



"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

The Establishment of the Church

Chuck Northrop

If you were asked *where* was the church established, how would you answer? Most likely, there would be as many answers as people asked. Some may say Rome, others may say Germany or England, and still others may say various cities in the United States.

If you were asked *when* was the church established, how would you answer? Again, the answer would probably be as varied as the number of people asked. Answers would range thousands of years before Christ to within the last century.

If you were asked *who* established the church, how would you respond? Some would say Abraham, others would say Jesus, and still others might say Luther, Calvin, Smythe, Wesley, or Miller.

If we really wanted the correct answers to these questions, where should we turn? Where should we look to find the correct answers? Since God adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47), and since Jesus is the Savior of the body (Ephesians 5:23) which is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23), then the church concerns the salvation of mankind. And, since the church concerns mankind's redemption, then its establishment is of utmost importance. So where can we find out about the establishment of the church? In the same place we read about the church — the Bible. So according to the Bible, who established the church, and where and when was it established?

The answer to the first question is Jesus. In the region of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus promised His disciples He would build His church (Matthew 16:18). That, in itself, ought to answer the question. However, there is more to it. Not only did Jesus promise to build the church, He purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). We often think about the blood of Jesus paying the price of sin, but it also paid the price for the church. For this reason, when sin is wiped away, God adds the saved to the church. Now let's apply this. Paul wrote, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20).

Second question: When was the church established? The church was established on Pentecost fifty days after the death of Christ. Notice this:

- (1) Jesus promised the kingdom was at hand (Matthew 4:17).
- (2) Jesus promised to build His church, and this would come to fruition when Peter was given the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19).
- (3) Jesus promised there would be some who would not taste of death until they see the kingdom (Mark 9:1).
- (4) Jesus promised at the institution of the Lord's supper He would not drink the fruit of the vine with His disciples until the kingdom came (Matthew 26:29).
- (5) Jesus promised the kingdom would "come with power" (Mark 9:1).

When did all of these things come to pass? The Jewish holiday of Pentecost, fifty days after the crucifixion of Christ (Acts 2). It was near to the time of Jesus' preaching. The church was built upon Peter's proclamation of Christ (Acts 2:14), and God added those who were saved to the church (Acts 2:41,47). It came during the lifetime of those to whom Jesus spoke. After its establishment, the disciples partook the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42), and it came with power (Acts 2:2-4). Thus, the church was established on Pentecost of AD 30 as recorded in Acts 2.

Finally, where was the church established? Since the Bible teaches the church was established by the preaching of the gospel on the day of Pentecost, then the *where* is simple: the city of Jerusalem (Acts 2:5). This was the fulfillment of the prophecy found in Isaiah 2:2-4. Jesus instructed the apostles "they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4). The promise was fulfilled in Acts 2 when Peter declared the promise of the remission of sins in the name of Christ (Acts 2:38).

Are you a member of the church established by Jesus the Christ in the city of Jerusalem fifty days after His death? Do you want to learn more about the church Jesus established? Then, please let us know. We would be delighted to study the Bible with you further. □

Belief

Wayne Brewer

One of the foundational doctrines of the New Testament is “belief” or as it can also be called “faith.” Jesus said, “...for if ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). The inspired author of Hebrews wrote, “But without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). These and many other Bible verses clearly set forth the fact that “belief” or “faith” in God and Jesus Christ is essential in order to receive forgiveness of sins, have fellowship with God, and be a Christian. As the Hebrew author stated, “it is impossible” to approach God without faith or belief. However, the question arises, biblically speaking what is the nature of belief?

First, biblical “belief” or “faith” is based upon evidence. There are many who speak of a “blind faith” or a “leap of faith” and apply that to biblical faith, but biblical faith is based upon evidence. One believes or has faith because of the evidence. John wrote, “but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31). Notice, “but these are written that ye might believe...” or as evidence “...that ye might believe.” Biblical belief is not a “blind faith,” a “leap of faith,” or a feeling but is based upon evidence and proof.

Second, biblical “belief” or “faith” necessitates one’s personal ability to think, reason, and make a decision with conviction of heart and mind. Paul wrote, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Bible “belief” or “faith” is the ability to sort out truth from error and then make a decision from the heart whether to accept or reject the truth. Consequently, any doctrine or religious practice, such as infant baptism or baptism by proxy for someone who has already died, circumvents God’s plan for a person comes to God through his or her personal “belief” or “faith.”

Third, biblical “belief” or “faith” necessitates a person’s willingness to obey the will of God from the heart. Not only does biblical “belief” include what takes place in the mind or heart but also obedience to God. Paul wrote to the Romans concerning their belief, “but God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin...” (Romans 6:17). It is evident that their “belief” or “faith,” which included their obedience, brought about their spiritual freedom from sin in Christ.

When Jesus said, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16), he was teaching not only belief from a mere mental ascent, but all that belief would include as revealed through his own teaching as well as that of the apostles and inspired writers of the New Testament. Belief in Jesus includes repentance of sin (Luke 13:3), confession of Jesus as the Son of God (Acts 8:37), and baptism for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38).

Observations and Concerns

September 13, 2023

Welcome Visitors! It is our Honor to Honor YOU as our welcomed guests.

Praise in Psalm: “O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together” (Psalm 34:3).

Declaration of Appreciation: We appreciate all the lessons and all who spoke on the Summer Series this year. It was a great series of lessons and most beneficial.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Jim Allison** had a biopsy recently. His results came back negative and showed no cancer. We rejoice with him, and to God be the praise!
- ▶ **Sammy Gray** will be having medical tests conducted in the coming weeks.
- ▶ **Andy Hudson** was in a car accident last week. We are thankful to God that he is ok, although sore.
- ▶ **Nelda Hudson** is scheduled to have a Loop procedure on her heart on September 18th.
- ▶ **Vance Smith** fell last week. He is recovering at home.

The Lee & Walnut church in Sapulpa will be conducting a Gospel Meeting October 8-11 with Tommy Stacks. The theme is “**Heaven — The Home of the Righteous.**”

Reminder: If you have news for the Oologah Observer, please give it to Chelley or Chuck before Tuesday morning each week.

The email address for **The Oologah Observer** is OologahObserver@gmail.com. If you would like to send news or subscribe, you can do so via this email address.

Schedule of Services	Assignments			
		Wednesday, Sep. 13	Sunday, Sep. 17 AM	Sunday, Sep. 17 PM
	Announcements	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop	Ross Swearingen
	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Doyle Jackson	Bill Dilks
	Prayer	Paul Praschnik	Hayden Praschnik	Doyle Jackson
	Lord's Supper (speaker)		Ross Swearingen	Paul Praschnik
	Lord's Supper		Chris Nelson	
	Lesson	Landon Rowell	Bill Dilks	Chuck Northrop
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Ross Swearingen	Paul Praschnik	Chris Nelson
Sundays				
Bible Classes.	9:30 AM			
Worship	10:30 AM			
Worship	5:00 PM			
Wednesdays				
Bible Classes.	7:00 PM			
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