

THE TRUTH

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Lesson 23 - The Truth About God's True Church

"There is but one inquiry to be made, namely, 'Which is the true church?' By solving this one question, 'Which is the true church?' you will at once solve every question of religious controversy that ever has been, or that ever can be agitated." [The End of Religious Controversy, J. Milner, 95]

1. Is church membership Biblical? [Acts 2:41,47; 5:14,16:5] Ans. _____

NOTE: In a day when commitment is a rare commodity, it should come as no surprise that church membership is such a low priority to so many believers. Sadly, it is not uncommon for Christians to move from church to church, never submitting themselves to the care of elders and never committing themselves to a group of fellow believers.

To neglect or to refuse to join a church as a formal member, however, reflects a misunderstanding of the believer's responsibility to the body of Christ and also cuts one off from the many blessings and opportunities that flow from this commitment. It is essential for every Christian to understand what church membership is and why it matters.

2. Where did the early believers assemble for worship? [Acts 2:46] Ans. In the _____ / _____ to _____.

THE CHURCH

3. What is the church? [Acts 7:38] Ans. His _____.

NOTE: The word "church" or "churches" is found about _____ times in the New Testament Scriptures. The word church in the Greek means "Ekklesia" "ek," _____ "kaleo," "_____," "The Church" means "the called-out people."

4. Does Jesus have a church? [Matthew 16:13-18] Ans. _____

- Jesus **has** a _____
- Satan would **seek** to _____ the church.
- Satan would **not** be _____ in destroying the church.

5. Does Jesus recognize other Christians in other faiths? [John 10:16; Psalms 100:3] Ans. _____

Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches, which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion.

There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. **[The Great Controversy, 390]**

FINDING THE TRUE CHURCH

6. Is it possible to determine, or find the “true church” by the name of the church? Ans.

- The Roman Catholic Church 'Catholic,' its original meaning is 'universal'
- The Church of God [1 Corinthians 1:2]
- The Pentecostal Church [Acts 2:1]
- The Holiness Church [1 Peter 1:16]
- The Christian Church [Acts 11:26]
- The Church of Nazarene [Matthew 2:23]
- The Brethren Church [Matthew 2:23]
- The Church of the First Born [Hebrews 12:23]
- The Latter Day Saints [Philippians 4:22]
- Jehovah's Witnesses [Exodus 4:3; Acts 1:8]

NOTE: There are only three ways one can discover God's true church:

- I. By it's _____ to Bible _____. **[1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 2:13; 2 Corinth. 6:14-16]**

THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE

7. Whose doctrine should God's last-day church replicate? [Acts 2:42, Matthew 28:20] Ans.
The _____

NOTE: If the teachings and the practices of a church are contrary to the plain teachings of the Bible or to the Apostolic doctrine, then it is certainly not the true church.

- a. _____. **[2 Timothy 3:16]**

Satan is constantly endeavoring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves. Then, by controlling the minds of these leaders, he can influence the multitudes according to his will. **[Great Controversy 595.2]**

- b. The _____ and the _____ - _____ of Jesus. **[John 10:28]**

This text categorically affirms that there was never a time when Christ did not exist. He was not brought into existence by the Father, either by a process of creation or of eternal generation. He has always been with the Father. He did not have a beginning. The life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. "I lay it down of Myself," **[John 10:18]** He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived.

- c. _____ in Jesus Christ alone. [Acts 4:12; Philippians 2:10]
- d. _____ and man's _____. [1 Corinthians 15: 51-53; Acts 2:29, 34]
- e. The _____. [1 Thessalonians 4:16]
- f. Total separation from _____. [2 Corinthians 6:17; Acts 19:17-19]

The early Christians were indeed a peculiar people. Their blameless deportment and unswerving faith were a continual reproof that disturbed the sinner's peace. Though few in numbers, without wealth, position, or honorary titles, they were a terror to evildoers wherever their character and doctrines were known. [The Great Controversy, 46]

- g. Teach and practice _____. [1 Corinthians 7:19-20; 10:31]
- h. The _____ of Jesus. [1 Thessalonians 4:16]

NOTE: The Secret Rapture advocates that the Second Coming will be a secret and silent event. Only believing Christians will see Christ appearing in the clouds of heaven. They will suddenly disappear and the unbelievers will be mystified, totally unaware of what happened until after the event has taken place.

- i. They must advocate the right _____ of _____. [Acts 13:14; 18:4]
- j. They believed in the _____ of _____. [Acts 21:8-9]
- k. They believed that they should not wear _____. [1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Peter 3:3]
- l. They would abstain from _____. [Phil. 4:8; Galatians 5:19-21]
- m. They would follow the Biblical rule for _____. [2 Corinthians 6:14]
- n. They would follow the Biblical rule for _____. [Ephesians 5:19]

GLOBAL

- I. It will be _____ in its _____ and _____.
[Matthew 24:14]

PROPHECY

- II. It will be _____ in its teachings and in its origin. [2 Peter 1:19]

8. What two groups of people is the devil angry at in the book of Revelation? [Revelation 12:17]

- Those that _____ the _____ of God.
- Those that have the _____ of _____.

Thus we conclude that this text, Revelation 12:17, refers to the faithful believers in the time of the end, who are identified by two characteristics. A study of this text, therefore, is imperative for arriving

at the correct identification of who composes God's last day church.

The book of Revelation identifies the crowning characteristic of the redeemed as obedience. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." [Revelation 14:12] "And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." [Revelation 12:17] "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." [Revelation 22:14]

The second characteristic of these last-day Christians against whom the dragon wages his war is that they 'have the testimony of Jesus Christ.' In Revelation 19:10 this term is explained to mean 'the spirit of prophecy.'

Obviously the plain meaning is that the true church, which is preaching the gospel of the coming kingdom just before the second advent, will cherish a high regard for the prophecies of such books as Daniel and the Revelation, in which the perils and obligations of the last days are clearly defined and in which the second advent is forcefully taught. Another conclusion from these facts is inevitable. Since the people of this remnant church have a high respect for the Spirit of Prophecy, they will necessarily obey the admonition not to quench the Spirit and not to despise "prophesings." [1 Thessalonians 5:19, 20]

In other words, if they happen to know of contemporary manifestations of the 'spirit of prophecy,' they will not reject them off hand without investigation, but will have enough true spiritual discernment to 'prove all things; hold fast that which is good.' [Verse 21.] All this means that they will not only cherish the old, long-recognized prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, but will also give heed to whatever contemporary results of the prophetic spirit may appear among them which prove to be worthy of holding fast as 'good,' or of divine origin, after complete tests have been intelligently applied, as given in Isaiah 8:20 and elsewhere. [Time of the End, 129, 130]

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH SPEAKS

"Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the Church ever made happened in the first century. The Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday, not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church's sense of its own power. People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should **logically** become Seventh-day Adventist and keep Saturday holy". [Saint Catherine May 21, 1995, Catholic Church Sentinel]

The challenge issued by Rome over 100 years ago remains: Either the Catholic Church is right, or the Seventh-day Adventists are right. There can be no other choice. And if one choose neither, then the whole doctrine of Sola Scriptura collapses, and with it, the pillar upon which all of Protestantism stands [Mary Online, Dec. 2003]

"Every man must do two things alone; he must do his own believing and his own dying." [Martin Luther]