with bishops (overseers), deacons (servants), and members.

1. Philippians 1:1 - Paul addressed this letter “…to all the ________ in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the ________ and ________.”
2. Bishops are also called ________ (Look closely at Titus 1:5-7).
3. There are a PLURALITY of bishops or elders in every church. Acts 14:23 - “And when they had ordained them ________ in ________ church…”
4. Another word for “elder” or “bishop” is “pastor.” (In Christ’s church, preachers were not called “Pastors” because that term refers to elders or bishops. The word “bishop” describes one aspect of the work of elders (the work of overseeing the church), and the word “pastor” describes their work as those who feed and watch after the flock (congregation).
   a. Acts 20:17 - Paul sent to Ephesus - “…and called the ________ of the ________.” In verse 28, he said to THEM - “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the ________, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you ________, to ________ the ________…”
   b. The obligation of members in a congregation to the elders: Hebrews 13:17 - “_______ them that have the ________ over you, and ________ yourselves: for they ________ for your ________…”
5. The qualifications for elders are given in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. In 1 Timothy 3:1-7, beginning with “…desireth a good work…” count the qualifications Paul gives through “…have a good report…without…” How many are there? ________.
6. The qualifications for deacons are given in 1 Timothy 3. What verses? ____________________.
FACT NUMBER TWO: Every church had complete autonomy and was free from all other churches and from ecclesiastical organization or authority. In order words, every church was independent of any denominational headquarters and was responsible only to Christ.

1. 1 Peter 5:1 - “The ________ which are among you I exhort…” Verse 2 - “_________ the _________ of ________ which is ________, taking the ________ ________.” [This circumscribes or limits the work of elders TO THE CHURCH WHERE THEY ARE MEMBERS]. There is NO PASSAGE which authorizes elders of one church to do the work of another church, or to function for it in any capacity as elders. [If you know of such a passage, please give the references here: __________.]
2. In evangelism, each church did its own work - 1 Thessalonians 1:8 - “for from _________ sounded out the word of the Lord…”
4. When one church had more needy members than could provide for, other churches sent a contribution. In doing so, each one did its own work of selecting its own messengers, and sending its contributions directly to the need. Please read 1 Corinthians 16:1-4.

FACT NUMBER THREE: God has no organization, other than the church, to do His work.

1. This is simply saying there is no passage which authorizes church support of any organization OUTSIDE the church, such as a missionary society.

FACT NUMBER FOUR: If we want to be members of the true church and have the hope of heaven, we must make a complete return to the PATTERN OF ORGANIZATION (as well as worship and doctrine). God has revealed in His word. Remember, John 12:48!

True or False (Circle One)

1. T F A number of churches are to be under the control of one bishop.
2. T F Each church is overseen by a board of deacons.
3. T F Each church has one pastor, and he is the preacher.
4. T F An elder is to be the husband of one wife.
5. T F A deacon must have his children in subjection.
6. T F Auxiliary organizations to do the work of the church are scriptural.
7. T F If we are saved, we must accept the PATTERN the Bible gives for organizations.

We hope you have enjoyed your study of the Bible through this Correspondence Course.
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