

Bible Facts Concerning the Church

The scriptures clearly and definitely set forth the essential facts about the church established by Jesus Christ. These scriptural facts outline the pattern for all to see and to follow. Paul commanded, "Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim 1:13)." We should all note the facts that make up this pattern.

First, Christ is the founder (Matt. 16:18). God authorizes no human beings, no matter how great, to build or found a church.

Second, the church originated in Jerusalem, in approximately 30 A.D. (Acts 2:1-47). Any church with a different date and place of origin cannot be the church of Christ.

Third, Christ is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). The Bible does not authorize any man or group of men to be head of the church. God reserves this position for Christ and Christ alone (Matt. 28: 18-20).

Fourth, only the Lord adds members to the church (Acts 2:41, 47). In these passages, these early Christians heard the word, believed the word, obeyed the word in baptism, and were saved. The Lord added to the church daily those that were saved. There was no voting in the early church to see whether they should accept someone.

Fifth, the members of the church wear scriptural names. The Bible calls individual members saints (Acts 9:13), disciples (Acts 6:1), brethren (Acts 6:3), and Christians (Acts 11:26). The Bible calls a collective group of Christians the church (Phil. 3:6), the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), and churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16). The Bible condemns the wearing of human names (1 Cor. 1:10-13).

Sixth, the Bible specifies the worship of the church. The church of the Bible assembled weekly on the Lord's Day for partaking of the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7), for preaching of God's word (Acts 20:7), for giving as they prospered (1 Cor. 16:1-2), for praying (Acts 2:42), and for singing (1 Cor. 14:15).

Seventh, the Bible specifies the terms of membership in the church. In Acts 2:47, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (KJV)." The Lord saves people when they hear the gospel (Rom. 10:17), believe (Mark 16:16), repent (Luke 13:3), confess (Rom. 10:10), submit to baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and live faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10).

Bible facts, if we observe them, will recreate Christ's church.