



---

# WEST VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

---

9:30 am Bible Class—all ages  
10:30 am Sunday Worship  
5:00 pm Proverbs study (online)  
7:00 pm Wednesday Bible Class

Phone Number: (623) 695-5623  
Website: [www.wvcochrist.com](http://www.wvcochrist.com)  
Email: [wvchurchofchrist@gmail.com](mailto:wvchurchofchrist@gmail.com)  
Facebook: West Valley church of Christ

**December 26, 2021**

---

## “I am a member of the church of Christ.”

If someone at the close of the first century in the Roman empire said, “I am a member of the church of Christ,” there’s a fair chance that they would be identified simply as a member of the assembly of believers who followed Jesus Christ. Hundreds of years and thousands of denominational churches later, that statement is a lot harder for people to process as is evidenced by their questions and comments.

Sometimes people ask, “What does the church of Christ teach about \_\_\_\_\_?” It’s not an easy question to answer, as the global church of Christ is comprised of independent, self-governing churches made up of individuals. The question really should be asked on an individual basis: What does this Christian teach about \_\_\_\_\_? There are three possible answers to that question: 1) the Christian is a babe in Christ and has not grown to understand what the Bible teaches on that subject; 2) the Christian teaches what the Bible teaches on that subject; 3) the Christian has knowingly rejected what the Bible teaches in favor of something else and is in that aspect of his faith not faithful to Jesus.

Sometimes people accuse the churches of Christ of being legalistic or even Pharisaical. Again, this is simply not a charge that can be made when one understands the autonomous nature of the church. Without a doubt, some churches of Christ are legalistic and Pharisaical; others are liberalistic and Sadducaical. Even in the time of the New Testament, some churches of Christ were unloving (Revelation 2:1-7), tolerant of false teaching (2:12-17), tolerant of sin (2:18-29), dead (3:1-6), and lukewarm (3:14-22), even while others persevered and were faithful (2:8-11; 3:7-13). When a church drifts too far from the teaching and practice of the Gospel, it ceases to be a church of Christ and its candlestick is removed the presence of Jesus (2:5).

Sometimes people ask, “How do I join the church of Christ?” It’s actually not possible to join the church of Christ by one’s own volition or that of any Christian. The church of Christ is literally the church owned by Jesus Christ; “it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy” when someone is allowed to be a part of it (Romans 9:16). Thankfully, there’s no mystery surrounding whom the Lord brings into His church; He adds “to the church daily those who [are] being saved” (Acts 2:47). Those “being saved” are those responding to the apostolic appeal to, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (2:38).

Sometimes people say things like, “He’s a church-of-Christ-er,” or “I grew up church-of-Christ,” or “I’m c-o-C.” Statements like these demonstrate a lack of understanding regarding both the word “church” and the church as an institution. “Church of Christ” is not an adjective, a theological position, or a denominational designation. The term church references an assembly, a group of people who have been called out and separated from other groups. Those in the church that belongs to Jesus Christ have answered the call of the Gospel by obeying its truth and have been added by Jesus to His church (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 1 Peter 1:22; Acts 2:47).

When a person is truly a part of the church of Christ, it’s the same as saying he is a part of Christ’s church, the Lord’s church, the way, the church of God, the church of the firstborn ones, the house of God, or describing the institution of which he is a part with any number of other Biblical descriptions. To be a member of the church of Christ is to be a Christian, nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else.