

The Church of Jesus Christ

Where is it?

How shall I know it?

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Where is the Church of Christ?

How Shall I Know It?

There are many different churches in the world that claim the name of Christ. A person who is looking for truth and light is left confused and uncertain by the different opinions and differences in the different organizations. How can a person know which church belongs to Christ?

Not all of these churches can be true; they disagree in their beliefs and teachings in many ways. They also conflict with the Bible, which should be the standard of judgment for all Christians. Can God be the author of all this confusion? Can a church that teaches only a part of the gospel of Christ be true?

The religious world today is very much like it was in the time of Christ:
“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” (Matthew 15:9)

Warnings of False Teachers

Paul foresaw the coming of apostasy into the church, and warned against false teachers who would betray the people:

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:28–31)

A Falling Away

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.” (II Thessalonians 2:1–3)

The Saints Are Overcome

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” (Revelation 13:7)

The Lost Hope of the Church

The war against the church of Christ was so effective that the church was overcome. Apostasy brought about its ruin, as the prophecy foretold.

John Wesley (the founder of the Methodist Church), considered that the spiritual famine had set in by the third century. *“We seldom hear of them [gifts of the Holy Ghost] after the fatal period, when the emperor Constantine called himself Christian: From this time they almost totally ceased: The cause of this was not (as was vulgarly supposed,) “because there was not more occasion for them,”* because all the world became Christian.

“This is a miserable mistake, not a twentieth part of it [the world] was then nominally Christian. The real cause was the “love of many” almost of all Christians, so called, was “waxed cold.” The Christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ, than the other heathens. This was the real cause why extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the Christian church; because the Christians were turned heathens again, and had only a dead form left.” (Wesley’s Sermons, Vol. 2, p. 266)

Many Christians have complacently accepted the fate of the Church as described by Wesley. They say that it is necessary to have churches to fit all kinds of people, to suit all varieties of thought and sentiment because not everybody sees things alike.

Are there different kinds of truth for people who happen not to like certain facts? Does God change because some people prefer him to be different? Can churches that deny some of the things that Jesus said and did build his kingdom?

Jesus brought to the earth one church: *“One body, and one Spirit, ...one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.”* (Ephesians 4:5) This was the same God who said, *“for I am the Lord, I change not.”* (Malachi 3:6) Today there are thousands of different kinds of Christian churches. Is this the will of God?

The Organization of the Church of Christ

In spite of disappointed hopes, sincere people continue to look at the church of Christ. They read about it in the Bible, and they long to find it. How would they know it if they found it?

The description of Christ’s church is in the Bible. First, we will look at the organization of the Church. The officers of the church are named:

“ And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.” (Mark 3:14)

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostle, secondarily prophet, thirdly teachers, after the miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, government, diversities of tongues.” (I Corinthians 12:28)

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.” (Ephesians 4:11)

What Is the Work of the Above Officers?

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:12)

How long were they to continue in the church? Was it only during the apostolic ages, and merely to establish Christianity? No, these officers were to continue in the church... *“[t]ill we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13)*

What benefit and protections were the apostles and prophets to provide for the church?

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:14-16)

The work of the ministry is still essential; therefore it is reasonable and scriptural that apostles and prophets should be in the church today.

The Doctrine of Christ

If there is a church of Christ in the world today, it should teach the same doctrine that Christ taught, the same doctrines that were a part of the gospel in the times immediately following his ministry on earth. The seeker for truth, therefore, will be interested in the teachings and doctrine of Christ, and they will look for them in the words of the Bible.

The *“principles of the doctrine of Christ”* are listed in the letter to the Hebrews. (*Hebrews 6:1-2*) They are Repentance, Faith, Baptism, Laying on of Hands, Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.

A Divinely Called Ministry

God chooses his own ministers. Men cannot elect themselves to serve the Lord under ordination. This is the rule in the Christ's church.

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” (John 15:16)

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.” (Hebrews 5:4)

One who is seeking the church of Christ will, in accordance with these Scriptures, expect to find that the members of the ministry are divinely called in this manner.

Spiritual Gifts in Christ’s Church

The spiritual gifts were used throughout the ministry of Jesus. Their power was enjoyed in the ministry of the apostles and servants of the church long after the ascension of the resurrected Christ. The first great meeting of the church after the Ascension, on the day of Pentecost, witnessed and outpouring of blessings through these gifts. *(Ephesians 4:8)*

The Description of Christ’s Church

Now you have the description of the Church of Jesus Christ, in the words of the Bible. With this description you will be able to identify that church when you see it. You have read about its organization, its officers, its doctrine, its principles, and its spiritual gifts. You have learned how its ministers are divinely called to their work. You have the identification ready to use.

The prophets foretold that the Church of Jesus Christ would be taken away.

“Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips: for there is no answer of God.” (Micah 3: 6-7)

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.” (Amos 8: 11-12)

Was the church never to return? The Bible does contain the prophecies of the restoration of the gospel.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left....And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” (Isaiah 11: 11-12)

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” (Rev. 14: 6-7)

Zechariah spoke of two angels conversing. They were talking of the rehabilitation of Jerusalem, which was soon to take place. *“And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein...”* (Zech. 2: 4)

In Zechariah’s time, Jerusalem was a walled city, but the prophecy mentioned here has come to pass. What about the young man to whom this information was to be given? Who was he?

The Fulfillment of the Prophecy and the Restoration of the Church

In the year 1820, in New York State, USA during a time of great religious revival, many people were joining various churches, and there was sharp strife among them for converts. Joseph Smith, then a boy of fifteen years, was convinced of the need of religion but was unable to decide which one of the contending churches were right. He knew that all could not be right, but he did not suppose that all of them would be wrong. In the Bible he read from James 1:5: *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”*

This made a deep impression on his mind, and in compliance with it, he sought the Lord for light upon the matter and beheld the following vision; a pillar of light appeared above his head, and he saw two personages, whose brightness and glory were beyond human description, standing above him in the air. One of them spoke to him, and said, pointing to the other: *“This is my beloved Son, hear him.”* The divine personage then instructed him to join none of the churches, saying that they were all wrong.

The announcement of this remarkable vision brought down upon him a great deal of trouble and persecution from that time to the end of his life.

The Lord had made known to Joseph the startling fact that the true church of Christ was not then to be found upon the earth.

If the church of Christ was to be had on earth by people of the latter days, it would have to be re-established.

Organization of the Church

On the sixth day of April, 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was organized. The angel of Revelation 14:6 had visited Joseph Smith, giving him instruction and authority to establish it.

The Church of Jesus Christ began with the basic principle, faith. The organization, the ministry, the doctrines, the functions of the church all grew out of that beginning.

The Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Today, the Church of Jesus Christ is known among men as the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. As stated at the beginning of this pamphlet, if there is a church of Christ in the world today, it should teach the same doctrine that Christ taught, the same doctrines that were a part of the gospel in the times immediately following his ministry on earth. The seeker for truth, therefore, will be interested in the teachings and doctrine of Christ, and they will look for them in the words of the Bible. The person searching for the Church of Jesus Christ today will find all of the same doctrine and organization that Christ taught in the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is often confused with the Latter Day Saint church in Salt Lake City, Utah. For further information on this subject, please read the tract "Differences That Persist."

We invite you to contact us at the following email address or mailing address to receive more information about the Church of Jesus Christ that has been restored to the earth in these latter days.

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