

# Why We Need...

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## The Church Of Christ

(Mt 16:13-19)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
  - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on “Why We Need...”
  - a. Last week we examined “Why we need the Bible.”
    - i. **II Ti 3:16-17** “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”<sup>1</sup>
  - b. This week we will be looking into “Why We Need The Church Of Christ.”
    - i. **Mt 16:13-19** “Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is”...16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”...18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”
3. We live in a time when “church” is no longer deemed necessary.
  - a. The modern movement is that which considers “spirituality” something to be considered separate and apart from church.
    - i. Jefferson Bethke has perpetuated this movement in his extremely popular Youtube video “Why I Hate Religion, But Love Jesus.”
4. We haven’t really helped the cause in the church today.
  - a. We more often than not use the term “church” in its denomination usage meaning building.
    - i. I’m going to church.
      1. Translation I’m going to the building where I worship.
    - ii. Would you like to come and visit my church?
      1. Translation would you like to come to the building where I worship?
  - b. This has led to the misunderstanding of what the church actually is and the misguided theology that one can be spiritual and not be affiliated with “a church” i.e. building.
5. Considering these truths let us now examine therefore “Why we need the church of Christ.”
  - a. We will be examining...
    - i. Why we need the church of Christ universal.
    - ii. Why we need the church of Christ local.

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<sup>1</sup> All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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## I. The Church Of Christ Universal

### A. Defining church of Christ universal

1. Today, in the religious world, this means something different than it should.
  - i. Denominationalism considers church universal as “all denominations” with the philosophy of Christ at its core.
  - ii. Sectarianism considers church universal as all church buildings with church of Christ as the name on the building.
2. Jesus defines church of Christ universal different than most.
  - i. It is the universal assembly that Jesus built for Himself.
    - a. **Mt 16:18** “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
  - ii. It is the one and only body of Christ, made up of only saved members.
    - a. **Ep 1:22-23** “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”
    - b. **Ep 4:4** “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call”
    - c. **Ro 12:5** “so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”
  - iii. It is the household or family of God.
    - a. **I Ti 3:15** “if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.”
  - iv. It is the house or temple of God.
    - a. **Ep 2:19-22** “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”
  - v. It is the kingdom of God.
    - a. **Co 1:13** “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son”

### B. We need the church of Christ universal because...

1. Jesus is the Savior of it.
  - i. **Ep 5:23** “For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.”
2. Jesus loves it.
  - i. **Ep 5:25** “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church...”
3. Jesus gave Himself for it.
  - i. **Ep 5:25** “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”

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4. Jesus purchased it with His blood.
    - i. **Ac 20:28** “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.”
  5. Jesus has sanctified and cleansed it.
    - i. **Ep 5:26** “that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word”
  6. Jesus will present it to Himself as glorious, holy and without blemish.
    - i. **Ep 5:27** “so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”
  7. Jesus nourishes and cherishes the church.
    - i. **Ep 5:29** “For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church”
  8. Jesus is the head over all things to the church.
    - i. **Ep 1:22** “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church”
  9. Jesus adds those who are saved to the church.
    - i. **Ac 2:47** “praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”
- C. Therefore...
1. Considering how much Jesus has done for His church and loves His church how can we not need it?

## II. The Church Of Christ Local

- A. Defining church of Christ local
1. Today in the religious world this, once again, means something different than what Jesus means it to be.
    - i. Denominationalism considers church local as any congregation that deems itself to be a church.
    - ii. Sectarianism considers church local as any congregation that deems itself to be church of Christ.
  2. Jesus defines church of Christ local different than most.
    - i. It is a congregation made up of Christians in a geographical area that assemble together to work and worship.
      - a. **Ac 11:26** “and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.”
      - b. **Ro 16:16** “Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.”
    - ii. It is a congregation that continues steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers.
      - a. **Ac 2:42** “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

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- iii. It is a congregation that assembles weekly to break bread i.e. to observe the Lord's Supper.
    - a. **Ac 20:7** "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight."
  - iv. It is a congregation that seeks to organize just as the local churches were doing in the days of the apostles.
    - a. **Ph 1:1** "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons"
  - v. It is a congregation that seeks to care for each of its members.
    - a. **I Co 12:25-26** "that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."
  - vi. It is a congregation with members that are united in "one" speech, mind, and judgment.
    - a. **I Co 1:10** "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (NKJV)
      - 1. **I Co 1:10** "...that all of you agree..."
- B. We need the church of Christ local because...
- 1. Fellowship is found in it.
    - i. **Ac 2:42** "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."
  - 2. It sirs us up towards love and good works.
    - i. **He 10:24-25** "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."
  - 3. Spiritual growth is found in it.
    - i. **Ep 4:11-16** "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."

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4. Encouragement towards remaining faithful is found in it.
    - i. **He 3:12-15** "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. 15 As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.""
  5. Comfort during trails is found in it.
    - i. **II Co 1:3-5** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too."
- C. Thus...
1. What we can clearly see is that the Lord intended for the local church to provide much of the support and encouragement we need as His disciples.

### CONCLUSION

1. Brethren can there be any doubt how much we need...
  - a. The church of Christ universal.
  - b. The church of Christ local.
2. Question: Do you grasp how much you really need the church of Christ?
  - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
  - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation<sup>2</sup>
  - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
    - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
  - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
    - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
    - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
    - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
    - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
    - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
    - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**

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<sup>2</sup> This lessons relied heavily on Brother Mark Copeland's sermon: Why We Need The Church of Christ.