

May, 2006

Pause Ponder Profit

What About Your Religion?

by Bobby Graham

Does it concern you that your religion might not be acceptable to God? He does speak of religion that is vain (worthless) in James 1:26 and of that which is pure and undefiled in James 1:27. Jesus spoke of worship that was done in vain (Matt. 15:8,9), and Paul spoke of worshipping ignorantly in Acts 17:23. Such citations should cause us to pause and ponder our efforts to please God. Things that please us do not necessarily please God. Are you willing to turn to the Word of God to learn His will for us?

Here are questions to study from the standpoint of Bible teaching:

(1) Did you become a member of the church as people did in the New Testament? Read Acts 2, 8, 10, and 16.

(2) Is the church that you are a part of mentioned in the New Testament? Can you even find its name there? Read Romans 16:16 and 1 Cor. 1:2.

(3) Can you find the doctrine of the church you are associated with in the New Testament?

(4) What about what you do in worship to God? Can you put your finger on the verses teaching those things?

(5) Does the group you are affiliated with engage in only those works authorized in the New Testament?

Friend, these are things that make a difference! The diversity of the current religious scene is not a blessing, but a bane to mankind, serving only to mislead and deceive. Do not base your hopes or rest your faith on the ideas and practices conceived in the mind of man. Go to the Book of God and there learn of His will, by which you can be saved and in which you can serve him acceptably.

Remember Our Gospel Meeting

Speaker: Lowell Blasingame

Sunday, July 23rd

9:45 A.M. 10:45 A.M. & 6:00 P.M.

Mon. — Fri., July 24th — 28th

7:00 P.M.



Is It Possible?

by Billy Moore

Could a perfectly honest man listen to the teachings of different religious groups and conclude that all of them are teaching the truth? Think of the different churches in our town, each teaching a different doctrine, yet the thinking of many is: it doesn't matter which church one belongs to, or what he believes, just so he is sincere.

The Baptist churches have always insisted that baptism is immersion. This I believe to be true. But the Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist teach sprinkling for baptism. Can all be right? Is it possible?

Some of the preachers in our town tell the lost to pray for salvation. Others say the sinner is saved the moment he believes in Jesus as the Son of God. Some of us teach the believer must repent and be baptized to be saved. Can all be right? Is it possible?

Members of churches of Christ preach that baptism is necessary unto salvation, while others preach that one is saved before and without being baptized. Can all be right? Is it possible?

Some of the churches in our town have communion once a month, others have it once a day or once a year. Churches of Christ have communion every Lord's day. Can all be right? Is it possible?

Some churches teach inherited sin — babies are born with sin and should they die before that sin is forgiven they would be punished for it. But others of us deny this doctrine and teach that babies are born innocent, pure and undefiled — that sin is the transgression of the law, and babies have not transgressed the law of God, therefore are not sinners. Can all be right? Is it possible?

Some churches teach that Christ is coming back to this earth to set up His kingdom and reign a thousand years. Others of us teach that the kingdom of Christ was established in apostolic days, that He is now reigning, that His kingdom is spiritual in nature. Thus, we deny the thousand year reign of Christ on earth. Can all be right? Is it possible?

One church in our town teaches that there will be no eternal hell. But others teach that there will be a hell. Can all be right? Is it possible?

Surely a perfectly honest man could not believe all the doctrines taught in our town. It is impossible! Then how can one know who is right? Search the scriptures to learn what is right (Acts 17:11). Try the preachers (1 John 4:1). Do you think of men above that which is written (1 Cor. 4:6)? Let God be true, but every man a liar (Rom. 3:4). Learn the truth — It Is Possible.

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What Is The Church?

by James A. Brown

Some say it is the building where religious worship services are held. Others say it is any denomination or any religious organization. Still others will say that it is all denominations grouped together, that make up the church. These answers, of course, are not in agreement with the definition that the Bible gives.

The word church first appears in Matthew 16:18 where Jesus said, *"I will build My church."* It is interesting to note that Jesus did not say, I will build 350 churches. The promise of Jesus was to build only one church, "My church." This shows the singularity of the church. Also notice that Jesus used the possessive pronoun "My" church. That is, it is His church, it belongs to Him. Read Ephesians 1:22-23 and see that Christ is head over the church, which is his body. Notice the definite article (the) before church, this again shows the singularity of the church. Also note that the church and the body are said to be the same, the church, (one church) which is His body (one body). The way many in the religious world view the church is that Christ is head over a multitude of bodies. What a monstrosity, can you imagine a human head attached to several bodies? In chapter 4 of Ephesians and verse 4 it says, *"there is one body."*

What then is the church? The church is people, but not just any people. The church is people who have been *"bought with a price"* (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23). Christ purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). The people who are blood bought are the people who have been called by the gospel of Christ (2 Thess. 2:14). They are called out of darkness into God's marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9). As a matter of fact, the word church is the translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*, which literally means to call out. Without hearing the gospel, man can not be called out by the

gospel. *For faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* (Rom. 10:17). In Mark 16:15-16 Jesus, speaking to His apostles, said, *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."* What were the apostles to preach? The gospel! What were the people to believe? The gospel! What were the people to do after they believed the gospel? Be baptized! When man meets these conditions, then the Lord adds him to His Church (Acts 2:47). The church then is those who have heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel. If man will not obey all of the gospel it means he does not believe the gospel. Jesus says, this man will be condemned.

One of man's greatest needs today is to belong to the church that Christ built. Preachers across the land have said for years, "join the church of your choice." When people believe this kind of preaching they are condemning their souls to hell. Man can join any one of the hundreds of denominations across the United States, but joining that denomination will not make him a member of the church that Christ built. The Bible simply teaches that God adds us to the church after we have met His conditions of entrance (Acts 2:47). This church was established on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two. Before this time the church was never spoken of as being in existence. It is referred to in the New Testament as: the church (Eph. 5:25), church of God (Gal 1:13), church of the living God (1 Tim. 3:15), church of the first born (Heb. 2:12), household of God (1 Tim. 3:15), kingdom of God or Heaven (Matt. 16:18-19; 1 Cor. 4:20), body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23) and more. Study the word of God, believe it and obey what it says. For when the end comes, Jesus will deliver the kingdom, that is, the church, to God (1 Cor. 15:24). Will you be a member of it?

The Church, Christ Built

by James A. Brown

Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build My church" (Matt. 16:18). Luke said, "The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47).

Note what one should infer from these statements. That Christ must have built His church by the time the events of Acts 2 took place. Because the Lord could not have added those who were being saved to the church, if the church had not been built. Now if Christ built His church as He promised and it came into existence on the day of Pentecost, then we may also infer that any church not built by Christ and not having its beginning on the day of Pentecost is not the church mentioned in the New Testament.

So it stands to reason that no church listed in the chart below is the church that came into existence on the day of Pentecost—the church that Christ built.

Church	Founder	Time
Roman Catholic	Boniface III	606 A. D.
Lutheran	Martain Luther	1520 A. D.
Episcopalian	Henry VIII	1534 A. D.
Presbyterian	John Calvin	1536 A. D.
Baptist	John Smythe	1607 A. D.
Methodist	John Wesley	1739 A. D.

And a long, long list of others...

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Church Of Christ
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Pause — Ponder — Profit is a monthly publication of the Second and Walnut Church Of Christ, Paragould, Arkansas.

Sunday

Radio 1490 AM .

Bible Study 9:00 A.M.

Worship..... 9:45 A.M.

Worship..... 10:45 A.M.

Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study..... 7:00 P.M.

Preacher: James A. Brown

Phone: 870-236-3371

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