

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

July 31, 2016

The Church of Christ and Salvation

by Frank Himmel

Does one have to be a member of the church of Christ in order to be saved? That depends on what you mean when you say "the church of Christ."

The Bible Picture

The Bible simply and straightforwardly presents these facts.

- ✓ Salvation is in Christ. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).
- ✓ Salvation is only in Christ. "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
- ✓ The church is the body of Christ. "And He [the Father] gave Him [Jesus] as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:22-23).
- ✓ Christ saves the church/body. "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23).

- ✓ The church/body is the saved. "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47, NKJV).

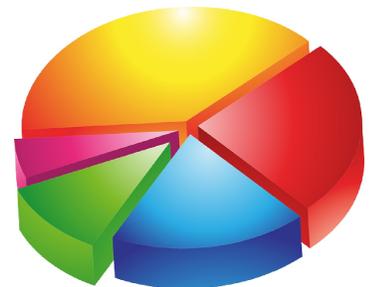
The word *church* refers to an assembly, literally "the called out." It is those who have obeyed Jesus' call to become His followers (see Matthew 16:18ff). *Of Christ* is an expression that denotes ownership or belonging or adherence. Biblically defined, the church of Christ is those who belong to Christ, those who have come to Him for salvation.

Our salvation is conditioned on faith in Jesus (John 3:16). Saving faith is obedient faith, and part of that obedience is baptism. The Bible affirms that we are baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3). It also says we are baptized into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13). That is no surprise. To be in Christ is to be in His body, the church. You cannot do one without the other. When you are added to Christ you are saved, and when you are saved you are added to the group of saved people, Christ's church.

The Popular Picture

Too many people are accustomed to thinking of Christ's body as divided into numerous segments or denominations, each wearing a unique name.

Given that assumption, people commonly view the expression *church of Christ* as merely identifying one of those segments. Therefore, when they hear someone ▶



talking about the essentiality of being a member of the church of Christ, their question is: Why is membership in one segment better than or more necessary than membership in any other segment?

If the segmented view of Christ's body were true, there would be little advantage in being in one division versus another, and it would be arrogant to claim there is. The problem is, that view is false! Nothing in the Bible supports it. To the contrary, the Bible consistently commends unity and condemns division. Note especially 1 Corinthians 1:10-13 and Galatians 5:20-21.



Side note: one of the ironies of the segmented view is that the overwhelming majority of segments claiming to be part of Christ's body deny what the Bible says about how one becomes a part of it!



Another side note: there are groups who wear the name *church of Christ* (or something similar) yet view themselves as nothing more than a denomination. That only adds to the confusion.

Conclusion

I appeal to you to become a member of the church of Christ, Biblically defined. That is no sectarian plea. It is an appeal for you to come to Christ for salvation – turning from sin, confessing your faith in Him, and being baptized into Him for the forgiveness of your sins. Let Him save you. Let Him add you to His body, His church, the one you read about in your Bible. ■

Our Values



by Frank Himmel

The NBA has announced that they are moving next year's all star game from Charlotte, North Carolina because of the league's objection to recently passed legislation in that state. A league spokesman said, "We have been guided in these discussions by the long-standing core values of our league." And what values does North Carolina law reflect that the NBA finds so objectionable? HB2 says that in government-owned buildings, people must use the bathroom that corresponds to their gender at birth!

The game will be moved to a community with better values. As of this writing, the new site has not been officially announced, but guess who the front-runner is? New Orleans! Yes, New Orleans, that bastion of morality, renowned for boozy parties and floozy dancers; the city whose murder rate is nearly four times higher than the average city its size, higher per capita than Chicago and New York. Evidently drunkenness, fornication, and murder do not matter, as long as trans-genders get their choice of facilities.

"Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20a).

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Adam Gibson	John Baucom	Bruce Williams
SONG LEADER	Greg Winget	Frank Himmel	John Baucom
OPENING PRAYER	Steven Turner	Steven Turner	
LORD'S SUPPER			
BREAD	Howard Moore	Howard Moore	
CUP	David Gray	David Gray	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Albert Lee Harrison		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Greg Winget	Chad Brock
CLOSING PRAYER	Adam Gibson	Josh Baucom	Adam Wilson