

# Bedford Bulletin

Columbus Street church of Christ

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*"God made us alive..."* *Together with Christ*  
*Ephesians 2:5*

## Is it the Church of Christ? ☞ Look Before you Leap!

I Have had the great pleasure of meeting with brother Don Wright regularly to do a "Podcast" that is published through the Brown Street Website "brownstreetcoc.org". We've been talking about the church, and specific marks that identify the church as the one true church. Something that brother Wright said intrigued me. So simple, yet powerful are the words, "If the church where you attended isn't...then you're in the wrong church." Sometimes the ending is "you need to get out of there".

This reminded me about a phrase, "Look before you leap". Something that is seldom properly done today when it comes to religion. Yes, people look before they "join", but where they look is in all the wrong places and what they look for is all the wrong things. Searching the internet to "find the right church for me", is bound to fail. It is the Bible that has all the right answers to your query. Looking for a church that has everything you want in a church, games, fun, food, women's groups, ball clubs, entertainment, easy soft preaching, and the like, will find you a church, but again it will not be the church you can read about in your Bible.

In our time many people are caught up in false forms of "church" where they are taught many mistakes concerning the faith that comes only from God's word (Romans 10:17). The reason this continues at astronomical speeds is because most don't look before they leap. Most people accept, without investigation, everything a certain church teaches, then they're in so deep that they choose to overlook truth to save friendships with the other members. When faced with simple truths they say, "we love Jesus, we teach the Bible", then whole-heartedly teach error.

This practice is contrary to the Bible itself which says, "*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world*" (1 John 4:1). Like jumping headfirst into an uninvestigated pond, where the water depth may be 8 feet, or 8 inches and ending up paralyzed for life, it happens. Jumping into a religious practice with both feet, well meaning, all in the "name of Christ" could very well put you under the teaching of Satan in disguise (2 Cor. 11:14) causing you to lose your soul in hell, eternally, it happens.

Therefore, before accepting any form of religious teachings read God's word first. Then and only then will you know the truth and be able to safely yield yourself its teaching. John said, "*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world*" (1 John 4:1). There is a great conflict pictured all throughout the Bible. Between Christ and the Satan, between error and truth, between the church and worldliness. The deceiver is very good at what he does, one can easily be lost in the fight between truth and error if one doesn't look before leaping.

# Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

Every day, good people, “join” churches without looking into their origin, their doctrine, or their organization and are then easily led astray. Listen to the Lord’s grave warning, *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves”* (Matt. 7:15). Listen, *“God is not a man, that He should lie...”* (Num. 23:19). In fact, *“...it is impossible for God to lie...”* (Heb. 6:18). If God said there will be false prophets, teachers, then there will be false churches. The New Testament should be the only guide and rule of faith. Therefore, if your church has a “Creed Book”, you’re in the wrong church, and you need to get out of there. If your church wears the name of someone other than Christ, if you believe you’re a child of God, but you’re called by some other name plus Christian, such as Christian Methodist, Christian Catholic, Christian Lutheran or Christian Baptist; You’re in the wrong place and you need to get out of there. Many good and honest people are this very day lost in the maze of confusion produced by opinions and creeds of men, they are in darkness, thus miss the greatness of the Lord’s church.

Open the Bible and honestly, with an open heart, investigate the church of Christ because it, and it alone, is the body purchased by Jesus’ blood (Acts 20:28). The very nature of the great price paid places a solemn duty upon every blood-bought member to submit to Him only.

Investigate the church you’re a part of, prove from the word of God that it is from and of Christ. If your church doesn’t practice the Lord’s Supper each Lord’s day, (Acts 20:17) it wasn’t built by Jesus (Matt. 16:16-18). Get out! Every spiritual blessing including salvation is found only in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3), therefore, you must be in Jesus to receive the blessings. What does your church teach? The Bible teaches only one way to “get into the church”, and that is through faith and obedience to the gospel. Paul clearly stated that baptism puts one into Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4). We read in Acts 2 at verse 41 that, *“those who [c]gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them”*, and in verse 47, *“...And the Lord added <sup>lsl</sup>to the church daily those who were being saved”*. You cannot “join” the church that Jesus built, you must be added by the Lord which happens only to those who believed and were baptized, (Mark 16:16).

Remember too, Jesus offers blessings that are eternal. No man, not Luther, Calvin, or any other can make such a claim, for his man-made institutions are limited to man’s ineffectual, meager, insufficient ability to extend benefits. Salvation is offered only in the church built by Jesus (Acts 2:47). All other churches will be uprooted (Matt. 15:13).

Receiving Jesus, believing in His name, that is accepting His word and His authority, is what gives us the right to become the children of God (John 1:12). If you are not a member of the Lord's church, you will not be delivered up to the Father in the end (1 Cor. 15:24).

What will you miss out on if you don’t look before you leap into just any church? For one thing you won’t see what John said the saved will see: *“They shall see His face...”* (Rev. 22:4), the face of God and Christ. God through His church carries out His will, saving souls from the second death. God does this by delivering believers, *“...from the power of darkness...”* and conveying us, *“...into the kingdom of the Son of His love”* (Col. 1:13), making, *“you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ”* (1 Pet. 2:5). Only through His church is there hope in this world and the world to come.



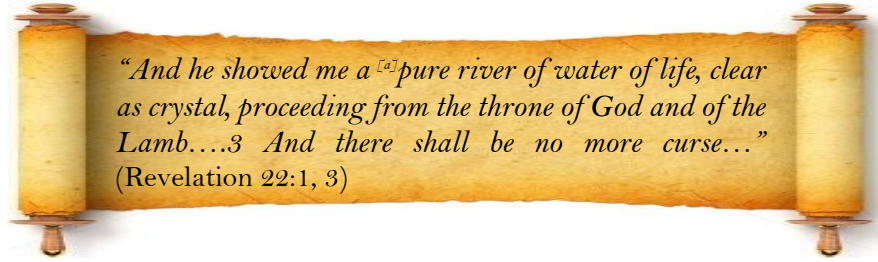
*“Test all things; hold fast what is good.”*

Dear reader, if anything above is taught differently where you are, you have never

become a part of the church for which Jesus died. Remember, you cannot join it, but God will add you to it, if you will obey His commands and remember that God adds to the church (Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:18), only the saved. Who are the saved? Acts 2:38, *“Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit!”* Yes, if you believe that Jesus is the Christ, you

can be baptized into Christ and into the body which is the church (Col. 1:24; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Cor. 12:13). If you are a member of the Lord's church, but have been out of duty, restore yourself to your first love before it is too late.

As always, in Love  
Dave Scarpino



**Our faithful Creator** is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:8-9) ***“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”*** (Isaiah 6:3)

### Times of Our Services

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Sunday Morning Bible Study    | 9:00 AM |
| Sunday Morning Worship        | 9:50 AM |
| Sunday Evening Worship        | 6:00 PM |
| Wednesday Evening Bible Study | 7:30 PM |

### What Must I Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel ----- John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel ----- John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins ----- Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ ----- Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized ----- Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death ----- Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22