

THE ONE TRUE CHURCH

Introduction

- 1) **Ephesians 1:22-23** – Christ was made head over all things to the church
 - a) Other great things are stated about the church in this epistle (3:10-11, 21; 5:25-27)
- 2) A well-known tract has been distributed through the years called “The One True Church” by James R. Cope
 - a) While written by a man, it does point the reader directly to New Testament revelation about various aspects of the New Testament church (scriptural teaching)
 - b) Some have thought that the title might be viewed as offensive by some, as this might suggest that there are churches in existence that are not the “one true church”
 - c) If there are false messiahs (cf. Matt. 24:4-5), false prophets (1 Jn. 4:1), and false doctrines (2 Tim. 4:3-4), so there will also be false churches and religions
- 3) Is the concept that there is “one true church” offensive? More importantly, is it scriptural and true to the New Testament? We will now examine it word for word in reverse order:

I) “**CHURCH**”

- A) The “church” is the saved people of God (Acts 2:47; 9:31)
 - 1) Those “called out” (Gk. *ekklesia*) by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14)
- B) Jesus built the church – His people belong to Him (Matt. 16:18)
 - 1) Head of His body (Col. 1:18)
 - 2) King of His kingdom (Col. 1:13)
 - 3) Son over His house (Heb. 3:6)
- C) This church/kingdom/house will continue until the end of time (1 Cor. 15:22-26)
 - 1) Today exists the kingdom/church wherein we serve God acceptably (Heb. 12:28)

II) “**TRUE**”

- A) That which is true must necessarily come from Him who is the truth (Jn. 14:6)
 - 1) The revealed word of God is the final judge of what is true (Jn. 17:17)
- B) The church of Jesus is to teach, practice, and uphold the truth (2 Tim. 2:15)
 - 1) Only the true church of Jesus will reflect the true identifying marks of His church revealed in the New Testament

III) “**ONE**”

- A) That there is “one” church that Jesus built is stated clearly in the New Testament
 - 1) Jesus said He would build His church (Matt. 16:18 singular)
 - 2) There is one body (Eph. 4:4) and that body is the church (1:22-23)
- B) “One” means only one and no more
 - 1) “Churches” in the plural (Gal. 1:2; Rev. 1:11) refer to local congregations of those saved individuals who make up the church/body of Christ
 - 2) We do not see “churches” like today who differ in name, worship, doctrine, and practice

Conclusion

Is it right to say there is “one true church”? Yes, for it is scriptural and true, and a critically important message for those outside of Christ lost in sin. But aren't there are many different “churches” doing many different things in the name of Jesus? Yes, but they cannot all be right. Jesus is not the head over many different bodies. We must investigate and search the truth of Jesus about His church, and seek to be a member of that church today. Our eternal salvation depends on following Christ and being a member of His one true church.