WHY I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

By Donald Townsley


1. Many people today have reached the conclusion that the church is relatively unimportant to them spiritually.
   a. Not essential
   b. Jesus, yes – church, no.
   c. There is the “no church” movement.

2. Many say, “Today’s church is out-of-date and needs to be modernized to meet the needs of a modern generation.

3. Others say, “One church is as good as another”.

4. Others today think of the church in terms of a social type organization to be tailored to meet the social needs of the community.

5. Men have lost sight of what the New Testament church is all about.

6. The church of the New Testament is about the redemption of lost man.
   a. It was bought with the blood of Christ – Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25.
   b. We are reconciled to God in it – Eph. 2:16; 2:13.
   c. By the new birth we enter into the kingdom of God (the church) – John 3:5; Col. 1:13.
      i. To be in Christ is to be in His body – Gal. 3:27; I Cor. 12:13.
   d. The saved are added to it – Acts 2:47; 5:14; 11:24.
   e. The church, the body, is the fullness of Christ – Eph. 1: 22 -23.

7. In this lesson, I want to tell you why I believe in the church that you read about in the New Testament.

I. I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BECAUSE GOD PLANNED IT FROM ETERNITY.

   a. Paul said that the church was in the eternal purpose of God – Eph. 3: 9 – 11.
   b. God, in eternity, planned to send Jesus to this earth to die for our sins – Rev. 13:8; I Pet. 1:19 – 20.
   c. God’s plan in sending Jesus involved “the church”.
      i. God planned it; Jesus bought and built it – Eph. 5:25; Matt. 16:18.

II. I BELIEVE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH BECAUSE JESUS CAME TO BUILD IT.

   a. From the beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, He announced His plan to establish the church, which is the kingdom of God – Mk. 1: 14 – 15; Matt. 4:23; Matt. 24:14; Acts 20: 25; 28:31.
   b. Jesus said in Mark 9:1 that some who heard Him would not die till His kingdom came with power – Acts 1:8; Acts 2: 1 – 4.
   c. Daniel had foretold the establishment of this kingdom in the days of the Roman kings – Dan. 2:44; Isa. 2:2 – 4 – “last days”.
   d. When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He announced the establishment of His church as the fulfillment of the kingdom prophecies of the Old Testament – Matt. 16: 18 – 19.
Jesus built His church on the first Pentecost after His resurrection – Acts 2:47.

III. I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BECAUSE RECONCILIATION TO GOD OCCURS IN THE CHURCH.
   a. Man’s sins have alienated him from God – Rom. 6:23; Isa. 59: 1 – 2.
   b. Jesus died and shed His blood as the propitiation for sins – I John 2:2; I John 4:10.
      i. A propitiation is an atonement, or an atoning sacrifice for sins – I Cor. 15:3; I John 1:7; Rev. 1:5.
      ii. The word “propitiate” means to appease, to render favorable; to conciliate.
      iii. In obeying the gospel, we appropriate the benefits of his propitiation, and are treated as if we have not sinned against God – we are forgiven – Acts 2:38.
      iv. We are reconciled to God – Rom. 5:10.
   c. Paul taught that this reconciliation unto God occurs in the one body, the church – Eph. 2:16.

IV. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH WORSHIPPED ACCORDING TO GOD’S DIVINE PLAN.
   a. God was worshiped in spirit and in truth – John 4:24.
      i. This is the worship God seeks – John 4:23.
   b. For our worship to be acceptable to God, it must be as He directs – Matt. 15:9.
   c. The worship of the New Testament church was simple and sincere.
      i. They came together every first day of the week to commemorate the death of Christ – Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Cor. 11: 23 – 28.
      ii. They gave as God had prospered them on each first day of the week – I Cor. 16: 1 – 2.
      iii. They prayed – Acts 2:42.
      iv. They taught the word of God – Acts 20:7; Acts 2:42.
      v. They sang spiritual songs and “made melody in their hearts” to the Lord – Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.

V. I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BECAUSE IT WAS ORGANIZED ACCORDING TO GOD’S DIVINE PLAN.
   a. Elders were ordained in every church – Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5.
   b. Elder’s authority begins and ends with the congregation where they are elders – I Pet. 5:2.
   c. These churches did none of their work through any human organization or sponsoring church.

VI. THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IS SCRIPTURAL.
   a. The church is to preach the gospel to the lost – I Tim. 3:15; I Thess. 1:8; Mk. 16:15 – 16.
   b. The church is to edify the saved – Matt. 28:20.
   c. The church is to help poor saints – I Cor. 16: 1 – 2.
      i. The work of the church is not social – I Cor. 11: 22.

VII. THE CHURCH WAS ENTERED BASED UPON SPECIFIC CONDITIONS.
   a. People heard the gospel preached – I Cor. 15: 1 – 4; Acts 8:12.
b. **People believed** the gospel – Acts 8:12; Acts 18:8.
c. **People repented** of their sins – Acts 2:38.
d. **They confessed** their faith in Christ – Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9, 10; Matt. 10:32,33.
e. **They were baptized** for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38; 2:41, 47.

**CONCLUSION**
1. These are the reasons I believe in the New Testament church.
2. Are you a member of Christ’s church?
3. Won’t you obey the Gospel NOW?

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