
“Come, Let Us Reason Together” About the Bible
What Is the Church of the New Testament?
Bible Study Series

“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”—(Matthew 16:18, NKJV)

LESSON ONE – Whose Church Is It?

Estimated Time to Read the Lesson: 5 – 7 minutes

Let’s Talk About It

Imagine you’re walking through a neighborhood and you see a building with a sign that reads, “**The _____ Church**” or a sign that says “**The Church of _____**” (You fill in the blanks). These are names you’ll find used by many churches that claim they are the church you will read about in the Bible. But this raises a great question—**really? Are they really following the pattern, the blueprint, of the church in the New Testament?**

If you’re going to study the Church of the New Testament, you need to begin by understanding **who started it** and to **whom it belongs**. After all, if someone is the founder and owner of something, they’re the one who sets its purpose and direction. The church isn’t ours to design, reinvent, or change—it belongs to someone far greater.

Who Founded the Church in the New Testament?

The Bible is clear: **Jesus Christ** is the one who established the church.

“...on this rock I will build My church...”—(Matthew 16:18)

Notice that word—“**My**.” Jesus didn’t say He would build **a** church. He said “*My church*.” It belongs to Him. He’s the one who built it, and it exists under His authority.

Who Is Jesus?

Let’s pause and talk for a moment about **who Jesus is**. This is more than just theology—it’s deeply personal. If you’re going to be part of His church, you need to know Him.

Jesus didn’t begin His existence in Bethlehem. He came to earth from heaven.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory...”—(John 1:1, 14)

Jesus is **God in the flesh**. He existed before the world began. He came to earth not to rule as a political leader, but to save mankind from sin and to establish a spiritual kingdom—His church.

He is called by many titles in the New Testament, each with deep meaning:

- **Son of God** – (Mark 1:1)
- **Son of Man** – (Matthew 8:20)
- **Christ** – the Anointed One (Matthew 16:16)
- **Lord of lords and King of kings** – (1 Timothy 6:15)
- **Savior** – (Luke 2:11)

These aren't just titles; they describe who He is and what He came to do.

Why Did Jesus Come to Earth?

The Bible teaches that Jesus came to seek and save the lost:

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”—(Luke 19:10)

Our sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2), and Jesus came to bridge that gap by offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice to bring man back into a relationship with God.

But Jesus also came to **build something lasting**—His **church**. Not a building, not a denomination, but a **spiritual body of believers**.

The Church Was Always Part of God's Plan

Because the Jews of Jesus' time on earth rejected Him and had Him crucified, some people think the church was a backup plan. They say that the Messiah was to come and establish again the earthly Kingdom of Israel and He would sit on the earthly throne of David. But since the Jews rejected and killed him, the church was established just as a temporary placeholder until Christ would return to earth to set up his earthly Kingdom. But that's not what Scripture teaches.

The church was always in the mind of God, from the very beginning.

“...the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”—(Ephesians 3:11)

That phrase—*eternal purpose*—tells us that the church wasn't an afterthought. It was a key part of God's plan of salvation, fulfilled in Christ. Jesus came, not just to save individuals, but to gather those saved individuals into one body—**His church**.

Why Did He Establish It?

Let's make this personal. **Jesus built His church:**

- To **gather the saved** (Acts 2:47)
- To **teach and uphold truth** (1 Timothy 3:15)
- To **encourage and equip believers** (Hebrews 10:24–25)
- To **glorify God** (Ephesians 3:21)

He didn't establish the church for entertainment, politics, or because of tradition. He established it to be the spiritual family of God.

“To Him (God) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”
—(Ephesians 3:21)

When you belong to the church that Jesus built, you're not just joining a group—you're becoming part of a **divine purpose** that stretches from eternity past to eternity future.

Let's Reflect Together

So, let me ask you a few questions:

- If Jesus built the church, and it belongs to Him, shouldn't you want to be part of **His church**—not one designed by men?
 - If He established His church, shouldn't you seek to follow His lead in all things in the church?
 - And if the church was part of God's eternal plan, how important must it be for our lives today?
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Conclusion

Jesus Christ is the one and only founder of the church you read about in the New Testament. It is **His** church. He purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). He built it with His own hands (Matthew 16:18). He rules it as its head (Colossians 1:18). And He adds to it those who are saved (Acts 2:47).

As you continue in this study series, we'll explore many other important aspects of His church—when the church was established, what its purpose is, how it's organized, who has authority in it, how it worships, and how it differs from the many churches you see in the world today.

But for now, remember this: **The Church of the New Testament belongs to Jesus Christ.**

Let's make it our aim to know it, love it, and be a faithful part of it.

Questions to Confirm Understanding.

Estimated time to answer the questions, including time to look up scriptures: 7 – 10 minutes

Read and answer the following set of questions about this lesson, and circle your answer: “True | False” or “Yes | No”. Look up the scriptures provided to confirm your answers. Then compare your answers with the Answer Key provided after these questions.

1. Jesus said, “on this rock I will build My church.” — (*Matthew 16:18*)
True | False
2. The church belongs to those who attend and support it.
True | False
3. Jesus Christ is the founder and builder of the church described in the New Testament.
Yes | No
4. Jesus gave permission for other men to establish churches. — (*Matthew 16:18*)
True | False
5. Jesus existed before His birth in Bethlehem.
Yes | No
6. Jesus is called the “Savior” in the New Testament. — (*Luke 2:11*)
True | False
7. Jesus came to earth to rule as a political king of an earthly kingdom.
True | False
8. Jesus is called the “Son of God” in the Bible. — (*Mark 1:1*)
True | False
9. Jesus came to build a spiritual body of believers, not a denomination.
True | False
10. Jesus came to seek and save the lost. — (*Luke 19:10*)
True | False
11. According to Isaiah 59:2, sin separates people from God.
Yes | No
12. The church was an afterthought because the Jews rejected Jesus. **True | False**
13. The wisdom of God is made known by or through the church. — (*Ephesians 3:10–11*)
True | False
14. The church was always part of God’s eternal purpose. — (*Ephesians 3:11*)
True | False
15. Jesus built the church to entertain and meet people’s preferences.
True | False
16. The church is where the saved are gathered. — (*Acts 2:47*)
True | False
17. “The church of the living God” is called “the pillar and ground of the truth.” — (*1 Timothy 3:15*)
True | False

18. Believers are encouraged to assemble together to stir up love and good works. — (*Hebrews 10:24–25*)
True | False
19. God is glorified in the church.— (*Ephesians 3:21*)
True | False
20. You are not required to attend church services. (*Hebrews 10:25*) **True | False**
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Answer Key

Estimated time to read and contemplate the answers: 10 – 20 minutes

- Question:** Jesus said, “on this rock I will build My church.” — (*Matthew 16:18*)
Correct Answer: True
“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” — Matthew 16:18
Explanation: Jesus clearly states that He would build **His** church, emphasizing ownership and divine origin.
- Question:** The church belongs to those who attend and support it.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: The church belongs to Christ, who purchased it with His blood (*Acts 20:28*). Attendees and supporters are not owners.
- Question:** Jesus Christ is the founder and builder of the church described in the New Testament.
Correct Answer: Yes
Explanation: Jesus is the only one credited in Scripture with building and establishing the church (*Matthew 16:18*).
- Question:** Jesus gave permission for other men to establish churches” — (*Matthew 16:18*)
Correct Answer: False
“...I will build My church...” — Matthew 16:18
Explanation: Jesus used the possessive “My,” showing that the church belongs to Him, not to anyone else. No one else has authority to establish a church.
- Question:** Jesus existed before His birth in Bethlehem.
Correct Answer: Yes
Explanation: *John 1:1* and *1:14* affirm that Jesus (the Word) existed with God in the beginning and became flesh.
- Question:** Jesus is called the “Savior” in the New Testament. — (*Luke 2:11*)
Correct Answer: True
“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” — Luke 2:11

Explanation: This verse plainly identifies Jesus as the Savior, confirming His role in God’s plan of salvation. The lesson also highlights "Savior" as one of Jesus’ key titles, demonstrating His mission to redeem mankind.

7. **Question:** Jesus came to earth to rule as a political king of an earthly kingdom.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: Jesus came to save the lost (Luke 19:10) and to establish a spiritual kingdom, not a political one (John 18:36).
8. **Question:** Jesus is called the “Son of God” in the Bible. — (*Mark 1:1*)
Correct Answer: True
“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” — Mark 1:1
Explanation: Jesus is called the Son of God, signifying His divine relationship with the Father.
9. **Question:** Jesus came to build a spiritual body of believers, not a denomination.
Correct Answer: True
Explanation: The lesson states, “Not a building, not a denomination, but a spiritual body of believers.” Jesus came to establish His church as a united spiritual family—not a manmade organization or sect.
10. **Question:** Jesus came to seek and save the lost. — (*Luke 19:10*)
Correct Answer: True
“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” — Luke 19:10
Explanation: Jesus’ mission was to redeem lost humanity, not to rule or gain earthly power.
11. **Question:** According to Isaiah 59:2, sin separates people from God.
Correct Answer: Yes
“But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.” — Isaiah 59:2
Explanation: Sin creates a barrier between man and God, requiring reconciliation back to God through Christ.
12. **Question:** The church was an afterthought because the Jews rejected Jesus.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: Scripture teaches that the church was part of God's eternal purpose, not a reactionary plan (Ephesians 3:11).
13. **Question:** The wisdom of God is made known by or through the church. — (*Ephesians 3:10–11*)
Correct Answer: True
“...that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church... according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” — Ephesians 3:10–11
Explanation: The church reveals God's wisdom as part of His eternal purpose.
14. **Question:** The church was always part of God’s eternal purpose. — (*Ephesians 3:11*)

Correct Answer: True

“...according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” — Ephesians 3:11

Explanation: God's plan for the church predates creation and is fulfilled in Christ.

15. **Question:** Jesus built the church to entertain and meet people's preferences.

Correct Answer: False

Explanation: The church was established to gather the saved, glorify God, and teach truth—not to entertain.

16. **Question:** The church is where the saved are gathered. — (*Acts 2:47*)

Correct Answer: True

“And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” — Acts 2:47

Explanation: Only those saved by Christ are added to His church by the Lord Himself.

17. **Question:** “The church of the living God” is called “the pillar and ground of the truth.” — (*1 Timothy 3:15*)

Correct Answer: True

“...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” — 1 Timothy 3:15

Explanation: The church upholds and supports God's truth in the world.

18. **Question:** Believers are encouraged to assemble together to stir up love and good works. — (*Hebrews 10:24–25*)

Correct Answer: True

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...” — Hebrews 10:24–25

Explanation: Christians are called to encourage one another through regular gathering.

19. **Question:** God is glorified in the church.— (*Ephesians 3:21*)

Correct Answer: True

“To Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” — Ephesians 3:21

Explanation: This verse clearly teaches that the church is the God-ordained place where He is glorified through Christ Jesus. God's eternal purpose was not just the salvation of individuals, but that the redeemed—gathered as His church—would bring Him glory across all generations.

20. **Question:** You are not required to attend church services. — (*Hebrews 10:25*)

Correct Answer: False

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another...” — Hebrews 10:25

Explanation: Christians are commanded not to forsake assembling; regular worship is part of faithful living.