WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (2)

1 Peter 3:15

12.2.2012

Because it has the scriptural foundation, location, and was founded at the scriptural time

INTRODUCTION

1. In our series that we began a few weeks back (11/11/2012), we talked about why I am a member of the church of Christ.
   a. In that lesson we focused our attention on the word scriptural; Jesus is the scriptural builder of the church.
   b. The word scriptural pertains to that which has its origin in the Bible.
   c. Of course, simply because a person is able to find some particular thins (teaching) in the Bible does not necessarily mean that it is of God. For instance, Satan taught Eve error.
   d. Thus, by scriptural we mean that which has its origin in God and is for us to implement today.
2. In this lesson we want to focus our attention on Jesus as the scriptural foundation, establishing His church at the scriptural location, and at the scriptural time.

DISCUSSION

I. FOUNDATION
   A. Foundations are important.
      1. In fact, they are crucial to a well-built structure.
      2. Not just any foundation will do, however.
      3. Can you imagine a foundation for the size of a shed, but a house sits on it? I can’t.
   B. The foundation needs to be sized properly for the structure that sits on it.
      1. Next door to us is a house that is currently being built.
      2. The foundation of that house corresponds to the size of the structure that is currently sitting on top.
   C. The church of Christ must have a foundation that corresponds also.
      1. Jesus, the scriptural builder, does not need a foundation which was (is) created by man; man’s foundation is inadequate for the structure that belongs to the Lord.

II. LOCATION
   A. If the church of which I am a member got its start in some location other than Jerusalem, it is the wrong location.
      1. The Roman Catholic Church got its start by a slow melding of ideas that came under the umbrella of what was perceived as sound doctrine.
a. It seems to have begun slowly in the second century, but began to take off in the third, fourth, and beyond.

1) In the early portion of his discussion concerning the church’s development as a “catholic organization,” church historian Kenneth Latourette says, “Thus came notable steps in the development of what was early called the Catholic Church and which soon, if it did not already do so, embraced the majority of those who thought themselves to be Christians” (p. 130).

2) The date for this was in the 2nd century. “By the end of the second century the word Catholic was increasingly applied to the Church and in a technical manner, meaning both universal and orthodox” (ibid).


2. “The Reformation of the sixteenth century brought two other churches into existence: the Lutheran and the Reformed. The issues for the departure of Protestantism from Rome had been altogether in the field of soteriology [salvation] and related topics” (Churches and Sect of Christendom, Neve, p. 28).

3. Thus, a church that started in Rome, London, New York, or any other location is not a scriptural location.

B. Scripture:

1. Daniel 2:36-44 – a clear reference to a messianic kingdom.

2. Isaiah 2:2-4 – a clear reference to a location of origination (Jerusalem).


C. Consequently, the disciples of the Lord went about preaching God’s kingdom and establishing a church in each new city. Paul told Titus to stay in Crete and set in order those things that are lacking – clearly indicating a church was established on the island of Crete (Titus 1:5).

1. But an objector might say that it was established later than that which we read having occurred in Jerusalem, and at a later date.

2. Fair enough.

3. Let us consider a few things.

a. First, the Lord sent out His apostles to into the entire world (Mark 16:15).

b. Second, that message they took to the whole world was (is) God’s seed (Luke 8:11). From that seed a crop grows (Matthew 13:1-16).

c. Third, Paul declared that he taught the same thing in every church (1 Corinthians 4:17), and that whether it was him or the other apostles they both taught the same thing (1 Corinthians 15:11, Galatians 1:6-9).

d. The purity of the seed (the word of God) that originated out from Jerusalem is that same seed that is planted in every community. Thus, we can see that an objector has nothing upon which to base his resistance.

III. TIME
A. The church of which I am a member not only has the right builder, the right foundation, the right location, but it was also established at the right time. “Any church not founded on Pentecost is not the true church” (Leroy Brownlow, p. 20).

B. In the book Christianity Through the Ages (Earle Cairns, Zondervan, 1969), there is a chart titled “Chronology of Church History.”
   1. That chart has as a starting point for the New Testament church’s founding on Pentecost (p. 24). He complements this chart in the first full paragraph with a discussion (p. 60).
   2. This is just the perspective of the historian and his collection of data.
   3. What is his data?

C. We briefly considered Luke 24 and Acts 2 already. Let us look at it again.
   1. Luke 24:46-49. From Jerusalem the message would go forth. The time that Jesus spoke to His disciples at this juncture is forty days after His resurrection.
   3. Acts 2:1-4. From the time that Jesus was resurrected there was forty days wherein He interacted with His disciples.
      a. From day forty until day fifty the apostles were told to linger in Jerusalem until God’s power came upon them. That they did.
      b. On day fifty, also known as the day of Pentecost, the power came from God, and from Jerusalem the gospel message went forth.
      c. Those who obeyed that message were added, note this, to the church (Acts 2:47).

CONCLUSION

1. I was born in Marion, OH. To be exact, I was born in Marion General Hospital on October 10, 1960 to the parents of Dave and Jo An Thomas. If another man came along and claimed to be me he could be quickly detected as a fraud by simply considering his origin.

2. I want to be a member of Christ’s church. The church He talked about to His apostles, the church that He built, with Him as the foundation; the church that has its start in the right location, and at the right time. I don’t want to be a member of a man-made institution. It does not have the right builder, foundation, the correct location from which it got its origin, or even at the right time. INVITATION