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Describe The 20th Century Church Of Christ

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DESCRIBE THE 20TH CENTURY CHURCH OF CHRIST

I. Because of common interest it's a joy to attempt to describe the church of Christ.

A. To those that are members it is impossible to describe it without turning to the 1st century when we believe the church was established. This necessitates a Bible orientated description of origin and purpose.

1. It is earnestly believed there is the church of Christ described in the Bible and its sincerely wished that today we might be members of such.

B. To those not members the theological reasonings of honest minds as to when, and how it started and through what trials it has come could be less than interesting. Those members of it feel this information is most important, the average non-member simply asks "What is its contribution, work, service, and purpose of today--forget the musty past."

1. Thinking in the audience are those belonging to both these classes we will seek to serve both honest inquirers in our presentation.

II. What better way is there to describe the church than to do an acrostic on the word "church" itself.

A. The definition I'm sure is known.
I. Church comes from ekklesia, the called out, the congregation, the assembly.
   a. Used 192x in one Eng. translation.
   b. 4x refers to non-Christian groups.
   Acts 19:32 "Some therefore cried one thing, and another, "Ekklesia!"
   Acts 19:39 "But if ye inquire any thing concerning this, etc.,
   Acts 19:41 "And when he had thus spoken," etc.
   Acts 7:38 "This is he, that was in the church of God, etc.,
   c. Perhaps its most famous usage is by Jesus: 
      Matt. 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That

B. Could we then do an acrostic on church, hoping these 6 letters will impart some information.

1. Though 6 has a semi-completion to us, it also bows to Jewish usage and professes in this short span of time to be inconclusive.

2. Tis hoped 6 observations will help.

III. Acrostic on church.
A. Our 6 letters.
   1. C-creed.
   2. H-head.
   4. R-religion.
   5. C-called.

B. Chronologically we approach.
   1. C stands for Creed.
      a. Creed comes from Latin "I believe."
      b. Does the church, written or unwritten
have a creed?

**c. I believe Christ is the Son of God.**

Acts 2:22 "Ye men of Israel, hear these
Acts 8:5 "Then Phillip went down to
John 20:30-31 "And many other signs
Acts 8:12 "But when they believed P.
Matt. 16:16 "Thou art the Christ the
2 Tim. 1:12 "I know whom I have believed
Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in a
John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the

d. What's distinctive about this?

(1) Either/or choice—son of God or
blasphemy (John 7:28).
(2) Accept virgin birth, miracles, resurrec-
tion, assention of Jesus.
(3) Literally its believed that he is all he
said he was.
I Tim. 3:16 "And without controversy
Rev. 19:16 "And he hath on his vest
(4) The sonship of Christ is Heavenly
required confession of all.

**2. H is for Head.**

a. That every body has a head surely is an
accepted fact.

(1) Eugene Johnson of Hartsville told of
capturing and dressing a turtle. "1/2
hr. to boat him as hooked in leg, jaw
broken with screwdriver, head cut off
but heart kept beating and claws tore
me up as I dressed him, cut feet off." I'd
say that headless fighter was a bit
than normal! Most bodies have heads!

b. Head of church of Christ.
Eph. 1:22-23 "And hath put all things under
Matt. 28:18 "All power is given unto me
Matt. 16:18 "And I say unto thee that
John 5:22 "For the Father judgeth no man
John 12:47-48 "And if any man hear my
(1) A head is essential to permanency.
(2) The function of a head is to give direc-
tion.
(3) This Jesus, not man, does today.
2 Tim. 3:16-17 All scrip. is given by
2 Pet. 1:3 "According as his divine
c. What's the significance of this?
(1) Church is not a legislative body.
(2) It has no earthly headquarters.
(3) No one can speak for the church, some
speak against it and too much but none
as its voice.
(4) None can "organize" the church.
(a) American Bible Society—how do we
get to your people?
(b) No census taken for years.
(c) Scoffing at church rolls. The Lord
knows them that are his.
(d) Organization at a bear minimum.
(5) Temptation to polarize around strong
voices; i.e. papers, colleges, personal-
ities.
(a) Church doesn't have bishops—has
editors!
3. U stands for Unity.
   a. Here dreams arise and also know shattering.
   b. The dream is that with the Bible as a standard of authority saints may be one in Christ.
      Acts 4:32"And the multitude of them Eph. 4:4-6"There is one body, and one Spirit
      I Cor. 1:10"Now I beseech you, br., by the I Cor. 1:12-13"I am of Paul, & I of Appol
      I Cor. 3:3"For ye are yet carnal--division
      Rom. 16:17-18"Mark them which cause Acts 9:2"That if he found any of this
      John 17:20-21"Neither pray I for these Gal. 5:19-20 Variance work of flesh
      c. Dream shattered--we're externally and internally divided.

      (1) Over rebaptism, premilleniumism, orphan homes, dogmatism.
      (2) Ours always over doctrine--never morals.
      (3) Each man feels he has "Bible on his side."
      (4) Main stream of this still at peace and in unity today.

d. Significance.
   (1) What is standard of authority?
      (a) Matters of faith--doctrine.
      (b) Matters of opinion--liberty.
      (c) All things--love.
      (2) Must morals and doctrine be equally
viewed—are they of kindred importance?

(3) Is there a difference between fellowship and endorsement—could Paul teach in school of Tarranus without endorsing all that's there?

(4) Does a little deviation matter?

(5) Thus we claim not to be the only Christians but Christians only.

4. R is our letter for Religion.

a. It means binding back to God.

b. Qt.: How is one bound then back to God?

John 11:27 "Yea Lord, I believe that thou..."

John 8:24 "If ye believe not that I am..."

Rom. 2:4 "Despisest thou the riches of his..."

Luke 13:3 "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye..."

Acts 3:19 "Repent ye therefore, and be..."

2 Pet. 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning..."

Acts 8:36 "And as they went on their way..."

John 3:3-5 "Jesus answered and said unto..."

Rom. 6:4 "Therefore we are buried with him..."

Mk. 16:16 "He that believeth and is baptized..."

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Rep..."

Gal. 3:27 "For as many of you as have been..."

Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? an..."

I Pet. 3:21 "The like figure whereunto..."

Acts 10:48 "And he commanded them to be..."

c. It's believed salvation and church membership are on the same conditions.

Acts 2:47 "Praising God, and having favor..."

Acts 5:14 "And believers were the more a..."
(1) Added to the Lord, added to body—same act at same time.

d. "But what's peculiar to that religion?" and this is asked in a good sense. I'll name some items.

(1) Name of church multiple.
   (a) Church.
      Acts 9:31 "Then had the churches
   (b) Of God.
      I Cor. 1:2 "Unto the church of God
   (c) Of firstborn.
      Heb. 12:23 "To the general assembly
   (d) Of Christ.
      Rom. 16:16 "The churches of Christ say
   (e) Body.
      I Cor. 12:27 "Now ye are the body.
   (f) Saints.
      I Cor. 14:33 "For God is not the author of

(2) Name of members.
   Acts 26:28 "Almost thou persuadest me to
   Acts 11:26 "And the disciples were called
   I Pet. 4:16 "If any man suffer as a Christ:

(3) Organization of the organism.
   (a) Elders.
      Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto
[1] Also bishop, overseer, pastor,
     teacher, presbyter
[2] Qualifications I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:
     6-10.
[a] Yet we do little about their work
     thus failing to see things to which
the qualifications pointed.

(b) Deacons.

Phil. 1:1 "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Rome who are of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: (c) No clergy--laity separation, no Rev.

(d) No women preachers. "

1. Husband head of wife.
2. Elder husband of one wife.

I Cor. 14:33-35 "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. I Tim. 2:12-14 "But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the ministry, but to be in silence."

(e) Congregational autonomy.

(f) Worship via 5 avenues, with weekly observance of Lord's supper.

1. Sing.
2. Pray.
3. Preach.
4. Give.
5. Commune.

(g) Aim is to walk in the steps of Christ as guided by word.

Eph. 4:1 "Walk worthy of the vocation you have received.

Col. 1:10 "That ye walk worthy of the Lord who has called you into His own kingdom and church, (h) Each church handles its discipline.

Gal. 6:1 "Br. if a man be overtaken

I Cor. 5:11 "With such an one no not to struggle at all to withdraw yourselves from that man."

2 Thess. 3:6 "Withdraw yourselves from the things that are appointed to be destroyed, (h) Titus 3:10 "A man that is an heretick and a contemnion of Christ Jesus."

(i) Evangelical spirit.

"Yet how can you export something if it isn't good for you!!"

5. C is called.

a. What names will you accept?
(1) Christian = Follower of Christ.
(2) Disciple.
73x in Matt.
44x in Mark.
38x in Luke.
73x in John.
31x in Acts.
(a) Though not in epistles shows one taught and trained.
(3) Saints -- called out.
(4) Brethren.
(b) Call Bible things by Bible names -- yet Bible not in it!
(c) Search for conviction and character.
Rom. 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the
6. H-the Hope.
(a) To evangelize world.
Mk. 16:15 "And he said unto them, Go ye i
(b) Speaks as oracles of God.
2 Tim. 2:2 "And the things that thou hast
Jude 3 "Beloved, when I gave all diligence
(c) Be current recipient of Grace of God.
(1) Justified.
Rom. 5:1 "Therefore being justified by f
(2) Forgiven.
I John 2:12 "I write unto you, little child;
(3) Redeemed.
I Pet. 1:18-19 "Forasmuch as ye know th
(4) Saved.
Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness
d. Like Jesus go about doing good.
Acts 10:38 Jesus of N... who went about
Rom. 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow he
e. Faithful unto death and await His return.
Matt. 24:42-44 "Watch therefore: for ye k
Acts 1:10-11 "And while they looked stea
2 Thess. 1:7-8 "And to you who are troubl

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