

THE HOUSE OF GOD
(Micah 4:2-3)

Isa. 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

I Tim. 3:14-15: Paul Says That God's House Is God's Church.

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

Eph. 2:19: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone."

Heb. 3:6: "But Christ as a son over His own house: whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

I. THE HOUSE OF GOD IS THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. DEFINE OUR USE OF IT.

1. That Institution, the Pattern of which was revealed to the apostles by Christ.
2. The Church Whose Organization Came Directly from Christ - Set up by Apostles.
3. That Church Which Was Instituted Prior to the Introduction of Human Creeds.
4. In Short, the "ONE BODY" Mentioned by Paul:
 - A. Vitalized by the one Spirit.
 - B. Animated by the one Hope.
 - C. Acknowledging the one Lord.
 - D. Professing one Faith.
 - E. Submissive to one Baptism.
 - F. Humbly dependent upon the on God and Father of all.

II. WHEN WAS THIS CHURCH ESTABLISHED?

1. Isa. 2:2-4: Isaiah Said That It Would Be Established in "Last Days."

2. Matt. 3:2: John the Baptizer said "The Kingdom of Heaven Is At Hand."
3. Matt. 8:5-13: The Gentiles To Share the Blessings and Privileges.
4. Matt. 10:5-7: The Twelve Sent Out to Preach: "The Kingdom Is At Hand."
5. Luke 10:8-9: The Seventy Sent Forth to Proclaim its Nearer Approach.
6. Matt. 18:15-17: Method For Settling Disputes in Church Outlined.
7. Matt. 16:13-19: Jesus Promised That He Would Build The Church.
8. Luke 24:46-49: Repentance and Remission of Sins To Be Preached At Jerusalem.
9. Acts 1:1-5: The Apostles Wait for the Holy Spirit Before Preaching Gospel.
10. Acts 2:1-47: The Holy Spirit Came - The Apostles Preached - Church Established.
 - A. As a New Covenant - It was not binding until ratified by Christ's blood.
 - B. As a Testament - It was not in operation as long as testator lived.
 - C. As a Kingdom - It was established after Christ ascended - coronated.
 - D. As a Church - It was not organized while Christ was on earth.
 - E. As a Salvation - It was spoken of by the Lord and confirmed to those on Pentecost by the Apostles.
11. All These Scriptures But Fulfill Isaiah's Prophecy About House of God.

III. WHAT WAS THE TERMS OF ADMISSION TO THIS CHURCH?

1. Faith in Christ as the Son of God. (Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:8-10)
2. Repentance toward Christ and God. (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3-5; Acts 17:30-31)
3. Confession of Christ (Matt. 10:30-33); which was made with the mouth, (Rom. 10:9-10); and the presence of witnesses (I Tim. 6:12).
4. Baptism into Christ. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 8:18; 10:47-48; 16:15; 19:5; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4; I Pet. 3:21)

IV. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THIS CHURCH?

1. It is Invisible:

- A. Heb. 12:22-23: "But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly, and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."
- B. I Pet. 2:5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

2. It is Visible:

- A. Gal. 1:13: "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it."
- B. Rom. 16:16: Members worshipped in local congregation - "Churches of Christ."

V. WHO IS THE FOUNDER AND THE FOUNDATION OF THIS NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH?

1. Builder Matt. 16:13-19: "When Jesus came into the costs of Baesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elijah; and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
2. Eph. 1:21-23 - The Head
Col. 1:18
Eph. 5:23
3. Acts 2:36 - The Lawgiver
4. Acts 20:28 - The Purchaser
5. Eph. 5:23 - The Savior
6. THE FOUNDATION:
- A. Isa. 28:16: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a

stone, a tried stone, a precious stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

- B. Acts 4:11: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."
- C. I Cor. 3:11: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."
- D. Eph. 2:20: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."

NOTE: BOTH THE FOUNDER AND THE FOUNDATION ARE DIVINE AND STEADFAST, ANCHORED.

VI. WHAT ARE THE NAMES APPLIED TO THIS CHURCH?

- 1. Col. 1:18 - "The Church"
- 2. Col. 1:24 - "The Body of Christ"
Eph. 4:12
I Cor. 12:27
- 3. I Cor. 15:9 - "The Church of God"
I Tim. 3:15
- 4. Acts 20:28 - "The Church of the Lord"
- 5. Heb. 12:23 - "The general assembly and church of the first-born"
- 6. Rom. 16:16 - "The Churches of Christ"
- 7. The Word "Church" is Used in Four Different Senses in the New Testament.
 - A. "A religious assembly selected and called out of the world by the doctrine of the gospel, to worship the true God in Christ, according to His word." (I Cor. 1:2, Rev. 2:7)
 - B. "All the elect of God, of what nation soever, from the beginning to the end of the world, who make but one body, whereof Jesus Christ is the Head." (Col. 1:18)
 - C. "The faithful of some one family, together with such Christians as were wont to assemble with them for solemn worship." (Rom. 16:5, Col. 4:15, Philemon 2)
 - D. "The faithful of some one Province." (2 Thess. 1:1)

VII. WHAT WERE THE MEMBERS OF THIS CHURCH CALLED?

- 1. Acts 11:26 - Disciples
- 2. Rom. 1:7 - Saints
I Cor. 1:2
Phil. 1:1

3. I Cor. 15:6 - Brethren
James 1:2
2 Pet. 1:10
4. I Pet. 2:9 - Priests
Rev. 5:10
5. Acts 11:26 - Christian
Acts 26:28
I Pet. 4:16

VIII. WHAT IS THE CREED OF THIS NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH?

1. The word Creed is derived from the Latin verb "credo" meaning, "I believe."
 - A. The Creed of the early Church was Christ Himself.
 - (1) Peter was the first to voice this creed. (Matt. 16:18)
 - (2) Matt. 10:32-33: "He who will confess me before men ... "
 - (3) Rom. 10:9-10: "If thou wilt confess Christ as Lord . . . with the tongue confession is made unto salvation."
2. Paul says: "I know him whom I have believed," not what.
3. THE DISCIPLINE: The New Testament has always been, and always will be, a sufficient guide in religious faith and practice.

IX. WHAT COMPOSED THE WORSHIP SERVICES OF THIS NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH?

1. Acts 2:42-47: Teaching, Prayers, Breaking Bread.
2. Acts 20:7: "Upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."
3. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16: Singing.
4. I Cor. 16:1-2: Giving.

Thus, we have five simple acts of worship in this early church.

X. HOW WAS THIS EARLY CHURCH ORGANIZED?

1. Temporary Officers:
 - A. The Apostles Were Personally Chosen and Trained by The Lord. (Acts 10:41; 13:31; 2 Pet. 1:16; Acts 26:16-17)
 - B. Prophets, who were inspired teachers. (Acts 11:27; 13:1-2; Eph. 4:11)

2. Permanent Officers:

- A. Evangelists, who were fundamentally preachers of the gospel. (Acts 21:8, Eph. 4:11, 2 Tim. 4:5)
- B. Elders (Titus 1:5-9; I Tim. 3:1-6; Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:3-4)
- C. Deacons, who were appointed to look after the temporal interests. (Acts 6:1-6; I Tim. 3:8-13)

XI. WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THIS GREAT INSTITUTION?

1. To Preserve the Truth of God.

- A. I tim. 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of the truth."
- B. 2 Tim. 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

2. To Proclaim This Truth To The Uttermost Parts of The Earth.

- A. Matt. 28:18-20: Teach all nations
- B. Mark 16:15-16: Preach the gospel to every creature.

XII. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY THIS NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH TODAY?

1. WHAT CHURCH:

- A. Has No Creed But Christ?
- B. Has No Book of Discipline But The New Testament?
- C. Requires The Same Terms of Admission As Did The New Testament Church?
- D. Wears The Same Religious Designation As Those of the New Testament?
- E. Has No Other Officers But Elders, Evangelists, Deacons?
- F. Insist That Baptism and the Lord's Supper Are to Be Kept Today?
- G. Meets on First Day of Every Week To Break Bread?
- H. Which Church In This Community Has All These Earmarks of the New Testament Church?

XIII. RESTORATION OF NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY TO THE
WORLD IS NO MEAN TASK.

1. God's House - The Church Was In The Mind Of God From
The Beginning.
2. Christ Purchased This House With His Blood.
 - A. That House offers Salvation and Safety.
 - B. In This House We have God As Our Father and
Christ as Elder Brother.
 - C. Ours Is To Persuade Every Person To Enter It
Before It is Too Late.