

church, (23) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

1Cor 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

## **Do We Need to Meet with a Local Church?**

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When we read the New Testament, we learn that members of Jesus' church met as local churches to work and worship together. They did not join any of the churches we see today such as Roman Catholic or Baptist but they remained simply Christians submitting to Jesus as head following the apostles teaching. One of the ways these local assemblies were described was by the term churches of Christ.

Acts 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

1Cor 1:1-2 Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, (2) To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

Rom 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Jesus has revealed how these local churches should be organized and worship together. If we are meeting with a local church that does not follow the apostles' teaching, then we should find or start one that does. Each local group was to look to Jesus for instructions and not to any central earthly headquarters.

Phil 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

1Tim 2:11-12 A woman must quietly receive instruc-

tion with entire submissiveness. (12) But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

1Cor 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (25) In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

1Cor 16:1-2 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. (2) On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Let us join ourselves to Jesus in the way He has commanded and He will add us to His only church, saved body. Then, let us regularly meet with others of His church and work and worship as He directs. Those churches that wear different names and teach different things were built by men not by Jesus.

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# Understanding The Scriptures

## Which Church Should I Join?

### **Why So Much Confusion?**

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This should be an easy question to answer. But, it has been made hard because there are so many different churches that claim to follow Jesus. They have different names such as Roman Catholic, Baptist Methodist, and teach different things. Also, each church is organized differently. How then can we know which church we should join?

### **Jesus Gives The Answer**

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You may be surprised that Jesus, through the New Testament, has clearly shown all of us the answer to this question. We do not have to be confused about which church we should join.

Jesus promised His apostles that He would send the Holy Spirit to guide them in speaking and writing all truth. When we read their writing, we can understand all we need to know about His church and how we become a part of it.

John 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

Eph 3:3-4 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. (4) By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

By reading the New Testament, we will get the clear answer that Jesus intended for us to have. Let us look at the

Scriptures to tell us about Jesus' church and how we can become a part of it.

## **Jesus Promised to Build and Save His Church**

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### **He promised to build His church.**

Mat 16:15-18 He \*said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" (16) Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (17) And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (18) "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

### **He died to save His church.**

Eph 5:23-25 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. (24) But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. (25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

### **God Raised Jesus from the dead and made Him head of His church, His body.**

Eph 1:20-23 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, (21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (22) And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, (23) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Because Jesus said He would save His church, we should want to be a part of it not any other church. But what is His church and how do we become a part of it? Again, we must turn to the Scriptures for our answers.

## **How Do We Join Jesus' Church?**

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**The New Testament tells us that when we be-**

### **come a Christian, Jesus adds us to His church.**

You cannot join Jesus' church but if you become a Christian, He will add you to His church. When people were told that God had made Jesus Lord over all and that they were guilty of sin, they asked the apostles what they should do to be saved. When they obeyed what the apostles said, Jesus forgave them and added them to His church.

The apostles taught people that Jesus died for our sins, was raised from the dead, and God seated Him at His right hand giving Him all authority over heaven and earth. Those who believed in Him were commanded to repent, change their minds about their sins, and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. When they did, Jesus added them to His church. Also, before they were baptized, fully immersed in water, we learn they confessed Jesus to be the Son of God.

Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified." (37) Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" (38) Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (41) So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. (47) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 8:35-39 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. (36) As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch \*said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" (37) [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."] (38) And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him. (39) When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing.

### **Although some teach that baptism is not a part of being saved, the New Testament teaches that baptism is a work of faith that brings us into relationship with Christ who adds us to His church.**

Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (16) "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

Gal 3:26-27 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Rom 6:3-4 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? (4) Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Col 2:11-12 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; (12) having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

If you have been taught you can become a Christian in some other way than this, then you have been taught wrongly. The apostles never baptized babies. They also never taught people to pray for forgiveness and that they were saved at that point without being baptized.

## **What is Jesus' Church?**

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Jesus' church is His body of saved people who submit to His will. The word church means "called-out ones" who are that assembly of people that obey Him as the apostles have directed. When we are baptized, we are added to His body. This body is not an organization but simply a collection of people who submit to Jesus.

Eph 1:22-23 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the