

Which Church Did Columbus Attend?

By Kent Heaton

The year 1492 is indelibly stamped on the minds of all schoolchildren as they learned the history lesson of the voyages of Christopher Columbus with three ships: the Santa Maria, the Pinta and the Nina. While Columbus was not the first person on the continents of North and South America, his voyage opened the flood gates for discovery, conquest and settlement. Born around 1451 his life would change the face of the known world to a global understanding of our planet. He died in May of 1506 in Valladolid, Spain.

It was not until his latter life that Columbus looked deeper into matters of religion. Turning the pages of history to the year of his voyage to America would beg the question of which church would he be a member of in 1492? Pope Innocent VIII had just been elected head of the Roman Catholic Church in the year of his great voyage. Columbus was in fact Catholic and believed his mission of sailing the oceans was to spread Christianity. But were there other churches that he would have known about in his lifetime? The answer is there were no Protestant churches in existence during the lifetime of Columbus. Martin Luther would not begin the period of reformation until he nailed his 95 theses on the door of All Saints church in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517 (nine years after the death of Columbus).

From the simple act of protest Martin Luther began a time of reform that created every church that stands beneath the Protestant flag. Christopher Columbus could not have been a member of 99% of the churches we find on every street corner in America today because they did not exist while he lived. There were only two churches that existed in 1492: the Roman Catholic Church and the New Testament church. The Catholic Church was the apostate body of people who rejected the New Testament as authority. The New Testament church had been in existence since Peter (an apostle; not a Pope) and the other apostles declared the way of salvation on the Day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 2).

The New Testament church has never failed to be in existence since the work of the early disciples. It was called by many names in the New Testament: "church" (Acts 2:27); "the Way which they call a sect" (Acts 24:14); "flock" or "church of God" (Acts 20:28); "saints which are at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:1); "churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2); and "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). Columbus was not a disciple of the New Testament church but was a Catholic. No Protestant church can trace their lineage to the First Century. Each one was begun by a man and is less than five hundred years old.

Christopher Columbus should have belonged to the church Jesus died for as well as each person today. There are as many flavors of churches today as there is ice cream in an ice cream shop. But Jesus only died for one church – His (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28). We must not believe that a 'sign out front' will make us the church Jesus gave His blood for. Our obligation to God is to follow the authority of the Bible and the Bible alone. Can I find the name of the church I am a member of in the New Testament? If not, then I am serving a religion of man and not of God. Is the Bible my only source of authority? If not, I am serving the will of man and not of God (Matt. 15:13-14).

Does She Have a Brain?

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). One day a 6-year-old girl was sitting in the classroom. The teacher was going to explain evolution to the children. The teacher asked a little boy, "Tommy, do you see the tree outside?" "Yes," said Tommy. The teacher asked, "Tommy, do you see the grass outside?" Again, Tommy said, "Yes." The teacher said, "Go outside and look up and see if you can see the sky." Tommy returned a few minutes later and said, "Yes, I saw the sky." The teacher asked, "Did you see

God?" Tommy said, "No." "That's my point," said the teacher, "We can't see God because He isn't there."

A little girl spoke up and wanted to ask Tommy some questions. The teacher agreed, and the little girl asked, "Tommy, do you see the tree outside?" Tommy said, "Yes." She asked, "Tommy, do you see the grass outside?" Tommy, getting tired of the questions by this time, said, "Yes." She asked, "Tommy, do you see the teacher?" Tommy said, "Yes." She asked, "Do you see her brain?" Tommy said, "No." She asked, "Does that mean she doesn't have one?"

One Single Decision

"By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward" (Heb. 11:24-26).

On the top of a hill in a Midwestern state stands a courthouse so situated that raindrops falling on one side of the roof drain into the Great Lakes into the Atlantic, while drops landing on the opposite side flow toward the Ohio and Mississippi to the Gulf. Just a breath of wind one way or the other may determine whether a single raindrop will end up either in the Gulf or in the Atlantic. Even so, one single decision is enough to determine man's destiny, either heaven or hell. Have you made the right decision? (From Illustrations Unlimited by James S. Hewett, p. 153)

Miss Me, But Let Me Go

(Lorene Morris' favorite poem)

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me.
I want no rites in a gloom tilled room,
Why cry for a soul set free.

Miss me a little - but not too long,
And not with your head bowed low.
Remember the love that we once shared,
Miss me - but let me go.

For this is a journey that we all must take,
And each must go alone.
It's all part of the Master's plan,
A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick of heart,
Go to the friends we know
And busy your sorrows in doing good deeds,
Miss me - but let me go.

A Moments Wisdom

- The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up.
- Reputation is for time; character is for eternity.
- He who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander.
- Happiness is not a state to arrive at, but a manner of traveling.