

# Where is the True Church?

---

By Peter Salemi

**BICOG Publication**

**[This booklet is not to be sold. It is a free educational service in the public interest,  
published by the British-Israel Church of God]**

## Where is the True Church?

---

***Where is the True Church of God? Is it one Church Organization? Or many branches of the Church scattered all over the world? Should you be under a certain name or group? If you don't belong to that group does that mean you are not saved? What is the Church and what is the Church supposed to do in the end time?***

There are many church buildings all over North America, hundreds of denominations, like the Seventh-day Adventists, Lutherans, Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Church of God Seventh Day, and many others that call themselves, the TRUE CHURCH OF GOD! Then there are the so-called “cults” and “sects” that also claim that they have the truth and the right system of worship. There are no churches that call themselves the “*wrong church!*” All claim to be the right church.

### **Does it really make a Difference?**

Many churches have some amount of truth; many are quite similar in certain broad categories. So since they are similar does it really matter where you go to church? Or what church you choose?

Yes it does!

If choosing a church were as easy as buying shoes, there would be nowhere near the arguing, squabbling, bickering, fighting, dissention, and division. Is there any church group that has lasted without some major split in it, over some doctrine, policy leadership, or how they should spend the funds?

For many people choosing a church is done with great caution. Some have never attended a church, but feel they are good Christians. Do you attend a church? If so why? Have you proved from the pages of your own Bible whether or not your church is the right one? Does it live up to the standards that Christ laid down as the true church of God?

### **What is the “Church?”**

Jesus Christ said, “I will build my church;” (Matt 16:18). Many people today misused this word; many think it means a building of some sort. Some people think it means a denomination or some sort of government. The Vatican is a state. The leader is the Pope who is the head of that state., run also by priests. Yet they still call it a church.

Jesus said “I will build my church.” What is it really? The word “Church” in the Greek is “*ekklēsia*” (Strong’s #1577). It means, “*εκ* out, *καλέω*, to *call* or *summon*” (Vine’s). Vine’s also says, “Originally an assembly of citizens, regularly summoned.” Basically it's an “assembly” of people who are “called out,” or “called out ones.” Called by whom? God!

“Who [God] hath saved us, and called us with *an holy calling*, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Tim 1:19). God actually picks those who he wants in his church, chosen for a purpose. As Jesus, said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you” (John 15:16). No one ever really thinks that it’s really God that chooses them. Many are led to believe that they have to choose their church, when it is really GOD THAT CHOOSES THEM! God does this through

## Where is the True Church?

---

his word by the power of his Spirit, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” (John 6:44, 45). The word of God is the seed planted inside us and produces fruits (Matthew 13:23). And it is the Spirit of God that leads and guides us. It opens our minds and teaches us, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Rom 8:14).

What are you “called out” of? This evil sin sick world. “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19). God has chosen people out of the world, drawing them by the word of God, open their minds with his holy Spirit, teaching them the word of God, not us putting our ideas into the Bible, but letting the Bible teach us God's message, and being his assembly, a group of people, God's People! The holy spirit also dwelling inside of them being God's possession God's children, “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom 8:9). This is done after baptism” (Acts 2:38). This is God's church!

God's church is also called the “little flock” (Luke 12:32). Not a huge organization or state with millions of followers. Israel was called God's “church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38). And Israel was the smallest nation on the earth at that time when God called them, “The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor *choose you*, because ye were more in number than any people; *for ye were the fewest of all people:*” (Deut 7:7). Christ said, “For many are called, but few *are* chosen” (Matthew 22:14). So God's church is small and has “little strength” (Rev 3:8). Yet strength enough to do a worldwide work!

God's church is not part of this world, meaning it does not compromise beliefs and doctrines that suit this world and its beliefs. Therefore because of this, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore the world hateth you*” (John 15:19). The church is a persecuted group, persecuted by the world because of its beliefs, “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. *If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also*” (John 15:20). It is, “through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:22). They are not loved by the world, because the world loves its own. Is the church that you attend, loved by the sinning evil world? Does your church try to appease to the world by compromising and accepting worldly ideas and doctrines? Now, the church is persecuted by the world, but also by religions and religious people as well. “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he *doeth God service*” (John 16:2). What, people being persecuted because their religion differs from other beliefs? Yes, this is been going on since man has walked this earth.

### **The True Church of God would also have an identifying sign.**

John said that the devil persecutes the woman-who is the church of God, who, “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Rev 12:17). This is the sign of God's true Church. The same sign, or mark God gave Israel, “Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it: ...And these words, which I command thee

## Where is the True Church?

---

this day, shall be in thine heart:...And thou shalt bind them for a *sign* upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes” (Deut 6:1, 6, 8).

“Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a *sign* between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I *am* the LORD that doth *sanctify* you.” (Ex 31:13). It is what separates the church of God from everyone else in this world! It is God’s identifying sign that sanctifies his church! This is done only by the receiving of God’s Holy Spirit! As God wrote the Ten Commandments on tables of stone, God also writes his laws on the “fleshy tables of the heart.” (2 Corinth 3:3; Rom 5:5; 1 John 5:3). “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom 8:9). The true Church of God all have the Spirit of God dwelling inside them; The evidence? They are obeying the Ten Commandments of God!

### Who is the Leader of the Church of God?

Jesus said “**I will** build my Church.” Jesus is the architect, the builder of the church of God. He told Simon, “That thou art Peter [Petros], and upon this rock [Petra] I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). The Catholic Church believes that the head of their church is Peter. Christ relinquished his power, and made Peter the “chief Apostle.” This led towards the Papal throne and Papal Infallibility.

But is Peter really the head of the church? Jesus said “I [Jesus] will build my church.” Jesus is called the “Head” of the church of God (see Ephesians 5:23). Jesus is called the “Rock” that followed the Israelites in 1 Corinthians 10:4. He is also called the “Chief Cornerstone” of the church in Ephesians 2:20, and the “Chief Shepherd” in 1 Peter 5:4. Jesus is the leader and head of the church, so what did Jesus really mean when he told Peter that you are “Peter.”?

The word Jesus used for Peter is “Petros.” This means “a (piece of) *rock*” (Strong’s # 4074). Thayer’s has a “stone” (see also John 1:42). It is not a foundation stone, or a cornerstone but a *pebble*. Then Jesus said, “**and** upon **this** rock [Petra] I will build my church.” The word here is “Petra.” is a “large” stone (Thayer’s). Jesus was speaking of *himself* as the large foundation stone.

Jesus is the chief cornerstone, “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

“In whom all the *building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord*:  
“In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:20-22). Peter and ALL OF THE OTHER APOSTLES are part of the foundation of the church of God, Jesus being the chief cornerstone, in which the building rests.

The Apostle Peter agrees, “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

“To whom coming, *as unto a living stone*, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,

“***Ye also, as lively stones***, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a ***chief corner stone***, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

## Where is the True Church?

---

“Unto you therefore which believe *he* is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made ***the head of the corner***, [see Matthew 21:42] “And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

“But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:” (1 Peter 2:3-9). Peter said that Jesus is the “chief cornerstone,” in which the church of God is built, and that the saints were “lively stones” that build up the house of God. Peter, the other apostles, and the saints are “stones” and Jesus is the Petra, the large rock, the foundation in which the church is built upon. Jesus builds his church and no one else!

### Is there Order & Structure in the Church?

Was there order, and doctrinal decisions, and administrative offices in the Church? Yes there was!

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

“And God hath set some in the church, *first* apostles, *secondarily* prophets, *thirdly* teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, **governments**, diversities of tongues” (1 Corinth 12:27-28). There are various *functions* in the church of God that God has set in.

What does it mean by “governments?” Many take this to mean that the government of God is in the church-*nothing* can be further from the truth!

Actually the word for “governments” is “kubernēsis *koo-ber'-nay-sis*; From κυβερνάω kubernaō (of Latin origin, to *steer*); *pilotage*, that is, (figuratively) *directorship* (in the church): - government.” (Strong's 2941).

Its Hebrew equivalent is “tachbûlâh *takh-boo-law'*, *takh-boo-law*; From H2254 as denominative from H2256; (only in plural) properly *steerage* (as a management of *ropes*), that is, (figuratively) *guidance* or (by implication) a *plan*: - good advice, (wise) counsels.” (Strong's 8458).

This source says, “Dr. Lightfoot contends that this word *does not refer to the power of ruling*, but to the case of a person endowed with a deep and comprehensive mind, who is profoundly wise and prudent; and he thinks that it implies the same as discernment of spirits, 1Cor 12:8 (note). He has given several proofs of this use of the word in the Septuagint.” (Clarke's commentary, emphasis added).

Basically what it means, “Greek. *kubernesis*. Only here in N.T., but found in the Septuagint. The word means 'guidance’” (Bullingers Companion Bible notes). Not the power to rule!

The word “government” meaning to rule that is revealed in Isaiah 9:6-7 “...of the and the government shall be upon his shoulder... Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end...” in the Hebrew is “miśrâh *mis-raw'* From H8280; *empire*: - government.” (Strong's 4951). This means the power of ruling as Isaiah 9:6-7 demonstrates; that this power will come at

## Where is the True Church?

---

the second coming of Jesus Christ; and he establishes it, and orders it, and the saints are made kings and priests *at that time and no other*.

The church today, in this world, are not kings and Priests-the kingdom is not here, instead the Bible says, “For our *conversation is in heaven*; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:” (Philippians 3:20). The word “conversation” is “*politeuma*” and it means “citizenship” (Strong's 4175).

Bullinger's Companion Bible notes says, “Greek. *politeuma*, Only here in N.T. It sec, in the Septuagint and in 2 Macc. 12.7. *The seat of the government of which we are citizens (Greek. polites), and of which we have both rights and responsibilities.*” The power to rule for the saints is in heaven and it is “reserved in heaven for you,” (1 Peter 1:4). It's only when Jesus comes that the church of God receives that kind of rule.

As of this moment Satan rules this world (see John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinth 4:4), and the saints have no power to rule, *yet*. Paul said, “*Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.*”(2 Corinth 1:24). God's government is *not* in the church so says your Bible. The ministers have no “dominion” over the church members, they do not rule, but the ministers are guides, helpers in your salvation.

But there is structure so the church can function.

First “Apostles.” These are the 12 Apostles *personally* trained by Jesus, the missionary movement of the church to go and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to all creatures.

Second, the “prophets.” Old and New Testament prophets. These formed the foundation of the church with Jesus being the “chief cornerstone.” The word prophet can also mean inspired preachers who preach to the church revelations in the Bible and prophecies in the Bible as well.

Third, teachers, pastors that shepherd the flock, being helpers of their joy. These are all the same. These are functions in the church not a “rank” but an assignment a responsibility to feed the “flock of God.”

Then, miracles, and healers, helpers, and those who can speak in different languages or tongues. These are people who have different talents that they bring into the church, or even “gifts” that God has given them to function in the church of God to edify them.

Then there is guidance *kubernesis*. God's law was to be taught and kept. The very word means “guidance” or “instruction.” The law of God is to be *administered* by those in the church.

Doctrinal issues were solved in an open forum, not issued by a lawmaker, or one man in the church as God's Apostle. Local elders and lay members took part in this process see Acts 15. Dictatorship was never allowed in God's Church. Jesus said it (Matthew 20:25-26). Paul wrote about the Apostles that, “*Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.*” (1 Corinth 1:24). All the positions mentioned above are *not* ranks, but

## Where is the True Church?

---

functions in the church, Christ is the *only* leader of the Church, and his *instructions* are in the Bible!

Now Paul wrote of administering the law of God, “Who [God] also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

“But if the *ministration of death*, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away:

“How shall not the *ministration of the spirit* be rather glorious?

“For if the *ministration of condemnation* be glory, much more doth the *ministration of righteousness* exceed in glory.

“For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

“For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious.” (2 Corinth 3:6-11). The Apostle Paul was comparing the two ministries. Moses’ ministry, and the ministry of Jesus and the Apostles.

Both were “glorious.” One however was a ministration of death and condemnation, the other of “life,” “spirit” and “righteousness.” Now does this mean Moses was not of life and righteousness? No! Deuteronomy 30:19 shows that it was. The difference was, how it was “administered.” The word “ministration” is “diakonia” (Strong’s #1248) It means “(ad-) minister (-ing, -tration, -try), office, relief, service (-ing)” “Administration” is the meaning of the word.

This of course means:

“The root idea of both words is 'service,' hence to supply, or conduct or attend to anything; the performance of official duty, the conduct of affairs, the various forms of spiritual or social service. 'Minister,' used either of an act or of an office, is the term that best represents the apostolic thought and ideal. ” (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)

Now Moses’ “administration” was death, meaning those who sinned were put to death. This was the office of Moses. He was the “judge” in Israel, and only the Judges were allowed to put people to death. “If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall *pay as the judges determine*.

“And if *any* mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

“Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

“Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.” (Ex 21:22-25).

The New Testament also says that the death penalty can only be executed by the government of the nation, “Let every soul be subject unto the *higher powers*. For there is no power but of God: the *powers that be are ordained of God*.

“Whosoever *therefore resisteth the power*, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

## Where is the True Church?

---

“For **rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil**. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

“For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; **for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.**” (Rom 13:1-4).

Jesus dealt with this issue in Matthew 5. Jesus was dealing here with the interpretation of the law of God by the scribes and Pharisees. He said, “For I say unto you, That except *your righteousness* shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (v.20). Their “righteousness” was based on the doctrines and commandments of men and not God, (Matthew 15:9). The Apostles righteousness was based on Jesus’ teachings and the Bible. Then he said, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:...But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (vv.3-38). Jesus dealt with their interpretation of the law. If someone “smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” The “evil” Jesus spoke of was personal vengeance which is *condemned in the Old and the New Testament!* This law of “eye for an eye” was only for the government to administer, not some vigilante to execute. ***Yet the Pharisees believed personal vengeance was justified with this false interpretation of this law!***

The New Testament says, “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

“Dearly beloved, ***avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.***

“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Rom 12:17-21). The Apostle Paul quotes from Leviticus 19:18, “Thou ***shalt not avenge***, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.” This is what Jesus taught, no personal vengeance, but love your enemies. So this was the administration of Moses. Moses exercising the government of God in Israel, to those who broke the law. These were put to death, *the administration of death*.

But in the New Testament “administration,” the ministers of the church were *never* a ministry to execute the penalties for sin. Yes, there was order and structure, but the administering aspects of the ministry emphasized *service* more than command; edification and *gentle encouragement* more than rebuke; being “helpers of their joy” more than *policemen* over their faith; visiting, counseling, anointing, encouraging more than criticizing or condemning; seeking those who were straying rather than threatening the weak with excommunication; building up faith, not instilling fear. So these two administrations were basically the same law, the law of God, administered in *two different ways*.

The ministry also is not a priesthood. That they are your connection between you and God. There is only one Priesthood, and that is the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;” (1 Tim 2:5).

## Where is the True Church?

---

*Jesus is the leader of the church.* If someone claims to be the leader of God's Church, and what he says goes, right or wrong, the church of God was not administered in this way.

Jesus put checks and balances in his church. He said, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

**"But it shall not be so among you:** but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

"And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28). Those that are ordained over the church under the leadership of Jesus let them *minister* to the church. *Give* not get. If governments in today's world would exercise this, because they have the power to do so, it would be a lot better for them. Yes there is leadership in the church, but not the way we think of it. The leaders were to serve the church of God, *not* become its masters and dictators. These served under the leadership of Christ.

Again, Doctrinal questions were solved in open forums, including the presence of the "elders" and even local lay members as well as apostles (read Acts 15).

One apostle could openly disagree with another apostle without fear of retaliation or being "put out." Paul rebuked Peter. Paul and Barnabas disagreed over a personnel choice and split up in anger, yet the work got done and neither tried to "put out" the other (Acts 15.39, 40).

The evangelists, such as Timothy, Titus, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, and others, usually labored under the instructions and authority of the apostles. The classic example of this is found in Paul's encouraging and instructional correspondence with young Timothy.

Yes, there *is structure and order* in God's true church, but it is not a dictatorship of harsh, brutal, unthinking authority that threatens to smash your eternal life, consign you to Gehenna fire at the slightest intimation that you are not blindly following a human leader. Christ is the Head of the Church of God. The Apostles were chosen and trained by Jesus himself to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, and minister to the church of God. Now, Jesus, the Apostles and their teachings, along with the prophets of the Old and New Testaments are for our edification and salvation today taught by Pastors, ministers and teachers in the church today.

### **Human Organization**

But when will people come to see the difference between the *spiritual organism* that is the church and the *human organization* that must function as the vehicle to fulfill the great commission?

Today the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God must be done by the means of the *mass media*: through radio, television and evangelistic campaigns; through booklets, periodicals and magazines; through Bible study courses and the internet. All of this takes *organization*. But not in the way an army functions with the head of it called a "Pastor

## Where is the True Church?

---

General.” More like a business or a charity, because there is a business side to the work; Trustees who operate for the benefit of the church and the general public.

There is nothing evil whatsoever about organization for the purpose of getting a great work done. It is the *abuse* of it that is the shame. That *work* is the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the entire world as a witness unto all nations, baptizing those who believe and teaching them to observe all things Jesus Christ taught His disciples; Also the work of the watchman to Israel. That warning message to God's people to repent! And, this is *not* appointed to one person! Jesus said, “And what I say unto you I say unto ALL, Watch.” (Mark 13:37). “Go ye [the whole church] therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

“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” (Matthew 28:19-20). The whole church is involved in this work, not just one person! We all must do the work of God.

To do that great job, there must be organization. But let that structure be like God Almighty, who “gently leads those that are with young” and who is “easy to be entreated” and who is filled with “goodness, meekness, gentleness, faith,” and who has unbounded, unlimited, perfect *love* toward those in the Church of God.

So, the True Church must have:

1. Jesus as the leader of the Church
2. Leaders of the church that serve and minister to the church of God, not be its masters, mediators or priesthood.
3. God's *guidance* in the church. His laws administered to show them the way of life. Helpers of their joy. Encouragement, edification and correction.
4. These are “called” of God, “chosen” by God, and have the “spirit” of God in their hearts. Evidence of this is the keeping of the law of God.
5. A “little flock” with “little strength.” But strong enough to do the work of God on this earth.
6. These do not compromise with the world, but are called out of the world, and their sole authority of God and the Bible. Not very popular with the world, at times even persecuted.
7. Doing the work of God of preaching the Gospel of God's coming kingdom and the watchman to Israel.

If you feel you are called and chosen of God and you are looking to attend a church, let the spirit of God guide you, and do your homework. If they meet the biblical criteria, then you have found the true church of God. And you will know it, when you let almighty God guide you through the process.

### **Only “ONE” Church?**

There are many that believe that only their organization is the only true church. How can people claim this coming out of the same church and becoming a splinter group? The Restored church

## Where is the True Church?

---

of God, and the Philadelphia Church of God came out of the Worldwide Church of God, yet both claim to be the true church and NO ONE ELSE! Many of the others claim to be the true church, and if you are not with them-part of their organization, then you are not part of the true church, even though you practically have the same beliefs. How can this be? Is it true that only one of these is the true church and no one else? Must you be a member of a particular church to be saved? Or is this just another false interpretation?

Again Man's theories cause confusion among the followers of Christ. Many lay members say, "How can there be two true churches"? There aren't. There is one true church of God! The problem is the egotistical leaders that head these churches; they claim they are the only true church! They have an "us" "them," hunkered down sandbag attitude.

There is one true church. Remember Jesus said it's *his* "assembly." *His* "called out ones." These can be all over the world without any of the other churches even knowing about it! Whose permission did Jesus need to call Paul? Peter's? Did Jesus need permission to call anyone out of the world? Jesus said this, "I am the vine, ye *are* the branches" (John 15:5). He didn't say "I am the vine and you are the ONE BRANCH." There can be branches of the churches of God scattered all over, all with the same beliefs, all with the spirit of God, and all *not even knowing that either one even existed!* Back in the heyday of the Worldwide Church of God, they discovered groups around the world who never even heard of the Worldwide Church of God, yet their beliefs were almost identical. How can that be? The answer, we all have the *same* Bible. It's God that has the truth! It's God that can guide your heart and mind to understand the truth, and he can call you ANYTIME HE WANTS TO, AND HE DOESN'T NEED ANY CHURCHES PERMISSION TO DO SO!

The Disciples of Christ had this "us" "them" type of attitude and Jesus dealt with it. In Luke 9:49, John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, *because he followeth not with us.*" You see they thought that God was only working with them and no one else. If you did not belong to their group, then you were not called, you were not in the true church. But Jesus said, "**Forbid him not:** for he that is not against us is for us" (v.50). Why can't the church of God have this same attitude? That others are also doing the work of God, and that God is calling others besides them to do the work!

Another example is Elijah. He thought he was the only prophet and follower of God left on earth (see 1 Kings 19:14), but God told him, "Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." (v.19). God was working outside of the ministry of Elijah. He had others who were doing the work of God.

Jesus told the Jews in Nazareth the same thing, that among the Israelites were many widows and lepers yet God chose to work among the heathen instead of God's chosen people; to show them God can work anywhere he wants to, and is not confined to one group, and doesn't work outside that group. (Luke 4:22-30).

If you are one who has been repentant of your personal sins, meaning the transgressing of God's holy law (1 John 3:4), then Jesus Christ tells you to be baptized (Acts 2:38, Romans 6) and have an authorized representative of God's true church lay hands on you for the receiving of God's Holy Spirit. From that time on, *you need no membership identification card*, no "letter" sent to

## Where is the True Church?

---

and kept in church files, and no material, man-made recognition whatever. From that time on, you are automatically inducted into the “one body of Jesus Christ,” which is the true Church of God!

Before the Apostle Paul preached to the gentiles at Corinth, Jesus already told Paul, “...for I have much people in this city.” (Act 18:10). These were called by God before Paul even spoke a word, Jesus needing no one's permission to call. Yes there is only one church. The body of Jesus Christ is scattered all over the world. Branches of the True church all over regardless of the title they have over their doors. As Paul said, “***For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.***” (1 Corinth 12:12). The sooner we learn this, the sooner we can do God's work without any hurdles to jump over.

That true Church of God will also be zealously attempting to do the work of God!

It will be preaching the same gospel Jesus Christ of Nazareth gave to the disciples. It will be a church in which is found the Spirit of God; the spirit of brotherly love, harmony, forgiveness, kindness, goodness, meekness, gentleness, faith and understanding. It will probably be quite small, perhaps looked upon as weak and ineffective, even persecuted, widely scattered, and will not be a vast organization of this world!

Yet it will be “rich in faith,” crying out daily to Almighty God for every need.

If you have repented, been baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God - if you know and understand what sin is, have repented of all those sins, and cry out to Jesus Christ as a daily High Priest making intercession for you if you stumble and sin as a Christian, and if you are zealously, eagerly and enthusiastically supportive of the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God as a last-minute witness and warning to a dying, sin-sick world - then you are a member of the true Church of God! If you are not, you should be!