

The Unique Nature of the Church of the Bible: We need this lesson.

We live in a world in which religious division is not only prevalent but perceived as normal and acceptable. There are literally thousands of religious groups who all claim to be serving the same God and reading the same Bible, but their beliefs and practices differ greatly.

May we ask just one simple question: Is this what God wants?

This question ought to be the basis for everything that we believe and practice! More than anything else, we ought to desire to please God.

Let's go back to the Bible and find God's original plan for His church and restore that church today.

The church of the Bible was planned by God before He ever created the world (*Ephesians 3:10-11*). Over and over again in the pages of the Old Testament, God sent forth prophets to speak of His coming kingdom (*Isaiah 2:2-4; Daniel 2:44*).

The church of the Bible was promised by Jesus when He came to earth. *"I will build My church...And I will give you the keys of the kingdom"* (*Matthew 16:18-19*). **Notice how Jesus uses the word kingdom to refer to the church. Jesus further said that the prophecies of the Old Testament would be powerfully fulfilled within the lifetime of His followers** (*Mark 9:1*).

The church of the Bible was purchased by Jesus when He died on the cross. The same blood that was shed so that people could be saved and have the remission of sins was the very blood shed to purchase the church (*Acts 20:28*).

The church of the Bible was established in Acts 2. On the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles (just as Jesus said would happen in *Mark 9:1* and *Acts 1:8*), Peter preached the complete gospel for the first time and about 3,000 were saved when "those who gladly received his word were baptized" (2:41).

Acts 2:47 ties salvation and the church together—"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." Note also **Gal 3:26:27**

When people were saved in the New Testament, there were not thousands of denominations from which they could "choose." In fact, there were no denominations at all. When they obeyed the gospel and were saved from their sins, God immediately added them to His church—the one which He planned, the one which Jesus promised and purchased, the only One which was in existence.

In the New Testament, there was only one church (*Ephesians 4:4; 1:22-23*). **One was added by the Lord to that church when he was baptized** (1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:41-47). **Only those who are in the Lord's church are "registered in heaven"** (*Hebrews 12:23*).

Let us go back to the Bible and restore the church of the Bible today. It can be done, for God has given us the same pattern that was used to establish the church in the first century—His Word!

