WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF Christ (1)

1 Peter 3:15

11.11.2012

BECAUSE IT HAS THE SCRIPTURAL BUILDER – JESUS CHRIST.

There is something in a name. Why some people think there is not is rather strange. Would a husband allow his wife to have the name of another man? Would a wife desire to have the name of another man?

There is something in a name! Now I can get all philosophical about the value of a name. I mean it's that one thing you received at birth which everybody gets to use ... except yourself ... well occasionally at least when you have to sign away whatever the bank throws at you. *** There is something else in a name too ... a lot of sweat as Andy (our Swiss pilot) and two Canadian nurses found at when they literally embedded the new runway with its own name. At least now everyone flying over our base will know where we are! Please pray for our final inspection and paper work to come through and be released so we can actually start using the new runway!

(From the BLOG: http://lovemoz.blogspot.com/2012/10/there-is-something-in-name.html)

There is something else that is important with regard to a name: Jude 3. In this verse the Lord made very clear that there is something for which His saints must contend.

Let us consider, briefly, the importance associated with a scriptural name in matters of religion (Christianity).

I. No church can be scriptural unless it was founded by the scriptural builder.
   A. There are a large number of churches in our country.
      1. The churches that exist have varied doctrines, different in origin.
      2. Moreover, each church has its founder. Is that founder man or God?
      3. If it is man, then by necessity that church is unscriptural.
   B. The word unscriptural simply means that is has its existence based on something other than the Scriptures.
      1. Colossians 3:17
      2. Psalm 127:1
      3. Thus, it is a work of man.

II. The church of which I am a member has Christ as its founder. Matthew 16:13-19
A. Any church that has been founded by man – even great men of the past – is a church that was not built (established) by Jesus!

1. John Wesley: “John Wesley with his gift for organization is correctly spoken of as the founder of Methodism. His brother Charles was an influential factor in spreading and establishing Methodism in America” (Churches and Sect of Christendom, J.L. Neve, Lutheran Publishing House; Blair, Neb., 1944, p. 316).

2. Henry VIII: The reformation took hold in Europe, and England was not immune. As a result of some dispute between the Roman Catholic Pope and the King of England (Henry VIII), “…Henry VIII broke with the pope, throwing off all papal jurisdiction and establishing the English church as the national or state church. However, deciding to be orthodox and to die in the true Church, he determined that the English church should remain Catholic in doctrine” (Neve, p. 299).

3. Martin Luther: “The Lutheran Church in Europe is the oldest and probably the largest Evangelical Denomination which sprang from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was named after the great leader, first, in derision, by Roman Catholics, then by followers of Luther, though he protested against a sectarian use of his name” (Schaff, vol. 7, p. 79). It has a general origin of about 1517 surrounding the ninety-five propositions for debate Luther nailed to the building door in Wittenberg (ibid).

4. John Calvin: a preacher in the early years of the reformation (early to mid-16th century), was a man trained in law, the original languages, and studied Scripture intently. He was a man of intellectual standing and, being invited to Geneva Switzerland, “…declared immediately after his victorious reentry (sic) that he could not take up work without a reorganization of the [Roman] church…On Nov. 20, 1541, at a popular meeting, the scheme he drew up was ratified” (The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, “John Calvin,” Funk and Wagnall, New York, volume 2, 1908, p. 356).

5. Joseph Smith: The Mormon Church (otherwise and properly known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is dated in origin about 1827-1830 (Neve, p. 474).

6. Men who are way past the time of Jesus’ life and, thus, unscriptural.
B. The only human that Jesus gave any kind of authority is within our text. To Peter He said...

C. The church was not established by John the Baptist.
1. It might be thought by some that John the Baptist started the church; he is both scriptural and lived during the time of Christ.
   a. Roy Mason asserts that Jesus built His church and it was in existence before Pentecost. Those who refuse to accept this are doing so because of the “invisible church theory” (The Church That Jesus Built, p. 15).
   b. He says: “Out of the material prepared by John the Baptist, Jesus organized and founded His church during the days of His personal ministry here on the earth” (pp. 15-16).
2. However, this fails in the light of the biblical evidence.
   a. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus spoke His words, but we read in Matthew 14:12 that John was dead.
   b. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus uses the future tense “I will”, thus it has yet to be.
   c. In Matthew 16:18-19 Jesus used the word “church” in conjunction with the term “kingdom of heaven,” but note what Jesus said in Matthew 11:11.

D. Other plants will be rooted up. Psalm 127; Matthew 15:1-14

III. The Church of Which I Am a Member is Scriptural.
A. There is something in a name.
   1. For a wife to not take the name of her husband is a dishonor to him to whom she is married.
   2. For a Christian to not take the name of Christ is a dishonor to Him who bought us (Acts 20:28).

B. Acts 4:12
C. Matthew 16:13-19

CONCLUSION. When I started learning about Jesus and His word I had no idea about the significance of the one body as the New Testament explicitly declares it. When I learned about it I took that mantle and boldly declared it where I could. I want to be a member of the Lord’s church, the church that belongs to Christ. I don’t want to be a member of a church that has its origin in man. INVITATION
The genus of this series of lessons is based on the book *Why I Am A Member of the Church of Christ* by Leroy Brownlow.