

Old Union Ministers School
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The identity and destiny of the New Testament Church
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Introduction = When I first begin to pray about my lesson that I wanted to try to present, I thought it was a bit too much for me to handle and I was right. Without the help of God it would mans' views and man's views alone and the world has too much of that already. I am persuaded by God's help, we can find the truth that will grow our lives in Christ and strengthen our churches. I'm convinced that most of the problems in our churches is because our people can't truly see the Lords' church and it's function.

When I sat before my computer and prayerfully placed my fingers on the keys, I thought, how many of us could actually identify the New Testament Church biblically and historically if we were put to the test? There are so many look-a-likes and sound-a-likes and even act- a-like out there that can sometimes confuse the mind; but by the help of God, I would like to try and remove these confusions.

God is not the author of confusion, he is the author of peace and understanding, and this is Gods' will for each of us. This school over the past twenty some odd years has given me the peace of mind and the knowledge of many things to aid me in avoiding confusion, and I thank the Old Union School and these capable teachers.

In this lesson, I will try to set forth some defined words that will help us to understand the subject at hand. I also will try to point out the differences in counterfeit organizations and the Lord's Church. I will also try to abstain from the use of name calling but let their own error point them out.

I trust that we each and everyone will continue to be prayerful students of the word of God, and with that being said I will now get into my lesson.

Definition of words in this lesson

N.T. Church = A body of scripturally baptized believers who have covenanted together to carry out the work of God until he returns. The N.T. Church was blood bought and God himself placed certain marks on his church that can't be erased to identify it as being authentic.

Counterfeit church = When our currency was printed, there were certain water marks and numbers on that money to identify it. If these marks didn't appear it was a counterfeit, just a look a like. The blood marks don't appear in the counterfeit organizations.

Identity = characteristics by which a person, place or thing can be recognized.

Destiny = The place toward which someone or something is going. In our case, the New Testament Church. A permanent residence with God.

Lesson text = Jud 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Dan 2:44 (And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.) I believe that this is having reference to the church kingdom (the New Testament Church Kingdom) that Jesus was going to set up during his personal ministry.

There are many organizations in the world today calling themselves a church which have some resemblance of the true church, but they have no relationship to the New Testament Church that our Lord established during his personal ministry. In my estimation, these are counterfeits that I made reference to in my introduction.

When we make reference about or to (The New Testament Church) it must be traced further back than earthly men for their head. Anything that can't trace their origin beyond the work of sinful men, these people have an identity problem.

When Jesus organized and established the New Testament Church, he left his identifying marks all through it, and with an honest desire and humble prayer, these identifying marks readily come to the surface.

When tracing the New Testament Church it's not wise to try and trace it through church succession; there are too many gaps that history has not maintained or kept adequate records of. The enemy of the church destroyed many records. So there must be a better way of getting back to Christ.

I believe the first thing that we must establish when trying to identify the Lords' church is who the head and owner of the church really is. I want to base what I am trying to teach upon the scriptures. In Ephesians 5:23 (For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.) (Act 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.)

So we can see from these scriptures that the church belongs to Christ, and that he is the head of the church, and that he purchased it with his own sinless blood. I think that this is a very critical point that must be established early on.

Many of these organizations that have sprung up can trace their beginning no further than some man or woman, and if we can find the true identity of these counterfeit organizations and you can, you can tag them for what they really are. I am really glad that God has given us the grace to be bold enough to say what really needs to be said, we need, no, we must call black black and white white with respect. Bro. we are in a terrible battle in this country and our fight isn't with fist and scull, its higher than that.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

These people have totally invaded the media of this country with their false doctrine, and the most of the populated world are being engulfed by it. These people can be tagged as nothing but false organizations because their identifying marks are wrong.

Luke 21:8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

Be careful of what you hear and what you believe; don't go after anything without proof of truth. God didn't leave us without resources to aid us in finding the true identity of the N. t. church.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: Brothers this is the goal that God set for us, but we have slipped a long way from the fullness of Christ.

You know when I came to the Old Union School several years ago, I was hungry for something that would grow me in the work of the Lord, and I found it. The same teachings are available for you if you really desire it.

We have established that Jesus Christ is the head of the New Testament church, and that being the first identifying and scriptural mark. I want us to keep this in mind for the remainder of our life.

I suppose here would be as good a place as any to make this statement. As I said earlier on, I don't think that it is possible to trace the Lords' church all the way back to Christ through church succession. There are succession links good and bad. We might be able to trace it through some of our churches, but I have a lot of questions when the church that went through some of the men. I have my doubts that we could trace the Lords' Church all the way back to Jerusalem by following the trail from church to church and this is again because of the destruction of records.

I believe that there must be a better process of finding the footprints of the New Testament Church. I think these footprints should be visible enough for any rational minded human being to follow.

The name over the door of any establishment doesn't necessarily mean that this is the Lord's church because God didn't give his church a name to be traced by but he gave it a body of doctrines. If the name was sufficient, the counterfeits claim would be as legitimate as any other, but God placed this safeguard in there to protect his kingdom.

Mat 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

What was the church to teach? Teach the doctrines of the church, and the promise was that he was with them always, even to the end of the world. Amen.

If we are teachable children of God, these footprints of the Lords' church become more visible. You know there are some people who will take anything that some one says for truth, but I am going to be honest with you. I am not going to take anything that anyone says, and it doesn't matter who they are if it can't be proved by the scriptures. Now I want to say something here if I might, we have several young ministers here today and you are beginning a journey to obtain knowledge and understanding of the scriptures. It would be wise on your part to learn to keep silent sometimes and listen; you'll learn more if you listen.

Now what is going to perpetuate the New Testament Church that will leave legible doctrinal footprints for our children and grandchildren is to teach, teach and then teach some more. I have heard some of our preachers say, I just can't teach, well bro if that is your thoughts I am going to say to you and that is, you can't preach either. Any man of God can teach if he will prepare himself and put his trust in God. I think maybe that is the reason some of our

churches are falling apart today. If a preacher says that he can't teach; that's a copout, and I would be ashamed to admit it.

The enemy of the New Testament has done all in their power to stamp out the Lords' church, but by the grace of God the church has continued to this present hour. Satan has tried to assimilate his doctrine to the doctrine of Christ in order to try and pervert the truth.

When the persecutions became greater than we could stand, God stepped up to give us grace
Luk 18:7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

Luk 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Now I want us to look at a few of these doctrines and we could list more but these have been and are the footprints of identity down through the centuries.

These are cardinal bible doctrines that we must agree on

#1 The virgin birth of Christ: Everything is at stake when the virgin birth of Christ is questioned.

(A) The deity of Christ is at stake.

(B) The truthfulness of Prophecy is at stake.

(C) The truthfulness of the gospel writers are at stake because these men with one accord give record of the virgin birth of Christ.

#2 As I mentioned earlier, Christ is the head of the New Testament Church.

#3 The Lords' Church is composed of saved people; in short, it has a redeemed or called out membership.

#4 Salvation is a prerequisite to scriptural baptism.

Mar 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mar 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

#5 Scriptural baptism is a prerequisite to church membership.

Act 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. Baptism was instituted first and it was first in observance. Authority; candidate; administrator; mode.

#6 Church membership is a prerequisite to the Lords' Supper. The Lords' supper was second in institution and it was second in observance. Luk 22:30 That ye may **eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and** sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. No one has the right to the Lords' table until they have been scripturally baptized.

#7 The New Testament Church wont except the baptism of other denominations, nor will it recognize the baptism of non-scriptural organizations.

#8 The New Testament is our rule and guide of faith. These doctrines that we have today was preserved and secured by the blood of the many martyrs who loved the truth more than

their own lives. These faithful brothers have handed the baton on to us we hope to hand it on to you who are coming behind us.

#9 The Lords' Church has two church ordinances; which I mentioned above "Baptism and the Lords' Supper" and in that order. An ordinance is an established rule or command given by authority. The Lord placed these ordinances inside the church.

Now with this being said; These precious doctrines that God has safeguarded all these years are the spiritual jewels and the white robe of which God hath clothed his bride and her destiny is fixed. Rev 14:4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

Well, will everyone who has been saved by the grace of God and has been baptized by the proper authority be in the bride? I think when the writer spoke of those people who had followed the Lamb meant more than an occasional or when it's convenient relationship with God.

I believe the scriptures will bear out what I am about to say. We are bought with a price, and our lives are not our own to do with as we please. People who refuse to make serving God and taking up their work will not be in the bride. Can I prove that? I think the scriptures carry more weight than I do, so I will let them speak.

2Ti 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

2Ti 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

2Ti 2:11 *It is* a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

2Ti 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

2Ti 2:13 If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

So we can see from this teaching that is important to suffer and labor with Christ in order to remain in the bride of Christ. The blessings and rewards are worth it.

When Jesus was speaking to his church in Johns' gospel, the fourteenth chapter, Jesus told them (the church) In my Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. This makes me to rejoice to think that Jesus himself has prepared a place to take his bride. I received this thought from another good brother of mine. If Jesus created the world in six days, and a great portion of this world has never been told; I wonder what that country is going to be like that Jesus has been preparing for two thousand years.

1Th 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

When I think of the joy in a passing blessing, I get almost beside myself, but to live in the joy and in his presence forever; how do you explain it. I think then I will in all spiritual reality know what the saying means when I hear the term (it's better felt than told).

This is the place where no traveler ever returns. How glorious to think there's nothing on earth to ever claim our attention again, but God has prepared something special for his bride.

I want to finish up with a few thoughts from the twenty fourth chapter of Genesis, and I trust God will help me with this.

Abraham sent his servant down to a near kinsman's house to get a bride for his son Isaac. I think this a beautiful picture of God sending the Holy Spirit to get a bride for his son Jesus.

Abraham didn't send his servant to the other tribes of the world to find the bride for Isaac; he sent him to his near kinsmen to take a bride for his son.

God didn't send the Holy Spirit to the lost world to get a bride for his son Jesus, but he chose her from the family of God. The spiritual D.N.A. was right .

When a person is saved by the grace of God, they should pray for God to direct them to a New Testament Church, and to this point I have not mentioned which church that I believe is the N.T. church. I know God didn't give his church a name as such but I am glad that I am an old time Baptist. I know that a person can go to Heaven without being a Baptist, but I believe that everyone who got saved or will be saved was because of what this old church has suffered for.

Will I be in the bride, I sure hope so, but I tell you there 's going to be many saved people who had scriptural baptism and had their name on the church roll that wont be in the bride.

2Ti 2:12 If we **suffer**, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

This walk of life is not going to be easy if we preach and teach the doctrines of Christ, but when we can lay this work down and hear the master say well done my good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of the Lord. Bro. you talk about a payday; It will well worth the travel.

When Rebekah denied all that the natural life offered her and chose for herself by the direction of the Holy Spirit to go and be Isaac wife, they set out on a journey toward the rich mans' house.

I tell you when we united with the Lords' church, we too begin a journey toward the rich mans' house. I wondered how many times the servant of Abraham comforted Rebekah on their journey home with silver and gold.

You know the master has given us many gifts on our way home also; He gave us his love to assure us of his presence; He gave us his spirit to lead and guide in the right way, and there are many more but he has given sufficient to get to the rich mans' house.

The servant of Abraham had traveled many days toward the rich mans' house with Isaac's bride to be which must have felt like a lifetime. They probably faced many heart aches, many troubles, maybe even the thieves tried to steal away wealth and joy, but by Gods' Grace they was helped on their journey homeward.

Well the Holy Spirit has been traveling with the bride of Christ which has been many lifetimes heading toward her destiny. The Lords' church has faced many trials, there has been much bloodshed but she has persevered. The Lord has never taken his eyes' off her at any time

Finally Abrahams servant was nearing the rich mans' house and she looked and saw Isaac walking out in the field toward them and she got down from the camel on which she was riding and ask the servant who this man was, and he replied, this is my masters and she covered her face with a vial

Brothers in just a short time we too are going to reach our eternal home.
The church has made herself ready and we to are going to see Jesus the rich mans' son coming on the cloud of Glory to receive his bride .

The bible said Isaac took Rebekah into his mothers tent and he loved her.
Jesus is coming also to get his bride and he already loves her and he is going to usher her into that special place that he has prepared for her and this is her final destiny.