

Words of

# Truth & Reason

Acts 26:25

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CHURCH OF CHRIST—QUAIL VALLEY

## Unfamiliar Bible Words: Church (1)

*The word “church” is not an exclusively spiritual word but was originally a very common word meaning. . .*

Are you surprised that I suggest that the word *church* is not a familiar word, since many people see it every day? Many people use but do not understand this word. They say “I left my Bible at the church” or in some way call a building “the church.” This is not what Jesus meant when He said “I will build my church” (Matt. 16:18), nor what Paul meant when he referred to “the churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16).

In the Bible, the word *church* means an assembly or gathering. The church is the people God has gathered *in Christ*, having saved them from sin through the blood of Christ (Acts 2:47; Eph. 2:13, 16). No one enters the

church through wooden doors but through *the door*, Jesus (Jn. 10:7).

A habit of the church is that they assemble. This is God’s plan (Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:24-25) and also fitting when we understand what *church* means. People who claim to be “in the church” but do not “go to church” (go to the assembly) contradict their claim. Why claim to be a part of the church if you do not do what the church does?

Many people today view “church” as unimportant but God disagrees. The church is the people who belong to His Son Jesus. Are you one of those people? Keep reading. . .

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- *Unfamiliar Bible Words: Church (Parts 1, 2, & 3)*
- *God Did Not Send His Son... To Condemn the World*

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## Unfamiliar Bible Words: Church (2)

You just learned that *church* refers to the people saved by the blood of Christ (Eph. 2:13, 16; 1:22-23).

Today some people think of *church* as being separate from what they call “Christianity.” Their idea is “I’m a Christian, but church is not for me.” In the Bible, being: in Christ, saved, a Christian, and a part of the body (church) of Christ are indistinguishable (Acts 2:41, 47; 26:28; Eph. 2:13, 16).

The Bible also teaches the difference between the one church and the many churches. Paul said *there is one body*, the church is the body, and Jesus is the only head (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23). Paul also wrote of the *churches of Christ* (Rom. 16:16). What is the difference? The *one body/church* is the group composed of every person saved by the blood of Jesus. The *churches of Christ* are individual groups of Christians who live near each other and commit to work together. For example, when the Ethiopian was baptized into Christ in a deserted area, he was added to the body of Christ but was not yet a part of one of the churches of Christ until he found other Christians to work with (Acts 8:30-39).

## Unfamiliar Bible Words: Church (3)

*In the Bible, we do not read of different kinds of churches with different kinds of teachings but we see that today. Why?*

In this final article on the word *church*, let's consider the question "Why are there many different kinds of churches?"

Paul preached the same word *everywhere in every church* (1 Cor. 4:17). Is the same message taught everywhere today? No. There are many different kinds of teachings, and that is why there are many different kinds of churches. Is God pleased with this? Paul said "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8). God gave one message and any change to that message must be rejected. Do any churches today change the original message? If they do, God rejects them and their message. It is not true that "one church is as good as another."

Study the Bible to learn the truth and to know whether churches today teach His word. Do they teach that we choose sin or inherit sin (Jam. 1:14-16; Ezek. 18:20), we are saved by faith or by faith only (Jam. 2:19-26), baptism does or does not save (1 Peter 3:21)? Study the Bible to learn whether you, other individuals, and various modern churches have God's approval (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Jn. 4:1).

*And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.  
Colossians 1:18*

You are invited to:  
Sunday AM Bible classes:  
**10:00AM**  
Sunday AM Worship:  
**10:45AM**  
Sunday PM Worship:  
**5:00 PM**  
Wednesday Bible Classes  
& Worship: 7:00 PM

## God Did Not Send His Son... To Condemn the World

Each edition of *Words of Truth & Reason* invites you to send us questions *and comments*, and we are glad when anyone accepts that invitation. Someone reading one of the above articles wrote to us, cited John 3:17, and then stated "Do you imagine that we are approved when we condemn others???"

John 3:17 helps us to understand why Jesus came to earth--*God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved*. Jesus did not have to come to earth so that sinners would be lost---sinners were lost before, during, and after Jesus' time on earth. BUT, if sinners could be saved, Jesus had to come.

A part of saving sinners is helping them to identify sin and urging them to leave it. Jesus often identified the sin men had to leave in order to be saved by Him (Matthew 7:21; 11:30-34; 15:7-14). When we (or you) identify common, modern sin, we are seeking to imitate Jesus by helping people to identify the sin they must leave or avoid in order to follow Jesus. We are responsible to practice what Jesus taught—do we? Read your Bible and read these articles or visit our assemblies to find out (and send us your comments!).

### Questions from this issue's articles:

1. Name another word that has the same meaning as "church."
2. In the Bible, being in Christ also means what?
3. Based on Galatians 1:8, does God care if churches teach things that are not from Him?
4. For what purpose did Jesus identify the sins of the people He taught? Should we imitate Him today?

\* Mail your answers to the church of Christ in Quail Valley 4104 E. Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501 OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**

\* If you have a comment or question, call (793-6700; 569-4491) or visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**

\* All past and current issues of *Truth and Reason* are available at our website—tell a friend!