

Which Church Is Right?

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In Matt. 16:18 Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"My church" indicates sole possession. The thought which naturally comes to mind is, what church did He mean, or which did He build? Was it a church comparable to the rest of the churches? Or is it a separate, distinct body in which all its members have salvation?

The fact that Jesus said, "I will build my church," definitely shows that He was the builder and organizer.

One popular opinion is that the Church of God is a church among the rest, on par with them and like them in formality and association.

Jesus said in St. John 10:9, 10, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture." We go through the door (Christ), which is the only process by which we obtain salvation and membership in His church.

Different bodies call themselves churches of God. Some have had light and in reality were a member of Christ's body or Church, but have departed from the truths that made them the Church of God. Some have substituted man's ideas, and are now a church among the rest, with the Biblical name only as a marked difference to designate them. It is as the Prophet Isaiah said. "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach." Isa. 4:1.

The Church of God name has become common to many Bible students, but to see the exclusive body is quite another thing. Some have the idea that all sects or denominations comprise the Church that Jesus built. But Jesus never built a sect. He is the Head of His Church, His Body. Men are the heads of the churches they build. For instance, the Lutheran Church was founded on the teaching of Martin Luther; John Wesley's teaching became the Methodist Church from the methods he taught.

Sectarian churches individually teach some truth, but omit much truth. Any joinable church has both good and bad in its membership. But God's true church contains only saved men and women. The Psalmist declared, "Of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her." Psa. 87 :5, 6. She carries the true nature of God, being born of His Spirit, having His divine nature. Her members are raised up and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Paul described this church as glorious and without spot or wrinkle that it should be holy, and without blemish. Ephesians 5:27.

Jesus also prayed in St. John 17:22, "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one." Jesus had great joy in seeing His children one. The most glorious church is where the members see eye to eye and flow together. There the fellowship runs from heart to heart. The Psalmist declared Mt. Zion (the Church of God), beautiful for situation (Psa. 48:2), the joy of the whole earth. When the Holy Spirit is in each heart and divine love flows toward each other, why wouldn't it be a place of divine satisfaction?

No joy can equal the sublime, glorious unity brought about by the Spirit of God. It is joy unspeakable and full of glory. One divine taste forever spoils one for the darkness of the denominational world. My heart aches when I think of the condition of souls groping in denominational darkness; perhaps honest, but not knowing that God has a pure church, a city set on a hill illuminated with the light from heaven with no darkness in her. There the true character of Jesus is reflected through men and women whose hearts are filled with His divine nature (love), walking in light, each having fellowship with God and with each other (sublime and heavenly!

Is the Church of God organized? Yes, most surely so. Jesus said He would build His Church and furnish it with "apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors, and teachers." Eph. 4:11. As these work under divine inspiration there is unity among believers.

Sectarian churches are often organized through human wisdom; therefore none are alike because human wisdom without the Holy Spirit can never come to the unity Jesus prayed for.

I have set before you some Biblical truths so that you may measure them to churches in existence today. Jesus has a church that comes up to the Bible standard, which you can find as you keep an honest heart before God and diligently seek for His truth.