



PART TWO

The Church

How & When

It Was Established

THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

I. How Was the Church Founded.

There are several views held as to when and how the Church was founded.

1. By Christ during His ministry. (The true view.)
2. At Pentecost. (The false view.)

This confusion can be easily cleared up when one examines **Acts 1:8**.

Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...”

Speaking to the church (“ye”) Christ promised that they would receive power from the Holy Ghost, which they did as He promised they would, on the day of Pentecost. Therefore, the day of Pentecost was not the birthday of the Church, as many claim, but the day of **Pentecost** was the day of the **empowering** of the already existent Church.

3. Clarification.

- ▶ You can’t put power into something unless that something already exists. And the power can’t flow unless the power supply is already there and is hooked up.
- ▶ Example: In order for an automobile to receive power three things are necessary.
 - a. The car must already exist.
 - b. A battery needs to be available and in the vehicle.
 - c. The battery needs to be hooked up to the car’s electrical system.
- ▶ Applied to the Local Church.
 - a. In order for the Church to have received power, as God promised they would when the day of Pentecost was come, the church must have already existed.
 - b. In order for the Church to receive power as promised, the battery must have already been available in the Church.
 - c. In order for the Church to receive power from the battery, as promised, the battery needed to be “hooked up.”

4. The process concerning the Local Church.

- a. To receive “power” the Church must have already been in existence. (We will address when and how that happened in the next section.)
- b. To receive “power” there must have already been a power source (battery) installed in the Church.
 - ▶ The Church is the people- so the power supply must have already been installed in the people. This happened prior to Pentecost and is recorded for us in the Bible.

John 20:19-22 “Then the same day at evening, being the first [day] of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace [be] unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them [his] hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace [be] unto you: as [my] Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on [them], and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:”

- ▶ It is made plain in **Jn 20:22** that the people, the Church, already had the indwelling

of the Holy spirit from the day of Jesus' resurrection; i.e., from the evening of Jesus' resurrection, the "battery," the power supply, the Holy Ghost, was available to the Church.

- c. Summary: On the day of Pentecost, the Church, which had to have already existed, had the "battery cables" hooked up providing power from the Holy Ghost, the battery, which had already indwelt the members from the day of Christ's resurrection.

Therefore, Pentecost was not the birthday of the Church but the day of empowering of the Church. And that is exactly what Christ promised.

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..."

They had received the Holy Ghost the evening of the day of His resurrection; and then at Pentecost, the power of God's Holy Spirit within them came upon them, i.e., it was released to enable them to carry out God's work.

To put it simply, the cables were hooked up to the Holy Spirit within them so the power could start to flow in the Church. The individual believers already had the Holy Spirit within them, and at Pentecost the Church, corporately, was empowered.

II. When Was the Church Founded and Who Founded It?

A. Who founded the Church?

Jesus claimed the Church was His- therefore, He was the founder of it.

Mt 16:18 "... I will build MY church..."

B. When was it founded?

1. Many believe the foundation of the church was somewhere between **Mt 16 & Mt 18**.

- a. He gave a prophecy and promise of it in **Mt 16:16-18**.

Mt 16:18 "... I will build my church..."

- ▶ He told them in that passage that He would build His Church- i.e., He told them that He would be going through the process of building, which is an ongoing process, His Church.
- ▶ Remember, however, that this also could easily be a promise of the ongoing construction (building) of something that was already previously started.

- b. Recognition of the church visible (discipline) was given in **Mt 18:15-20**.

It would not be possible to take an erring brother or sister to a gathering of some "Universal" Church because it would be impossible for all believers of all places and all times to gather in one place to carry out discipline, such as is the case here, or any other corporate matter. Therefore, Christ must have been talking about a local assembly- a Local Church.

- c. The giving of the Holy Spirit to the believers. (**Jn 20:22**)

- d. The filling of the Church corporately, with the Holy Spirit and power. (**Acts ch. 2**)

- e. This possibility, that Christ established the Church somewhere between **Mt chs. 16-18** is a good possibility but not necessarily the best possibility because of several scriptures that will be discussed in the next section.

2. Many believe that the Church was started when Christ called His first disciples/apostles. (Because we have already discussed the receiving of the Holy Ghost and the later empowering of the Church at Pentecost, then we need not discuss them again in this segment.)
- a. Christ called His first disciples at the beginning of His ministry.
Mt 4:17-22 “**From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left [their] nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James [the son] of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.**”
 (Also see John 1:29 - 51)
- b. Speaking to the Church, Christ said that where two or three are gathered, there He would be in the midst of them. (**Mt 18:17-20**)
- c. Therefore, it is quite logical to believe that His Church started when He called His first disciples with Himself physically in the midst of them as they assembled.
3. Summary.
- ▶ If one chooses to believe that the Church that was started by Christ actually started somewhere between **Mt ch. 16** and **Mt ch. 18**, that would be quite acceptable and in accord with the scriptural evidence.
 - ▶ Also, if one chooses to believe that Christ started His Church when He called His first disciples, then that would also be acceptable and in accord with the scriptures.
 - ▶ However, to believe that it started at Pentecost is contrary to the evidence.
 - ▶ Suffice it to say that it is scripturally necessary to believe that it was Jesus that started His Church and He did so while He was still here on the earth.

NOTE:

- A. Jesus Christ went to John the Baptist for Baptism.**
- B. His original church members also had the Baptism of John the Baptist.**
- C. Therefore, when they baptized new members into the Church, they passed on the baptism of John to the new members.**
- D. You become a Baptist by being baptized by a Baptist. (A church is a called out, baptized body of believers.)**
- E. Then the Church that was founded by Jesus Christ was a Baptist Church.**

Jesus founded the first Baptist Church at Jerusalem.

NOTE: There are those that claim that the phrase “John the Baptist” should be rendered “John the baptizer.” Even if that was true, and it is not necessarily so, it would not change a thing. Those who baptize with the baptism that God gave to John are true, biblical, Baptists. That scriptural authority has been handed down to that group today known as “Baptists.” Many have erred from the scriptural traditions but that does not negate those traditions. Therefore, those of us who are scriptural “baptizers” are the true “Baptists” because we pass on and practice the baptism of John, as approved by the Lord Jesus Christ. Had there been denominationalism in the days of Jesus, which there wasn’t because there was only one Church, the one Jesus started, then Jesus’ group, His assembly of baptized believers (His Church), would have been called Baptists because they were baptizers with the authoritative baptism that God gave to John and which was subsequently passed on to them. Baptist is not just what we are- it is what we do.

In a later segment, the one on Church History, we will discuss where the name, Baptist, came from as well as when it was applied to us and by whom.

Class Instruction

Please return to the class page and take the test for Section Two.