

WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

By Paul. O. Nichols

People all over the world belong to various organizations for different reasons. Some become members of a club or church or some other institution because of friends or for prestige or for political gain. People should have definite reasons for being members of organizations or institutions of any kind, whether they be religious or secular. To the Christian the apostle Peter commands, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear..." (1 Pet 3:15). So in this

article we propose to give some scriptural reasons for a person being a member of the church of Christ.

The first reason is that it had a divine builder. Jesus promised His apostles, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). This promise was given by the Son of God. The church was established on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 33 (Acts chapter 2). In verse 47 we are told, "...The Lord added unto the church daily such as should be saved." Jesus promised to build only one church, and it belongs to Him. Those saved by the Gospel are added to its membership by the Lord.

The church of Christ has a scriptural foundation. The apostle Paul says, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone..." (Eph. 2:19, 20).

Jesus Christ is the head of His church. The apostle Paul affirms this in Ephesians 1:22, 23. He says that God, "...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." The church of Christ has a divine head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The apostle Paul says, "And he is the head of the body, the church..." (Col. 1:18).

Another reason I am a member of the church of Christ is the price that was paid for it. Jesus "loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). He purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20: 28). No denomination or other institution can rightfully make this claim.

The faithful church of Christ worships God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24, 25). People who make up their own form of worship do not offer acceptable service to God. Jesus said, "but in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines

the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). Paul said, "We are the circumcision which worship God in truth, and rejoice in the Lord, Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

The mission of the church of Christ is to save lost sinners. Paul refers to the church as "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). It is the support of men who dedicate their lives to this end. The inspired writer says, "...It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). This is according to God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10, 11). It is the only institution in the world given this grave responsibility.

If one wants to be a member of the Lord's church there are certain requirements. The first step is to listen to what God has to say in the Bible. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:10). And Jesus says, "I tell you, Nay, but, except ye repent, ye shall all

likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). When one makes up his mind to repent, God demands that he recognize Jesus Christ as His Son, and confess it openly; "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God" (Acts 8:27). Finally, He requires the penitent sinner to be buried in water "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). At the moment of his baptism the Lord adds him to His church (Acts 2:47). Jesus declares, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Then as a Christian he has this promise by the Lord, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

These are all scriptural reasons why I am a member of the Church of Christ.

Paul O. Nichols has served the Church of Christ faithfully for over sixty years.

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