

IDENTIFYING THE CHURCH BELONGING TO CHRIST

Introduction

- 1) **“Identify”** = recognize or establish as being a particular kind (Webster)
 - a) Many today believe that they cannot identify anything or anyone with absolute certainty
 - i) Examples would include truth, authority, morality, gender, religion, church (cf. Jn. 18:38)
- 2) Jesus built His church (Matt. 16:18; Col. 1:18) – Are we be able to *identify* this church?
- 3) Having the doctrine [teaching] of Christ, we absolutely can identify the church of [belonging to] Christ anywhere anytime (2 Jn. 9; 2 Tim. 1:13; 1 Cor. 4:17)
- 4) We can identify a true church of Christ if it is patterned after the true words of Christ
 - a) One true pattern will produce one true church (not many differing churches)

I) **The Church that Belongs to Christ Has:**

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| A) One Builder – Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18) | D) One Head – Jesus Christ (Col. 1:18) |
| B) One Purchaser – Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28) | E) One Savior – Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:23) |
| C) One Foundation – Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11) | F) One Hope – Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 1:1) |

II) **The Church of Christ Is:**

- A) The **body** of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18)
- B) The **kingdom** of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19; Col. 1:13)
- C) The **saved** in Christ (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23)
- D) The **house** of Christ (Heb. 3:6)

III) **The Church of Christ Is Identifiable by Its:**

- A) **Worship** – singing, praying, teaching, along with observing the Lord’s supper and giving each Lord’s day (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; 16:2)
- B) **Work** – preaching the saving gospel (Mark 16:15-16), edification of saints (Eph. 4:11-16), and benevolence toward saints (1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 9:1)
- C) **Organization** – a plurality of elders in each local congregation (Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and deacons to serve in each congregation (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8-13)
- D) **Entrance** – belief, repentance, confession of faith in Christ, baptism for forgiveness into Christ and His body, the church (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27)

IV) **Modern Denominational Religion vs. the Church that Christ Built**

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| A) Denominationalism claims: | The Bible says: |
| One church is as good as another | There is one body/church (Eph. 4:4) |
| One way is as good as another | There is one way (Jn. 14:6) |
| One faith is as good as another | There is one faith (Eph. 4:5) |
| All religious people will be saved | Not everyone religious will be saved (Matt. 7:21) |

B) **Denominationalism and Christ’s Church differ as to:**

Origin, Foundation, Membership, Head, Name, Organization, Doctrine, Practice, Destiny

C) **Christ’s Question to Denominationalism:**

“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?” (Lk. 6:46 ESV)

Conclusion

Must I be a member of Christ’s one true church to be saved?

If the church of Christ is the body of the saved (Eph. 5:23)...

And if the only way to eternal life is by Jesus Christ (Jn. 14:6)...

...then YES, *I must be a member of Christ’s one true church to be saved.* No hope can be extended to those who have rejected God’s will in Christ. His word will judge us in the last day (Jn. 12:48). Be saved today by becoming a member of His one body, the church!