

Schedule of Meeting Times:

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM
Study Sunday 10:00 AM
Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM
Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM
Singing every 2nd Sunday evening
Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

Preacher / bulletin editor:

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“...Now it will come about that
In the last days The mountain
of the house of the LORD Will
be established as the chief of
the mountains, And will be
raised above the hills; And all
the nations will
stream to it,”

—Isaiah 2:1,2



The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” 1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

Volume 8

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Servants during January:

Songleader: Dwight (4), Stanley
(11), Larry (18), Dwight (25)

Reading: Mike

Announcements: Stanley

Table: Larry, Marty, Mike

Wednesday Lesson: Larry (7), Stanley
(14), Kris (21), Larry (28)

Area Meetings:

Eastside, 2/15-17, Scott Smelser;

Oakland, 2/21-25, Stephen Rouse;

Pepper Road, 2/21-25, Jesse Flowers;

Hays Mill church of Christ

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Elkmont, AL 35620

Could the Church Be Wrong?

By Robert F. Turner

Could “the church” be wrong? Is it possible that a portion—or even all of the members of a congregation (including their elders) could be in error with respect to doctrine and/or practice? Could several congregations be wrong? Could a majority of congregations be wrong?

One of the most basic fallacies of Roman Catholicism is its conception of the “infallible” church. But someone says, “The church of the New Testament could not be wrong!” **WHICH ONE** will you use as your example? The one at Corinth? Ephesus? Laodicea? But you say “I’m referring to the ‘whole’ church, the body of Christ.” And I remind you that this organism, this relation of individuals to Christ, does not exist as a functional organization. The

characteristics of the perfect church must be gleaned piece by piece from the divine records. By command, example, and necessary inference we learn what Christ would have us be and do **as a local church**. The divine purpose and intent alone is without fault. In all functional churches—and here the New Testament allows us to speak only of individual congregations—the human element is present, and we are forbidden to use such a church as a pattern, 2 Cor 10:12.

The New Testament, the covenant or law of Christ, is that which was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection (Isa 2:1,2; Joel 2; Acts 2); and the body of people who accepted this law, and by a practice of its instructions brought into being the

Jerusalem congregation, were the **product**—not the makers of a divine standard. The same principle continues to this good day, and both the First and Twentieth Century churches could and do err, (see Rev 2-3).

In every century, in every generation, each congregation must prove its right to the name “church of Christ” by showing identity with the divinely approved church characteristics found in the New Testament. We must pay more than lip service to this principle. When we begin to think a thing is right because a “Church of Christ”—or a majority of the “Churches of Christ”—or **ALL** of the “Churches of Christ” do or teach it, we have become sectarian in our conception of the church, and need to revise our thinking.

God’s word is the pattern by which a true church must be cut. Did

you ever cut 2x4s to frame a wall, or pickets for a fence? If you obtained a pattern, cut the first by that pattern, then threw the pattern aside and cut the second by the first—and so on—you learned the fallacy of identity by succession. Any slight difference in the second was passed to the third—and the slight difference of the third was added to the error of the first, and passed on. To cut a true wall, or fence, we must measure each cut by the original pattern. This is no less true with reference to the church.

A crying need of our time is a firm resolve to determine right by an appeal to God’s truth, rather than to “a well-defined and clear-shown majority of the Churches of Christ” in Limestone County, Alabama, the US, or even in the world. Cancellations will be received with as much grace as we can muster.

—slightly edited (to include Alabama), via *Plain Talk*, v3n3, April 1966 

“Becoming” A Church-Member

By Robert F. Turner

For years gospel preachers have taught “one does not **join** the church”; and members have parroted “one does not join the church, one is **added** to the church.” The distinction is valid if properly understood; but I fear it is **not** widely understood, and often the words

become mere “church of Christ” nomenclature.

Receiving Christ gives one “power to become” a child of God, Jn 1:12. Of “become” Robertson says, “to become what they were not before.” The new baby does not “join” the status of son or

daughter—it “becomes” a child, and a member of the family. Of the new life, Paul wrote, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,” 2 Cor 5:17. Coming into Christ, one becomes a part or member of Christ’s body, Eph 2:13,16, and thus one “becomes” a member of Christ’s church, Eph 1:22,23. Now take it slow and easy—and read the scriptures cited with great care.

One does not “become” a Christian and then, at some later date, “join” the body of Christ. **One “becomes” both a Christian and a member of the church of Christ by one and the same process.** The “church” of which we are writing is, of course, that one great universal body of saints; those called out of darkness by His gospel. This church is not a “church-hood” or “brother-hood of sister-churches”—if you can picture such. It is neither all the churches, nor a special portion of the churches. It is simply a figurative (or “spiritual” if you prefer) gathering or assembly of saints, of which you may “become” a part.

But when you have become a member of the body of Christ (His “church” in the universal sense) you will, if possible, “join” with other disciples in your worship and service of God. Paul sought to “join” with the disciples in Antioch—at least he was no

longer considered a part of the Jerusalem company, Acts 15:22.

These local groups, or fellowships (such as the saints at Philippi, Phil 1:1) were also known as “churches,” 1 Cor 1:2; Rom 16:16, and exemplify the one and only church organization known in the New Testament. Perhaps one may speak of “joining” the local church, and do no injustice to language; but we should understand that we “join” **with other disciples** to form a local church. “Join” (kollaō) means “to glue or cement together,” then generally, “to unite, to join firmly.” In passive voice, it signifies “to join oneself to, be joined to,” (W.E. Vine).

The true church of Christ on earth today is not a group of congregations bound together in some “church-hood” by name, creed, or practice. The true church of Christ is, today as always, the body of called-out people who acknowledge Christ as their head, and serve Him faithfully. If, in your community, there are true disciples of Christ “joined together” to do the Lord’s bidding, they constitute a local “church of Christ.” But don’t be fooled by a Name. Test their preaching and practice by the Word of God. The true church of Christ welcomes such investigation. They urge you to “become” a Christian, and “join” them.

—via *Plain Talk*, v3n2, May 1966 

Remember in Prayer

Stanley, Marty, and Cindy’s aunt, Donnie Lou Williamson, passed away earlier this week...

Also, please continue to pray for

Betty; Carolyn; Deborah and Serenity; Hazel; John, Sylvia, and Paige Pollard; Joshua and Kayla V; Pam B, Kaylee, Julie and Violet; and Pam McNatt. 