

# The True Church

Many people are asking, "Why are there so many different churches? Why do they teach so many different beliefs? Which church should I go to, or does it matter?"

There are over 300 churches in the City of Durham and surrounding area. Which one is really right in what they teach, how they worship, how they live, etc.? Is it possible that even though they all preach something different that they are ALL still right and all on their way to heaven?

Scripturally, God has "A" church composed of believers and doers of His Word. The true church, the church that Jesus is coming back for, is the church that is a continuation of the church he started on the day of Pentecost in an upper room in Jerusalem. He is coming back for a people who have been obedient to the Word of God and not the teachings and doctrines of men

## MATTHEW 15:9

In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

## MATTHEW 15:6

Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

People who are adhering to the pure Word of God and doing everything as outlined therein, are part of Jesus' church—the church He started, the church He is coming back for.

If today's churches are all preaching and teaching something a little differently, doing and living something a little differently, etc., then they cannot ALL be following God's singular plan for salvation. So which church should we follow? Which doctrine should we believe? What guidelines should we accept and live by if are to make it to heaven?

## ACTS 5:29

We ought to obey GOD rather than men.

## ROMANS 3:4

Let GOD be true, but every man a liar.

## MATTHEW 7:21

Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Anything outside of God's established Word will not be accepted. In the Book of Revelation, He tells us we will be judged by the Word of God. Those who do not follow it's roadmap to heaven will not be saved. Men say it doesn't matter how we do things, but God said we have to obey the Book—ALL of it!

So, that brings us back to why are there so many different Christian churches? Why does one church teach we should repent, turn away from our sins, go out of the sinning business and live a holy and Godly life, while another church preaches repentance isn't that important because we cannot help but sin everyday?

What about those who teach water baptism by immersion, while others say we should sprinkle, dip or pour? What about the churches that teach baptism is just our works and that it has no saving qualities at all?

Some churches teach we should be baptized in the titles Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Others say the scriptural method of baptism is just like they did it in the Bible—In the Name of Jesus. Other churches say it doesn't matter what name you use.

Some churches teach the Holy Ghost is no longer a part of the church, that God stopped pouring out His Spirit. Others say God put His Spirit IN the church and He never took it OUT of the church. They say He is still pouring out His Spirit today just as He did in the early church, and that receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for salvation.

Some say speaking in tongues is God's proof of the infilling of His Spirit, while others say that speaking in tongues is of the devil. There are yet other churches that say it's just a lot of foolishness.

Some say there is one God; some say two; some say three or more. All of these different opinions cannot be THE opinion of God. All of these different teachings cannot be following the plan (singular) of God, the Word of God, the instructions of God, the commandments of God toward salvation. For those wishing to make heaven, it is imperative that we know what God has to say about all of this. Our soul is far too valuable to merely accept someone else's' beliefs and/or teachings.

## EPHESIANS 4:6

(There is) ONE Lord, ONE Faith, ONE Baptism, ONE God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all.

If God says there is only one way, and yet there are a large number of different ways being preached, practiced and taught today, then somebody is missing the mark—a lot of somebodies are missing God's way, and that is what we are going to be judged by. It is essential that we seek out truth for ourselves and then plant ourselves right in the middle of a church that teaches and preaches the pure Word of God, no deviations. We need to be in a church that does things God's way.

Note what Paul said to the apostles:

### I CORINTHIANS 1:10

Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the SAME thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the SAME mind and in the SAME judgment.

Notice again in:

### GALATIANS 1:8–9

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Paul told the apostles to be sure they all spoke the same thing, the same gospel. There was to be no deviations. They were to be in one mind and one accord and in unity. If these disciples had gone about teaching whatever they pleased, it would have been one big state of confusion, and our Bible says God is not the author of confusion.

Paul further stated in Galatians that if anyone preached anything other than the true gospel, then let that person be accursed. To drive the point on home, Paul repeated that statement immediately following the first statement because it was so important! It sure doesn't sound like there was more than one gospel or more than one way. Over and over again, our Bible makes that clear.

Everything the apostles taught was identical. The same message of salvation was taught/preached everywhere. Everything was done the same way, according to Jesus' plan. We are following that same message of salvation at the First Pentecostal Church here in Durham. We are still doing everything the way Jesus and his disciples did it—no deviations.

God has "A" church and it began on the day of Pentecost when the disciples and others gathered together in the upper room in Jerusalem in one powerful prayer meeting! This is when the promise of the Holy Ghost was received, and Jesus filled all that were there with power from on High as they began to speak in other tongues. His Spirit was poured out on them and it is still being poured out today.

This was the birth of the church—Jesus' church—and it is the one He is coming back for. Only those who are obedient to the teachings of the early church are actually a part of that church. It is the same church that Peter and Paul belonged to. It is the same church that Mary, mother of Jesus, belonged to. Jesus is coming back for the church He started—those people who have been obedient to the Word, who are followers and adherers to the same gospel, the same scriptural plan of salvation, the same do's and don'ts for holy living, the same Godly standards of purity and Godliness.

The saints of the First Pentecostal Church in Durham are a continuation of the church Jesus began. We are doing everything the early church did in obedience to the Word of God. We have not put our own interpretations to the Word of God and we have not streamlined or modernized it to fit the times.

The Word of God has never changed. It forever stays the same. The scriptural plan for salvation is the same today as it has always been. Those who do things their own way and who are not in obedience to the Scriptures, are not a part of Jesus' church but, through their disobedience, have made themselves disciples of another fellowship.

The Bible says God's church will be without spot or blemish. Think about that statement for a minute. How does it measure up to those who say we cannot help but sin everyday, that it is just natural and God understands and will accept us anyway? Our Bible never teaches that we can go to heaven with sin as a part of our daily lives.

It IS natural for our old carnal nature to sin, but this is what the Holy Ghost is for! This is the power God promised us and gives to us when we are filled with His Spirit as evidenced by speaking in other tongues. How can we go to a church that denies the power of God that is going to take us out of here! The Bible says to "quench not the Spirit."

God says that without holiness we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. He knows we cannot live holy by our own efforts, but with Him living on the inside of us, we can do it! The Holy Ghost gives us power to live above sin. God would not require something of us that we could not do!

## ACTS 1:8

But ye shall receive POWER after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

So, God has a plan, and He gives us the power to follow it. It is the same plan He has always had. It is the plan that will take us to heaven.

There are a lot of different churches, but we need to go to the church that teaches/preaches God's plan! The same plan followed by the early church is being followed by its members today:

## ACTS 2:38–39

Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

# THE BIBLE PLAN OF SALVATION IN BIBLE DAYS

1. Repentance was Absolutely Necessary
2. Before anyone can be saved, they must first realize they are lost and need God. Any other step(s) they might take toward salvation is virtually meaningless without this realization. Repentance is seeing ourselves as God sees us, in our carnality and sinful nature. It is having Godly sorrow for our wrongdoings and unrighteousness, and our desire and efforts to right our wrongs and turn away from sin and live for Jesus. In repentance, we confess all our sins to Jesus—not a priest, a rabbi, or whoever. The Bible says only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7) and it also says to call no man Father here on earth (Matthew 23:9) (speaking of “father” in the spiritual sense, not the natural). Repentance was an essential step towards salvation in the days of the apostles, and it is **STILL** necessary for salvation today. Times may have changed, **BUT: THE BIBLE HAS NOT CHANGED GOD'S WORD HAS NOT CHANGED GOD'S PLAN HAS NOT CHANGED**
3. Baptism by Immersion, in Jesus Name, was Absolutely Necessary
4. This is how it was always done without exception. It is the death of

that old nature we faced in repentance. It is the washing away of every sin. We will come out a new person, swept clean and a ready vessel for the Holy Ghost to come into and take up residence in us. In Baptism we are baptized into Christ. We put him on. We, the bride, take on the name of our groom. Baptism is a command, not an option. It is an act of obedience unto God, not an act of our works. There is a vast difference in trying to be saved by our own efforts and being obedient to the commandments of God. God said that even at our very, very best, we were as filthy rags to Him! We must be obedient to the Word of Almighty God if we hope to be saved, and the Word of God commands us to be baptized. Water baptism by immersion in the name of Jesus was an essential step towards salvation in the days of the apostles, and it is STILL necessary for salvation today. Times may have changed, BUT: **THE BIBLE HAS NOT CHANGED GOD'S WORD HAS NOT CHANGED GOD'S PLAN HAS NOT CHANGED**

5. The Infilling of The Holy Ghost, as Evidenced by Speaking in Other Tongues was Absolutely Necessary

This was the power given to Saints to enable them to live a victorious life over sin. This is impossible for a person to do on their own. The Holy Ghost is Jesus Christ actually living inside us. Many people can feel the Spirit of God, but the Holy Ghost is actually being filled WITH the Spirit of God. There is a big difference! It is the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit) that teaches us and leads us to all righteousness while helping us steer clear of unrighteousness. It will keep us until the day of redemption. The Bible says that we are sealed with the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 4:30). It is also the Holy Ghost that will enable us to rise in the rapture (Romans 8:11). We cannot make it without the Spirit of God. The Scriptures say that without the Holy Ghost, then we don't belong to God (Romans 8:9). The infilling of the Holy Ghost as evidenced by speaking in other tongues was an essential step towards salvation in the days of the apostles, and it is STILL necessary for salvation today. Times may have changed, BUT: **THE BIBLE HAS NOT CHANGED GOD'S WORD HAS NOT CHANGED GOD'S PLAN HAS NOT CHANGED** Anything done less than what is commanded us in the Holy Scriptures is not enough, and anything that is added on to what is in the Scriptures is too much. God has shown us what to do and how to do it. It's up to us! We can follow HIM or the notions and doctrines of men. Jesus has only one church, made up of believers from every generation who have been obedient to the teachings of the Word of God.