**What Is**

**the church of Christ?**

The church mentioned in the New Testament came into existence 2,000 years ago with the promise of Jesus: “... upon this rock I will build my church...” (Matthew 16:18).

Shortly after Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and ascended back to God the Father, the apostle Peter, along with the other eleven apostles, preached to a multitude about Christ and about the church He promised to build. After the people heard the sermon, three thousand obeyed the gospel and the Lord added them to His church (Acts 2:37-47). Thus, the church was no longer a promise, but a reality!

The promise of the Lord in Matthew 16:18 was not to build a “building,” but an assembly or body of people who are in fellowship with Jesus the Son and God the Father. These are people who hear, obey, and live by Christ’s teachings and the teachings of Jesus’ apostles, all found in the New Testament. These “Christians,” as they were later called, became the church of Christ—those “called out” of the world, and called into the service of Jesus Christ.

**Not a Denomination**

The church of Christ is not a denomination. The “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16) follow only the New Testament for its doctrine. The church of Christ does not follow human creeds, disciplines or manuals, since to do so would be to worship the Lord in vain. Jesus said, “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:8-9). To truly be a “New Testament” Christian, one must follow the teachings of the New Testament. Following the teachings of various denominations and their human creeds, disciplines and manuals can never make one a “New Testament Christian.” One must follow the teachings of the New Testament. Following the teachings of various denominations and their human creeds, disciplines and manuals can never make one a “New Testament Christian.”

**The Worship**

The worship of the church of Christ is simple and spiritual. Men officiate at each part of the worship, just as was done during New Testament times. Singing is performed in the assembly today just as it was done during the days of the apostles, without the use of accompanying instrumental music or choirs, duets, quartets, or bands (Colossians 3:16). Prayers are offered to God through Jesus Christ, and the Lord’s Supper is observed as a memorial to Christ every first day of the week, just as the first century church did (Acts 20:7). Christians also contribute a portion of their finances once a week on the Lord’s Day to support the work of the church (1 Corinthians 16:1), and time is spent in a study of God’s Holy Word, the Bible.