

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

The ONE Church

By Richard Thetford

We only have to open the telephone directory and look at all the different churches that are listed to wonder “what church is the right church?” There are books that are written about various churches, most claiming to be spiritually and doctrinally correct. We can read where all kinds of things are taught such as praying to Mary, baptizing babies, some priests can marry, others can't, the social work of the church, no life after death or there is life after death! How can we know which church is the church that Jesus built?

I Will Build MY Church

Jesus said: “...*I will build my church...*” (Matt. 16:18). Jesus said this way back in 30 A.D. Therefore, the church that Christ built was built long ago. Every denomination that is in existence today was built long after Jesus said “*I will build my church.*” Most are proud to tell you the exact date that their church was established and the creed in which it was established on. Since Jesus said “*I will build my church,*” that must mean that the church in which Jesus built belongs to Him. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:22-23: “*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*” Here we can clearly see that HIS BODY = HIS CHURCH. In Colossians 1:18 it is pointed out that Christ is “*the head of the body, the church.*” Since Christ is the head, He decides, controls, and guides His church.

There Is ONE

The word ONE is mentioned several times in the New Testament. Let's look at a few references to this. In Ephesians 4:4-6 we can read where “*there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*” Here we can plainly read where there is just ONE of each. Yet while most will acknowledge there is ONE God, they recognize several churches! Paul said that we should be unified (1 Cor. 1:10). Only when we're doing all things exactly as God has stipulated can we truly be ONE, which is to be unified.

Jesus said: “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me*” (Jn. 10:27). In John 10:16 we can read where there is ONE fold and ONE shepherd. Therefore, in the New Testament (the testament we are under today), we see that there was only ONE CHURCH! ■

MAKING GOD A LIAR

By Dan Richardson

“*If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us*” (1 Jn. 1:10). It should go without saying that God is not a liar, as Paul affirmed when he wrote to Titus concerning the reliability of God's promises (Titus 1:2). In 1 John 1:10, the apostle's statement is not meant to reflect negatively on God's character, but rather on those who attempt to affirm the opposite of God's truth in their conduct (i.e., to affirm they have not sinned, when God has revealed they do, Romans 3:23). Some today continue to make God a liar...

By Saying They Will Reap Something Other than They Have Sown in Life. This is suggested by Paul's teaching in the sixth chapter of Galatians: “*Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that*

soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life” (vs. 7-8). People continue to deceive themselves by living carnally but believing God will reward them with heaven. By such, they contradict what God’s word clearly says – they make God a liar.

By Saying Baptism Doesn’t Save. How many there are in the world today that make God a liar on this subject. One wonders how much plainer God could have expressed Himself in His word on the essentiality of baptism in our salvation? The scriptures teach: *“baptism now saves you - not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience - through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”* (1 Pet. 3:21, NASV). Again, *“And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name”* (Acts 22:16). Despite the clear import of God’s word on this subject, many continue to believe the devil’s lie that we are saved by *“faith only”* and deny water baptism is essential to our salvation. Their denominational doctrine makes God a liar.

By Saying There Will Be No Judgment. People today, true to how God’s word describes them in 2 Peter 3:3-7, have deceived themselves by dismissing Jesus’ second coming, the destruction of the world, and the final judgment of all mankind, when the Bible affirms that we all, individually, will be held accountable before Christ for how we have lived and will be judged either worthy or unworthy of heaven (2 Cor. 5:10). These deluded people are described as *“mockers ... walking after their own lusts ... who willfully forget”* what God’s word says about His day of judgment and condemnation of sin. They make God a liar.

By Saying the Church Is Not Important. Some professed believers cry out against being a part of, what they call, “organized religion.” They tell us they just want to be a *“Christian”* without being shackled with all the responsibilities of “church membership.” Others who call themselves Christians, while they claim to be a member of a local church of our Lord, show liar, who has revealed plainly in His word that to be faithful to Him demands that we be faithful, dependable members of the body of Christ, His Church (Eph. 1:21-23). Those who obey the gospel and receive forgiveness of sin, are added by God to His people, the church (Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13). The importance of the church should be obvious when we understand what it cost to purchase it – the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28)! Those who don’t believe it important, make God a liar. ■



IS THERE REALLY A GOD?

By John Edwards

Absolutely, yes!

THE REALITY OF GOD IS AFFIRMED BY THE BIBLE. The Bible begins with God! *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”* (Gen. 1:1). From the first verse to the last, the Bible holds up God as being real.

THE REALITY OF GOD MUST BE ACCEPTED BY FAITH. *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”* (Heb. 11:6).

THE REALITY OF GOD IS SEEN BY THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE. *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse”* (Rom. 1:20). *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world....”* (Psa. 19:1-4). *“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well”* (Psa. 139:14). *“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God....”* (Psa. 14:1). Do you believe what the Bible says about God being real? – *The Terre Haute Speaker*, January 3, 2021. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com - Email: lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com - Phone: 209-365-9250