

IDENTIFYING THE LORD'S CHURCH

(Matthew 16:13-19)

1) Christ is her head.

- a) In our text, Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18).
- b) Paul tells us that Jesus is the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).
- c) The church of Christ, or the Lord's church, has Jesus as her head.
 - i) There is no need for an earthly head of it.
 - ii) Some religious bodies have either one or more people described as the earthly head of it.
 - iii) You do not read about such in the New Testament.
 - iv) Jesus is described as the head of His church so all answer to Him.
- d) One identifying mark of the Lord's church is that Jesus is her head.

2) Her members wear the name of Christ.

- a) Those who are a part of the Lord's church wear the name Christian.
 - i) This name signifies one belonging to Christ.
 - ii) A person who is part of the Lord's church wants to show the world that he or she belongs to Christ so His name is worn and nothing else.
- b) Any other name is too much.
- c) Wearing another name besides Christian shows a divisive spirit.
 - i) Our Lord prayed for unity (John 17:20-21).
 - ii) One way in which unity is shown is by wearing the name of the One to whom we belong, Christ.
- d) Why would a person want to wear the name of a man or a system?
 - i) A man didn't die for you.
 - ii) A system didn't die for you.
 - iii) Jesus died for mankind (Hebrews 2:9).
- e) Not only that, the church is described as the bride of Christ, so why would a bride want to wear another name than that of her Groom?
- f) Notice what Peter said while standing before the council (Acts 4:12).
- g) Another identifying mark of the Lord's church is that her members wear the name of Christ.

3) God's word is her only creed.

- a) Psalm 119:105.
- b) Romans 1:16.
- c) 2 John 9.
- d) I read of a man in Spain who began to read and study the Bible.
 - i) He saw a pattern in it and began to teach others that pattern.
 - ii) A gospel preacher was on a mission trip to Spain and came across a group that was teaching what the Spanish man had taught.
 - iii) Those people had never heard of the church of Christ.

- iv) No missionary had come and taught them.
 - v) The Spaniard and those who studied with him did nothing but go to God's word and follow it.
 - vi) All they were doing was what was found in the New Testament for the church to do.
 - e) What was done by those in Spain can be done by anyone today.
 - f) We are not to add to nor take from scripture so there is no need for anything else but scripture to be our guide.
 - g) The Lord's church has God's word as her only creed.
- 4) The Lord's church is organized according to the New Testament.**
- a) 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9 gives us the description of elders.
 - i) Elders are to shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28).
 - ii) Elders are overseers of the church (1 Peter 5:2).
 - iii) Elders will one day give account of those under their watch (Hebrews 13:17).
 - b) The passage in 1 Peter also lets us know the headship of Christ, as He is the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4).
 - c) Under the elders, there are deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13).
 - i) These men assist the elders in the work of the church.
 - ii) They work directly under the oversight of the elders.
 - d) Those are the only positions described as leadership, elders being the overseers with the deacons assisting them in the work of the church.
 - e) All others are simply Christians who work in the Lord's church.
 - f) There is no one-man rule, there is no preacher rule.
 - g) A preacher is under the oversight of the elders like all others are.
 - h) The Lord's church is organized according to the New Testament.
- 5) The Lord's church worships according to the teaching of the New Testament.**
- a) Those in New Testament times sang hymns of praise to God.
 - i) Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19.
 - ii) The only instrument used was that of the voice
 - iii) There is no authority in the New Testament for the bringing in of any other kind of instrument in worship to God.
 - b) Those in New Testament times prayed to God in worship (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
 - c) Those in New Testament times engaged in preaching God's word (2 Timothy 4:2; Acts 20:7).
 - d) Those in New Testament times engaged in observing the Lord's Supper every Sunday (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23ff).
 - e) Those in New Testament times engaged in giving to God in worship (1 Corinthians 16:2).
 - f) These are the only acts of worship about which one reads in the New Testament.
 - g) Anything else is an addition to God's word and anything less is a subtraction from it.
 - h) The Lord's church worships according to the New Testament pattern.
- 6) The Lord's church teaches the New Testament plan of salvation.**
- a) John 8:24.

- b)** Acts 17:30.
- c)** Matthew 10:32-33.
- d)** Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16.
- e)** Revelation 2:10.

From a sermon outline by Danny Cottrell.