

Being A Member Of The Lord's One Church

By Ron Boatwright

The fact that the Lord has only one church is unpopular with many people who want to belong to one of the many differing denominations of their choice. Jesus says in Matthew 16:18, "I will build My church". The word "church" is singular, meaning one and only one and the word "My" is possessive, meaning it belongs to the Lord. The Lord began His one church more than 1900 years ago. Christ "loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25). Jesus Christ did not die for or establish any of the more than 600 different denominations which men have begun during the past 500 years. Denominations are of human origin and have no scriptural authority to exist.

How does one become a member of the Lord's one true church? Jesus says, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). One must believe and be baptized in order to be saved. Once people are saved, the Bible says, "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). The Lord adds only the saved to His church. Since those in denominational churches do not believe the Lord's requirement, that baptism is necessary for salvation, they remain unsaved. And since the Lord does not add unsaved people to His church, the unsaved have to join a denomination.

The one church that Christ purchased with His own blood belongs to Him and the name it wears must honor Him. We read in Romans 16:16, "**The churches of Christ greet you**". This name glorifies and honors Christ who died for it and built it. Even by the names the denominations wear, they do not claim to be the Lord's church. Christ has only promised to save His one church (Ephesians 5:23).

What is going to happen to all of the many different illegitimate counterfeit denominational churches that men have started? Jesus says, "Every plant My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted" (Matthew 15:13). Since Jesus did not build any denominational church, they all stand under His condemnation. Today, there are many people laboring in vain in their man made churches. God's word says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it" (Psalms 127:1). It does one no good to belong to and worship in a denominational church. One is wasting his time and will lose his soul in eternity !! Jesus says, "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). Vain worship is useless.

If people really want to go to Heaven, they must come out of their denominations and be baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38) so they can be saved (Mark 16:16). Then the Lord will add them to His church (Acts 2:47), the church of Christ (Romans 16:16), where they can worship God “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Jesus promises “Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10). **“Let’s make going to Heaven our number one priority in this life.”**