

Where Is the TRUE Church Today?

Here is the answer to the repeated questions which thousands of you have been asking!

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IT IS TIME you knew the *truth* about this work.

Does Jesus Christ have *many* different evangelists and church denominations—each teaching a different “gospel” and practicing different doctrines—doing His work?

Is Mr. Armstrong’s ministry just another one-man evangelistic work? Or is this work the work of God’s Church—*THE Church of God*—which Jesus founded? Who gives us “the right to be right”?

Could Jesus Christ be using, guiding and directing *this work* if it were *not* the work of His Church?

It is time you knew *how* to recognize what the true Church is and which one it is! It’s time you *knew* how, when, and where this religious babylon of hundreds of denominations started. The truth will come as a shock!

Only ONE Church

Every thinking person—every denomination—realizes that, at some time in history, there has been a great apostasy or falling away from original TRUTH. Many may dispute the *time* of its occurrence, but they know that it happened!

Jesus Christ did not found *many denominations*! Christ said, “I will build my Church.” *He did build it!* ONE Church, commissioned to preach and to publish His Gospel—the very Message He brought from God—to all the world!

But what do we find today? Hundreds of different and disagreeing sects, all founded by MEN, each *professing* to teach the truth, yet contradicting and disagreeing with all the others—a modern religious babylon!

And what is a “sect”? According to Webster, it is “a group that has *broken away from* the established Church.” Who established the Church?—Christ! Today’s host of sects or denominations have

BROKEN AWAY from that established parent Church—they teach different doctrines!

Christ’s instruction to His people is, “*Come out from among them, and be ye separate*” (II Cor. 6:17). Yes, Christ commands you to separate from these sects founded by men!

In His final prayer for His ONE Church, not for the many sects or denominations masquerading as the true parent Church, Jesus prayed: “I pray for *them*: I pray *not* for the world . . . Holy Father, keep *through thine own name* those whom thou hast given me, *that they may be ONE*, as we are. I have given them thy word, and the *world hateth them*, because *they are not OF the world*, even as I am not OF the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. *They are not OF the world*, even as I am not OF the world” (John 17:9-16).

Jesus did command HIS BODY—the collective Body through which the Spirit of God does the WORK of God—to go *into* all the world and preach and publish His Gospel. But those of His Church are described as being strangers and foreigners in this world—as AMBASSADORS for Christ — representing HIS Kingdom which is *foreign* to this world!

The religious sects of Jesus’ day were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, the Samaritans. Jesus joined none of them. On the contrary, He called His disciples *out of them*—out of all organizations of men. The Greek word “ecclesia” translated “Church” in English has the meaning of “called-out ones.”

What Is the True Church?

Very few really know what the true Church is.

The true Church is the collective body of individuals, called out from the ways of this present world, who have *totally*

surrendered themselves to the rule of God, and who, through the Holy Spirit, become the begotten sons of God (Rom. 8:9).

Jesus purchased *the Church* by shedding His own blood for it (Acts 20:28). The true Church is not some *politically organized denomination* which one joins or becomes a member of in order to be “saved.” Jesus did not die for some one religious *organization* called a church. Joining a local church congregation does *not* put you into God’s Church.

You can’t *join* the true Church; *only God can put you into it by His Spirit*. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into [put into] one Body” (I Cor. 12:13). *God makes you a member of His Church*—if you surrender your life to Him—even if you have *no local church* with which to fellowship.

The Church is called the body of Christ because it is a *spiritual organism* whose LIVING, ACTIVE HEAD is Jesus Christ, in the same sense that the husband is head of the wife (Eph. 5:23, 31). How does one enter this true Church of God?—this spiritual union? *Notice:*

When God’s Church first began on the day of Pentecost, Peter gave the answer to this question. “REPENT and BE BAPTIZED every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

We have to realize our own ways are wrong, that they have brought on war and suffering about us. We must be willing to *repent* and completely turn from our former ways and let God rule our lives. Then we should be *baptized*. Paul explains it in Romans 6:1-6 as the outward sign of our willingness to completely *bury* our old self in a watery grave and come up to walk in newness of life—following Jesus’ example.

Then we are promised the “gift” of

the Holy Spirit to guide us in obeying and following Christ—our *real* Lord and Master. This gift puts us into the Church, as we read in I Cor. 12:13.

Church Grows in Truth

Before He ascended to the Father, Jesus prayed that His Church would be kept ONE in the Father's name. "Holy Father, *keep through thine own name* those whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE, as we are" (John 17:11).

The true Church—the "Church of God" (I Cor. 1:2)—is not many divided quarreling denominations, but ONE Church, composed of many scattered members, ONE Church united in Spirit, mind, attitude and heart because its members have totally surrendered their wills to God and have yielded to correction and reproof from the Word of God—the Bible.

No denomination could be the true Church, because none has been willing to admit where it has been wrong, none has received God's correction, none has allowed the Holy Spirit to guide it into truth. The Church which Jesus is building is composed of those *scattered* individuals who have God's Holy Spirit, who admit it when they are wrong, as the apostle Peter did when he made a serious mistake (Gal. 2:11).

Now notice Jesus' promise in John 16:13. He would send the Spirit of truth who "will GUIDE you INTO all truth."

Here is the KEY which proves who are in God's Church. It is composed *only* of those who are *growing into truth* as God reveals it. The moment anyone ceases to GROW, but wants to retain only what he had five or ten years ago, *from that moment on the Holy Spirit ceases to live in him.*

To Be Scattered

Now let's notice what was prophesied to happen to the Church.

This true Church of God was to be PERSECUTED—SCATTERED! "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you," said Jesus to His disciples (John 15:20). "ALL that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution*" (II Tim. 3:12).

On the night Jesus was seized to be crucified, He said: "It is written, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall

be scattered'" (Mark 14:27). After HE, the Shepherd, was crucified, the "sheep,"—His CHURCH—were to become *scattered*! Previously, that same evening, Jesus had said to His disciples: "Ye shall be *scattered*" (John 16:32).

This persecution and scattering began early. Notice Acts 8:1: "And at that time there was a *great persecution against the Church* which was at Jerusalem; and *they were all scattered abroad* throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

Notice what Daniel says about the Church: "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: *yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.* Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: *but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.* And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white, even to the time of the end" (Dan. 11:33-35).

The prophet Ezekiel foretold this scattering—chapter 34. Daniel again foretold it: "When he shall have accomplished to *scatter* the power of the *holy people* (Church), all these things shall be finished." That is, the end of the age! (Dan. 12:7).

Nowhere is there any prophecy that the one true Church should become great and powerful, exerting influence in this world. Rather, Jesus called it the "Little Flock," despised, persecuted, scattered BY the world—separate FROM the world! Scattered, but NEVER DIVIDED! Always ONE Church, speaking the SAME thing—*never* many differing sects!

You haven't read much of the history of THAT Church! Even the historians never knew where to look for the TRUE Church—for they didn't even know WHAT the true Church *is*!

WORLD'S Churches Deceived

On the other hand all the prophecies foretold that in the WORLD apostasy, deception, counterfeit "Christianity," and division would occur.

Jesus foretold the very *first* event to come on the world—GREAT DECEPTION—climaxing, in *our* day now just ahead, in GREAT TRIBULATION!

"Take heed," He said, "that no man deceive you. For MANY shall come *in my name*, saying I am Christ; and shall de-

ceive MANY!" (Mat. 24:4, 5).

Notice carefully! It was not the *few* who were to be DECEIVED—but the MANY. It was the FEW who were to become true Christians!

Jesus had pictured this same condition, when He said: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and MANY there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto LIFE, and FEW there be that find it" (Mat. 7:13-14).

That isn't what the world believes, is it? Probably that isn't what *you* have always heard, and come to assume. But it's what CHRIST SAID! How deceived this world has become!

Yes, the MANY would come *in Jesus' name*, proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ—yes, preaching CHRIST to the world—and yet DECEIVING the world—by substituting pagan beliefs while preaching ABOUT Christ!

Clever Counterfeit

What a clever counterfeit! And many—perhaps most—of those so preaching in Christ's name are sincere—*themselves* deceived! It is SATAN who has deceived even *them*! It is SATAN who has made himself the GOD OF THIS WORLD—and thus is worshipped AS God. This world *doesn't know* the true God, strange as that may seem! This world believes that if one "accepts Christ"—"makes his decision for Christ"—"WORSHIPS Christ"—he is saved.

That's what many preach today! But that is not what JESUS preached!

Observe: "IN VAIN do they worship ME," said Christ, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men . . . making the word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mark 7:7, 13).

That is difficult to believe, isn't it?

Shocking though it is, the overwhelming majority *have been deceived* by ministers who come in the name of Jesus Christ, proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ, but who teach a different Gospel and a different faith! They are those who, themselves being deceived from childhood, brought up in these deceptive beliefs, enter the ministry to earn a living, who choose it as their vocation or job, who decide to appoint *themselves* as Christ's representatives, yet who were *not* called by Christ to be His ministers!

They have hired themselves out to the people, and therefore must preach what the PEOPLE want to hear! They do *not* correct or reprove their congregations for rejecting the doctrines JESUS taught and for transgressing God's law which the BIBLE defines as SIN!

A Lesson to be Learned

The apostles, instructed directly by Jesus Christ, constantly warned the Church about this great departure from the FAITH that would *begin to occur at the close of their ministry*—not 1500 years later during the Protestant Reformation!

Scarcely twenty years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the apostle Paul, in one of his first inspired letters, cautioned Christians not to be deceived by false preaching, or by false letters purporting to be from the apostles. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day"—the time of God's intervention in human affairs when Jesus Christ will return to rule the nations—"shall not come except there come a *falling away FIRST*" (II Thess. 2:3).

The wholesale departure of professing Christians from the truth was the *FIRST event* prophesied to befall the true Church. Yes, today's hundreds of confused denominations—the result of that apostasy—were prophesied. *God is allowing human beings to form their own churches, to learn by hard cruel experience, that every teaching contrary to the way of life revealed in Scripture will end in sorrow and death.* The world has

not yet learned this lesson fully. The world doesn't want to receive the truth, but would rather be lulled to sleep by false ministers who preach what the people want to hear.

The Church Exists Today

Jesus said He would be *with* His Church till the end of time—that He would build His Church and the "gates of hell" would not prevail against it. His Church—the true Church of God—is commissioned to preach and to publish the gospel to all the world in *THESE LAST DAYS*. *Therefore God's Church MUST EXIST TODAY!* It is preaching the "gospel of the Kingdom . . . in all the world for a *witness*"—not to convert everyone, but for a witness—"unto all nations, and then shall the end come" (Mat. 24:14).

There is *ONLY ONE WORK* that is preaching the true gospel of the kingdom of God—the rule and the reign of God—to the nations.

This is that work.

Then those who have their part in this work and are converted *MUST CONSTITUTE THE CHURCH OF GOD!*

I challenge any of you to prove that any other work on earth is preaching the same gospel which Jesus preached! Our work is not yet done, not all nations have been reached. But when this work is finished, *YOU WILL KNOW THAT THE MESSAGE WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN HEARING OVER "THE WORLD TOMORROW" BROADCAST AND WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN READING IN "THE PLAIN TRUTH" IS THE WORK OF GOD WHICH*

HE IS SENDING THROUGH HIS CHURCH SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Every other work rejects the message of Jesus Christ or else rejects His rule through His laws. There is no exception.

The NAME of the Church

The Bible gives us the true NAME of the Church in *twelve* different places.

In five passages where the true NAME of the Church appears, the entire Body of Christ—the Church as a whole—is indicated. Thus when speaking of the entire Church, including all its individual members on earth, the name is "The CHURCH OF GOD."

There are *several* religious denominations who falsely claim the name "Church of God." We should bear in mind that *all* sects of this world have *some* truth, though mixed with error. Several have found the truth about the true NAME, and use it. But they are not the true Church. Since Christ is the Head of the Church, Paul also called the various congregations "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16)—but the actual NAME is the CHURCH OF GOD. It is kept in the name of the Father (John 17:11).

Yes, this work is the work of the true Church of God. All others are satanic counterfeits! It is time we come out from among them and become separate.

The only true Church of God is made up of those who have surrendered their lives to God and through whom God is carrying out His work on earth.

It is time you consider whether you are *really* in God's true Church!

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