

## CHAPTER TWO: THE TIME AND PLACE OF BEGINNING

For many, proving the church of Christ takes more than undeniable evidence of just ONE church. Those contending their religion is right and acceptable with God will agree there is ONE church. However, they would have us believe “all religions are a part of that one universal church.” Unfortunately, several endorse such a falsehood and say, “It does not matter what you are a member of religiously, as long as you believe and teach God, Christ and the Spirit offer heaven as a reward.” As one Christian often says, “Most people believe all anyone has to do to get to heaven is die.” Indeed dear student, man cannot distort God’s Word and succeed. It is necessary we accept His Word, and His Word only regarding the proving of all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21) pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

In this lesson, we wish to deal explicitly with this fact: The ONE CHURCH has a specific time and place and beginning. We need to realize God is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5; 34:14), and His desire to have ONE CHURCH limits all others to a non-existent state so far as His is concerned (Matthew 15:10 – 14). Thus, in order for the ONE CHURCH to be the church He had in mind from the beginning (Ephesians 3: 10 – 11), we must note the time and place of its beginning. Any religious organization with a beginning within another time and place than the ONE CHURCH found within the New Testament simply cannot be the ONE CHURCH of our Lord!

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### THE TIME AND PLACE OF BEGINNING (Outline of Lesson)

Text: Luke 24: 44 – 53

- I. The inspired prophesy of time and place
  - A. Note: Hebrews 1:1 – 2; 2 Peter 1:21
  - B. 1 Timothy 3: 14 – 15
  - C. Isaiah 2: 2 – 3
  - D. Micah 4: 1- 2
  - E. Zechariah 1:16
  - F. Daniel 2:44
  - G. Note the sequence: Luke 24: 44 – 49
    1. Christ had to die, be buried and rise from the dead (1 Corinthians 15: 1- 4)
    2. Apostles had to tarry in Jerusalem
    3. Proclamation of the gospel had to start in Jerusalem

- II. The fulfillment of the prophesy
  - A. Death, burial and resurrection of Christ – 1 Corinthians 15: 1- 4
  - B. Holy Spirit could not come until Christ had returned to heaven
    - 1. John 16:7
    - 2. Acts 1:9
  - C. Apostles tarried in Jerusalem – Acts 1:12
  - D. Apostles received the Holy Spirit – Acts 2: 1- 4
  - E. The gospel first preached at Jerusalem
    - 1. Acts 2: 14 – 42
    - 2. Joel 2: 28 – 32
  - F. Message had to include repentance and remission of sins
    - 1. Luke 24:47
    - 2. Acts 2:38
  - G. The church begun
    - 1. Note again the fulfillment of prophesy
    - 2. Acts 2:41 – 47

Conclusion:

- 1. Matthew 16:18
- 2. Ephesians 2:11 – 22
- 3. 1 Corinthians 15:24

Discussion:

Whenever God did anything, He had a plan (reason) for doing that task. This is especially true in relationship to the church. It was in His mind from the beginning of all things (Ephesians 3: 10 – 11). A careful study of the Old Testament reveals many examples of the church foreshadowed: (the ark, the building of the tabernacle and temple). The prophets speak of it to come: Zechariah, Isaiah, Daniel, Micah, and the Psalms. It is easy to understand that God had planned a specific time and place to begin the church.

Our text (Luke 24: 44 – 53) shows the words of Jesus concerning the time and place at which the church would begin. Note these facts:

- A. “All things must be fulfilled” (verse 44)
- B. “Thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead: (verse 46)
- C. “Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name” (verse 47)
- D. “Beginning at Jerusalem” (verse 47)

While this could be considered prophesy in its own right, it is in fact the repeating of prophesy. Never in all the years of the Bible will one find a contradiction. Jesus declared He did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). He further said that every “jot and tittle” would be fulfilled concerning prophesies of Himself (Matthew 5:18). Isaiah’s prophesy is now

brought to its climax as Jesus explains its accomplishment. (Compare Luke 24: 44 – 49 with Isaiah 2: 1- 4).

Of the prophecies, listed on the lesson outline, you will note each speaks of the following facts:

- A. the house of God
- B. the city of Jerusalem
- C. the last days

Remember also REASON (Isaiah 1:18) requires we first accumulate facts, think seriously on these facts, and then reach the conclusion only the facts will allow! The earnest student knows the coming of Christ to die for our sins, to be buried and to rise from the dead, concluded the Old Law (Colossians 2:14); and thus began the last “dispensation”. After the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, the TIME was right for the beginning of the church. All the religions of the olden times would be too old to be the ONE God had in His mind from the beginning to save man from sin. Even the religion of Moses, which God established for Israel, His chosen people of that time, was now completed and would be not longer acceptable in the sight of God (Hebrews 10: 1 – 10). Just so, any religion beginning AFTER this established time of beginning would be too young to be the church God had in His mind from the beginning. THERE IS ONLY ONE RIGHT TIME OF BEGINNING FOR THE ONE CHURCH.

Now that the time is right, what about the PLACE of beginning? To answer this, it is needful to follow the sequence of events. Christ had died, had been buried and had been raised from the dead. This constitutes the gospel (1 Corinthians 15: 1- 4). This had to be accomplished before the apostles could preach; else there could be no gospel to preach! They could not preach the gospel without inspired guidance (John 16: 7 – 13). Further, that inspiration could not come upon the apostles until they were gathered in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:47). Read again the verses of the Old Testament speaking of the word going forth “from Jerusalem.”

According to Acts 2:1, we learn the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the apostles were gathered in one place. Where was this place? From Acts 1: 12 – 14, this upper room was in Jerusalem. Now we have the right place according to the prophesy! From the contents of Acts 2, we learn these apostles were the recipients of the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The message they preached was the gospel (read carefully Acts 2: 14 – 36). When this gospel was heard and believed, the hearers were pricked in their hearts and asked what they should do to rid themselves of the sin of murdering Christ (verse 37). Peter told them to REPENT and BE BAPTIZED every one of them, in the name of Jesus Christ (i.e. by His authority – Colossians 3:17). This is the beginning of THE kingdom, THE church that was prophesied! Acts 2:41: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same

there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Verse 47 of the same chapter says, “And the Lord added to THE CHURCH daily such as should be saved.” He could not have added them something that did not exist. The church obviously existed! For the first time, THE CHURCH was made available to the souls of men and women. Before, it had been in the mind of God (Ephesians 3:10 – 11), and now it is made known to obedient souls!

From all this we can note any religious organization claiming to be acceptable in God’s sight, yet has its origin in time and place other than what we have just studied, can not possibly be the ONE CHURCH God sanctions! It would either be too old or too young to be the church God had in His mind from the beginning. For any religious organization to claim a head other than Christ, would not permit that body to be what God has authorized. The same is true if any other king is claimed, or another husband. It is plain there is but ONE CHURCH and it has but ONE TIME AND PLACE OF BEGINNING.

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1. Name at least three verses of the Old Testament prophesying the coming of the church.
2. At what time and in what place did the church of Christ begin? Prove your answer.
3. What things had to take place before the church could have its beginning?
4. What is the only message that was permitted to be preached on the first day of the church?
5. What were the results of that message?