

# San Juan Church of Christ

1414 Hawk Parkway, Unit C  
Montrose, CO 81401 | (970) 249-8116

## What Does God's Word Say About...

### History of the church of Christ — Part 1

There was only one church [body] in the first century A.D. (Eph. 4:4). When Jesus rose and was resurrected from the grave after the crucifixion, Satan no longer had power over death. Satan then had a new goal and began to persecute the church (Rev. 12:17) that was established on the day of Pentecost in 33 A.D. (Acts 2:1-47).

The Bible clearly shows that the church Jesus established was begun in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3) by the apostles, who Jesus appointed for that purpose (John 14:26, 16:13). This church belongs to Christ: because HE purposed it (Eph. 3:10-11), HE built it (Matt. 16:18), HE purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28), HE adds the saved to it (Act 2:47), and HE tells us, "All the churches of Christ salute you," (Rom. 16:16).

The apostle John understood that there was only one church when he wrote in 1 John 2:19 that "they [the Gnostics, false teachers] went out from us [the one body], but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they were not of us." Even though Satan was working against the church through false teachers, the Lord told us in scripture that Satan would not overpower the one true church over the centuries to this present day: Daniel 2:44, "In the days of those kings [Roman Empire] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom [church] which will never be destroyed"... and "will itself endure forever." Jesus said, "the gates of Hades will not overpower it [the church]," (Matt. 16:18).

Paul told us that corruption in the church would begin among the elders (Acts 20:28). He wanted the elders from Ephesus to look in the mirror and face themselves, as some of them would be the source of corruption in the church. History tells us that beginning in the second century corruption did come through the leadership of the church and they did take the church away from the original pattern given by the apostles. Paul and Peter instructed us that each individual congregation in "every city" should have elders [plural] "among you," (Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1). The instruction given in these verses is elders must oversee the work in their individual congregations. The elders in each locality had specific responsibilities to teach, oversee, rule, and be examples to the flock of God under their care. Each congregation functioned with a plurality of elders. The elders in each city, or congregation, had no authority over congregations in other cities. Likewise, all elders in a congregation had equal responsibility and authority in their congregation.

Next week we will see how the apostasy [falling away] began by those disobeying the pattern found for elders in the above scriptures.

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:  
[info@sanjuanchurchofchrist.org](mailto:info@sanjuanchurchofchrist.org)