

THE TRUTH ABOUT
**the Church
of Christ**



LESSON 2

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MANNA PROJECT

WHY SO MANY CHURCHES?

Have you ever wondered why there are so many different churches? If you drive through nearly any village, town, or city in the world you will see literally dozens of different churches in each one. Why are there so many people calling themselves “Christians” yet they believe and practice drastically different things? In the world today there are over 38,000 different denominations (a denomination is a sect or a branch of something). This is truly an astounding number! While it is an astounding number it is also very confusing! How can a person that is seeking the truth know which of the 38,000, if any of them, are the church you read about in the Bible? Some people confuse the matter more by stating “*that it doesnt matter which one you attend, attend the church of your choice. They are all different roads going to the same destination.*” So the reason there are so many different “churches” is because there are so many different beliefs, teachings, and ideas about theology, worship, faithfulness!

HOW MANY “KINDS” OF CHURCHES ARE MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE?

When you open your New Testament and read it from start to finish, you only read of ONE church. As a matter of fact the New Testament explicitly states this fact!

Ephesians 1:22-23 *And He put all things under His (Jesus’s) feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

Ephesians 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;*

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 may have the preeminence.*

Colossians 1:24 *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,*

You can quickly see from several New Testament writers that there is one body which is the church. This can mean nothing less than the fact that there is only ONE church!

HOW DID WE GET TO 38,000 “KINDS” OF CHURCHES?

Since the Bible teaches that there is only one church yet the world has 38,000 denominations we are led to a simple conclusion for the question of how did we get to 38,000 different denominations: Division. Division is the reason for so many different denominations. Division over authority. Division over church organization. Division of worship. Division over doctrine. Division!

1 Corinthians 1:10 *Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

The Apostle Paul “plead” with those in the first century to not go down the road of division yet some today say its a good thing! Friend, it is the farthest thing from good! The first century church (the one we read of the Bible) was already struggling with following after men instead of only the scriptures.

1 Corinthians 1:12-13 *Now I say this, that each of you says, “I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ.” Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*

Do we not see this very same problem today? Do not people claim to be Lutherans, Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Calvinists, or Presbyterians? Was Martin Luther (Lutherans follow his teachings) crucified for you? This question gets to the heart of matter. It is Jesus’s church and noone else has a claim to His throne! Division, Division, Division!!! What if we could go back to the original church of the New Testament and be members of it?!?!?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH?

JESUS WAS THE BUILDER

Matthew 16:18 *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*

JESUS IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

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 may have the preeminence.*

Ephesians 5:23 *For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

JESUS PURCHASED IT WITH HIS BLOOD

Acts 20:28 *Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

JESUS RECIEVES GLORY FROM THE CHURCH

Ephesians 3:23 *to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen*

SAINTS (CHRISTIANS) ARE IN THE CHURCH

2 Corinthians 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia:*

Acts 11:26 *And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.*

CHURCH AND KINGDOM ARE THE SAME

Matthew 16:18-19 *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed[a] in heaven.”*

Acts 28:31 *preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.*

Colossians 1:13 *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*

EACH CHURCH WAS TO HAVE ELDERS

Acts 14:23 *So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*

THE CHURCH WAS CALLED THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Romans 16:16 *Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.*

THE CHURCH WAS TO TEACH THE SAME THING IN EVERY CONGREGATION

1 Corinthians 4:17 *For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.*

THE SAVED WERE ADDED TO THE CHURCH

Acts 2:47 *praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

If the saved were added to the church, the next logical question for each of us should be: “How do I become one of the saved?”

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT BECOMING A CHRISTIAN?

FAITH IS REQUIRED

Hebrews 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

FAITH COMES FROM HEARING

Romans 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

FAITH ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH

James 2:17 *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

REPENTANCE IS REQUIRED

Acts 3:19 *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,*

Acts 2:38 *Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

CONFESSION IS REQUIRED

Romans 10:10 *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Matthew 10:32 *"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.*

Acts 8:37 *Then 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.*

WATER BAPTISM IS REQUIRED

Acts 2:38 *Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 2:41 *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them*

Acts 8:12 *But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*

Romans 6:4 *Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Colossians 2:11-12 *In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

1 Peter 3:21 *There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*

Galatians 3:27 *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

As you have seen from the Bible, there is one church, the Church of Christ which is not a denomination. This church was purchased with the blood of Christ and is filled with the saints/saved. This church was founded in the first century and the saved are added to it when they obey the New Testaments commands on salvation!

**PLEASE ANSWER ALL
QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF
YOUR ABILITY**

- 1. Why are there so many churches?**
- 2. How many kinds of churches are mentioned in the New Testament?**
- 3. What is a denomination?**
- 4. Who is the head of the church?**
- 5. What was the church called in the New Testament?**

6. By what two names is a person called who is a member of the church of Christ?

7. What four actions are required to become a Christian?

8. What is a person to confess?

9. How many denominations are in the world today?

10. Are you a member of the church of Christ?

Would you like to become a member of the Body of Christ, the church of Christ? There is no greater choice than the choice to become a New Testament Christian. If you would like to become a Christian, please contact the person who gave you this study or contact your local church of Christ! There is one study left. It is a study of how New Testament Christians are to worship!

