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THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison

HOW MANY CHURCHES DID JESUS BUILD?

The question that is the title of this article may seem irrelevant to some of our readers. This is true because we have lived in the midst of hundreds of different kinds of religious denominations each claiming to follow the same Lord yet believing and practicing different and often conflicting teachings.

How many different kinds of churches did Jesus promise to build? Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build **My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against **it**." Twice in this passage Jesus uses the singular to describe the church He promised to build. Rather than many different kinds of churches, Jesus promised to build "My church" (singular) not my churches (Plural). Why is this significant?

Because Jesus adds the saved to His church and not to any other. On the first Pentecost after Jesus had ascended back to heaven, the apostles, having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, preached the gospel to Jews who had come to Jerusalem from many other places. Those who heard the message in their own languages are said to have been "cut to the heart" which means it impacted them to the point that they asked, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" The answer given to their question was "...Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . . ." (Acts 2:36-38). What was the response? "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were **added** to them" (Acts 2:41). Verse 47 reads, "And the Lord **added to the church** daily those who were being saved." To whose church were the saved added? Obviously, they were added to the **ONE CHURCH** which Jesus had promised to build. They were not added, nor did they "join" any of the religious denominations that exist today for none of them existed then. The church we read about in the New Testament was one of a kind and the only church Jesus established. The references throughout the New Testament to the church does not refer to modern denominational churches but to the pre-denominational church Jesus built on Pentecost and to which He added the saved.

The good news is that all believers who repent and are baptized for the remission of sins today will be added by the Lord to His church just as those record is found in Acts. Why would anyone want to "join" a denominational church since the Bible clearly teaches that the Lord adds the saved to His ONE CHURCH? greenplaincoc@gmail.com.