

# San Juan Church of Christ

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## What Does God's Word Say About... One True church of Christ

The church of Christ began in 33 A.D. on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-47). Both Isaiah and Micah spoke of a kingdom to come in the future and described it as "the mountain of the house of the Lord" (Isa. 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-2). Jesus said, "I will build My church [singular]; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it," (Matt. 16:18).

Jesus was clear in this passage that the church He would build would sustain itself through time against all that Satan could do to destroy it (Rev. 12:17). Jesus said this kingdom would come during His generation (Mark 9:1) and that it would come with power, which it did on the day of Pentecost. Paul told the elders in the church at Ephesus that he "went about preaching the kingdom"...and that he "did not shrink from declaring to you [elders] the whole purpose of God" (Eph. 20:25-27). Paul also told these elders that the Lord "purchased the church with His own blood" (Eph. 20:28). Notice that "church" and "kingdom" are used interchangeably in these verses and are the same entity.

In the first century there was only one church and it was non-denominational in character and was sometimes spoken of simply as "the Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4). Paul knew that this was the exclusive church, and when non-believers called it a "sect" he corrected them by calling the church "the Way" (Acts 24:14). The Bible traces the Divine church through Old Testament prophesy, and ultimately its founding in 33 A.D., giving authority to the apostles (John 14:26, 16:13) for the church's organization, pattern of worship, and doctrine today. One must ask, over the centuries, how could there be so many varied denominations, most claiming to be the church, when in fact there is only one true original church (Eph. 4:4-6)? Nowhere in the New Testament is there a record of Roman Catholicism or any of the numerous Protestant denominations. How did the variety of all these present-day "churches" come into existence? Paul warned the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:1-13) not to follow men - not even good men - instead of Christ. Divisions will come about when we look to men rather than the Bible for our authority.

Paul warned that the apostasy [falling away] from the apostle's doctrine, given to them by Jesus and the Holy Spirit, would come from the elders of the church. Paul told the elders at Ephesus "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves [elders] men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Eph. 20:29-30). History tells us that beginning in the second century A. D. corruption did come from the elders [bishops of the church] and over the centuries synods, councils, and conferences gradually evolved into deviations from the New Testament pattern. Proverbs 14:12 warns: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." Jesus Himself said that there would be those who profess the name of the Lord and did works in His name, who would be lost. He said those who did the will of His Father who is in heaven would enter heaven (Matt. 7:21-23).

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:  
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