

“AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH”

Ac.2:47b

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Our purpose is to examine the expression in Ac.2:47b: “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
2. Some people are not members of any church, or have not “joined” any church, because they do not believe it is necessary to be members of any church.
3. A few have “joined” this church or that church because they have been taught and believe it makes no difference to which church one belongs.
 - a. I say, “A few,” because most people who are members of certain churches do not actually believe “it makes no difference” even though they say they do!
4. Some have “joined” a certain church because their families also “joined” that church – mother, father, wife, husband, children, etc.
5. Still others have “joined” a certain church because it is good for business. Example: Cliff DeJarnette’s business friend at Pine Bluff, Ark.
6. With many of these people their church affiliation is secondary. They have “joined” because it is popular; it is convenient; it is expected of them; it is just the thing to do; they do not want to be referred to as the “un-churched.”
7. But many people are not members of any church because they “do not know which one of the many to join.” Example: Bud Acres & Woodrow Adkins at Kennett, Mo
8. But Ac.2:47b and other sections of Scripture show us what church to be a member of, who became members of that church, and how they were made members of it. (Read the text at this point and briefly review the chapter.)
9. From Ac.2:47b, it should be obvious to one and all that the Lord:
 - a. Added all who were members.
 - b. Added only the saved, but he added all the saved.
 - c. Added them to the one he wanted them to be members of, not the church of their choice, or to some denomination, but the church of the Lord’s choice!
10. In view of this, let us talk about Ac.2:47b and some things necessarily implied by the expression “and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

II. DISCUSSION

A. SINCE THE LORD ADDED THEM TO THE CHURCH OF HIS CHOICE, THEY GOT INTO OR WERE ADDED TO THE RIGHT CHURCH.

1. Question: Which is the right one? Which one was it?
 - a. Obviously, it was the one the Lord wanted them in.
 - b. The Lord knows the one to which the saved should belong.
 - c. If you let the Lord do the adding, there can be no mistakes and you will not have to worry about being in the wrong one.

- d. One thing for sure, the Lord would not add anyone to a church that didn't belong to him; so we know *they were added to the Lord's church.*
2. Question: Which one is the Lord's church?
 - a. It must be the one we read about in the Bible, the N.T.
 - b. It must be the one which can be identified by the N.T.
 - c. To illustrate: Compare the FBI's search for a criminal – his ID sets him apart from all others. They have all of his identifying characteristics, habits, job preference, etc.
 - d. Just so, the Lord's church can be identified by its scriptural name or designations, by its scriptural worship, by its scriptural work, by its scriptural organization – in other words, by its identifying characteristics, all of which are revealed in the N.T.
 - e. Note some churches one cannot read about in the Bible; churches which do not have the scriptural characteristics, or have only some of them. Churches which did not exist then; which came into existence hundreds of years later. (More on this later)
3. The Bible knows nothing about any more than one church belonging to the Lord.
 - a. Narrow? Yes! Still the truth, though.
 - b. Narrow-minded? No! Truth is always narrow. Cite examples.
 - c. Scriptural proof that there is one, but only one church belonging to the Lord.
 - (1) The Lord promised to build only one, Mt.16:18.
 - (2) He purchased only one, and that with his blood, Ac.20:28; Eph. 5:25; 1Pet.1:18,19; 1Cor.6:19,20.
 - (3) He is the head of only one, Eph.1:22,21; 5:23; Col.1:18.
 - (4) He added all the saved, but only the saved, to that one, Ac.2:47.
 - (5) He has promised to save only one, and is the Savior of only one, Eph.5:23; Cf. Mt.15:13f; Ps.127:1.
4. Every figure of speech in the N.T. referring to the church represents the church as one in number, with its ownership being the Lord's.
 - a. One bride, Jno.3:25-30; Rom.7:1-4.
 - b. One household, or family, Eph.2:19; Gal.6:10.
 - c. One building or house, 1Tim.3:14,15; Cf. Ps.127:1.
 - d. One fold and one shepherd, Jno.10:16; Ac.20:28; 1Pet.5:1-4.
5. Names and designations by which the Lord's church is and is not known.
6. Churches which did not exist at that time. (Name plus when)
 - a. Roman Catholic not before 606 A.D.
 - b. Lutheran not before 1517 A.D.

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| c. | Presbyterian | not before | 1536 A.D. |
| d. | Ch. of England | not before | 1534 A.D. |
| e. | Congregational | not before | 1550 A.D. |
| f. | Baptist | not before | 1607 A.D. |
| g. | Methodist | not before | 1739 A.D. |
| h. | Mormon (Latter Day Saints) | not before | 1830 A.D. |
| i. | Adventists | not before | 1830 A.D. |
| j. | Christian Scientist | not before | 1866 A.D. |
| j. | Jehovah's Witnesses | not before | 1872 A.D. |
7. As a counter to this, what men often claim about A. Campbell and the church of Christ, which the N.T. easily belies. Cf. Mt.16:18; Ac.2:47; Rom. 16:16; etc.
 8. What men often claim the Lord's church is: The one church made up of the saved of all the denominations, or of each and every denomination. This the N.T. also easily refutes. Cf. 1Cor.1:10-13, etc.

B. SINCE THE LORD ADDED ALL THE SAVED TO THE CHURCH, THEY OBVIOUSLY GOT IN OR ENTERED THE RIGHT WAY.

1. Since the Lord added them, this means they were not "voted" in.
 - a. If you were voted in the church of which you are member, you are not in the Lord's church, the one to which he adds the saved.
 - b. People do not decide who has the right to be added to the one church; the Lord has done that and revealed it in the N.T, by which we are to be guided – our rule of faith and practice – our only rule of faith and practice in religion.
 - c. One "joins" the local church, but not the church universal, the body of the saved in the aggregate. Cf. Ac.9:26-28
2. The Lord added the saved; he added only the saved; he added **ALL** the saved to the church, Ac.2:47b.
 - a. This means there are no saved outside the Lord's church!
 - b. If you claim to have been saved and then joined the church of your choice – it was not the Lord's church you joined – and you are not in the Lord's church, nor among the saved, because you are not in the body of the saved.
 - c. Or if you claim to be saved and not a member of any church; then, obviously, your claim is false!
3. When we learn what they did to be saved, and how they learned it, we will know what the right way into the Lord's church is and how to enter it, Ac.2:21, 36-47; Cf. Mk.16:15,16; Rom.1:16,17; 1:5; 6:16-18; 16:25,26; 1Cor.12:13; 1Pet.3:21; Ac.22:16; 2:Tim.2:10; Rom.6:3,4; Gal.3:26-29.

C. SPECIFIC BIBLE EXAMPLES: THE CORINTHIANS AND OTHERS BECAME MEMBERS OF THE LORD'S CHURCH. WHAT DID THEY DO AND HOW DID THEY GET IN?

1. The Corinthians, Ac.18:8-11; Cf. 1Cor.1:1,2; 15:1,2.
 - a. They heard the gospel, believed the gospel, were thus saved and added to the church by the Lord.
2. The Ephesians, Eph.2:8; 1:13 (Ac.18:24-19:5); 5:25-27.
3. Others: 1Th.1:9,10; 2Th.2:13,14; Ac.6:7; 11:19-26.
4. Jno.6:44,45.

III. CONCLUSION

1. The only one you can afford to be a member of is the right one; and the right one is the Lord's.
2. The only way you can be a member of the Lord's church is to be added to it by the Lord himself.
3. The Lord adds only the saved, but all the saved, to his church; and he adds them when they are saved.
4. The only way a sinner can be saved is through the blood of Christ by means of his faith in and obedience to the gospel of Christ.
5. Why not believe and obey the gospel now and let the Lord save you and add you to his church, the church of his choice?
6. The same thing that saves you and makes you a Christian, a child of God, a brother with Jesus Christ, also makes you a member of the Lord's church, his body, his family. See Mk.16:15,16; 1Cor.12:13.
7. Mt.15:13,14; Jno.12:48-50; Heb.5:8,9; Mt.7:21-23; Lk.6:46.