

THE ONE CHURCH OF THE BIBLE

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The good news of the gospel is seen in the church of Christ; sincere, submissive seekers of salvation are satisfied when it is proven to them from the Bible that salvation is in Christ and in his church. A New Testament letter about the church says,

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it (Eph. 5:23-25).

The exclusivity of the church as the unique body of the saved is a point of doubt surfacing in the brotherhood today. An examination of texts like Ephesians 5:23-25 can erase every vestige of doubt about so important a matter.

Observe from the text, first, the unique relationship of Jesus Christ to the church: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.” The acceptance of pluralism in religion is totally foreign to the monogamous relationship of Jesus Christ to his church. The blessing of salvation in Christ is privileged only to his bride, the church (cf. Rom. 7:1-4; Rev. 19:7).

Two, Christ is head of his church—one head, one body. The various heads and many bodies of false religion masquerading as churches today viewed from the vantage point of this Bible truth constitute a grotesque monstrosity. It is the pinnacle of deception to accept the position that Christ serves as one head over many bodies.

Three, the church is subject to Christ. The significance of this simple statement is seen in the truth that no one can be saved who does not submit to Jesus Christ. Consider John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” Further, notice Matthew 7:21: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” The force of Hebrews 5:9 cannot be successfully evaded in relation to salvation resting exclusively with those who submit to Jesus Christ: “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

Four, Christ “gave himself for it,” the church. Jesus shed his blood to purchase the church (Acts 20:28). But, his blood was shed for the remission of sins (Matt.

26:28), and there is no forgiveness of sins apart from the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:22; I Pet. 1:18-19). Therefore, no salvation exists outside of the church of Christ because none outside of the church of Christ have the blood of Christ applied to the sinful condition of their souls and receive the remission (forgiveness) of their sins. The penitent believers on the day of Pentecost were instructed to repent and be baptized for the remission (forgiveness) of sins. The ones who “gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (v. 41). “The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (v. 47). The one church of the Bible has the saved added to it by the Lord himself. The good news of the gospel is seen in the church of Christ.