

## The Church Part Two

Due to the length of this topic the lesson begun in The Church Part One will now continue in the lesson The Church Part Two.

### Christ's Followers are Called...

**Acts 11:26** “And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” and **Acts 26:28** “Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” Not long after the church is established, we see Christ's followers being called Christians.

**Romans 16:16** “Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.” We see clearly in the book of Romans Christ's church being called by His name, churches of Christ.

**Ephesians 1:20-23** “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 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 fulness of him that filleth all in all.” and **Ephesians 4:12** “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” In these verses Christ's church is also called His Body.

**1 Timothy 3:15** “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” In these verses His church is called the Church of the living god. We have been given a handful of scriptural names for Christ's church but many many names are in use today that the Bible does not authorize. Do I attend a congregation with a name that is scriptural or not scriptural?

### What is the Outcome of being in Christ's Church?

**Matthew 25:26** “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” The righteous will be in Christ's church because they have obeyed Him. Sadly, those that are not righteous will miss out on Heaven. It is our choice while still living here in this life to obey Christ or not. Those that chose to not be faithful Christians will not be in Jesus's Church and will be lost eternally according to the Word of God.

**1 Corinthians 15:50** “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” Someone that is obedient to Christ will be in His spiritual kingdom and inherit eternal salvation.

**Hebrews 12:22-23** “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect” To be a faithful member of Christ's Church is to be able to one day go to the city of the living God.

**Revelation 21:4** “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Heaven will be a wonderful place to spend eternity. It would be a horrible shame to choose to miss it because one thought they could make their own path to Heaven outside of Christ’s Church.

### The Mission of the Church

**Matthew 28:18-20** “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” and **Mark 16:15-16** “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” The church has a very important mission, to spread the Gospel. While Christians are certainly not responsible for the hearer’s willingness to accept or reject the Word of God, it is the responsibility of each Christian to try and teach others, and do so in a loving way. A Christian that will not help spread the Word is disobeying Jesus, and is not actually a Christian. Spreading the Gospel is an important task for the church.

**Romans 1:16** “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” The church must try to spread the Word to all people, because it is for all people.

**Ephesians 3:8-11** “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” and **Ephesians 3:21** “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” Christ wants all of the members of the church to help reveal God’s plan to anyone that will listen. The church was always in God’s mind and part of His plan for salvation. Christians must try and help others understand how important the church is. No one outside of Christ’s blood bought church will be saved. However, in our lifetime no matter how long or short it might be we can become part of that church, the Body of Christ.

### The saved are in the Church

**Galatians 3:26-27** “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” All of God’s children, Christians, have been baptized and become a part of the one body of Christ which is His one church.

**Ephesians 1:6-7** “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according

to the riches of his grace” Redemption or forgiveness of sins is accomplished by baptism. After taking the step of Baptism we become a part of Christ’s blood bought and only church.

**Colossians 1:18-20** “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” Christ through the blood He shed at the cross bought and became the head of His church, the only church. Don’t you want to be a part of the only church Christ bought and leads? This is the only way to Heaven but it is open to all, regardless of wealth status or race. None of those earthly things are important to Christ. All that matters to Christ is are you in His church, are you obedient to Him.

There is only one church with many congregations

**Matthew 16:15-18** “He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Christ said I will build my church. In other words, Christ said he was going to build His church, not Peters, Paul’s, Johns, or anyone else’s. Christ also said I will build my church not churches which means he was not building two let alone several hundred, only one.

**Romans 7:4** “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” The church belongs to Christ it is His one and only bride. Christ does not have multiple wives only one. Am I a part of Christ’s body, His bride, and therefore belong to Him? If I am not in Christ’s church, I do not belong to Him and I am, sadly lost.

**Romans 12:4-5** “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” While Christ has only one body, or one church, many members, or Christians, make up that one body. So while there are many congregations of Christians, they are all part of His one body. As long as the congregation teaches and follows the New Testament doctrine of Christ it is His church. If it does not follow and teach Christ’s doctrine it is not His church. Ask yourself can I find the congregation I attend in the Bible? I hope so but if not change before it is too late.

**1 Corinthians 12:12-13** “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” Baptism is the doorway into Christ’s one and only body. That one body does not see difference in its members due to wealth, race, or any other earthly measures. Christ values all His members equally.

**Galatians 1:2-3** “And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ” This is an acknowledgment of one body of believers writing to the multiple churches in the region of Galatia. Clearly all Christians in the world do not have to meet in one place. Many congregations can be spread out all over the world. They remain part of Christ’s church as long as they obey Him.

**Ephesians 1:22-23** “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 fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Christ’s body and His church are one and the same and He is the one and only head of it.

**Ephesians 4:4-6** “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Just as there is only one God there is only one body or church that is acceptable and pleasing to our Lord. All other bodies or churches are not His and He does not accept them. Ask yourself am I in Christ’s one body?

**Colossians 1:18** “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” Christ is the one and only head of the church, the only church.

What makes a strong church?

**John 4:24** “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” Worshiping God as He has told us to in the New Testament is the only way to truly worship Him and will help build a strong congregation.

**Acts 2:41-46** “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” A congregation that loves and takes care of each other, as well as being united in learning and teaching Christ’s New Testament doctrine, while adding nothing to it and taking nothing away from it will be strong.

**Romans 1:8** “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.” A strong congregation of the Lord’s should be seen by other people as being different from churches that do not belong to Christ.

**1 Corinthians 15:58** “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” The Lord’s Church will be sound in following His New Testament teachings and will not move from them. They will also be trying to lovingly teach others about Christ.

**Philippians 1:7** “Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.” A body that belongs to Christ will defend His doctrine and not stand for teachings that are not the Lord’s, being falsely labeled as His. The defense of Christ will be done in a loving but firm way by His church.

**James 1:27** “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” A church of Christ’s will do its best to strictly follow His Word and will try to help others truly in need if it can.

**1 Peter 2:1-2** “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” A Church that belongs to Christ will continue to grow in His word and put aside things that are not in His Word.

How do I enter the Church, (or What must I do to be saved )?

Fortunately, God through his Bible tells us what we must do to be saved. The following are the steps God has laid out for us to take if we want eternal salvation. We must obey if we want salvation **Hebrews 5:9** “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” If you decide you want salvation it is your choice but the disobedient need not expect salvation. So, what are the steps we must take if we want to be saved?

- 1). You must hear the word of God. **Romans 10:17** “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” It would be impossible to come to understand something you have never heard of and don’t know anything about so hearing is the place to start.
- 2). You must believe Jesus is the son of God and died for our sins on the cross as well as that He has risen from the dead. **John 8:24** “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” If you don’t believe in something why follow it? You must have faith in God or there is simply no point in going any further down this road. **Hebrews 11:6** “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”
- 3). You must repent of your sins and turn from them to start a new life following after Christ. **Acts 2:38** “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” To repent means realizing that something is wrong and doing one’s best to not repeat the same errors. It means to stop living a worldly sinful life and turn to live a life pleasing to God. It does not mean you will be perfect and never stumble but it does mean you are putting great effort into changing.
- 4). You must confess that Jesus is the son of God. **Romans 10:9** “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” This is a wonderful start after you have completed these steps but you are not finished. Some will teach that the next step, baptism, is not necessary but the Bible says it is.

5). You must be baptized. **Mark 16:16** “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” Don’t forget the words “and is” because you must do both, falling short leads to condemnation. Not following through with baptism leads to condemnation not salvation. **Romans 6: 3-4** “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” These are the steps of salvation to become a Christian and walking in a new life.

Once you become a Christian you have only just started your new life. This is the start of a lifetime of growing in knowledge about Jesus and becoming a stronger Christian **Galatians 5:22-24** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

### Conclusion

Hopefully, in this two-part lesson we have come to better understand what the church truly is and what it stands for. Hopefully, you will understand how to enter the church and become a Christian. During these lessons I hope you have considered whether or not you are in the church of the Bible, as it is the only way to get into Heaven. If you are stay faithful, maybe these lessons will have been a helpful review. If not, I hope you will want to become a Christian and be in the church so you can have an eternal home in Heaven.