

# A Study of the Church in the New Testament

## Lesson 1: God's Wonderful Will For Us To Obey

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### I. Introduction

#### A. Some important questions for us to examine:

1. What do you think when you hear the word "Church?" A religion? A sect? A "hierarchy?" Many denominations? The "Church" is MUCH different than this!
2. What do you think when you hear the word "Christian?" Someone who is not a Muslim? A "believer" in Jesus? The "Christian" is MUCH more than this!
3. What is the meaning of "upon this rock I will build My church?" (*Matthew 16:18*). Is Peter the rock? What is this "rock?" Please note that Jesus is involved here!
4. Was the "Church" very important to Jesus? Was the "Church" very important to the Father in heaven? VERY IMPORTANT!
5. Does the "Church" save? NO, Jesus is the Savior of His Body, the "Church." We will study that the "Church" is the "Saved."
6. When was the "Church" of the New Testament established? (*Acts 2*)
7. Where did the "Church" of the New Testament begin? Jerusalem.
8. Who was the "Head" of the New Testament "Church?" Jesus! (*Ephesians 1:22, 23*)

#### B. Topics concerning the Church which are to be discussed: (8 Weeks)

1. The Church is built on God's "pattern," on God's wonderful plan (Lesson 1)
2. How the Bible uses the word "Church." (Lesson 2)
3. The identity of the Lord's Church – Who are these people? (Lesson 3)
4. God's way for people to enter the Church of the New Testament (Lesson 4)
5. God's preparation for the Church He promised through Christ (Lesson 5)
6. The Lord established His Church (Lesson 6)
7. God's organization for the Church that Jesus established (Lesson 7)
8. God's plan for the worship, work, and life of the Lord's Church (Lesson 8)

## II. A Very Important Principle: God's Message Comes BEFORE God's Church!

- A. The Lord COMMANDS that His message be preached (*see Titus 1:3*)
- B. The message is the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus (*Acts 2:22-33*)
- C. The message is that Jesus must become our Lord! (*Acts 2:36*)
  - 1. The "Lordship of Jesus" means that we MUST follow Him. (*Luke 6:46*)
  - 2. Lordship means "discipleship" (*John 8:31, 32*). See also *Luke 6:40*. We MUST follow Jesus in EVERYTHING! (*Matthew 7:21-27*)
- D. The message must be obeyed! (*Acts 2:36-41*) See also *2Thessalonians 1:7-9*.
- E. Please notice that the 3,000 who obeyed the message were the CHURCH in Jerusalem (*Acts 2:41, 47; 5:11*).
- F. An important question: Who made these people a part of the Church? (*Acts 2:41, 47 and Colossians 1:12, 13*) The Lord did!

## III. The Church MUST Be Built On The "Plan" or "Pattern" That the Lord Has Given! It is His Plan! It is His Pattern!

- A. Words that tell us that God HAS a "pattern" or "standard" for us to follow:
  - 1. Hold on to the "pattern" of "sound words." (*2Timothy 1:13*)
  - 2. "Preach the Word" – Do not turn from truth! (*2Timothy 4:2-4*)
  - 3. God wants ALL men to "know" truth. (*1Timothy 2:3, 4*)
  - 4. Follow "sound words" (*2Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:1; 1Timothy 6:3*). Note: "Sound" means "healthy." Words without any error; No false teaching! (*Luke 5:31*) "Well" is from the same Greek word as "sound."
  - 5. Jesus gave the apostles EXACT teachings to obey and preach! Does this make "truth" very important?
    - a) When Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles, they were "guided into ALL TRUTH." (*John 16:7-13; 14:26*)
    - b) The church in Jerusalem "devoted" itself to the "apostles' teaching." (*Acts 2:42*)
    - c) God wants ALL His people to "speak the same thing." (*1Corinthians 1:10*)
  - 6. God's "pattern" for our life is also seen in the Bible teaching on "seed." (*Matthew 13:1-23; Luke 8:4-15*)
    - a) The "seed" is the "Word of God" (*Luke 8:11*)
    - b) God's teachings are the "seed" of the Kingdom! This is how the "fruit" is produced, how the Kingdom comes. (*Matthew 13:19*)
  - 7. Please meditate on this: We must "purify our souls" by our "obedience to the truth!" (*1Peter 1:22*)

## Study Questions to Consider:

1. Is it necessary for us to “love the truth?” (*2Thessalonians 2:10-12*)
2. On the basis of our study today, is it right before God for us to say, “One belief in religion is just as good as another?” Is it correct to say, “One teaching is just as correct as another teaching?”
3. Do we still have “false teachings” today? (*Matthew 7:15-27*)
4. How can you tell what is false teaching today, and how can you tell what is true teaching today?