

A survey of members on “What is the church of Christ”?

Most of the respondents, when asked to define the fellowship, cited the goal of restoring the church described in the New Testament book of Acts and the epistles written to first century churches. Many mentioned strict adherence to Scripture, male leadership, baptism by immersion and a cappella worship.

Some divisions have existed for decades. Non-institutional Churches of Christ oppose support for para-church organizations and mission ministries. Some Churches of Christ hold fast to the belief that the Lord's Supper should be shared from a single cup and an undivided loaf.

other Churches of Christ have added instrumental worship services, ministered alongside denominational groups and changed their name,

Churches of Christ in the US lists 11,965 congregations nationwide with combined adherents (baptized members and their families) of 1,447,271 — a drop of more than 72,000 since the 2015 edition of the directory. Since 2012, the average known size of a Church of Christ has dropped 3.2 percent to 121 adherents

A number of under-30 members identified Churches of Christ as nondenominational. One even called the fellowship “a denomination that denies it’s a denomination.”

“Instead, outsiders frequently think the Church of Christ is ‘the ones who think only they are going to heaven’ or ‘the a cappella music guys.’”

Some respondents also expressed frustration with debates in their churches about the use of instruments in worship or the practices of various denominations. The problem, they said, isn't that these issues are divisive; it's that young people don't care about them.

God defines what a Church of Christ is; we don't, say survey respondents over age 60

Let's answer some questions about "the church of Christ".

Who established it?

Mat 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Eph 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (20) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, (21) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (22) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Why is the number of persons in the church of Christ dropping, along with the number of churches (congregations)?

Hag 2:19 Is the seed yet in the barn? .

Lk 8:11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Mat 13:23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

Why do most say the church is focused on restoring the church described in the New Testament book of Acts and the epistles written to first century churches. Many mentioned strict adherence to Scripture, male leadership, baptism by immersion and a cappella worship.

It's not a new problem.

Luk 6:46 “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?”

Mat 7:21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Mat 25:3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. (5) As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. (6) But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' (7) Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. (8) And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' (9) But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' (10) And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. (11) Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' (12) But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

As we ponder the parable, we realize some will not be prepared for the Lord's return. But these were friends gathered for the wedding.

How then could the Lord not know them?

They were not faithful to His word.

Acts 11:23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose,

Near the start of the OT – Num 12:7 Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.

“Faithful” – used 79 times in the Bible

Near the end of the NT – Rev 17:14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

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The church Christ built is not a denomination!
1Co 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

Non-institutional Churches of Christ oppose support for para-church organizations and mission ministries.

Why?

Where in the Scriptures did Christ ever authorize “para-church” organizations?

Where in the Scriptures did Christ ever authorize mission ministries?

In the Scriptures, each church was under the care of its own elders.

Act 20:28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Never did God suggest that the elders of one church should oversee the work of another.

No church has the right to build a mission other than what that church could do.

Act 11:29 So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea.

Php 4:15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only.

Should the Lord's Supper should be shared from a single cup and an undivided loaf?

It would have been impossible for the church in Jerusalem.

Act 4:4 But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

Sipping from one cup in the church in Jerusalem at that early date would have taken a cup containing 6.6 gal, weighing 55 lbs if each brother took a 1 teaspoon sip. If there were women present at the same rate we have here, it would have taken an 18 gal tub with 150 lbs of juice.

How would you like to pass that down the row?

So these churches are not practicing truth, but error.

Have you thought yet about how large the one loaf of bread would have been?

If we presume that it took each of the 10,000 participants about 15 seconds to partake of brother McGarvey's one cup and then to pass it to the next person it would've taken 2500 minutes which is 41.7 hours. They would not have been taking it on the first day of the week as it would have taken all the first and most of the second day of the week, working around the clock.

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Again, we have to ask where is the authority in
God's word for such.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

How does an instrument add to the above command? – it is certainly not included.

And why would we invent a name to call the church of our Lord other than one given in the Scriptures?

Rom 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

If you are not a member of the church of Christ, why not become one now. The Lord will add you to His church if you obey His word.

Act 2:38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ...47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

