

THE LORD'S CHURCH WAS NOT ESTABLISHED TO...

By Marvin Weir, via "Seek the Old Paths"

The Lord's church is the one that was established in A.D. 33 in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. The Lord's church is the one that Jesus built (Matt. 16:18) and purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28). The Lord's church is the one body the apostle Paul recognized as being valid (Eph. 4:4). There is only one body that the Savior has promised to save (Eph. 5:23). It is imperative to understand that we are not discussing what denominations were established to do. Denominations may do whatever their founder desires them to do and please men, but they will never please God. If the church of our Lord is to be faithful, it must only do the bidding of its founder, Jesus Christ, and such will never please most men.

The Lord's church was not established to exist incognito! It makes one want to gag to hear those who profess to be members of the Lord's church avoid telling people they are a member of the church of Christ. These modern day dreamers will tip-toe for miles on eggshells before they will admit they are a member of the church of Christ. Upon being forced to make the admission, they then apologize by saying, "But we don't believe we are the only one's going to heaven."

What is wrong with the name church of Christ? Am I ashamed that Christ built His church? Am I embarrassed that the church wears His glorious name? Do I not want the church to be connected with the Savior? Brethren, these questions deserve an honest answer. Many members need to begin thinking for themselves and cease following the liberal change-agents who would place the church under a bushel (cf. Matt. 5:13-16). Faithful soldiers of the cross will boldly proclaim the essentiality and eternal destiny of the Lord's church. We cannot keep the church a secret and save the souls of men!

The Lord's church was not established to provide entertainment for its members! One can search the Bible from beginning to end and never find one incident where God has sought to entertain His people. It can be proved, however, that God "*would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*" (1 Tim. 2:4). It is also true that "*the Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost*" (Luke 19:10). We read that it was the Lord's desire "*that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem*" (Luke 24:47). When the early church was persecuted and scattered, they did not offer all types of entertainment to attract people. They did, however, go "*about preaching the word. And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ*" (Acts 8:4-5). The early church realized that the Gospel was the only "*power of God unto salvation,*" and they were not ashamed to proclaim it (Rom. 1:16).

The early church did not seek to attract people with eloquent dramatized skits laced with finger-nail biting excitement! Neither did the early church have "youth ministers" to entertain and baby-sit the young or an "elders minister" to transport the older saints to every play and flower garden within driving distance. Didn't they know that because of severe persecution they would have to cater to the wants of both young and old in order to grow? The wisdom of man says that the early church is destined to fail. The result — the early Christians who feared God and unashamedly proclaimed the Gospel grew by leaps and bounds (cf. Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 9:31).

The Lord's church was not established to provide a soothing answer to man's sins! The majority of men want to live in sin, enjoy the pleasures of the moment, and be told that all is well with their souls. Thus, alcoholics have a disease, homosexuals have a defective gene, fornication is simply an affair, lying is misinformation, and sin is tolerated as a mistake. Brethren, we can ill afford to pat members on the back, accept their contribution, and overlook sin! All sin is deadly (Rom. 6:23), and all must repent (give up) of their sins or lose their souls. Even though not "politically correct," Christians will teach sinners that they must "repent or perish" (Luke 13:3). May we keep in mind that the Lord's church was established to do what no man-made institution can do? Let us therefore not lose sight of the glorious purpose and mission of the Lord's church.