

WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST #5

I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST BECAUSE IT IS THE CHURCH FOR WHICH CHRIST DIED. He did not die for just any church or every church. He died for His church and His church alone.

The price paid for the church was His own precious blood. The apostle Paul exhorted the elders of the church in Ephesus saying, *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed **the church** of God, which he hath **purchased with his own blood**”* (Acts 20:28). Ephesians 5:25 says, *“Christ loved the church and **gave himself for it.**”* The church of Christ is an essential part of one’s salvation because it is made up of the saved (Eph. 5:23).

Jesus did not shed his blood to purchase a denominational church(s). The word “denomination” represents divisions and segments. Jesus did not die that those who believe and obey him might be divided and members of various denominations. Instead, he died that they may be *united* in Him. In the Lord’s prayer recorded in John 17 we read, *“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; **That they all may be one; as thou, father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me**”* (John 17:20-21).

He promised to build His church in Matthew 16:18 saying, *“...**I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**”* It was established on the first Pentecost after his resur-

rection from the grave. About 3,000 souls were added to the church of Christ that day when they repented and were baptized (Acts 2:38,41). Men and women have been added to it ever since by **faith** in Christ and **obedience** to His will (Acts 2:47; Heb. 5:8-9).

The Lord only has ONE church. Ephesians 4:4 says, *“There is **one body.**”* *“Now are they many members, yet but **one body**”* (1 Cor. 12:20). The “one body” is the church — His church. *“And he is the head of the body, the church...”* (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23).

One becomes a member of the Lord’s one church by obedience to His Word. This involves: **Faith** in Jesus the Christ as God’s only begotten Son and Savior of the world (John 8:24), **Repentance** of sins (Acts 2:38), **Confession** of faith in Christ (Acts 8:37), and being **Baptized in Water** for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21).

When one obeys the doctrines and commandments of men (such as “faith only”), he/she joins a man-made church which is vain worship (Matt. 15:8-9). But when one obeys the doctrine and commandments of Christ, it makes one a member of Christ’s church — the church of Christ (Acts 2:21,47; Rom. 16:16).

Friend, don’t you want to be a member of the Lord’s church? Believe and Obey today (1 Peter 4:17). You will be added by the Lord to His church! **Live Faithful** to Him (His Word) all your life and you will receive a crown of life that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Peter 1:4).

— Garland M. Robinson