

The Church, Her Bulwarks and Her Palaces #1

by Danny Brown

“Walk about Zion and go around about her tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks consider her palaces that ye may tell it to the generation following.” (Ps 48:12-13)

Now brethren , by your permission I will take the Bible in my hand and “Walk about Zion and go around about her.” I will “mark well her bulwarks” and “consider her palaces,” that we may “tell it to the generation following.” Please bear in mind that the distinctive principles that are here presented are not recent discoveries. They have lived upon the pages of Divine history for more than two thousand years. They will live until our Redeemer comes again. I proceed to submit the following propositions for your impartial investigation. Examine them in the light of God’s eternal truth, with unprejudiced minds and I shall be satisfied. Examine them at once, for unity and cooperation are absolutely dependent upon them:

1. *The church of the first century that is our model or pattern is referred to by many descriptive phrases.* It is referred to as the Church, (Matt. 16;18) a body of people called out of the world by the gospel of Christ; as the Kingdom, (Col. 1:13); as the House of God, (1 Tim. 3:15); as the Body of Christ, (Eph. 1:22-23); as the Temple of God, (Eph. 2:21); as the Vineyard of the Lord, (Matt. 20:1-116); as the Sheepfold, (John 10:1, 16).

2. *The founder of the Church was born at Bethlehem:* “And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judea, are not the least among the princes of Judea: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.” (Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:6) A person born at any other place could not found the church of Christ or a branch of it.

3. *Jesus of Nazareth is the Founder of the Church:* “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell (hades) shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:18) “Let no man glory in men.” (1 Cor. 3:21) John Wesley founded Methodism; Henry VIII, Episcopalianism; John Knox. Presbyterian; John Calvin, Calvinism; Martin Luther, Lutheranism.

4. *Jesus Christ is the Foundation of the Church* “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 3:11) An institution built upon any other foundation is not the church of Christ. Methodism is built upon the twenty-five articles of the Discipline. Baptism is built upon baptism (immersion), Presbyterianism is built on the Confession of Faith. Episcopalianism is built upon the thirty-nine articles of the Prayer Book. Lutheranism is built upon the twenty-eight articles of the Augsburg Confession of Faith. Roman Catholicism is built upon tradition.

5. *Jesus Christ is the Only Head of the Church:* “He is the Head of the Body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.” (Col. 1:18) An institution having any other head is not the church of Christ.

6. *Jerusalem is the beginning corner:* “And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Isaiah 2:1-3)

This prediction was made seven hundred and sixty years before the advent of the Messiah. Just before He returned to his Father He commanded His apostles to begin at Jerusalem and preach repentance and remission of sins in His name. (Luke 24:42) Paul says: "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." (Gal. 4:26) The church of Christ began in the year 33 A.D. in the city of Jerusalem. Before the day of Pentecost, spoken of in Acts two, the church is always spoken of as being established in the future. After the day of Pentecost it is spoken of as being in existence. Any institution that began at any other place than Jerusalem or at some other time than the day of Pentecost is not the church of Christ.

7. *The first century Church was one body:* "There is one body and one Spirit." (Eph. 4:4) "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Rom. 12:4, 5) "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30) "The churches of Christ salute you." (Rom. 16:16) Paul sent his salutations to the saints at Rome from the churches of Christ. He gave Christ the glory. This is in harmony with all Divine revelation. He is the founder, foundation, head and life of this institution, hence it must hear His name and it alone. He purchased it. (Eph. 5:25) Do not endeavor to rob Him of His well-earned honor! An institution composed of many bodies or sects is not the church of Christ.

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