

SAMARIA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Water of Life

"...the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." - John 4:14

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MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP

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Our worship unto the Lord must be offered according to the truth found in God's word (Jn. 4:24; 17:17; Col. 3:17). Today, many claim that the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship is accepted by the Lord. Below, I have listed every Scripture in the New Testament that authorizes the use of mechanical instruments of music (i.e. organs, pianos, guitars, etc.) in our worship unto the Lord.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

DAVID ELDRIDGE

The Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, IL, organized under the United Church of Christ denomination, has been in the news of late. This was due to remarks of its former preacher, Jeremiah Wright, and the fact that President Barack Obama was a member of this church. There is also a congregation of the United Church of Christ here in Cookeville. Unfortunately, some will hear “United Church of Christ” and think that it is equivalent to the church of Christ of which we are members. Lest this be thought by any reading this article, and to help us in teaching others, we note the reasons why the United Church of Christ denomination is not the church of Christ that you read of in the Bible.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST WAS BUILT BY MEN. “On Tuesday, June 25, 1957, at Cleveland, Ohio, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 23 years old...and the Congregational Christian Churches, 26 years old...joined together as the United Church of Christ.” This “new church” just celebrated its “50th anniversary,” and claims “God alone is its author.” Yet the reality is that this church was built by the men who founded it some 50 years ago. Jesus said, “*I will build My church*” (Matt. 16:18). The true church of Christ is the one built by Him alone. The church which Jesus built began in Jerusalem (not Cleveland) on the day of Pentecost as recorded in

Acts 2 (cf. vs. 47). The United Church of Christ started about 1,925 years too late to be the church which is authored by God. The United Church of Christ was built by the wrong people, in the wrong place, and at the wrong time. Therefore, the United Church of Christ cannot be the true church of Christ that you read about in the Bible!

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IS UNSCRIPTURALLY ORGANIZED. The United Church of Christ claims “Christ alone [as] its head.” Furthermore, they state that “each congregation within the United Church of Christ is independent and autonomous.” However, the true nature of their organizational structure belies their words. John H. Thomas is currently serving his third, four-year term as “General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.” The United Church of Christ also has a “five-person Collegium of Officers,” a “90 member Executive Council,” and a General Synod which meets at regular intervals to pass resolutions for the church. It is also of note that the United Church of Christ’s Headquarters are located in Cleveland, OH. How can each congregation be independent and autonomous with the organizational structure described above? The Bible pattern is to have a plurality of elders in each local congregation of the Lord’s church whose oversight is limited only to “*the*

flock of God which is among you” (Ac. 14:23; 1 Pet. 5:2). If the United Church of Christ truly believes that Christ is “*to be head over all things to the church*” (Eph. 1:22), why do they have a “President,” “Collegium of Officers,” “Executive Council,” “General Synod,” and headquarters in Ohio? The United Church of Christ states that they are “a Biblical church,” but where in the Bible do you read of such organization and offices as they employ? The United Church of Christ is unscripturally organized. Therefore, they cannot be the true church of Christ that you read of on the pages of inspiration.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TEACHES ERROR AND ENCOURAGES SIN. Though claiming to be “a Biblical church,” the United Church of Christ does not acknowledge the Bible as the objective standard of authority (Jn. 17:17). Instead, their churches “tailor themselves to fit the people they feel called to serve in their local community.” It is in this spirit that the United Church of Christ teaches and embraces much error. They state a belief “that baptism places each of us into the ‘body of Christ,’” but then go on to say that infant baptism and sprinkling accomplish that end. They include among their “many firsts”: “the first to ordain a woman” minister (the UCC in Cookeville has a woman “pastor”); “the first to ordain openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered” ministers; and publishers of “the only hymnal released by a Christian church that honors in equal measure both male and female images of God.”

The doctrine and practice of the United Church of Christ makes it obvious that claiming to be “a Biblical church” does not a Biblical church make. The Bible teaches that “*men and women were baptized*,” but never mentions the baptism (*lit.* immersion) of sinless infants who are incapable of believing (Ac. 8:12). Paul was divinely inspired to write, “*I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man*” (1 Tim. 2:12). The Bible teaches that homosexuality is a sin and describes it as dishonorable, vile, against nature, shameful, and deserving of death (Rom. 1:24-32). Though we may live in a “politically correct” society, the fact still remains that every Biblical reference to God, without exception, is in the masculine. The United Church of Christ would do well to heed the warning: “*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness...*” (Isa. 5:20).

Obviously, there is a difference between the man-made denomination of the United Church of Christ and the church of Christ that our Lord built. The United Church of Christ cannot be the church belonging to Christ for they are not built by Him, not founded upon Him, not organized according to His commands, and do not teach or follow His truth! Our genuine plea would be that those involved in such error would abandon it and simply be members of the church of Christ revealed on the pages of the New Testament.

(All quotations concerning the United Church of Christ are from their website, www.ucc.org)