

D. The church was started with the baptism of Jesus Christ.

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:13-17)

“And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:9-11)

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.” (Luke 3:21-22)

Jesus was the first Member. All members since have been added by baptism - see Acts 2:41-47 and John 4:1,2. Jesus did not need to be saved, He was sinless. But He gave us an example to follow by being baptized at age 30. After His baptism He began His public ministry and the organization of His Church. We are to follow this pattern.

Also notice that by Matthew 16+18 the “Church” is already mentioned, not at Pentecost. Converts were “added to the Church” at Pentecost (Acts 2:41), they did not start the Church.

The baptism of John was not his idea but was commissioned by God. Therefore Jesus submitted to it to fulfill all the law of God. John’s baptism was of God:

“And I knew him not: but **he that sent me to baptize with water**, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” (John 1:33)

“But the Pharisees and lawyers **rejected the counsel of God** against themselves, **being not baptized of him.**” (Luke 7:30)

E. Jesus Christ was the first Pastor.

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:21-25)

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” (1 Peter 5:4)

F. His church was a church of people.

He had many disciples, of whom He chose 12 and called them apostles. “And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer

to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;” (Luke 6:12,13)

He didn’t just have 12 from the beginning of His ministry, but many (See John 4:1). One example: Barsabas and Matthias were with Christ as long as the 12 apostles. See Acts 1:15-23.

Jesus sent out “other” 70 also. “After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.” (Luke 10:1)

Many women followed Him from Galilee (the beginning of His ministry) to Golgotha (His crucifixion). “And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:” (Matthew 27:55) “There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.” (Mark 15:40,41)

Multitudes from many regions followed Him. “And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.” (Matthew 4:25)

After Jesus ascended into Heaven, 120 of his disciples met in prayer for 10 straight days. This became the core of His church. “Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day’s journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)” (Acts 1:12-14)

G. His church had leadership

After a night of prayer, He chose all of His disciples and named 12 apostles: “And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;” (Luke 6:12,13)

These 12 were ordained (set apart publicly), that they should be with Him and live in His presence, serving Him and preparing for the ministry. “And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,” (Mark 3:13-14)

Of the 12, three in particular became leaders of the rest: Peter, James & John. See Matthew 17:1; Mark 5:37; 13:3; 14:33, Luke 8:51. These were specially trusted and entrusted people.

H. His church had a financial program

Two of the disciples were involved in this:

1. Judas Iscariot, the Treasurer

“This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” (John 12:6)

“For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him,

Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.” (John 13:29)

The money was used to meet the needs of the ministry and to help the poor.

2. Peter

“And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.” (Matthew 17:24-27)

I. His church had a visitation program

1. Leadership went out

“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;” (Mark 6:7)

2. Others went out two-by-two

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come ... And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.” (Luke 10:1,17)

3. Common folk preached

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.” (Acts 8:4)

4. Jesus went out

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,” (Luke 4:18)

“And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.” (Luke 4:43)

See also John 4:4-42.

Everyone was involved! They preached the Gospel and helped people.

J. His church baptized converts

“When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)” (John

4:1-2). The baptisms were performed by the ordained.

K. His church had a preaching and teaching ministry

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.” (Matthew 11:1)

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

The first century Church continued this pattern: “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” (Acts 5:42)

L. His church conducted public services

“And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?” (Matthew 21:12-16)

These services included outcasts and children.

M. If needed, there was church government regarding discipline

“And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” (Matthew 18:17)

N. Unfortunately, there were quitters in the Church

“From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.” (John 6:66)