

A Brief Introduction to the church of Christ

Allen Webster

The church of Christ dates back to the days of the New Testament (Romans 16:16). It was founded by Christ on the Day of Pentecost, a.d. 33 (Acts 2), not long after His ascension back to heaven. In the years that followed, it rapidly grew to fill Jerusalem, then Judea, Samaria, and finally the whole Roman Empire (Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:23). In America, the first churches of Christ were planted in the late 1700s as the result a movement begun to go back to the Bible and do Bible things in Bible ways and call Bible things by Bible names (cf. 1 Peter 4:11).

We believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20:30–31), that the Bible is inspired of God (2 Timothy 3:16–17), and that Christ will return to take His kingdom home to God (1 Corinthians 15:24). We emphasize sincere worship (John 4:24), every-member evangelism (Acts 8:4), godly living (Titus 2:11–12), love for each other (John 13:34–35), and helping those in need (James 1:27). We believe the Bible teaches that sinners are saved by learning of Jesus, faith in Jesus, repentance of sin because of Jesus, confession of Jesus, and baptism into Jesus (John 6:44–45; 3:16; Mark 16:15–16; Romans 10:9–10; Acts 2:38). The church of Christ is organized with elders, deacons, preachers, and members, as in New Testament times (Philippians 1:1). It has no governing body on earth higher than the local congregation.

The church of Christ is noted for its emphasis upon returning to New Testament Christianity and for its desire to unite all Christians into one body (1 Corinthians 1:10). We believe that the New Testament is the only rule for faith and practice in religious matters (2 Timothy 3:17; 2 Peter 1:3), and that God's Word must authorize all that is done in Christian worship (Colossians 3:17; Revelation 22:18–19). Thus we try to strictly follow the New Testament. We believe that it is possible to have religious unity in a day of division by simply following the New Testament pattern and putting aside human traditions.

To put it simply, the church of Christ is seeking to be the same church one reads about in the New Testament. We aim to restore its doctrine, its practice, its lifestyle, and its zeal.