

THE TRUE CHURCH

Where is the one true Church? What is it like? What are the marks by which it is known? These questions are important to those who are seeking to know and follow Jesus.

The one true Church is composed of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is made up of God's elect - those converted, true followers of Jesus Christ. In whomever we can discern the calling and election of God; the sprinkling of the blood of His Son; the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; in such a person we can recognize a member of Christ's true Church. It is a Church in which we will see the fruit of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of each individual for - *"by their fruits you shall know them"* (Matt. 7:20).

These are born again of the Spirit: they exhibit *"repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,"* and holiness in thought and conduct. Hating sin and loving righteousness, they worship with one heart, being led by one Spirit, building upon the one foundation. They are all drawn to the one wonderful center - the Lord Jesus Christ, and they draw their guidance and knowledge from one great inspired book - the Bible. These all, at all times, can say with one heart, *"Hallelujah,"* because they possess the *"mind of Christ"* (Phil. 2:5). This one true Church is not dependent on earthly ministers, however much they value those who preach the Gospel of Christ.

The life of its members does not hang upon church membership and other requirements. **It has only one Great Head - one Shepherd - one Chief Bishop - and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.** God alone, by His Spirit, admits the members to the Church, though He may use others to point to Christ which is the only door of access to the Father. No man on earth can open it - be they bishops, presbyters, priests or synods. One must be called of God.

Once a man truly repents, accepting Jesus as his Sovereign Lord and Savior and taking the steps of discipleship as outlined by our Lord Jesus Himself, i.e., **the denial of self, taking up of his cross and following Him,** he may be assured he is now a member of the one true Church. He may be excommunicated by man-ordained leaders, cut off from religious fellowship from other churches; but nothing and no one can shut him out of the true Church!

The true Church has an existence which does not depend on forms, ceremonies, cathedrals, church buildings, pulpits, fonts, magistrates or any act of favor whatever from the hand of man. It has lived on for centuries and has continued when all these things have been removed; often she has been driven into the obscurity of the wilderness, caves or secret places even by those who professed the name of Christ. The true Church is based upon that *one foundation*, spoken of by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 3:11: *"for no one can lay any other foundation than that which is already laid, Jesus Christ."* It depends on nothing but the indwelling presence of Christ and His Spirit; thus, this Church is indestructible, being God-ordained.

This is the true Church to which the Scriptural titles of present honor and privilege, and the promise of future glory belong; this is the body of Christ, the flock of Christ, the household of faith and family of God, the temple of God, temple of His Spirit; the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven, the royal priesthood and chosen generation, His peculiar (special) treasure, His purchased possession, the habitation of God, the light of the world, the salt and wheat of the earth. This is the Church to which Jesus promises *"the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,"* and to which He says, *"I am with you always, even unto to the end of the world."* This is the Church from which the bride, the Lamb's wife will be chosen to reign with Christ a thousand years. (See 1 Cor. 12:27, John 3:29, Rev. 21:9, Luke 12:32, Gal. 3:26; 6:10, 1 Cor. 6:19; Heb. 12:23, 1 Pet. 2:9, Eph. 1:14; 2:22, Matt. 5:13-14, Lk. 3:17, Matt. 16:18 & 28:20)

This is the true Church truly unified. Its members are in harmony on the fundamental matters of faith which the Scriptures clearly state, *“endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is **one body, one Spirit...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”*** (Eph. 4:3-5).

This is the true Church which possesses true sanctity. Its members are all holy in Christ Jesus. They are not holy merely by profession, name, and judgment of charity; they are holy in act, in deed, in reality, in life, and in truth; for these are all in the process of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ by God (Rom. 8:29). No unholy person belongs to this Church.

This is the true Church which is world-wide. It is not the Church of any one nation or people; its members are to be found in every part of the world where the Gospel is received and believed. In this Church there is no difference between Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female; Its faithful members, of every language and tongue, will be gathered from the north, the south, the east and the west in the last day, to be with Christ at His return. (Gal. 3:28, Matt. 24:31)

This is the true Church which will endure to the end. Nothing can overthrow or destroy it. Its members may be persecuted, oppressed, imprisoned, beheaded, burned; but the true Church is never totally extinguished; it rises up again from its afflictions; it lives on through fire and flood. When crushed in one place, it springs up in another, for God’s love is the center of its life, motives and existence.

The Pharaohs, Herods, Neros, and Bloody Marys have labored in vain to stamp out the Church; they slew their thousands, and then they themselves passed away, utter failures. The true Church outlives them all. It is an anvil that has broken many hammers; it is a bush which is often burning, yet not consumed. It ever lives on!

This is the true Church of which no member will perish if they abide in Christ. Once their names are enrolled in this true Church, they have the assurance of God’s daily watch-care over them; the continual intercession of the Son; the constant renewing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit which surrounds and protects them as a mighty fortress. Not one of the Lord’s dear lambs shall be plucked out of the Father’s Hand.

This is the true Church which does the work of Christ on earth. Its members are a little flock, not found in any one group, few in number compared to the millions who profess His Name. They are those who turn the world upside-down; which change the fortunes of kingdoms by their *“effectual, earnest prayers;”* who are zealous workers in spreading the pure Word of God where they are. (Acts 17:6, James 5:16)

This is the true Church which shall come to a glorious end. The faithful overcomers in this will be presented without spot before the Father’s Throne as Jesus’ Bride. Thrones, principalities, and powers upon earth shall come to nothing; dignities, offices, and endowments shall all pass away; but the Bride of Christ shall shine as the stars in that day and be changed to be like Jesus when He returns for them. When the Lord’s jewels are made up, the manifestation of the sons of God will take place. (See Ephesians 5:27, Hebrews 12:26-27, Matthew 13:43, 1 John 3:2, Malachi 3:17)

This is the true Church to which all must belong if they desire to be of those who will comprise the Bride of Christ. No religious body, church or denomination is the true Church. Many will say to the Lord in that day, *"Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? 'And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you (as My Bride); depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness""* (Mt. 7:22-23).

This is the true Church which is abandoned to the will of their Father just as Jesus was and who have a personal and intimate relationship with their Lord. Their one goal is to be always pleasing to Him and have their lives render glory and praise to Him for Who He is and all He has done, is doing, and will do for them in the future. The members of this church have undergone a circumcision of their hearts and have been given a new heart by God. They are now *"new creatures in Christ Jesus...old things have passed away -- all things have become new!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17), and the joy of reigning as the Bride of Christ lies before them.

The Church's One Foundation

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.
She is His new creation by water and the Word;
From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her and for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
And to One hope she presses, with every grace endued.

'Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation of peace forevermore;
Till with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest.

If you desire more of our tracts or booklets, please write to the address below for a listing:

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLING MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
32 Chapel Lane, Somersworth, NH 03878