



WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

In the Greek language (the original language of the New Testament), the word "church" means 'the called out'. The "called out" are people. What people? The people who have been "called out" of sin and called into Jesus Christ. Who are those people? Those people are Christians. Christians are the people who have agreed to leave sin and who have entered Christ by obeying the gospel.

THE CHURCH IS CHRISTIANS! If you are a Christian, you are a part of the church. The church is not a meeting house. The church is not some group of some organization different from Christians. Christians are the church. The way New Testament uses the word "church" makes this clear. *Acts 2:47* says the Lord added the saved (people) to the church. If saved people were added to the church, the church has to be made of saved people. Many other verses show the feeling and action of the saved people. *Acts 5:11* says all the church feared. *Acts 8:3* says the church was persecuted (abused). *Acts 8:3* says Saul troubled the church by putting men and women in prison. *Acts 9:31* says the churches had rest. *Acts 11:22* says news came to the "ears of the church". These scriptures show that the church is people, saved people who belong to Christ, Christians.

The Christians who live in one village, who worship together, and who work together for Christ are the church of that village. The New Testament church has no earthly headquarters and no man on earth as its head. No man or group of men can be the head of the church. The only head of the church of Christ is Jesus Christ (*Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18*). ALL spiritual authority belongs to Jesus Christ (*Matthew 28:18*). Christ is the foundation of the church (*1 Corinthians 3:11*). The church is properly built on Christ when it follows only the teachings and commands of the New Testament.

If the church is Christians who are called out of sin and into Christ, how are they called? Paul says in *1 Thessalonians 2:14* Christians are called by the gospel. When a person hears the gospel, believes in Christ, and obeys the gospel, he becomes a Christian - he has been called

out of sin and into Christ. He enters Christ when he is baptized for the remission of his sin (*Galatians 3:26,27*).

Never call the meeting house "the church." God and Christ do not live in earthly buildings (*Acts 17:24*). Christians are the church.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does the word "church" mean in the Greek language?
2. What are the people called out of? What are they called into?
3. What is the church?
4. What does *Acts 2:47* say?
5. The New Testament church has no earthly _____ and no _____ on earth as its _____.
6. Who is the head of the church?
7. Who has all spiritual authority?
8. Who is the foundation of the church?
9. How are people called?
10. When does a person enter into Christ?