

"Will Only Members of The Church of Christ Go To Heaven?"

Anyone who has been a Christian long gets the comment from friends and foes, "You 'church of Christ' people think you are the only ones going to heaven." Or they ask, "Do you think you are the only ones going to heaven?" The comment or question is said out of ignorance and, at times, prejudice.

Christians are sometimes hesitant to respond to the comment or answer the question in a straightforward manner. This may be because of a past experience where they were "jumped" or cowardice, either way, it is not what the Bible calls for. The Spirit said, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Christians are to be kind, but bold, "speaking the truth in love" (Acts 4:29; Eph. 4:15).

Now, to answer the question, "Will only members of the church of Christ go to heaven?" Yes. The Bible teaches that those who are saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47). To be saved we must have the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7). The blood of Christ purchased the church (Acts 20:28). Therefore, that church belongs to Christ; He is the one who built it and is its head (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23). It is that church that will be presented to Christ "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph. 5:25-27). Again, only members of the church of Christ will go to heaven, but not all members.

Some members of the church of Christ have turned from truth (2 Tim. 2:16-18; 4:3-4, 10). They have fallen from grace and "trampled the Son of God underfoot" (Gal. 5:4; Heb. 10:26-31). Though they are children of God, they are rebellious children who have the wrath of God abiding on them (Col. 3:6). Therefore, only members of the church of Christ will go to heaven, but not all.

One thing is for sure, if you are not a member of the church of Christ, the blood bought body, you will not go to heaven--no matter what you do. You cannot get to heaven without being saved by the blood of Christ. You may confess Jesus as Christ and do many wonderful things in His name, but still be turned away in the day of judgment (Matt. 7:21-23). The reason is because you have not submitted to the will of the Father in heaven.

So, how do you become a member of the church of Christ? Again, you need to be saved by the blood (Acts 2:47). How does this happen? The Lord said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mk. 16:16). The Spirit likewise said to believing Jews, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Ananias said to believing, penitent, praying Paul, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16; cf. 9:9, 11). When you are buried in baptism, you are baptized into His death, where the blood is--you are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4). Apart from this there is no salvation, no home in heaven!

Are you a member of the church of Christ?

Steven F. Deaton