

1:22,23). If the church is the body and there is one body, that means there is only one church which is approved by God. If there is but one church, then no man has any right to start another one. In fact, none of the churches founded by men have the approval of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Every plant, which My heavenly Father has not planted, will be uprooted" (Matthew 15:13).

When our Lord Jesus Christ lived on this earth, He responded to Peter's confession, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" by saying: "And on this rock I will build My church" (Matthew 16:16-18). Please notice that Jesus used the singular. He did not say, "I will build my churches!" Nor did He promise to build many churches. He built only one! Be-

cause He is the Christ, the Son of the living God, He has the right to build the church. No one else can truthfully make the same claim. Therefore, no one else has the right to start a church or religious organization different from that one which Jesus built.

The church that Jesus built, the church of Christ, began on the first Pentecost following the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. We can read about its beginning in Acts, chapter 2.

Why not be content to become a member of Christ's church? Follow the perfect pattern given for the church in the New Testament. Obey the same gospel which was preached on Pentecost day in the same way it was obeyed then and the same Lord will add you to the

same church, the church of Christ!

You must believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mark 16:16; John 8:24). Repent of all your past sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30,31). Confess your faith in Christ (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37). Be buried with Christ in baptism for the remission of your sins (Mark 16:16; Romans 6:4; Acts 2:38). You will thereby be added by the Lord to His one true church: ". . . And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 47).

You must serve the Lord faithfully in His church all the days of your life. If you do, you can be sure the Lord will reward you with eternal life in the Last Day (Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:6-8). ~

NAVARRE MESSENGER

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We Are Simply Christians



by Dale Smelser

Many are growing disenchanted with present religious forms which originated in the middle ages and have become meaningless. There is displeasure with denominational structures and dogma. Some, because of such views, have even decided that Christianity is not relevant today. We believe they have made that decision because they are not sufficiently acquainted with the Scriptures to be able to distinguish between the relevant gospel of Christ and what men over the centuries have attempted to add to it.

If some of these things have troubled you and you have felt a yearning to return to the simple, uncomplicated religion of Christ, stripping away all the nonessential elements of religion and simply abiding by the truths of Christ, truths which transform the soul and bind it to God, let us suggest that it can and has been done.

The Bible, God's word to man, presents Jesus Christ as the Son of God. He was foreshadowed and predicted in the Old Testament which God used to govern His people until Christ should come and establish the New (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Galatians 3:19,23-24). That New Testament

reveals the religion of Christ. By studying it we learn all there is to know of the way of Christ.

We learn that among the followers of Christ there existed no denominational organizations whatever. All began at a later time. In the New Testament we see people hearing the gospel and obeying the conditions of God's grace. Being thus saved, they were added to the Lord's people, the church (Acts 2:36-47). As the gospel spread, we find them assembling together in congregations in various localities. Each congregation was under its own elders (Acts 14:23) and no one else on earth. These elders could

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Place
Stamp
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Assembly Schedule

Sunday
Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Class for all ages ___ 7:00 PM

VISITORS ARE WELCOME!

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not make laws and be masters. They were given the responsibility of tending and caring for the congregation as shepherds would a flock (Acts 20:17,28; I Peter 5:1-3). The only headquarters those disciples knew was heaven, where their head, Jesus Christ, was and is (Ephesians 1:22-23).

Their worship was something in which to participate, not something to watch. On the first day of the week, for instance, they would eat the Lord's supper and hear preaching (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29), they would all sing (Ephesians 5:19), they would all pray with various ones leading (1 Corinthians 14:15-16), and they would share in their mutual responsibilities by sharing their prosperity (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). We find no contributions being collected on any other day than the first day of the week and no hierarchy taxing them or telling them how much to give. They had no organizations clamoring for their support. They gave as they individually purposed in their own hearts (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). In all this they were all necessarily involved for each saved person was a priest (Revelation 1:5-6). No one could perform his service or worship for another.

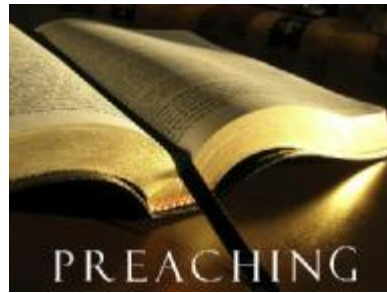
They lived godly lives. They cared for their poor. They taught others. They sent out preachers to teach others in far communities. With simplicity of faith and fervor there was no need of centralization. Without organized machinery, the gospel was preached to the whole of civilization in a short time (Colossians 1:23). These disciples of Christ were known as Christians (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Peter 4:16). They wore no sectarian names. Their religion

was not materialistic or sensual. They did not seek to impress men with pious ceremony, rather, they sought to impress God with the only thing that has ever impressed Him, contrite obedience (2 Samuel 15:22). Their appeal was not social or recreational. They offered the gospel, for they knew it was God's power to save (Romans 1:16), and any other appeal was beneath them.

Many sigh, "Oh, if only such could be today." But it is! Free men and women over the earth have despaired of denominationalism, seeing in it neither necessity nor relevance but only a cause of division. They desire the simplicity of what Christ authored, and their number is increasing. How many have taken such a stand? Who knows! They are related and connected only in Christ and not in some organization with machinery to keep a tally. We will not try to number them. What is important, though, is that a group of such people meet within minutes of where you live.

They are just Christians. They worship and serve God in the same way the early disciples did. Christ is their only creed and the Scriptures their only guide. They are not members of any human organization, they are simply a congregation, or church, of Christ. They, in turn, would like to share Christ with you and with all the world.

You too can be just a Christian and serve God without belonging to any denomination, bound by denominational laws or obligations. If such freedom appeals to you, please contact us. ~



Navarre church of Christ

will host a gospel meeting
with

Norman Sewell

Evangelist with the Capps
Road church in Harrison,
Arkansas

Norman's lessons are clear
and easy to understand for
listeners of any accountable
age

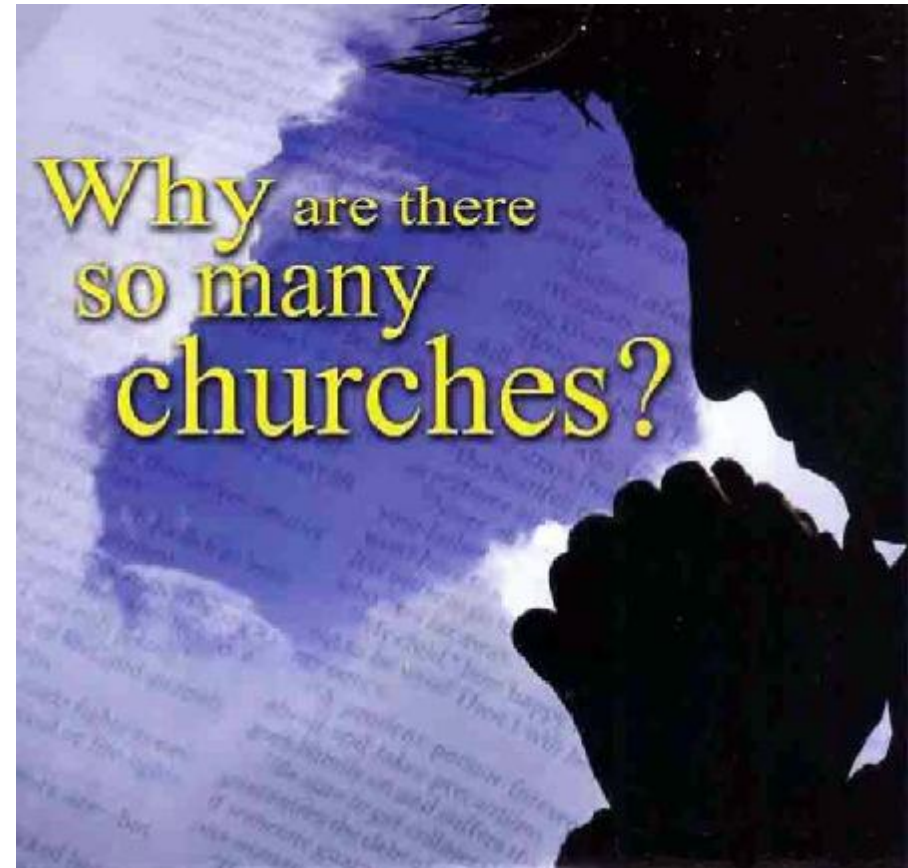
Please join us

**Sunday, May 23 through
Wednesday, May 26**

**Sunday times: 9am—Bible
Study**

Worship 10am

**Monday through Wednesday:
7pm**



Rod Rutherford

The following statement is typical of many that we hear: "There is one God and one Lord Jesus Christ. There is only one Bible. Why are there so many different churches?" There are literally thousands of different religious organizations in the world today which claim to believe in Jesus Christ. The number of these organizations increases daily. It is not surprising that sincere seekers after truth are confused. Our Lord prayed for the unity of all who would believe in Him. In

John 17:20-21, Jesus spoke to the Father these words: "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent me." Many turn away from Christ in confusion because of the many different churches which claim to be following Him today.

There are thousands of different churches in the world, but the Bible knows only one. Hear the

inspired Apostle Paul: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:4-6).

Please notice that "there is one body." That one body is the church. Please note that God "put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him, who fills all in all" (Ephesians