

## CHURCH MARKS UPON A SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION

*"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?", Psalm 11:3*

If we were to lay a foundation to place the New Testament House upon, the sacred inscription would be: "NEVER CHANGES."

Thus, the foundation of the church becomes as important as The MARKS defining its make-up; for, if the foundation sifts, the Church House crumples.

The church stands today - and throughout history, having the same Foundation and Head, as in the beginning. The Lord Jesus Christ guaranteed the continuance of His church forever when He said, "...lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt 28:20).

MARKS OF A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH, taken from "The Trail Of Blood," by B. H. Carroll (see our web site) and others, show how "...the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the LORD," Eph. 2:21.

If "you are being built together into a DWELLING of God in the Spirit" (Eph 2:22), you must understand what makes up the LORD's Church. It is the Holy Spirit that leads, guides and directs "into all truth" (Jn 16:13). But, a harmonious chord may strike the heart by reading: **CHURCH MARKS UPON A SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION.**

### THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH:

Here is Scriptural proof that the New Testament church predates Pentecost:

1. The apostles were the first members of Christ's church (1 Cor 12:28; Luke 6:12-16).
2. They were commissioned before Pentecost (Matt 9:36-10:8, 28:18-20).
3. The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper were already in place before Pentecost. (John 3:22; Luke 22:14-20).
4. The Lord set a system in place for the NT church to discipline members before Pentecost (Matt 18:15-20).
5. The church that the Lord Jesus started fit the common definition of the Greek word (ekklesia) which is translated "church." To the Greek of Christ's day "ekklesia" simply

meant "an assembly or gathering of citizens called out from their homes and convened in the public place for the purpose of deliberating." It means an assembly.

6. The church had 2 pastors prior to the day of Pentecost: Christ and then Peter (John 10:11, 14, 21:15-17; Acts 1:15, 2:14; 1 Pet 5:1-4).
7. The church assembled regularly before Pentecost (John 20:19, 26; Acts 1:4, 13, 14).
8. Christ's gave His assembly ability to understand His Word and authority to carry out His will on earth before Pentecost (John 16:13-14, 20:21-23; Luke 21:44-47)
9. They had a church roll of 120 names before Pentecost (Acts 1:15).
10. On the day of Pentecost 3000 souls were added to them (the church) (Acts 1:41). The church had to already be established in order for it to be added to.

#### MARKS OF A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH:

Historically New Testament churches have always held these doctrines (Matt 28:20):

1. Its Head and Founder -- Christ. (Matt 16:18; Eph 1:22, 4:15, 5:23)
2. Its only Rule of Faith and Practice -- The Bible (II Tim 3:15-17; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Tim 3:15)
3. Its Name: "Church", "Churches" (Matt 16:18 Rev 2, 3; 22:16; Gal 1:1)
4. Its Form of Government -- Congregational (John 20:23; Matt 18:17, 20:25-27; Acts 1:24-26, 6:3; Rev 2:6)
5. Its Members -- Only Saved people and only people who of their own free will and accord united with that Congregation (Eph 2:21 I Pet 2:5; Acts 2:41; Eph 2:8,9).
6. Its ordinances -- Believer's Baptism, followed by the Lord's Supper (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42)
7. Its Officers -- Pastors and Deacons (I Tim 3:1-16; Phil 1:1)
8. Its Work -- Getting folks saved through the preaching of the gospel (I Cor 15:1-4); baptizing them; and teaching them to observe all things that Christ commanded (Matt 28:16-20).
9. Its Financial Plan -- Tithes and Offerings. (I Cor 9:14; Mal 3:8-10; Matt 23:23; I Cor 16:1,2; II Cor 8:14)
10. Its Independence -- Separation of church and state (Matt 22:21)