



BIBLE TALK

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Question: How can I distinguish Christ's church from groups of men?

Answer: A good question due to such an extensive list of religious groups in existence.

Never in all of God's instruction to man has He ever condoned or inferred that a plurality of organizations exist as "the church." Division of the religious world stands in opposition to every principle for which our Lord stood. In Acts 17, Jesus prayed for unity of believers, violated by religionists of today.

Four questions can be asked to easily determine if an organization is of God or men. Put an organization to the acid test by asking these four questions: **1. Is Christ the founder?** Jesus said that He would build "*His church*" (Matt. 16:18) and equated it in relationship to a husband and wife (Eph. 5:23). One wife/one church, it agrees with both teachings of the Lord on marriage (Matt. 19:3-9) and His teachings on one church (Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 4:4). **2. Is Christ head of the church?** Jesus said in Matt. 28:18 that all power had been given Him. He said, in addition, that God "*hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body...*" (Eph. 1:22-23). Not only is He the head, but must have preeminence, and in Him all the fullness dwells (Col. 1:18-19). **3. Was Jerusalem the place of its establishment?** It was prophesied of old that it would be (Isa. 2:2; Dan. 2:44) and came to pass exactly as was foretold (Acts 2). **4. Was the beginning date about A.D. 33?** Anything later is too new and started by men, not the Lord! Jesus told His apostles, that some of them would not die until they saw the kingdom come with power (Mk. 9:1) which came via the Spirit (Acts 1:8) on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:1-4). If the organization of which you are a part cannot answer in the affirmative to all the above questions, it is of men, not the Lord and cannot save! We must be in Christ's church!

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