THE IDENTITY OF THE TRUE CHURCH

Introduction:

1. The Bible teaches Christ built only one church. Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4; Eph.5:25

2. Salvation is in Christ and to be in Christ is to be in the spiritual body of Christ, which is the church. Eph. 1: 3,7 ; 2 Tim. 2:10; Eph. 1:22, 23; Gal. 3:27; I Cor. 12:13

3. Even though Christ built only one, we find about 250 or more in this land today.
   (1) Any sober-minded man knows all these can't be right.
   (2) All of them but one must be of men.

4. At this point, we recognize the problem which confronts the honest inquirer.
   (1) Which one is the Lord's???
   (2) The honest want to know because they want to be saved.

5. The only way to know is to go the New Testament to see what the church looked like in the New Testament times; then find one today exactly like the one in the New Testament.
   (1) Reject all others as counterfeit.
   (2) The more like the Lord's church a man-made church becomes, yet isn't the Lord's church, the more dangerous it is, for people will more likely be fooled by it.

6. The New Testament church is produced by a seed:
   (1) Luke 8:11 "the seed is the Word of God".
   (2) God's unchangeable law of reproduction is that everything shall bring forth after its' kind.
      Gal. 6:7-8
      a. If we want to produce corn, we plant corn seed.
      b. We could never produce corn from cotton seed.
   (3) The same is true in regard to the SEED of the kingdom.
      a. It will produce today what it did 1900 years ago. Heb. 4: 12; I Pet. 1:23
   (4) If the seed, the word of God, produced the Baptist church, Methodist church, Lutheran church, Presbyterian church, THEN, it will do it NOW - if not THEN, it won't NOW. (5) We know it did not produce them THEN.
   (6) They are produced by different seed.....SEED OF MEN.
   (7) Let us look at some identification marks of the Lord's church.

I. WE IDENTIFY IT BY IT'S BUILDER:

1. Christ is the builder of the one true church. Matt. 16:18
2. Psalms 127:1 "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."
3. Matthew 15: 13
4. Any church established by any man cannot be the true church.

II. BY IT'S FOUNDATION:

1. Christ... I Cor. 3:11; Isa. 28:16; Matt. 16: 13-18
2. This foundation will stand the test.. Matt. 7: 24 -27
III. BY THE PLACE AND TIME OF BUILDING:

1. Isaiah 2: 2-3  Show God's house was to built in Jerusalem, in the last days, when the law of the Lord was given.

IV. BY THE NAMES APPLIED:

1. The church of God - I Cor. 1:2
2. The house of God - I Tim. 3:15
3. The body of Christ - Col. 1: 18
4. Christ's church - Matt. 16:18
5. Churches of Christ - Rom. 16:16

V. BY THE DAY OBSERVED AND THE KEEPING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

1. The early church was commanded to observe the Lord's supper. I Cor. 11: 23-30
2. They did every first day of the week. Acts 20:7

VI. BY THE GUIDE IT USES:

1. The true church has no rule of faith but the New Testament.
2. The Bible itself says this is enough - II Tim. 3: 16 -17; II Pet. 1:3.
3. It contains all we need.
4. A church that uses more or less is not the true church.

VII. BY THE ORGANIZATION IT HAS:

1. The organization of the church was simple.
2. Each congregation was independent with its own elders, deacons, evangelist and members. Phil. 1: 1; Acts 14:23; I Peter 5; 1-5.
3. The New Testament church turned none of its work over to a Missionary society, benevolent society, a college or to another congregation.

VIII. BY TERMS OF ENTRANCE:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16: 16
3. Repentance - Acts 2: 38
4. Confession - Romans 10:10; Acts 8 : 37

IX. IT'S MISSION:

1. Preach the gospel. I Tim. 3:15; Mk. 16: 15-16]
2. Edify saints. Eph. 4: 11-12
   Rom. 15: 26-27; I Tim. 5: 16; II Cor 8; II Cor 9

Donald Townsley