

Redwater Restorer

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness..." (Matthew 3:3)

Volume 1

No.9

April 12, 2003

The Spiritual Character Of The Church

Published By:

Redwater
Church of Christ

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The Nature Of The Church

Thus far in n this series of articles we have established the fact that the Lord's church is to follow a patten set forth in God's word. This pattern would establish the character of the church. By this character the true New Testament church can be identified. In our last article we began to note some of the identifying characteristics of the Lord's church. Let's now examine the spiritual character of the church.

I. The Church is called a Spiritual House because God has a spiritual family upon the earth. *"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in **the house** of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"* (1 Timothy 3:15-16).

II. The Church is called a Spiritual Temple because we are the temple of God upon the earth. *"Now, therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto **an holy temple** in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit"* (Ephesians 2:19-22).

III. The Church is called a Spiritual Assembly because we are the assembly of God upon the earth. *"Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the **general assembly***

and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:22-23).

IV. The Church is called a Spiritual Body because we are the body of Christ upon the earth. *"For by one Spirit (the Holy Spirit) are we all baptized into **one body** (the church) whether we be Jews of Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit"* (1 Corinthians 12:13).

V. The Church is called a Spiritual Kingdom because we are reigning (ruling) over the powers of Satan upon the earth. Jesus said in reference to the nature of His kingdom, *"**My kingdom** (My church) is not of this world"* (John 18:36). Having noted the nature of the church let's now examine the relationship between Christ and His church.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

I. Christ is the Builder of the Church. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, *"Upon this rock (the fact that I am Jesus Christ) I **will build** my church (the true Church of Christ) and the gates of hell (the powers of Satan) shall not prevail against it"*. (Matthew 16:18)

II. Christ is the Purchaser of the Church. He purchased the Church with His own blood. *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and **gave** himself for it"* (Ephesians 5:25).

III. Christ is the Foundation of the Church because we are built upon the foundation of Christ. *"For **other foundation** can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 3:11)

The Spiritual Nature Of The Church (Cont.)

IV. Christ is the Head of the Church because He rules the Church. *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is **the head** (the ruler) of the church; And he is the saviour of the body (the church). Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything"* (Ephesians 5:22-24).

V. Christ is the Saviour of the Church because He will save the Church eternally in heaven. *"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He (Christ) is **the saviour** of the body: the church"* (Ephesians 5:23).

Now, there is a wonderful relationship which exists between Christ and the New Testament Church because Christ built the Church. Let's also notice the relationship between the church and Christ.

THE CHURCH AND CHRIST

I. The Church is called the Bride of Christ because we are spiritually betrothed to Christ. *"So ought men to love their own wives as their own body. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones (Christians are spiritually betrothed to Christ). For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and be joined unto his wife, they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and **the church**"* (Ephesians 5:28-32).

II. The Church is called the Body of Christ because we are members of His Church. *"God hath put all things under his feet, and gave Him (Christ) to be the head over all things to the church, which is **his body**, the fullness of Him (Christ) that filleth all in all"*

(Ephesians 1:22-23)

III. The Church is called the Kingdom of Christ because we are citizens of His Kingdom. Jesus said concerning the divine reign of the kingdom, *"**My kingdom** (My church) is not of this world"* (John 18:36).

IV. The Church is called the Flock of Christ because we are sheep in His sheep fold. *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all **the flock**, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made your overseers, to feed the church of God, which He (Christ) hath purchased with his own blood"* (Acts 20:28).

V. The Church is called the Candlestick of Christ because we are the light of the world. John said, *"I turned to see the voice that spoke unto me. And being turned I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."* Then Jesus said unto John, *"**The seven candlesticks** which thou sawest are the seven churches"* (Revelation 1:12-20).

So we see that the church has a spiritual nature that reflects the character of the Lord. This character enables Christ to have a relation with the church and the church a relation with Him. Many in the world today want no part of the church. Many think they can have a relationship with Christ without being part of the church. This is impossible. If we want a relationship with our Saviour it can only be found by faithfully serving Him in the church He established according to His pattern.

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