

Finding the Church that Jesus Built 08-05-18 AM

Imagine if you would that you have been invited to a wedding reception at a dear friend's house. You have a gift you are excited to bring to them, and you truly want to congratulate them. This is important to you. When you receive the invite, it does not have an address. Instead, the invitation describes the home itself (as we do many times). Imagine that it said to come in through the red door and come upstairs, and that there is a fire going to stay warm. From that you might deduce that the front door is red, it is (at least) two stories tall, and a chimney should be visible on the outside. When you arrive at the street you might see many homes with similar characteristics. Maybe ten have a red front door; maybe ten are two stories or more, and maybe ten have chimneys. Do you simply pick one house from these? Of course not! You will not be at the right place if you do. Instead, you must use ALL of the attributes of the invitation to locate the single correct home.

The Bible says that Jesus built a church (Matthew 16:18). It says that He only built ONE church (Eph. 4:4). It says that this church is a home for believers (Eph. 2:19-20), and that there is an invitation to come to a wedding feast there (Rev. 19:9). The problem is this: there are many, many churches in the world, with different doctrines, purposes, structures and goals. They cannot all be correct, and there is a constant warning for us in the Bible of the dangers of counterfeit religion and churches (Col. 2:23, 1 Tim. 4:1-8, etc.). So how can we tell which one is Jesus' church?

Just like that party invitation, there are things about the church that Jesus built (the church of Christ) that we can look for to identify it as His church.

1) Jesus' church has one door; it is Jesus, and we enter it by putting Him on in baptism

Luke 13:24 - *"Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able"*

John 10:9 - *"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture"*

Galatians 3:27 *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

Any church that has another way to be added to it (Acts 2:47) cannot be Jesus' church

2) Jesus' church has only one source of light, and that is the Word of God

2 Corinthians 4:4 *.....that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

1 Timothy 3:15 *I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

Any church that has another source of knowledge (personal revelations, creeds, doctrines, catechisms, disciplines) cannot be Jesus' church

3) Jesus' church has only one head, Jesus

Ephesians 1:22 - And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

Any church that has a human head (a pope, a president, a council, a committee, a convention, etc.) cannot be Jesus' church

These are just three simple tests that can determine if we are the church that Jesus built or a church that, while similar, is not the same. There are many other tests that we might consider. Jesus church is not a denomination (1 Cor. 1); it is founded by Jesus (1 Cor. 3:11) when He arose from the grave; it is given to a unique and limited purpose.

Sometimes a church is established by Jesus, but then loses itself (Rev. 2-3). We need to examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5) in order that we may be certain we are in the right place to wait for the coming of our king (Mat. 25:1-13).