

Start Your Church

I recently received a news feed in my email in which was an advertisement from a company that advertised they can help anyone to “start your church”. They claimed they can help anyone to form a fully functioning not-for-profit religious organization fully compliant with IRS 501(c)(3) requirements.

Why would anyone want to start a church:?

The One True Church

In Matthew 16:13–19, Jesus asked His disciples, “*Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?*” After various answers, Peter confessed, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” Jesus then declared, “*On this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*”

This passage is foundational to the churches of Christ. It teaches that the church belongs to Christ alone—it is **His** church, not man’s. The “rock” is the confession of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and upon this truth the Lord established one body, one church (Ephesians 4:4–6). The church is not a human invention, nor a collection of denominations, but the divine institution purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28).

The churches of Christ emphasize returning to the New Testament pattern: worship, doctrine, and organization as revealed in Scripture. We believe that unity is found not in human creeds or traditions, but in faithfully following the Word of God. Christ promised that His church would endure, and we seek to be simply Christians—members of that one true body.

So then, Why Start a New Church?

If Christ built His one true church, why do people start new ones? Often, it is because of:

- **Human preference:** People desire worship styles, teachings, or practices that suit their tastes rather than God’s commands.
- **Doctrinal disagreement:** Instead of submitting to Scripture, some create new groups to promote their own interpretations.
- **Cultural influence:** Societal trends can pressure individuals to reshape the church to “fit in,” rather than remain distinct and holy.

Yet Scripture warns against this. Paul wrote that there is “one body” (Ephesians 4:4), and division is condemned (1 Corinthians 1:10–13). To start a new church is to suggest that Christ’s church is insufficient, when in truth His design is perfect.

The call of the gospel is not to innovate, but to return. The churches of Christ invite all to lay aside human traditions and simply be Christians, united in the one true church that Jesus promised to build.

~Ron Josselet (assisted by ChatGPT and CoPilot)