

# SCRIPTURAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

**TEXT: Psalms 127:1 with Matthew 16:18**

## **INTRO:**

### **A. The subject before us is "scriptural church organization"!**

1. By "scriptural" I mean according to the scripture - The word of God (II Tim. 3:16!)
  - a. Not conger, speculation, or emotional diatribe - but SCRIPTURE - pure SCRIPTURE!
2. By "church" I mean the Lord's church - Jesus said "my church" (Matt. 16:18).
  - a. I mean a "called out assembly" ekklesia (ek- out of & klesia -TO call fíot THE called )’
  - b. I mean an assembly of scriptural baptized believers called out, authorized, and commissioned to carry out the Lord's work in the world today.
3. By "organization" I mean to "set in order, establish, bring into being, or constitute".

### **B. The subject before us is of great importance.**

1. It has to do with HOW the Lord church is "set in order"! There MUST be order!
  - a. There has been much disorder in the past few years concerning this subject!
  - b. Debates, articles, letters, phone calls ...
2. To miss the mark in this area is to miss out on the most glorious institution one earth - the church!

### **C. I lay before you two propositions concerning scriptural church organization.**

1. For a church to be "scripturally" organized it must be organized by the Lord Jesus Christ!
2. For a church to be "scripturally" organized it must be organized by the Lord Jesus Christ working through his existing churches!

## **I. FOR A CHURCH TO BE "SCRIPTURALLY" ORGANIZED IT MUST BE ORGANIZED BY THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!**

### **A. This is proven by the *plain* declarations set forth in our texts Psa. 127:1 & Matt. 16:18.**

1. Mark well the scripture says, "except the Lord build" and "I will build my church".
  - a. Both these texts expressly limit the originator of the Church of Jesus Christ, to the Lord HIMSELF!
2. No man or group of men has any right to assume to themselves the work of Jesus Christ!
  - a. Down with the Popes, the Calvins, the Luthers, the King Henrys, the John Wesleys, and the host of other "church" originators.
  - b. Christ is the builder of His church - "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build:"!

### **B. This is proven by the *practice* of Christ in Mark 3:13-21.**

1. Jesus Christ HIMSELF organized HIS church while he was here on this earth!
2. Note well - Jesus "calleth unto him whom he would" (v.13) - That is an assembly, a Church!
3. "And he ordained twelve"(v.14) - That is an ordination in his assembly!
  - a. This is when He "set some in the church, first apostles .." (I Cor. 12:28).

### **C. This is proven by the *promise* of Christ in Matthew 18:20.**

1. The primary subject matter of this text is NOT *how* to organize a church but *why* an existing church has authority.
  - a. The "for" is a conjunction that relates to the previous subject matter of authority (Matt. 18:18).
2. Though Matthew 18:20 IS NOT teaching HOW a church is to be organized, the content of verse 20 does relate to the subject matter at hand.
3. Mark well that Jesus does NOT say "Gather themselves" together BUT "are gathered".
  - a. The action is not done BY them but TO them
  - b. This is borne out clearly in the English -Ex: eggs do not "gather themselves" but "are gathered".
  - c. This is borne out clearly in the Greek - "gathered" is a "Perfect Passive Participle"
    - aa. The passive voice represents the subject as being the recipient of the action.
4. This is a death blow to those who hold to the error that churches can and do "self constitute"!
  - a. If words and their usage mean anything, Sèlf constitution CAN NEVER BE PROVEN BY THIS TEXT!
  - b. Sèlf constitution is off the table äccording to this verse!
  - c. Christ constitution is a valid doctrine - but, HOW DOES Christ constitute his churches?

## **II. FOR A CHURCH TO BE "SCRIPTURALLY" ORGANIZED IT MUST BE ORGANIZED BY THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WORKING THROUGH HIS EXISTING CHURCHES.**

### **A. This is necessitated by the pressing facts of Christ's departure (Acts. 1:4-9).**

1. Jesus Christ is not here bodily! That is the FACT of the scriptures!
  - a. Many scriptures could be used to prove this fact (Acts 7:55; Rom 8:34; Heb1:3, 13; 10:12 .).
2. Since Christ is not here and he promised to "build" his church and "gather" his church then the question arises, HOW is he still doing it?
  - a. The plain fact of scripture is that he worked through the church that he personally organized and has continued to work through those churches that have descended from her.

### **B. This is proven by the promises that Christ made concerning His continual presence with his church.**

1. This promise is made Matthew 28:20.
  - a. The promise is "I am with you"! With who? With the church! Not apart from it but WITH it!
  - b. Why "Go"? By what authority do we "GO" - "I am with you"!
2. This promise is made in Matthew 18:20.
  - a. The promise is "there am I"! Where? In the midst, in the CHURCH! Not apart from it but "in" it!
  - b. Not "out" of it, but "in" it.

### **C. This is proven by the authority Christ placed in his church while he was with her.**

1. Jesus left binding and loosing authority IN his church and WITH his church (Matt. 18:18).
  - a. If you get in a church she has "authority" over you.
  - b. This argument is a death blow to the "self-constitution" theory!
  - c. If you merely "covenant together" then how are you "released" from you previous covenant?
2. Jesus left his church with POWER (Matt. 28:18-20)!
  - a. "is given to me" does not do away with the "go ye therefore"!
  - b. It is the power we "GO" THEREFORE by! Christ authority is Church authority!

### **D. This is proven by the personal dealings Christ had with his church AFTER he left.**

1. After Jesus left He is seen practicing what he promised (Rev. 1:11-13, 20).
  - a. Search for him among disgruntled schisms! You will not find him!
  - b. Try and find him WORKING apart from an EXISTING church.
2. See him WORKING on, in, and through His EXISTING churches.
  - a. Mark well WHO Jesus baptized with the Holy Ghost!
  - b. The day 3000 souls were saved and baptized, mark well *who* the Lord used in this work.
  - c. When Samaritans needs to hear the word, mark well *who* is sent ..*who* baptizes .& what else is done.
  - d. When there was a black man that needed some one to guide him, mark well who Jesus sends to guide Him and then to baptism him ...
3. Who added people to the church AFTER Christ left? The Lord did (Acts 2:47 &41)!
  - a. But He added them THROUH the work of the Church (Acts 2:41 with Jn. 4:1-2).
4. Who sent out missionaries AFTER Christ left? The Lord did (Acts. 13:1-4)!
  - a. But He SENT them those sent out BY the church (Acts 13:2, 3).

## **CON:**

### **A. How is Scriptural Church Organization accomplished?**

1. Some contend that Christ is accomplishing this glorious task immediately or directly from heaven!
  - a. Is Jesus baptizing, teaching, ordaining, and sending missionaries "immediately" from heaven?
  - b. This teaching is NOT implied or directly expressed anywhere in the scriptures!
2. Does Jesus use existing churches to Baptize? Teach? Ordain? - Yes the proof is overwhelming!
  - a. Why would Jesus work THROUGH his church for the "lesser tasks" (baptism, teaching, ordaining) and then do "greater task" of church constitution APRAT FROM the church?

### **B. I contend that Christ is accomplishing the glorious task of Church organization THROUGH existing churches.**

1. I am confident that when you can find WHERE Christ is, THEN you will be able to find HOW he keeping his promise to build his church

2. "Unto him be glory in (not out of) the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Ephesians 3:21