

# The Early Church

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"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matt. 3:2) began the announcement of Jesus Christ, in the wilderness of Judea. At that time, there had never been an announcement with more importance than this one. It foretold the promise of Isaiah who said, "Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight" (verse 3).

Then, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, began His ministry after He was baptized. The heavens opened, the angel of God descended upon Him, and a voice spoke out of the heavens acknowledging the divinity of the Son of God (Matt. 3:16). Jesus began to preach and from among His disciples He chose the twelve apostles. These men became the means to bring God's word to people for generations to come (Matt. 10:1-4). He gave us the Word through them by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He gave them the commission to preach the gospel, but limited them to Judea (Matt. 10:5), as they were under the law until He fulfilled it and broke down "the middle wall of partition" by His death. On the evening before His death, He instituted the Lord's Supper. He then gave the apostles the beautiful example of humility by washing their feet (John 13:5). Soon, He gave Himself to die for the people, and rose again on the third day (Luke 24:46). After His resurrection, He appeared to the disciples and extended the commission to "all the world" and to "every creature" (Mark 16:15-16), but told them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high." This promised power was given on the day of Pentecost, when they were enabled to speak under the influence of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2).

This is the church Christ established in its infancy. From this point, the church, as planned, has two sides: a Divine side where perfection is and always will be, and the human side where the problems that Christ said would come, did come shortly after.

For the elders,  
Tony Williams