

*Proving
the
Church of Christ*

written by
Michael J. Davis

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Dedication and Acknowledgements:

To all whose minds carefully study God's Word; to all whose interest is founded in God's Word for its unchanging facts; to all whose minds render the complete obedience to God's Word that is demanded, this material is affectionately dedicated. If even one soul is caused to relinquish the shackles of sin upon his or her soul and surrender him/herself to the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, what efforts of time, money and energy are exerted herein have been very wisely invested.

* * * * *

There were many deeds of kindness granted by so many to the completion of this task. It is my prayer that God reward them all abundantly for such love for truth and right. It seems needful to acknowledge them all: yet time, space and inability negate that desire. So many have expressed their interest in such material as herein presented. It is largely through that insistence that it is accomplished. Still others have aided in the writing, editing, copying, binding, mailing, etc. My sincere thanks is all they asked in return. May God grant their reward to be much greater!

Three must be mentioned as their support remains unquestioned and undying. Nancy, my wife and companion in the faith, Jeremy and Joshua, our two sons, have willingly sacrificed of our family time together and of our family means to permit the publication of this manuscript. I love them all dearly: but most for their unfaltering encouragement toward me in continuing to preach the truth!

* * * * *

Ammendment:

The following material first met publication in 1990, while working with the church of Christ at Pinhook, Indiana. Since that original, PROVING THE CHURCH OF CHRIST has received several re-prints and only one revision.¹ The author remains humbled by the reception of this material by the brethren, and their subsequent use of it for Bible class study, individual study, and for pulpit work. Now, at the behest of many brethren, it is the author's pleasure to convert it to Internet availability. It is his prayer such conversion to this format will provide hundreds more souls with the knowledge of God's Word concerning the church purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ.

The author hereby grants permission to any honest user of this material to copy it, study it, furnish it to others for study, etc. The only stipulation upon this permission is the obvious: be honest in providing credit where credit is due for the content of this study. Further, if mistakes are found within this writing – mistakes that contradict God's unerring Word – please help the author by informing him of such errors and correcting him! His sole desire is to present the Truth and only the Truth regarding this or any subject – especially those subjects pertaining to the sacred Word of God! Should you find the material correct, in perfect agreement with the Word of God, then give God the glory and the honor!

Michael J. Davis, preacher
Church of Christ
December 2008

¹ The single revision concerned a chart drawing and had nothing to do with the written material. The alteration came in 1997 when the church of Christ meeting at 825 West Second Street, Bloomington, Indiana reprinted the bound edition of PROVING THE CHURCH OF CHIRST.

Preface:

Several years ago, a good friend of mine accompanied me to services in a small rural congregation of the church. He was not a member of the Lord's church and what religious background he had was of a man-made origin. What my friend observed interested him. He mentioned that in "his church" communion was observed only a few times each year. Contributions were made on a tithing basis. Their understanding of baptism was never burial in water, but sprinkling. As we discussed his interests, he said, "I still believe all churches are basically alike." In order to help his argument, he invited me to attend services at "his church."

Having been "raised" in the church, I knew it would be unwise of me to compromise the truth I knew and practiced. Yet, when pressed for a reason of these convictions, I had to admit an absence of knowledge regarding proof that the church of Christ is indeed the only right church! That prompted a serious study of the scriptures that fully benefited me by convincing me of God's uncompromising truth! The material contained in this volume is in large part a result of that study. It is my prayer that each reader and student will benefit from its content as well.

May God richly bless your time in this study. May you be fully persuaded of the truth as you search the scriptures PROVING THE CHURCH OF CHRISIT.

In His Name,

Michael Davis

Introduction and Suggested Use:

God said, "Come now and let us REASON together," (Isaiah 1:18). There are three steps required in accomplishing this command. First, ACCUMULATE THE FACTS. Second, THINK ON THESE THINGS. Third, REACH THE CONCLUSION DEMANDED BY THE FACTS. Seeing that only the FACTS are unchangeable, our thoughts can change from falsehood to truth as may our conclusions. Thus, we must approach this study as we would any honest study: with an open mind and open heart, realizing that God's Word contains the facts concerning our salvation (2 Peter 1:3; John 17:17; Romans 10:17; et al). These are unchanging facts that require our study (2 Timothy 2:15; Philippians 4:8). When we reach a conclusion, if we have been honest and forthright in our examination of these facts and have studied them carefully, the conclusions will agree with these facts. Thus, if we are right, it is because the scriptures have been studied, obeyed, and unchanged, for they are these facts. If we are wrong, it is because we are unwilling to concede to the truth of these facts!

This material is prepared in order to instill a permanent knowledge in the mind of the student. Questions have been placed at the close of each chapter. While these are not "tests," per se, it is suggested the student use them as a mandatory review.

This material is written by an uninspired man; a man whose study of the truth continues daily (2 Corinthians 4:16). Therefore, you may find some of the comments incorrect. Such is certainly NOT the intention of the author; yet it must be admitted that only the scriptures are infallible. The study must use the Bible to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

It is suggested that no time schedule be fixed to a chapter. Some material may be well established and understood in a very brief time; other subject material may take longer. As serious as the matter of this material is, no soul should be deprived of a righteous understanding simply so a deadline can be met. Further, no student should think it needful to complete the entire study before rendering obedience to the gospel. Each lesson has been prepared with the prayerful desire that it teach the truth in such a manner as to convey the need for obedience at the time it is studied.

Note-taking is always encouraged. The student should take notes throughout this effort. Write any question as it comes to your mind: trying to remember what is forgotten may cost valuable time, importance, and even souls! Let each one be desirous of PROVING THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.