**Know the Truth about the Church**

1. **A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.**

Matt. 16:18 -19 – *on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.*

Acts 2: 41 -42,47 – *those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them. They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer…praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved*

1. Repented & believed in Jesus Christ
2. Baptized as believers in Jesus Christ
3. United to other baptized believers in Jesus Christ
4. Together – they devoted themselves
* The teachings of the Apostles
* To fellowship with one another
* To prayer with one another
1. **Observing two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.**

Matt. 28:19 -20 – *go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and I am with you always, even to the end of the age*

1 Cor. 11: 23 – 29 – the Lord’s Supper – Lords Table

1. **Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes.**

Acts 6: 3 -6 – *brothers and sisters, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty*

Acts 13: 1-3 – *as they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. They after they had fasted, prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them off*

1. **In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord.**

Col. 1:18 – *He is the head of the body, the church…so that he might come to have first place in everything*

1. **It’s two scriptural offices are that of pastor/elder/overseer and deacon.**

Acts 14:23 – *they appointed elders for them in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed*

1 Tim. 3: 1 -15

Acts 20:28

1 Pet. 5: 1 – 4 – *Shepherd God’s flock among you, not overseeing out of compulsion but willingly, as God would have you, not out of greed for money but eagerly, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears you will receive the unfading crown of glory*

1. **While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder/overseer is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.**

1 Tim. 3: 1 -15

1. **The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.**

Eph. 1:22 -23 – *He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all*

Rom. 12: 4-5 – *just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another*

Rom. 12: 6 -13

1 Cor. 12:27 – *now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it*

**The Church’s one foundation – Stone**

1 The church's one foundation
is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is His new creation,
by water and the word.
From heav'n He came and sought her
to be His holy bride;
with His own blood He bought her,
and for her life He died.

2 Elect from every nation,
yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation:
one Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy name she blesses,
partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses,
with every grace endued.

3 Though with a scornful wonder,
men see her sore oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder,
by heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping,
their cry goes up, "How long?"
and soon the night of weeping
shall be the morn of song!

4 The church shall never perish!
Her dear Lord to defend,
to guide, sustain, and cherish,
is with her to the end;
though there be those that hate her,
and false sons in her pale,
against the foe or traitor
she ever shall prevail.

5 'Mid toil and tribulation,
and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation
of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious
her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious
shall be the church at rest.

6 Yet she on earth hath union
with God the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion
with those whose rest is won;
O happy ones and holy!
Lord give us grace that we,
like them, the meek and lowly,
on high may dwell with Thee.