

# Introducing The Church Of Christ

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What is the Church of Christ? Is it just another denomination? Are there any characteristic beliefs that make it different from the hundreds of churches dotting the landscape of our world today? Perhaps we can answer these questions for you, but first let me address a common fallacy circulating in some religious circles i.e. that Alexander Campbell founded the Church of Christ. This rumor exists in part because Mr. Campbell was a leading figure in the effort to restore pure new testament Christianity in this country over a hundred and fifty years ago. Preaching the old Jerusalem gospel, and demanding a thus saith the Lord for what we believe and practice is a far cry from building a church. Campbell did not build the church of Christ, Christ did. (Mt. 16:18) In fact, Campbell did not build any church. He merely carried the good seed of the kingdom from place to place and planted it in the honest hearts of the hearers. Those who responded, obeyed the gospel (Rom. 1:16), not the teachings of Mr. Campbell, and became Christians (Acts 11:26) not Campbellites.

In an attempt to introduce you to the Church of Christ, let me first of all introduce you to the people. Who are these people? According to the bible, they are a group of individuals who have, because of their faith in Christ, embraced Christianity. (I Cor. 11:1-2) They are Christians (Acts 11:26) and feel honored to wear the lovely name of Jesus. In fact they are Christians only i.e. they wear no human names or appellation. They gather weekly to remember the death of their founder by celebrating the Lord's supper. (Acts. 20:7; I Cor. 11:23-33).

Secondly, I should note that the Church of Christ is not a denomination. We do not owe our existence to Campbell, Luther, Wesley, Calvin, or any other man. We are not descended from any such group, but rather owe our existence to the Lord himself. We pass up all human movements by going back to the beginning of the church in Acts 2. Since Jesus teaches that the word of God is the seed of the Kingdom, (Lk. 8:11) we believe that anywhere and anytime the pure word of God is preached, the results will be what they were in new testament days and times. Thus the New Testament becomes our blueprint for what we teach and practice. If it is not found there, then we reject it. If it is taught there, then we accept and practice it. We do our best to reproduce the church which Christ set before the world in faith, in doctrine, and in practice.

This is the reason we refer to the church in terms used only in the New Testament. Such as "Church of God" Acts 20:28; "Church of the Lord"; "Churches of Christ" Rom. 16:16 etc. Since the church belongs to Christ, and is the, bride of Christ, and since he built the church, it seems only right that we wear His, and only His name.

The Church of Christ subscribes to no human creed. We have no creed but Christ and the new testament scriptures. We believe the word of God to be inspired. To us it is the perfect revelation of God's will to man, and cannot be changed without disobeying God. (Jno. 8:32; Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19; Jno. 17:17) Since the rulings of church councils are not inspired, they are not binding upon God's people.

The Church of Christ is not governed by an earthly board of directors, with

a president or superintendent acting as head. Christ is the only head of the church. (Eph. 1:22 and Col. 1:18) Each local church is self-governing and independent of other churches. Bishops and Deacons exercise leadership in local churches. These men are selected by the church in accordance with new testament regulations. (Titus 1 and I Tim. 3.)

Finally, the Church of Christ may not be joined as one joins a denomination. Rather people are added by the Lord to the church, when they obey the gospel. In order for the Lord to add one to His church, the individual must believe, Heb. 11:6; repent, Lk. 13:3; confess Christ, Rom. 10:9-10; and be baptized for the remission of sins, Act. 2:38, I Pet. 3:21. At this point the Lord adds the converted to the church Acts 2:47. One never is voted into the church, or works his way into the church, or buys his way into the church. Only through obedience to the gospel does anyone enter the Church of Christ. Wouldn't you like to know more about these people and their message? If so why not talk with the ones who have made this booklet available to you. Remember to be in Christ means everything. Don't delay your obedience.