

# Misconceptions of Church of Christ

No. 151

## Introduction.

- I. In the closing part of Romans the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter Paul said. (Rom. 16:16).
  - A. The church in the New Testament was called the “church of Christ” or “the church of God.”
  - B. These designations were not names, but denoted ownership.
  - C. The church is owned by God and His Son. It was purchased by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. It is therefore called “God’s church” or “Christ’s church.”
- II. Today I would like for us to study some “Misconceptions of the church of Christ.” These misconceptions have led many people to criticize the church of Christ and refuse to embrace it.
  - I. **Rejects The Old Testament** - Many people in the world today believe the church of Christ rejects the Old Testament as part of the inspired word of God.
    - A. This misconception is brought about by the fact that the church of Christ teaches, as does the New Testament, that the Old Testament is no longer binding as a law on God’s people and should not be followed by Christians.
      1. There are numerous scriptures that teach the **Old Testament** is not binding today. (Heb. 8:6, 7; 10:9; Rom. 7:4; Col. 2:14; Gal. 5:4).
      2. Even though the church of Christ does not teach that the Old Testament is to be followed by Christians, it does believe the Old Testament is fully and completely inspired of God. We believe the Bible is inspired from Genesis 1, the first chapter of the Bible, to Revelation 22, the last chapter of the Bible. It believes every text, every story, every prophecy is inspired of God. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21).
    - B. The church of Christ also believes that one can **profit greatly from a study of the Old Testament**. (Rom. 15:4).
      1. There are many reasons why we should study the Old Testament.
        - a. We should study the Old Testament for the **valuable history it contains**. It contains reliable and accurate history of the Hebrews, the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians, the Greeks, the Egyptians, and of many other nations. From the Old Testament we learn of the creation and fall of man, the flood and other important historical facts.
        - b. We should also study the Old Testament because it helps us to **better understand the New Testament**. There are hundreds of references from the Old Testament found in the New Testament. Without a knowledge of the Old Testament, it is impossible to understand the New Testament.
        - c. We should also study the Old Testament because **it tells us of Christ** and His kingdom and **contains many examples** of faith, courage, and obedience.

2. Others reasons could be enumerated for studying the Old Testament but these should be sufficient to convince us and others that one profits from a study of it.

II. **Established In The Early Part Of The 19<sup>th</sup> Century** - Others have the misconception that the church of Christ was establish in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Alexander Campbell and others.

A. **This is not so!**

1. Campbell did not establish the church of Christ , but he and others restored the church of Christ in the New Testament that had fallen away.
2. The New Testament writers warned that there would be a great departure from the faith. (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Tim. 4 :1).
3. **Shortly after the close of the first century** there was this great departure from the faith. For more than 1800 years men did not follow the Bible as their only guide in religion. They adopted many human creeds and followed them even when they contradicted the clear teaching of the word of God..

B. The restoration leaders, who were a part of the various denominational groups, restored the church to the New Testament pattern. They turned from human creeds and traditions that had so long divided the religious world.

1. They said, “We will speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.”
2. This motto meant there must be Bible authority for what is practiced in religion.
3. They realized the seriousness of changing God’s word. (Matt. 15:9; Gal. 1:8).

III. **Arrogant** - Others think the church of Christ is arrogant because it teaches there is but one church and stands against denominationalism.

A. When I and the vast majority of the other members of the church teach there is but one church and oppose denominationalism with its conflicting doctrines, I will assure you there is no feeling of pride or superiority in our hearts. When we teach there is but one church, we are simply trying to stand where Jesus and the apostles stood.

1. **Jesus** said. (Matt. 16:18). **Jesus** prayed. (Jn. 17:20, 21).
2. **Paul** wrote. (Eph. 4:4; 1:22,23; 5:25, 23).
3. **Paul** wrote. (1 Cor. 1:10).

B. These scriptures set forth the fact that Jesus established one church, died for one church, and prayed for the oneness of the church.

1. We cannot be loyal to Christ and teach denominationalism.
2. We cannot be loyal to Christ and teach “one church is as good as another” and “one doctrine is as good as another” and stand where Jesus and the apostles did.

IV. **Prejudiced Against Instrumental Music** - Others have the misconception that members of the church of Christ are prejudiced against instrumental music and therefore do not use it in worship.

- A. Members of the church are not prejudiced against instrumental music. Most like it just as much as the next person. Many members of the church of Christ enjoy listening to instrumental music and spend time and money learning to play an instrument skillfully.
- B. Even though most members of the church of Christ like instruments, we do use them in the worship of God. The reason for this is simple.
  - 1. The New Testament does not authorize instrumental music in worship. It was endorsed (even commanded) by the Old Testament, but not by the New Testament.
  - 2. The New Testament, the Testament under which we live, gives us the authority to sing and make melody in our hearts. (Eph. 5:19).
  - 3. There is no evidence that the early church used it in their worship.
  - 4. It is **noteworthy** to point out that the early church did not use instrumental music and that it was not until the 7<sup>th</sup> century that mechanical music was introduced into the worship. Its introduction was opposed by the vast majority of the religious world. It was then introduced by men, not by God.

V. **Does Not Believe In The Holy Spirit** - Others have thought the church of Christ does not believe in the Holy Spirit .

- A. This misconception is brought about by the fact that the church of Christ does not believe the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the sinner's heart to bring about conviction and conversion.
- B. The church believes in the Holy Spirit. It believes the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person and He dwells in Christians as a sign of their sonship.
  - 1. It also believes the Holy Spirit convicts men of sin in 2001 just as He did in the first century. (Jn. 16:8).
  - 2. The New Testament teaches the Holy Spirit converts men through the gospel (the truth, the word of God), not in some mysterious or miraculous way. (Jn. 6:45; 8:32; Mk. 16:15; Acts 2:41; Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23).
  - 3. These scriptures make it abundantly clear that men are converted, they are saved when they hear and obey the gospel.

VI. **Water Salvation** - There are others who think that the church of Christ believes in water salvation.

- A. This idea is based on the fact we teach one must be baptized to be saved.
- B. Members of the church do not believe in water salvation. All the water in the world cannot remove even one sin.
  - 1. We believe in **blood salvation**. (Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:22).
  - 2. We believe, however, that it is only when a person is baptized that the blood of Christ cleanses him

of sin. (Jn. 3:5; Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

3. These scriptures show one must be baptized to be saved, but baptism is not an act meriting salvation.

**Conclusion.**

- I. I hope this lesson has removed some of the misconceptions of the church of Christ and will help us to have a better understanding of it. I hope this lesson will motivate us to give our lives to Christ and become a part of His church. I hope this lesson will motivate us to stand on the word of God and only on the word of God.
- II. The Lord's invitation is now extended. We urge you to come to Christ now and submit your life to Him. Come as we stand and sing.