

the
Church
in the
BIBLE

Don DeWelt

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Don DeWelt

With Special Articles By:

W.L. Hayden

Robert T. Matthews

J.W. McGarvey

T.H. Garrison

M.B. Ryan

Willard Vanderford

College Press, Joplin, Missouri

Copyright © 1958
Don DeWalt

All Rights Reserved

Second Printing — 1959
Third Printing — 1962
Fourth Printing — 1968
Fifth Printing — 1969
Sixth Printing — 1973
Seventh Printing — 1976
Eighth Printing — 1980
Ninth Printing — 1988

Drawings by
Don DeWalt
and
Bob Sargeant

ISBN 0-89900-049-5

Permission to use the American Standard Version of the
New Testament has been secured from
International Council of Religious Education.

DEDICATION

*To my brother in the flesh
and in the Spirit, David DeWalt
A good minister of Christ Jesus.*

P R E F A C E

Are we willing to search out the "old paths" for ourselves? Wait before you answer in the affirmative. It is so easy to listen to a respected and trusted friend tell us "**This is the way**, walk ye in it." Is it the way because he said so? Wait yet again, "We have no creed," you say. Is this **actually** true or **theoretically** true?

Maybe you have heard this for so long a time and so often that you have come to believe it because of frequent repetition. You have a creed, all of us live by something, but what is it?—the words of men?—the teachings of **your** Church of Christ?

This study is **not the Church In The Bible** to you unless **you can** find it in your Bible. Unless you are stirred to search the scriptures to see if these things are so, the words of this book will have fallen to the ground, and the purpose for which it was written shall not have been accomplished.

Don DeWelt

INTRODUCTION

For Your Information

We are most happy to greet you as a student of this wonderful study—one of the most important subjects in the Bible—"The Church In The Bible." Because of the great importance of this theme it is with genuine joy that we approach a consideration of it. Here are a few facts that will help to introduce the study procedure to you:

First, you will notice, on the following page, a chart outline of our entire study. This is a popular chart, many of you may have seen it before. Read it very carefully. We will develop each of the main points of this chart, and will follow it chronologically from the top to the bottom.

Each of the lessons has an attractive title page which also serves as the basic outline of the lesson. These lessons have been prepared in a workbook style. There are many exercises and questions to help you in your study. We learn best by doing, so to gain the utmost benefit from "The Church In The Bible," do your best to carry out the study procedure carefully. The answers to the questions, located throughout the lessons, will be found in the text of the book, itself.

The American Standard Version of both the Old and New Testaments has been quoted throughout. Permission for the use of this version has been secured from the International Council of Religious Education.

If we may have the happy privilege of leading you into this study until you have found "The Church In The Bible" for yourself, then we shall be content.

Yours In His Happy Service,
Don DeWalt

THE CHURCH REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES

REQUIREMENTS FOR SALVATION

God's Part

GRACE Eph. 2:8-9
I Cor. 1:4
John 3:16

PREACHING Mark 16:15
Acts 2:14
Acts 8:35
I Cor. 1:21

Sinner's Part

HEAR Matt. 17:5
Rom. 10:17

BELIEVE Acts 2:37

REPENT Acts 2:38
Acts 17:30-31

CONFESS Romans 10:10
Matt. 10:32-33

BE BAPTIZED Acts 22:16
I Peter 3:21

LIVE GODLY I Tim. 8:11-18
Phil. 4:8-9
Gal. 5:21-22

HEBREWS 5:9

No Book but the Bible!
No Message but the Gospel!

No Subtractions

Rev. 22:18-19 and I Cor. 4:6

RESULTS OF SALVATION

JUSTIFIED
Romans 5:1

SANCTIFIED
Acts 26:18

FORGIVEN
1 John 2:12

RECONCILED
Romans 5:10

REDEEMED
I Peter 1:18-19

ADOPTED
Gal. 4:5

SAVED
Titus 3:5

No Creed but the
Christ!

No Names but
those Divinely
Given!

No Additions
No Substitutions

Origin	TIME—A. D. 30. Acts 2:1 PLACE—Jerusalem. Acts 2:5	FOUNDER—Christ—Matthew 16:18 FOUNDATION—I Cor. 3:11 and Eph. 2:19-20
Organiza- tion	HEAD, Christ, Eph. 1:22-23. "All Authority" Matt. 28:18. Legislation—Executive—Judicial OFFICERS, Evangelists, Eph. 4:11; Elders, Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9 Deacons, I Tim. 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-6 MEMBERS, Penitent Baptized Believers, Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41, 4:4, 5:14; Gal. 3:27 GOVERNMENT, Congregational, Acts 8:3-6, 13:1-3, 14:23; I Cor. 5:4-5; II Cor. 8:19	WORSHIP, Acts 2:42, 20:7 UNITY, Acts 4:32; Eph. 4:3-6
Names	Of Individuals { Disciples Acts 6:1—Learners Gains " 9:13—Character Brethren " 6:3—Relationship Christians " 11:26—Ownership	ONE Body, Spirit, Hope, Lord, Faith, Baptism, God. Division Carnal Romans 16:17-18 I Cor. 1:10-13, 3:1-3 The Gospel Only Isa. 62:2, Acts 11:26 I Peter 4:16, James 2-7 Makes Christians Only Acts 26:28-29
Of Churches	The Church Acts 9:31 Church of God I Cor. 1:2 Church of the first born Feb. 12:23 Body of Christ I Cor. 12:27 Churches of Christ Romans 16:16 Churches of the saints I Cor. 14:33	Universal Planner Honor Activity Ownership Character
Creed	Jesus Preached—Acts 2:22, 8:5; II Cor. 11:4 Believed—John 20:30-31; Acts 8:12 Confessed—Matt. 16:16; John 1:49 Christ I Tim. 6:12-13; II Tim. 1:12	Heb. 13:8, 7:25-28 I Cor. 1:24 Needs No Revision
Memorials	The Lord's Day Set Apart John 20:26 Claimed Rev. 1:10 Observed Acts 20:7	The Lord's Supper Instituted Luke 22:19 Seal I Cor. 11:25 Participation I Cor. 10:16 Proclamation I Cor. 11:26 Unity I Cor. 10:17 Life Sustaining I Cor. 11:30
Discipline	THE NEW The Only Rule of Faith and Practice; Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16; II Tim. 3:16-17; TESTAMENT: Every New Covenant Command is an Ordinance. Human Legislation is Sinful, Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:1-12; I Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:8-9; Rev. 22:18-19	
Finances	Ordained—I Cor. 9:14; Gal. 6:6-8; How Much? In Type—Heb. 7:1-10; Oal. 3:7-9 Admonished—I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6-10; Who? When? Why? How? } Matt. 23:23 Blessed—Acts 20:35; Luke 6:38; Luke 16:9; Matt. 6:19-21 } Matt. 5:20	
Purposes	Preach the Gospel—Mark 16:15 "All The Nations" Baptize Them—Matt. 28:19 Make Disciples—Matt. 28:19 Luke 24:46-47 Teach Them—Matt. 28:20 Commit to Faithful and Able Men in Self-Governing, Self-Supporting, Self-Extending Churches—II Tim. 2:2; Acts 13:3-4; Jude 3	

"Make All Things According To The Pattern" Hebrews 8:5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	6
Introduction	7
1. Wonderful Attributes of A Wonderful Subject	10
2. When Christ Built His Church	24
3. Where Christ Built His Church	34
4. What Christ Promised in Matthew 16: 18-19	42
5. The Church's One Foundation	52
6. The Head of the Church	62
7. The Temporary Officers of the Church	76
8. The Evangelist	86
9. The Elders	96
Review Examination: Lessons one through nine	109
10. The Deacons	114
11. The Work of the Women	122
12. The Ordination of Officers	140
13. Ten Timely Truths	150
14. Faith in the Bible and Christ	212
15. Repentance	220
16. Confession and Baptism	238
17. The Government of the Church	266
18. The Worship of the Church	278
Review Examination: Lessons ten through eighteen	296
19. The Unity of the Church	300
20. Individual Names	312
21. The Name of the Church	342
22. The Creed of the Church	354
23. The Day of Remembrance	362
24. The Table of Remembrance	372
25. The Discipline of the Church	386
26. The Finances of the Church	402
27. The Purposes of the Church	414
Review Examination: Lessons nineteen through twenty-seven	426

*Lay these words upon
thy heart"*

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Greatest plan of God.

Greatest purpose of Christ.

Greatest privilege of man.

Divine

Prefigured in the gospels.

Foreshadowed at Mt. Sinai.

New

It is complete.



*"HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE
NEGLECT SO GREAT A SALVATION."
Heb. 2:3*



LESSON ONE

WONDERFUL ATTRIBUTES OF A WONDERFUL SUBJECT

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

It is our persuasion that the greatest mistake made in Bible study is to accept the conclusions of **any** teacher of the Bible on any Bible subject before we have read the Bible ourselves and have attempted to form our own conclusions on the subject.

Here are the basic scripture references considered in this lesson. Read them carefully in their context **before** you read our comments. Remember, only the truth of the Word is infallibly right.

Matt. 13:31-46; 16:13-19; 26:28; Acts 2:1-47; 7:38, 39; 5:14; 20:28; 19:23-41; Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:25; 4:11; 6:10-17 Col. 1:13-18; Rom. 5:6-10; Heb. 12:18-29; 10:4; II Cor. 5:1; Luke 19:10; II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 1:9, 10; 3:16, 17; Gen. 3:15; Titus 2:11; John 1:1-3.

Here are ten true or false questions based on this lesson. Answer them carefully. After you have studied the lesson check your answers to see if you feel you should change your answers.

True or False

- 1. In the New Testament the subject of the church is not nearly as well developed as that of salvation.
- 2. The word "church" is never used to refer to any other assembly than Christian.
- 3. Salvation and church membership are the same in the New Testament.
- 4. God planned the church before the foundation of the world.
- 5. Christ purchased our salvation and His church on the cross of Calvary.
- 6. What all of us should do is to be saved and then join a good Bible church of our choice.
- 7. Christ's church was created in a complete, unchangeable form by His inspired apostles.
- 8. The church is divine **only** in the sense that it has been used by God in spite of its human imperfections.
- 9. There are several features found in the church that were never before realized in fact.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- 10. "The kingdom" referred to so often in the four gospels always refers to the church in either its temporal or eternal state.

LESSON DISCUSSION

This happened down by the Gulf of Mexico. A few years ago a broken down horse cart creaked to a stop in front of a very humble home. The mother in the doorway could not be expected to know that the man on the driver's seat was a scientist from one of the large universities, nor could she have guessed that his mission was treasure hunting.

Neither could she catch a hint of his purpose from the question he asked her: "Excuse me, Madam, but I was wondering if I could purchase that cannon ball you have there against the door?" The eyes of both persons fell upon the object that lay partly concealed by the dirt. It had acted all summer as a prop for the door. "Well, I don't know whether I want to part with it or not. You see one of the kids found it a few years back buried in the sand on the beach. We have had it ever since. It has become somewhat of a family keepsake." Stroking her chin she continued, "course, if you want to buy it . . ." "I am prepared to give you ten dollars for the ball," the stranger replied. "Ten dollars," the woman said in hushed amazement. With this reply the visitor came swinging down from the seat and in another moment he had counted out ten shiny dollars into the work-worn hands of the mother.

To this poor soul the visitor was one series of strange words and actions. "Madam," the visitor said, "do you have an ax?" She led him to a large chopping block back of the chicken house. There, stuck in the block, was a somewhat battered double-bitted ax. Imagine her amazement when he lay the lead cannon ball on the top of the block and raised the ax. With careful aim he brought the ax down to strike the ball a square blow. To her astonishment she saw the ball was hollow and from its hollow center out on the top of the chopping block the stranger emptied two handfuls of gold nuggets. It was part of the fabulous treasure of Captain Kidd. This unusual visitor was generous enough to give the woman a supply of gold sufficient to keep her and the children for a good many days.

Doesn't your heart skip a beat when you read of discovered treasure? It should, and the subject was just as fascinating in Jesus' day. He said, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which when a man hath found, for the joy thereof, straightway goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." Matt. 13:44. It is with that type of eagerness, surprise, delight and joy, that we approach the subject before us. The "king-

WONDERFUL ATTRIBUTES OF A WONDERFUL SUBJECT

dom of heaven" and the "church" are the same institution, as we shall see as we discuss it later.

"But," someone says, "there is so little mention of the subject of the church in the scriptures; it would make no difference which one of these earthly churches I join, just so I am sincere." Is that the way you feel about it, friend? Do you have friends who feel that way? What are the real facts from the Bible?

Did you know that the word "church" appears one hundred and ninety-two times in the New Testament? Not only does the word appear so often but **there is a church completely described in the Bible**. Which church of our day is described in your New Testament? To answer these questions and many others it becomes necessary that we grasp some very basic facts. Notice please:

THE MEANING OF THE TERM "CHURCH"

What language did Jesus speak most often? Underline the one you feel is correct: 1) Greek. 2) Hebrew. 3) Aramaic. 4) Latin. 5) Chaldean. We know that every Jew was taught his mother tongue, the Hebrew, and that Jesus probably knew Aramaic, but the universal language of the Roman Empire of Jesus' day and the language of the common people was _____.

Now, this is not to be a lesson in Greek, but there is a very important point of meaning in this connection. One hundred and ninety-two times we have the word "church" in our English New Testament. Each time it is a translation from the Greek word "ekklesia." What is the root meaning of this term? In Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, he says, "Ekklesia: **'called out or forth'** (Page 195)." It is translated not only with the English word "church" but also "congregation" and "assembly." As you have probably known before, it does not and can not refer to a building, but rather to people, and to particular people, those who are **"called out."**

There are four times when this word is used in a non-Christian sense. Note: Acts 19:32, 39, 41 and Acts 7:38. Read very carefully the whole passage of Acts 19:23-41, then fill in the blanks in this quotation:

"Some therefore cried one thing, and some another; for the _____ was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together."

Who was this **assembly**? Who **called** them out? If you have answered correctly you know that they were anything but a Christian assembly. Still, the word used to describe them is the same one that Jesus used when He said "upon this rock I will build my _____." Matt. 16:18.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Once again, in the thirty-ninth verse, "But if ye seek anything about other matters; it shall be settled in the regular _____." In this instance it refers to the regular **called out court of law** in the city of Ephesus.

Finally in verse forty-one: "And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the _____." The mob was dispersed by the wise words of the town clerk. You can then understand from the meaning of the word here that it was in general use in the first century and could refer to any _____

Acts 7:38 contains another general use of the term "ekklesia." You probably remember that great group of people called out of Egypt by Moses. Here is a reference to Moses as being in the midst of that _____ or _____. Read the whole section from Acts 7:1-60 to get the complete thought of the chapter.

When we say "church" today we mean a religious gathering or, even worse, we refer to a building. But in Jesus' day the term "ekklesia" was used to refer to any called out group. Now notice Jesus' specific use of the word "church."

This word was used **specifically** by Jesus to refer to a **particular called out assembly**. Mark His words once again: "Upon this rock I will build _____ church." Matt. 16:18. The one word that takes this term out of the general realm is that adjective **MY**. Jesus said "_____ ekklesia" or in English "_____."

Literally translated it would say, "MY called out ones." Let me ask you a very important question: "What would cause that group to belong to Christ? Why could He say 'my church'?" You can answer that question by answering this one. What caused that house, car, or refrigerator to belong to you? Indeed, what has caused any object you own to belong to you? "That's easy," you say. "If they were not given to me I had to buy them." Now read Acts 20:28 and you have your whole answer:

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed _____ of _____ which He purchased with His own _____."

This assembly of people was going to belong to Him because **He** was going to call them out of the world. **He** was going to pay as the purchase price for them, His own precious blood. So, if we are going to become a member of Christ's church, we must be _____

_____ by Him and _____ by Him with His own precious blood. We shall say more about that later, but just now, let us notice the **NEXT BIG STEP**:

SALVATION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ARE THE SAME CONDITIONS

This comes, no doubt, as a real surprise to some people. Prob-

WONDERFUL ATTRIBUTES OF A WONDERFUL SUBJECT

ably we have all heard someone say: "What you need to do is to be saved and then join some good Bible church." Friend, **you just can not do that** and follow the plain pattern of God's Book. Look for a moment at the scripture,

"Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the **Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.**" Acts 2:47.

Notice the two wonderful things happening here:

- (1) People were being saved every day.
- (2) These same people were being added, by the Lord, to the "church." (Called out assembly.)

Do you not see, brother, sister, that in the act of answering the call to come out of the world into salvation, they were, by the same act, becoming "the church of the Lord" the "called out" ones? Now compare Acts 5:14 with Eph. 1:22-23.

"And believers were the more **added to the Lord**, multitudes both of men and women." Acts 5:14.

"And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to **the church, which is His body**, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22-23.

Mark the two thoughts here:

- (1) Believers were **added to the Lord**. That is descriptive of their being saved is it not? And yet how could one be "added to the Lord" — is not the Lord in heaven? Was He not in heaven when this was written? How then could these men and women be "added to the Lord"? The second thought answers it.
- (2) The church is the "BODY of Christ." Hence, we can clearly see that to be **added to the Lord's body and to be added to the Lord** would be one and the same experience; hence, being saved would add you to His body or His church.

When folk were saved in Bible times, the very act of coming out of the world for salvation brought them into the membership of Christ's body, His church. With these two wonderful thoughts in mind we are prepared to take up these eight **Wonderful Attributes of the Church In The Bible**.

1. Did you know—

The church is the GREATEST PLAN OF GOD.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Note this beautiful verse:

“Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal.” II Tim 1:9.

“Wait a minute,” you say, “Paul is discussing salvation.” Yes, so he is. But are not salvation and church membership the same conditions? What a **new** meaning to the subject of the church this gives us. And so it was, that “before times eternal” God had that “called out” assembly in mind and heart. We can indeed say that the church is and was, and ever has been, **the greatest plan of God.**

When He spoke in Genesis 3:15 of the bruising of the serpent’s head by the woman’s seed, He was promising nothing less than the provision for membership in the body of His Son, His church. The church, far from being a subordinate purpose in the plan of God, is rather **THE ONE GREAT PLAN** of our heavenly Father. Everything He revealed to man related in one way or another to this great subject of salvation or

2. The church is the **GREATEST PURPOSE OF CHRIST.**

The shadow of the cross fell over the manger in Bethlehem. Jesus walked in that shadow for more than thirty years and He finally followed it up the hill of Golgotha, there to be stretched on a Roman cross to fulfill the purpose of His life.

“For the Son of man came to and to that which was” Luke 19:10.

That cross was the means of our salvation and the one great purpose and passion of the Son of God. Indeed, His purpose was to seek and to save the lost, or, “to purchase the church with His own precious blood.” Acts 20:28. Thus His glorious plan was to provide or in His body, the church.

“... Christ ... loved the and gave Himself up for” Eph. 5:25.

Christ loved those persons who would be “called out” to be **His** and He gave Himself on Calvary to make possible the carrying out of His plan.

3. For you and me the church is **THE GREATEST PRIVILEGE OF MAN.**

Read these divine words with your **heart** as well as your eyes:

“For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for

WONDERFUL ATTRIBUTES OF A WONDERFUL SUBJECT

peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. But God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet _____, Christ _____ for _____. Much more then, being now _____ by His blood, shall we be _____ from the wrath of God through Him. For if, while we were enemies, we were _____ to God through the death of His Son, much more, being _____, shall we be _____ by His life." Rom. 5:6-10.

"Justified" vs. 9a; "Saved" vs. 9b; "Reconciled" vs. 10.

Think of it! Does it mean anything to you to be "justified, saved, or reconciled"? Just to consider the meaning of these terms is enough to make us exclaim in wonder and thanksgiving. But, have you ever thought that this is a description of your **church membership**? Indeed it **is** a wonderful description, is it not? How we need to open our eyes to God's definition of terms.

Consider:

"For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing _____ to all men." Titus 2:11.

Yes, yes, it was the grace of our God that provided this gift of salvation, and the text could just as well read, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing membership in His Son's church to all men." Indeed this is the supreme expression of God's love. Oh, the GREATNESS of the church revealed in the scriptures.

4. The COMPLETENESS of the church in the Bible.

Who made the rose and the lily? By reading the Word closely, we discover that _____ was the creator of these beautiful flowers. (cf. John 1:3 and Col. 1:16). Would it not be the sheerest folly for us to say that this creation of Jesus was incomplete? What a spectacle man would present if he were to attempt to add color to these lovely flowers. What would you think of the man who would tear from the rose its petals, saying, as he did so, "It will look much better with fewer petals"? Or what of that man who would prefer the artificial lilies of wax to the real, fragrant creation of Christ?

Stop and think a moment:

The same one who created these beautiful, perfect, complete flowers created the church. Did He make one complete and the other incomplete? No, no, no. All that we know of the Christ of God cries out against this thought. We say, "He made all things perfect." So then we can say as to our attribute of the church that **THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE IS COMPLETE.**

When our blessed Saviour called these people out to belong to Him, He was ready to "completely furnish" each one with an answer to every problem and a supply for every lack: to imagine less

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

would be a reflection against our Christ. Then as an "assembly," a "church," these "called out" people belonged to Him. He was ready also to "furnish **them** thoroughly unto every good work." Did this assembly need leadership? Then **He would supply the fulfillment of that need.** In answer to the need for leadership **He** would be the Head and **He** would set certain offices of leadership in this "called out" people which properly qualified men could fill. When Christ had completed His beautiful creation of the church it was indeed COMPLETE. For man to approach this divine institution and to suggest certain additions, subtractions, or substitutions, is a DIRECT reflection upon the wisdom and authority of the great Son of God!

In writing several years after Christ had called out His first followers, Peter said: "Seeing that **His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him** that called us by His own glory and virtue." II Peter 1:3.

Notice: Peter stated that He has given to us "ALL THINGS that pertain to life and godliness."

5. The church in the Bible is DIVINE.

Think of it—a DIVINE church. To many people, especially those who have been disappointed by a church member, the church is anything but a divine institution. However, let us pause for reflection. When we talk about the church in the Bible we are talking about a pattern or an ideal—yea, a pattern or an ideal for our reproduction. This is almost axiomatic for since the Bible is a DIVINE book anything within it would be of divine origin. But, wait just a minute! IF THERE IS A DIVINE PATTERN FOR ME TO FOLLOW, AM I NOT MORE THAN PRESUMPTUOUS TO FOLLOW ANYTHING ELSE? What would it mean for me to fabricate my own pattern and call men to follow it when all the while there is a divine pattern awaiting my use? May our heavenly Father open all our eyes to see again this great, complete divine pattern for the church in His Word. But in what way is the church, in the Bible, divine? Notice please:

(1) It was divinely founded. Matt. 16:18.

Jesus had this to say of its beginning: "I will build my church." Now if Christ founded it or started it, divinity in its founding is assured. Did Jesus build a church? Well, surely you believe that Jesus never made a promise and then failed to keep it. What an interesting search then is before us as we look in God's divine Book to discover the time and place where God's Son kept His wonderful promise. Now, let us hesitate a bit and look back

WONDERFUL ATTRIBUTES OF A WONDERFUL SUBJECT

over what we have already learned on this matter, as it will be of considerable help to us:

1. We know that the church is a "called out" assembly of people.
2. We know that Jesus promised to "call out" an assembly that would belong to Him. This constitutes the divine promise of founding His church.
3. We also learned that salvation and church membership were the same conditions. (We have learned other things but these are the points that are pertinent at this time.)

Now, let us draw the rather obvious conclusion:

To put it in question form: "When did Jesus 'call out' a people to belong to Him?"

Answer: After He had paid the purchase price for them. ". . . the church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28.

But, when was the actual "calling out" done? Did Jesus Himself do it?

Answer: On the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Christ was crucified. Read the record of this first "calling out" of persons to belong to Jesus in Acts 2:1-47. When you have read this second chapter of Acts, you will be able to answer these questions for yourself. In answer to one of them you will have to say: "No, Jesus **did not**, Himself, in person, call out a people to be washed in His blood." In explanation of your answer you would say that it was the apostles of the Saviour who issued the call. But let us not forget that these apostles were "baptized in the Holy Spirit" and thus spoke just what the Christ would want them to speak. So it was that Peter and the rest of the apostles, on the feast day of Pentecost in 30 A.D., **called, for the first time in all the world, for men to come out of the world and have remission of sins in the blood of the Son of God.** Three thousand of them responded and, together as a "called out" assembly belonging to Christ, they constituted His divinely promised church. In this we see the divine founding of His church.

- (2) It was divinely organized. Eph. 4:11.

We would hardly expect anything else—would we? Surely Jesus would not call out a people and then leave them without directions as to how to function as an assembly.

Note please:

1. The church is called a "flock." Acts 20:28. In a flock **there must be shepherds.**
2. The church is called a "body." Col. 1:18. In a body **there**

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- must be a head and several members** to carry out its functions.
3. The church is called a "kingdom." Col. 1:13. In a kingdom **there must be a king and officers under the king.**
 4. The church is called an army. Eph. 6:10-17. In an army **there must be a head officer and subordinate officers.**

But, dear friend, even without these comparisons from the Word of God, we can look into the divine record and see that the same Son of God who called this people out of the world "set into" this body FIVE offices for the carrying out of its great work in the world. "And He gave some to be: 1. **Apostles**; and some, 2) **Prophets**, and some, 3) **Evangelists**, and some, 4) **Pastors and teachers.**" Eph. 4:11. Add to this Phil. 1:1, and you have the fifth office in the divine body—**Deacons.**

Without here offering a lengthy explanation for the statement, let me say that **two of these office were temporary**, i.e. the apostles and prophets. The reason for saying the offices of apostles and prophets are temporary will be a topic of study in a future lesson. It is sufficient to say here that the church was not only divinely founded, but divinely organized.

- (3) It is divinely directed today through the Word of God. This Word is able to provide the total means for "reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." II Tim. 3:16-17. We have two or three lessons in our study to give the details on this wonderful point.

6. The church in the Bible is NEW.

- (1) **New** in the promise of the remission of sins. Read carefully: "For it is **impossible** that the blood of bulls and goats should **take away sins.**" Heb. 10:4.

In contrast read this reference:

"... in whom we have our redemption through His blood, the **forgiveness of our trespasses**, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. 1:7.

For two thousand years the promise of the remission of sins awaited its fulfillment, then one day Jesus took a cup and said: "for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **unto the remission of sins.**" Matt. 26:28. This marvelous blessing was realized for the first time by the church of the Lord.

- (2) **New** in the definite promise of life after death. In times past it was said: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." Eccl. 9:5.

WONDERFUL ATTRIBUTES OF A WONDERFUL SUBJECT

This is the dismal view of life lived only "under the sun." (cf. Eccl. 9:6.) To a large extent this was the attitude of those living under the law of Moses. Contrast that with these words:

"For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." II Cor. 5:1.

We do not intend to infer that life after death was not a reality in the Old Testament dispensation but the complete understanding of this truth was left for those in the body of Christ, even as Paul expressed it to Timothy:

"But hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. . . ." II Timothy 1:10.

7. The church in the Bible is PREFIGURED IN THE GOSPELS. By this time you know that the beginning of the church is described in the second chapter of the book of Acts. However, there are some wonderful figures of the beginning, growth and work of the church recorded in the gospels. Note these beautiful parallels:

(1) "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof." Matt. 13:31-32.

(2) "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." Matt. 13:44.

The church began with the **twelve** apostles. The Lord added to them "about **three thousand souls**," Acts 2:41. "But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of men came to be about **five thousand**." . . . "And a **great company** of the priests were obedient to the faith." Acts 4:4 and 6:7b.

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that ought of the things which he possessed was his own." Acts 4:32.

(3) "And again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls; and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matt. 13:45-46.

"Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ." Phil. 3:8.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

These are only three of the many parallels that can be and will be shown in our lessons on this wonderful subject.

8. The church in the Bible is FORESHADOWED AT MOUNT SINAI.

In Heb. 12:18-29 the writer makes a comparison between Mt. Zion and Mt. Sinai, between the old and the new covenants that were made from these mountains. As you probably know, Mt. Zion is another name for Jerusalem and in this connection has reference to the events that transpired there when the new covenant was given. Notice this unusual parallel:

Mount Sinai

God spoke to His people through His servant Moses. Exodus 20:22. There were physical manifestations of God's presence and power in "the thunders, and lightnings, and the voice of trumpet, and the mountain smoking." Exodus 20:18.

Three thousand were slain at Mt. Sinai. Exodus 32:28.

The law on Mt. Sinai was given fifty days after the Passover. Exodus 19:1. (cf. Exodus 12:1-2.)

Mount Zion

God spoke to His people through His servants, the apostles. Acts 2:4. There were physical manifestations of God's presence and power in the tongues parting asunder like as of fire, the rushing of a mighty wind, the shaking the hearts of the people.

Acts. 2:1-4. Three thousand were saved at Mt. Zion. Acts 2:41.

The law on Mt. Zion was given fifty days after the Passover. Luke 22:15. (cf. Acts 2:1.)

We hope this lesson has stirred you with a new desire to investigate this greatest of all subjects, the church revealed in the holy scriptures. This is only an introductory lesson; in the next twenty-six lessons we will discuss in detail some of the issues we have raised here.

Examination One

1. Give the general and specific uses of the word "church." You need not give the scripture reference; just the thought of it will do.
2. What is "church membership"?
3. What are the three great things about the church we are studying? Give a sentence of explanation in your own words about each one.
4. Do you believe the church, as revealed in the scriptures, is complete? If you do, explain why and in what way it is complete.
5. State the three ways that the divinity of the church was pointed out.
6. What two things does the church offer that are new? Explain how this is true. A sentence or two in explanation will suffice.
7. Explain why you believe that the church and the kingdom are the same institution.
8. Do a little work on your own this question: How is the "kingdom of heaven like unto ten virgins"? Matt. 25:1-13. Read the text and then answer.
9. Compare the events which accompanied the giving the law with those that accompanied the establishing of the church.
10. Tell which part of this lesson was the most important to you and say why.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

WHEN Christ Built His Church

According to prophesy

According to Jesus

According to logic



When Christ DID NOT Build His Church

- 1. During the lifetime of John the Baptist.*
Matt. 3:1
- 2. Before the disciples prayer.*
Matt. 6:10
- 3. At the sending out of the twelve.*
Matt. 10:7
- 4. At Peter's confession.*
Matt. 16:18
- 5. At the last Passover.*
Luke 22:18
- 6. At His death.*
Luke 23:51
- 7. After His resurrection.*
Acts 1:6



LESSON TWO

WHEN CHRIST BUILT HIS CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

Read slowly and carefully these wonderful words concerning the Bible:

"Almost every man who has by his life work added to the sum of human achievement, of which the world is proud, almost every such man has based his life work upon the teachings of the Bible."

—Theodore Roosevelt

We all agree to the truth of the above statement. It seems we hear a hearty "Amen" going up from many hearts, but what are we doing about it? Are we actually reading the Bible? The study of the Bible itself is what God wants. Here are the scripture references upon which this lesson is based. Read them in context.

Isa. 2:1-3; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 2:1-47; Dan. 2:1-44; Zech. 12:10; 13:1; John 3:1-5; Matt. 16:13-19; I Cor. 15:1-4.

Affirm or Deny But Tell The Reason Why

After you have studied the lesson, check your answers to see if you wish to change any.

1. There is really very little disagreement among believers as to when the church in the Bible was established.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
2. Jesus promised that the remission of sins would be preached in His name, beginning at Nazareth.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
3. The great image of Daniel (cf. Dan. 2:31-45) had reference to the time of the establishment of Christ's church.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
4. Zechariah 12:10 — 13:1 (read it) could have no possible connection with when Christ established His church.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
5. The new birth of John 3:1-5 has a definite bearing upon the time of the building of Christ's church.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
6. The Holy Spirit came to the disciples before Pentecost. (cf. John 21:19-20; 7:38-39.)
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
7. The "keys of the kingdom" (cf Matt. 16:19) refer to the plan of salvation.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

8. The subject of the beginning of the church is "better felt than told."
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
9. The kingdom of heaven is yet to come on earth.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____
10. Just when Christ established His church is not nearly as important as the fact that He did it.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why? _____

LESSON DISCUSSION

The time for the beginning of anything is important. The particular time Christ had in mind when He said, "Upon this rock I will build My church," is of earth shaking importance. Most especially is this true when there is so much definite disagreement among believers as to just what time He had in mind. Here are two quotations from authoritative sources which represent the belief of over ten million persons!

1. "I now lay down as the _____ position that the Church of Christ or the kingdom of heaven was set up in the days of the Caesars and during the personal ministry of Christ." (The authoritative source of this quotation will be furnished upon request.)
2. "We believe that the church was established during the days of Abel, and continued in the time of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the other patriarchs, into the ministry of John and Jesus." (The authoritative source of this quotation will be furnished upon request.)

Now which one is right? They cannot both be correct. Can you be sure you are right in your belief? We had better be assured in our hearts lest we sin. (cf. Romans 14:23.) We had best search the scriptures for they will judge us in the last day. (cf. John 12:48.) Let us remember that sincerity alone is not enough; sincerity plus truth equals eternal life. (cf. Romans 10:1 and 9:1-2.)

Let us approach our investigation of the time of the beginning of Christ's church with a study of the prophets:

Many, many prophecies were fulfilled in the life and ministry of our Lord. Surely then we should be able to find some prophetic promises concerning such a great subject as His church. We are not asking you to take our word for anything here written. If you cannot see the obvious application of what we say then remember that you are accountable to God and not man. But be honest with your own soul, examine these things daily and see if they are so.

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of

the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." Isa. 2:1-3.

In connection with this prophecy read the following:

"Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and He said unto them, **Thus it is written** that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that **repentance and remission of sins** should be preached in His name **unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."** Luke 24:45-47.

There are a number of very plain facts to be remembered in this prophecy of Isaiah. Note:

1. It is a prophecy made concerning Judah (the Jewish nation) and Jerusalem.
2. It is concerned with an object known as "the mountain of Jehovah's house." This undoubtedly refers to the rule or kingdom of Jehovah. This same terminology is used elsewhere.
3. This "mountain of Jehovah's house" is to be established "on top of the mountains." This would refer to the rule of God's kingdom over all other kingdoms.
4. Jehovah is going to be the teacher in this kingdom.
5. All nations are to be a part of this "house of Jehovah."
6. The law or the word of Jehovah is going to go forth from Zion or Jerusalem. The term "Zion" is a synonym for Jerusalem, as the hill of Zion was located within the walls of Jerusalem.

But to the question: "How do we know that this scripture has reference to the beginning of the church?" We know **because Jesus applied this scripture to it.**

Note the promise and prophetic fulfillment in these words: "Thus it is written . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name **unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.**" Now, just where was it written in the Old Testament that such a thing should take place? Isaiah 2:1-3 contains this definite promise. Read again the third verse. If the third verse is the one to which Jesus alludes then we can see the fulfillment of the other verses in the events that took place in the establishment of the church.

The prophet Isaiah said ". . . out of **Zion** shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." But when did this take place?

Answer These Questions

1. How were the nation of the Jews and Jerusalem concerned in fulfillment of prophecy **on the day of Pentecost** as recorded in Acts 2:1-47?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

2. How did Jehovah "teach the people" **on the day of Pentecost?** (cf. Acts 2:4.)
3. How was the kingdom of God set up to rule over all other kingdoms **on the day of Pentecost?** (cf. Acts 2:5.)
4. How was the universal nature of the church foretold **on the day of Pentecost?** (cf. Acts 2:39.)
5. What was the "law" that went forth from Zion **on Pentecost?** (cf. Acts 2:22-37.)

* * * * *

"And **in the days of these kings** shall the God of heaven **set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed**, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and **consume all these kingdoms**, and it shall stand forever." Dan. 2:44.

In order to appreciate this prophecy about the time of the establishment of the church we should understand the following Bible facts:

1. Read Daniel 2:31-35 for the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar.
2. Read Daniel 2:36-45 for Daniel's interpretation.
3. The four kingdoms spoken of are:
 - (1) **Babylonian.** Nebuchadnezzar was king in 600 B.C. This kingdom fell in 536 B.C. It is represented by the head of gold.
 - (2) **Medo-Persian.** Established by Cyrus, King of Persia, and Darius, King of Media. This kingdom fell in 330 B.C. It is represented by the breast and arms of silver.
 - (3) **Macedonia.** Established by Alexander the Great. Divided among his generals in 325 B.C. Represented by belly and thighs of brass.
 - (4) **Roman.** Established as a world power by Octavius Caesar in 30 B.C. This Roman kingdom was represented by legs of iron and feet of iron and clay.

Answer These Questions

1. What does the "stone cut out without hands" represent? (cf. Dan. 2:34.)
2. Where did the stone smite the image? (cf. Dan. 2:34.)
3. At what **time** then was God's kingdom going to be set up? (cf. Dan. 2:44.)
4. "In these days came John the Baptist." Matt. 3:1-2. In what days? cf. Luke 3:1-2 for your answer. Note please **the message** of John the Baptist in connection with the establishment of the kingdom of God.
5. Is there any significance in the fact that there were "ten kings" ruling under the Emperor of Rome? If not, why not?

WHEN CHRIST BUILT HIS CHURCH

“And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the **inhabitants of Jerusalem**, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall **look unto Me whom they have pierced**; and they shall mourn for Him, as **one mourneth for his only son**, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born.” Zech. 12:10. “**In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.**” Zech. 13:1.

* * * * *

Here is a prophecy having some very wonderful and specific promises in it. When was it fulfilled? It seems evident that it can find a perfect fulfillment on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem in 34 A.D. Note:

1. This prophecy was for the “house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” These were the ones present on that day: (cf. Acts 2:5.)
2. It states that “**they shall look unto me whom they have pierced.**” Peter said on that day “**ye by the hands of lawless men did crucify and slay.**” They also cried out and said, “What shall we do?”
3. The fountain had been provided on Calvary but it was “**opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem**” on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem in 34 A.D.

It has been established from three prophets that the time for the setting up of Christ’s church or kingdom was 34 A.D. Now to approach the subject from the promises Jesus Himself made, read again Luke 24:45-47.

1. Jesus said that “remission of sins” would start in Jerusalem. (cf. Luke 24:47.)
2. Remission of sins and church membership are the same thing.
3. Therefore the church began in Jerusalem in 34 A.D.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be **born anew**, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him. How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be **born of water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” John 3:3-5.

Answer These Questions

1. What were the entrance requirements for the kingdom of heaven? (cf. John 3:5.)
2. When was water and the Spirit associated in the ministry of Jesus? (cf. Matt. 3:16.)
3. When was water and the Spirit associated in the salvation of sinners? (cf. Acts 2:37-38.)

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

4. Read John 7:39 and tell when the Spirit was to be given. When was Christ "glorified"? (cf. Acts 2:33.)
5. **When** were the first persons born anew or **when** did the first persons enter the kingdom of God?

"And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the **keys of the kingdom of heaven**; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 16:18-19.

Answer These Questions

1. What are the "keys of the kingdom of heaven?" (The answer to question No. 1 is found by answering question No. 2.)
2. What is the kingdom of heaven?
3. What are the entrance requirements for the kingdom or the church?
4. When were these keys first used? By whom? For whom?
5. Were any of the other apostles invested with this power of binding and loosing? (cf. Matt. 18:18.) What were they to bind and loose? Compare Romans 1:16 for that power of God for the salvation of men.

* * * * *

These three statements of Jesus have proven that the time for the establishment of His church was the day of Pentecost, in the city of Jerusalem, in 34 A.D. The subject is now approached from a process of reasoning. What time, according to logic is established the time when Christ built His church?

It would be a happy experience if we could have a little informal chat. Many times I have sat in the homes of persons interested in the grand subject of the church and led them by a series of questions to the scriptural understanding as to just when the Lord built His church. Perhaps a study of this book will produce this same result in your life. There is a two-fold purpose in these questions. Not only are they to teach you, but you should so learn them that you can use them in the teaching of others.

1. **Who makes up the church?** There could be a good deal of discussion in answering this question. However, we know from a scriptural study that only Christians make up the body of Christ.
2. **What is it that makes a Christian?** There are many things involved in making a Christian but the one inclusive answer is that the gospel makes Christians for it is "the power of God unto salvation." Rom. 1:16.
3. **What is the gospel?** The word gospel means "good news." Noah had a gospel to preach. His good news was that there was safety in the ark. Moses had good news or a gospel to announce to

the Hebrew slaves in Egyptian bondage. John the Baptist preached the good news of the coming kingdom. But, there was nothing in any of these announcements that could save the soul. There is only one gospel that contains the soul-saving facts. Paul outlines it in his epistle to the Corinthians:

"Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by **which also ye are saved**. . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received; that **Christ died for our sins** according to the scriptures; and that **He was buried**; and that **He hath been raised again on the third day** according to the scriptures." I Cor. 15:1-4.

This is the soul saving good news.

4. **When was this gospel first preached?** It was preached in type and shadow in the Old Testament. It was preached in promise in the ministry of Christ. But fifty days after the last passover of Christ, on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem in 34 A.D. for the first time in the world's history, these facts were preached.
5. **What did the persons become who accepted this gospel?** We have already answered this question. Persons who obey the gospel become Christians.
6. **Together what did they make up?** We have answered this question, too. Gathered together a group of Christians make up the church. When the first three thousand became Christians and together made up the church, whose church was it? You have the answer to that question, too: it was Christ's church. Thus, from the prophets, from Jesus, and from logic, 34 A.D. becomes the time when Christ built His church.

Since there has been so much said in this lesson on the subject of the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven, it might be well to devote a little space to a brief study of this subject as it relates to the church. A scriptural demonstration shows that the kingdom and the church are the same institution.

1. The kingdom is consistently spoken of as in the future, before Pentecost. Note:
 - (1) John the Baptist: "The kingdom of heaven is **at hand**." Matt. 3:2.
 - (2) Jesus: "After this manner therefore pray ye . . . **thy kingdom come**." Matt. 6:10.
 - (3) The twelve, during the ministry of Jesus, were to say: "The kingdom of heaven is **at hand**." Matt. 10:7.
 - (4) At the time of the confession of Peter, Jesus said: "I **will build** my church. . . ."
 - (5) At the institution of the Lord's supper the Master said: "I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

of the vine, **until** the kingdom of God shall come." Luke 22:18.

- (6) The eleven apostles on the Mount of Ascension said: "Lord, dost thou **at this time** restore the kingdom to Israel?" Acts 1:6b.

2. After Pentecost it is consistently spoken of as being present. Note:

- (1) Philip preached it not as in the future but in the present. "Good tidings concerning the kingdom of God. . ." Acts 8:12.
- (2) Paul preached the kingdom in Ephesus. "I went about preaching the kingdom" . . . He gave no hint of it being in the future.
- (3) Paul preached the kingdom of God in Rome. "Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord. . ." Acts 28:31a.
- (4) The Colossian Christians were translated out of darkness into the kingdom of Jesus. ". . . translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." Col. 1:13b.
- (5) The Thessalonian Christians were called into a kingdom. ". . . who calleth you into His own kingdom and glory." I Thess. 2:12b.

3. As discussed by Roy E. Cogdill in, "**The New Testament Church**," the same conclusion may be reached by another line of reasoning: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them even as on us at the beginning." Acts 11:15.

- (1) The Holy Spirit came in the beginning. "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Acts 1:8a.
- (2) With the Holy Spirit in the beginning came the power. "And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power." Mark 9:1.
- (3) With that power came the kingdom in the beginning.
- (4) Therefore with the coming of the Holy Spirit, in the beginning, came the kingdom. In Acts 2, the record is given of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; hence that day of Pentecost marks the beginning of the kingdom.

Examination Two

1. Why is the beginning of the church of any importance to us?
2. Name three things Isaiah said about the beginning of the church.
3. Explain briefly in your own words how "God's kingdom was set up in the days of those kings."
4. What one thing did Zechariah say about the time of the establishment of Christ's church?
5. How does the promise of Jesus concerning the remission of sins beginning in Jerusalem have anything to do with the time of the establishment of Christ's church?
6. How does the new birth relate to the establishment of the church?
7. What are the "keys of the kingdom"?
8. Give the six questions and answers from memory.
9. Give three examples of when the kingdom was spoken of in the future.
10. Do you believe that the church and the kingdom are the same institution? If so, why? If not, why not?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

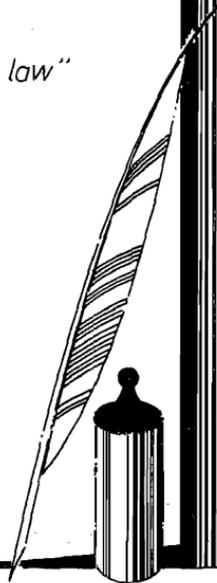
**WHERE
Christ Built His Church**

Jesus said: God said: Prophets said:

JERUSALEM

“... for out of Zion shall go forth the law”

Isaiah 2:3



LESSON THREE

WHERE CHRIST BUILT HIS CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"Young men! As you go out into the world to face scientific problems, remember that I, an old man, who has known only science all my life long, say to you that there is nothing truer in all the universe than the scientific statements contained in the Word of God."

—*Professor Dana (to a graduating class at Yale University.)*

But, of what benefit are the scriptures unless they are appropriated by each individual for himself? Here are the scripture texts of this lesson:

Luke 24:45-49; Jer. 3:14-18; Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:14-18.

Answer the Following Questions With A Very Candid Yes or No

- 1. The church came as a "stop gap" measure until Christ sets up His kingdom on earth.
- 2. Jerusalem was the geographical place of beginning for Christ's church.
- 3. The first members of Christ's church were all Jews.
- 4. The first members of Christ's church were from many nations.
- 5. The Holy Spirit was the real author of the first gospel sermon.
- 6. The Holy Spirit filled the room where the apostles were sitting and in this manner baptized them in the Holy Spirit. (cf. Acts 2:1-4.)
- 7. The one hundred twenty disciples were the ones who were "filled with the Holy Spirit" and thus preached the first gospel sermon.
- 8. The twelve apostles were, in a very special sense, the witnesses for Jesus.
- 9. There are no prophecies that speak in an unquestionable sense about Jerusalem as the place for the establishment of the church.
- 10. We can say today that the church of which we are a member was established in 30 or 34 A.D. in the city of Jerusalem.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ: even as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love." Eph. 1:3-4.

Careful reading of the above scripture reference will show that in the strictest sense of the word the church was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. This surely is one more evidence of the greatness of this subject.

The application that is to be made of the word "**where**" in this lesson has to do with the church's appearance on earth.

The Psalmist had this to say of Zion or Jerusalem:

"Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." Psalm 48:2. One hundred and two years ago these words were penned of the same city:

"The 'Land of Moriah' mentioned in Genesis 22:2, is supposed to mean all the mountains, on which, and in their hollows, Jerusalem was afterwards erected, and these mountains were called 'Moriah' or 'Vision' because, being high land, they could be seen afar off; but afterwards the name was appropriated to the most elevated part, on which Solomon built his celebrated temple (II Chron. 3:1), on the site of which now stands the mosque of Omar, which no Christian can enter but at the peril of his life . . . Mount Moriah, strictly so called, is the third of the four hills on which Jerusalem stood in the time of Jesus Christ, according to the minute topographical description of Josephus."

—*Scenes from Bible Lands.*

There are **some very definite reasons for the selection of Jerusalem** as the place for the calling out of the assembly of Christ. Notice what Jesus said about this place and the origin of His church:

"Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and He said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations, **beginning from Jerusalem.**" Luke 24:45-47.

This passage was commented on in the previous lesson, but there is yet a point or two worthy of consideration. Note:

1. When a sinner accepts the preaching of repentance and the remission of sins in the name of Jesus, he becomes a Christian.
2. An assembly of Christians constitutes Christ's church.
3. Christ said that the preaching in His name of repentance and the remission of sins would begin in Jerusalem.
4. The city of Jerusalem therefore became the beginning place for His church when this message was preached and three thousand accepted it.

WHERE CHRIST BUILT HIS CHURCH

Note this same thought from a little different approach:

1. Remission of sins and church membership are one and the same thing.
2. Jesus promised that remission of sins would begin in Jerusalem.
3. Therefore, we conclude that the church began in Jerusalem.

Answer These Questions

1. How was Jerusalem "beautiful in elevation?" Why was it called "Moriah?"
2. Why was Jerusalem sometimes called "Zion"?
3. What does repentance have to do with the remission of sins? (cf. Acts 2:38.)
4. What is the meaning of "in His name" in Luke 24:47?
5. What does remission of sins have to do with church membership?

* * * * *

Consider the remarkable providential arrangement of the city.

- (1) The **proper people** were present for the accomplishment of God's purpose.

"Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, **devout men, from every nation under heaven.**" Acts 2:5.

Although some Jews were wilfully rebellious there were many who were of a good and honest heart. These men who believed in the sacred scriptures would be able to appreciate the plan of God in Christ. In this way and for this reason the gospel was preached to the "Jews first."

Coming as they did from "every nation under heaven" they could take the good news back to their own people and spread it in the nation where they lived. It is very possible that "the sojourners from Rome" (Acts 2:10) started the church in the Imperial city. It is more than probable that those who made the trip to Jerusalem were above average in means and influence. It was a real expense and inconvenience to go so far. The Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8 is a specific example.

In all of these considerations we can see the providence of God.

- (2) The **proper power** was present.

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:4. This power was promised by Jesus in the following words: "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." John 14:26.

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak: and

He shall declare unto you the things that are to come." John 16:13. "For John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Acts 1:5.

By reading very carefully the context of each of these three passages you will find the apostles to be the ones to whom this power was promised.

This experience is called by Luke "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49) and in his second treatise, "baptized in the Holy Spirit." Acts 1:5.

The historical account of this experience is given in Acts 2:1-6. What happened when these apostles were "clothed with power from on high" or "baptized in the Holy Spirit"?

The answer can be found in the meaning of the word "baptism." This word means "to dip, plunge, or immerse." This experience would be the dipping, plunging, or immersion of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the **element** of the baptism, man is the **subject** of the baptism. Concisely stated, the baptism in the Holy Spirit was the **complete immersion or subjection of the spirit of man by the Holy Spirit**. Thus the apostles spoke not as their spirit gave them utterance, but as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance.

The Holy Spirit using the minds and tongues of the apostles gave them the ability to speak in more than a dozen languages. Truly this was a heaven sent power for the accomplishment of God's eternal purpose.

(3) **The proper preachers** were present.

Remember what Jesus had promised to Peter about the "keys of the kingdom"? (cf. Matt. 16:19). And what He promised to all the apostles? (cf. Matt. 18:18). Here is the occasion for the use of this power, of these "keys of the kingdom."

These men had been selected, called, and commissioned by Jesus. The teaching He had given them over the past three and one-half years was all for the purpose of preparing them for this great day: the day when the Holy Spirit would bring to their memory all that Christ had taught them. They, empowered with this truth, spoke to these "devout Jews;" those who accepted it were "loosed" from their sins, those who refused were "bound" to their sins. Thus had God selected the city of Jerusalem as the place for the establishing of the kingdom of His Son.

Answer These Questions

1. In what two way were "the devout Jews" the best prospects for the first gospel sermon?
2. Explain in your own words what it meant for the apostles to be "baptized in the Holy Spirit." (cf. Acts 1:5 — 2:1-4.)

3. Give a Bible reason for saying that only the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Maybe you do not believe this. If not, tell why you do not, but give a Bible reason.
4. Tell again "what are the keys of the kingdom"?
5. How did the apostles "loose and bind" according to God's will on the day of Pentecost?

* * * * *

And not only so, but **the prophets also had foretold of Jerusalem as the "city of the great king."** Note this very meaningful prophecy from Jeremiah:

"Return, O backsliding children, saith Jehovah; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and **I will bring you to Zion.** And I will give you **shepherds** according to my heart, **who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.** And it shall come to pass, when ye are multiplied and increased in the land, in those days saith Jehovah, **they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah;** neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they **remember it;** neither shall they **miss it;** neither shall it **be made any more.** At that time **they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah;** and **all the nations shall be gathered unto it,** to the name of Jehovah, to **Jerusalem:** neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. In those days the **house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel,** and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers." Jer. 3:14-18.

Mark a number of definite predictions in this prophecy:

1. Jehovah was to bring the nation of Israel to Zion or Jerusalem. This He did on the day of Pentecost for they came in response to the call of Jehovah to worship Him at the Passover and Pentecostal feast.
2. It is here said that God would give them shepherds who would feed the people with knowledge and understanding. This is wonderfully true of the day of Pentecost, the apostles were indeed the divinely selected shepherds of the people. Had not Jesus told Peter: "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep." (cf. John 21:15-16.)
3. Note the strange forgetfulness of the ark of the covenant. It is here said that they would not speak of it, remember it, miss it, nor make it any more. What could possibly cause this tremendous change of attitude both on the part of God and His people? Only the giving of a "new covenant" could make this true. This new covenant "in His blood" was made known to the world on the day of Pentecost.
4. Jerusalem is here called the throne of Jehovah. Note the words concerning the exaltation of Jesus in Acts 2:30-33.
5. Judah and Israel (the ten tribes and the two tribes) are here said

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

to come together. Only in Christ, in the body of Christ, can the two become one. This was accomplished in the city of Jerusalem on that wonderful Pentecost after His resurrection.

The prophet predicted that **all these events would occur in Jerusalem!**

“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations that are called by my name, saith Jehovah that doeth this.” Amos 9:11-12.

James gives us the explanation of the fulfillment of this prophecy as he writes:

“And after they had held their peace, James answered saying, Brethren, hearken unto me: Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written. After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old.” Acts 15:13-18.

What is the tabernacle of David? To the Jew this was another way of saying the house of God. This terminology had reference to the kingdom of God as typified in the kingdom of David. The words of the eleven on the Mount of Ascension carry the cry of the heart of the children of Israel, “Lord dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” This carried the thought of a restoration of the earthly kingdom of David. The house of David, or the kingdom of David, was to be restored but in a spiritual kingdom, not in a physical one.

Where was the tabernacle of David rebuilt? Jerusalem was the place for the rule of David in the long ago; Jerusalem was the capitol of His kingdom; Jerusalem became the place where the house of David was reestablished!

Note that in this new tabernacle of David “all the nations” are to be included. This is the particular part of the prophecy emphasized by James. That this kingdom had its beginning at Jerusalem is a point of utmost importance.

Answer These Questions

1. Who were the shepherds of God who were to feed the people with knowledge and understanding? Where did this happen?
2. What is the “ark of the covenant” that was forgotten? Why was it forgotten?
3. In what way was Jerusalem the “throne of Jehovah”?
4. What is the “tabernacle of David”?

WHERE CHRIST BUILT HIS CHURCH

5. Where and when did God "rebuild the tabernacle of David"?

* * * * *

Not only was Jerusalem the place predicted by Jesus; the place that was providentially prepared; the place pointed to by the prophets, but it was also strategically located from a geographical point of view. Consider these interesting facts about the city:

1. It was a center of commerce and industry of that day.
2. It was the capitol of Jewish worship.
3. It was the depository for the Old Testament manuscripts.
4. It was the center of religious learning and leadership.

Jerusalem in a very real sense has become "the joy of the whole earth" for from this city has come the beginning of God's rule in the hearts of men through His Son.

Examination Three

1. In what sense was the church established "before the foundation of the world"?
2. Explain in your own words from Luke 24:54-47 how the church began in Jerusalem.
3. In what sense were the "devout Jews" the proper people in the beginning of Christ's church?
4. Why was the baptism in the Holy Spirit the essential power for the establishment of the church?
5. How were the apostles prepared for the place they were to have in the establishment of the kingdom?
6. Give two points of importance in the prophecy of Jeremiah 3:14-18. (The passages of scripture cited in these exams should already be so well known that no further reference need be made to them during the taking of the examination.)
7. How was Amos 9:11-12 fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem?
8. In what three ways was Jerusalem important from a geographical point of view?
9. Name two ways that "Jerusalem is the joy of the whole earth." **Any** two will do.
10. What part of this lesson seemed most important to you? Tell why.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

**What Christ Promised
in Matthew 16:18-19**



A Personally Possessed Church

A Uniquely Individual Church

A Church Founded by Human Agents



LESSON FOUR

WHAT CHRIST PROMISED IN MATTHEW 16:18-19

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"The Bible narrative, by its sublime plan, its profound scientific accuracy, betrays the supreme guidance which directs the pen of the writer and kept him throughout within the limits of truth."

Guyot (Professor of Geology)

Inasmuch as to this statement we must readily agree, then shall we come to count as our most treasured possession our knowledge of the Biblical narrative, or shall we depend on someone else's second hand knowledge?

Read these references which form the basis for this lesson:

Matt. 16:13-19; I Pet. 2:8, 9; 4:10; II Tim. 2:1-3; John 15:1-18; 10:1-10; Heb. 8:5; John 14:26; 16:13; Mark 16:15, 16; Eph. 4:1-4; Isa. 22:22; John 20:22-23.

Right or Wrong

- 1. Jesus never made a promise He failed to keep.
- 2. Jesus promised to build His church on Peter "the rock."
- 3. To belong to the church is one thing, to belong to Christ is something else entirely.
- 4. Our eternal salvation is not at all dependent upon our service to God.
- 5. There is room for the approval of God upon several of our present day denominational churches.
- 6. There is only one church described in the New Testament.
- 7. Whereas there is only one church revealed in the New Testament, we have no church comparable to it today.
- 8. If we truly only had **one** authority, we would have only **one** church.
- 9. The twelve apostles were the ones who carried out the plans of the Divine Architect.
- 10. John 20:22-23 is fulfilled in Acts 2:4; 38. (Read these verses and cf. John 7:39.)

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

Jesus never said anything on a subject of truth that was not important. Neither did Jesus make a promise that He did not keep. Hundreds of thousands of words have been written concerning the significance of Matthew 16:18-19; many thousand more could be written, and still their importance will never be over-emphasized.

It would seem that Jesus makes three definite statements within the one promise. Note: What are the distinguishing characteristics of this church?

A Personally Possessed Church. "I will build my church."

How many of you have ever spent time with your father in a childhood project? Did your father ever help you build something? And, fathers, have you ever helped your son build anything? If either experience has been yours, you will appreciate the following: It seems that a certain boy of eight or nine had had a desire for a yacht for a long time. Oh, not an ocean-going vessel, just one he could sail in the river near his house. He had the plans of this boat worked out in his mind and time and again he tried to draw them on paper. Then he found just the piece of wood he wanted and he told his father all about his plans. Presently the two of them were working together on the boy's dream boat. It turned out beautifully, thanks most of all to Dad. It looked really wonderful setting on the desk right near the boy's bed, so he could see it the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning.

At last the day came for the launching. Down to the river bank they went. The boy had a big ball of kite string and had tied it carefully to the bow of the boat. The boat floated beautifully, but somehow, for no reason that either the boy or his father knew, the string broke and the little yacht was adrift in the river. They followed it as far as they could, but it finally disappeared around a bend in the river and they thought they had seen the last of the treasured boat.

Then one day as the boy walked by a store, he suddenly stopped. There in the store window was his beautiful boat! Someone had found it. There it was with a "for-sale" sign on it. He went in and told the man that it was his boat, that he had made it and lost it for awhile. Talk as he did, there was no way he could get it without paying for it. The boy did have some money, so he went home and took back to the store all the money he had. As providence would have it, the total amount of the boy's savings and the price of the boat were the same. The transaction was quickly

completed and when the man handed the boat to him, how happy he was. As he held it close to his heart he whispered, "Little boat, now you are mine **twice**. Once I **made** you and now I have **bought** you. Little boat, you are **twice** mine."

How marvelously true this is of the good ship Zion, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has **made** us and He has **bought** us.

In speaking of these "called out ones" Peter says: "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **a people for God's own possession . . .**" I Peter 2:9b.

Think seriously what it means to belong to Jesus. This relationship is described under various figures:

1. "Ye were bought with a price: become not **bondservants** of men." I Cor. 7:23.
2. ". . . as good **stewards** of the manifold grace of God." I Peter 4:10b.
3. "Suffer hardship with me, as a **good soldier** of Christ Jesus." II Tim. 2:3.
4. "I am the vine, **ye are the branches**" . . . John 15:5a.
5. ". . . **the sheep** follow him . . ." John 10:4.

My **church** is: my **bondservants**, my **stewards**, my **soldiers**, my **sheep**. Do we really feel the import and impact of this truth?

"If a servant does not serve; if a steward is not faithful; if a soldier is not on service; if the branches do not bear fruit; if the sheep will not follow," then has not the marvelous plan of Christ been frustrated? And, more important still, **are we not accountable**?

On the other hand, **we can** enter into the wonder and joy and of sustaining these relationships. He would not have loved us, called us, and purchased us if He did not feel we could enter into a full enjoyment of these capacities. We usually judge the value of an object by the price tag on it. What was the price Christ paid for the church? (cf. Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25.) If, then, we are **so valuable** to God and His Son shall we not live like it, talk like it and think like it?

"Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but **with precious blood**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." I Peter 1:18-19.

Answer These Questions

1. Give a scripture reference to show that Christ has created man.
2. Explain, briefly, the meaning of the terms in I Peter 2:9 that

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

describe our relationship to one another, to the world and to God.

3. How could we be both a bondservant **and** a steward?
4. Are the challenges of our relationship to Christ too high and holy for practicability?
5. How is the sacredness and preciousness of life shown in what has been said?

* * * * *

Christ promised to build a **Uniquely Individual Church**. "I will build my **church**."

We are to have a separate lesson on unity. A study of the thought of unity will present the rather obvious but neglected truth, that Christ promised to build but **ONE** church. And what He promised, that He did.

Wait a moment! Just a minute before coming immediately to a conclusion. So many people, upon reading or hearing the above statement, concerning one church, are repulsed by the thought, and indignantly say: "Yes, and I suppose Christ built **your** church." No, He did not. Christ is **not** today fulfilling what He promised in Matthew 16:18-19. He accomplished that nineteen centuries ago. But, in what He accomplished, **we have a pattern**. It is up to us to be at the work of building Christ's church; "That thou make all things according to the divine pattern." Heb. 8:5.

Now, there is a very real sense in which Christ and God work with every Christian. It is not in revealing the pattern for the church of the Lord. That was promised and fulfilled in the first century, and we have the imperishable record of it to follow in God's Word. (cf. Matt. 24:35.) The more we read the record or search the scriptures the more apparent this is to us. Consider these facts:

1. The church was **one** when it was first called out. (cf. Acts 2:1-47.) This can be demonstrated in a number of ways:

(1) There was **one** source of authority. Do you remember the promise of Christ to Peter? Matt. 16:19. The "keys of the kingdom" would be **the words** Peter and the other apostles spoke, but who was the source of these words? "They spake as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:4. This was in fulfillment of Jesus' promise to them in John 16:13; 14:26. (Read these references carefully.) If there was **one** source of authority in that day for the direction of the church, has it changed for today?

It could also be noted that they continued to recognize this authority, for they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching." Acts 2:42.

(2) There was **one** membership. Who were the members of the church in Jerusalem? This question has already been answered two or three times in previous lessons, but is it not a fact that the membership of the Jerusalem congregation was made up of all those who had repented of their sins and were baptized for the remission of their sins? (cf Acts 2:38-40.)

That the offer of membership in this divine body, (whether meeting in Jerusalem or any other part of the world) was to be given to all nations is very plain from Jesus' words in Luke 24:47b. In this reference He states that this preaching of repentance and remission of sins should be "preached in His name to **ALL THE NATIONS**, beginning from Jerusalem." What was started in Jerusalem was to spread to all the world. (cf. Mark 16:15-16.)

(3) There was **one** purpose. Of the church in Jerusalem it was said: "Not one of them said that aught of the things that he possessed was his own . . ." Acts 4:32. Unselfishness prevailed. The one purpose of all was to worship God and serve man.

2. The church is spoken of as **one** in the rest of its Biblical history.

Throughout the thirty-two years history of the church as outlined in the Acts record the church is **uniquely individual**; it is located in many places; it is referred to by many names; but it is always one body, Christ's church.

Jerusalem was an immense city in population; as much as a million at different times. There were three thousand added to the church in the beginning, five thousand a short time later. Then a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Yet it was "**the church at Jerusalem**" (cf. Acts 8:1), not the **churches** at Jerusalem. There could have been, and quite possibly were, several congregations in the great metropolis, but it was only one church in the sight of God and man.

There were numbers of congregations assembling in the three provinces of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, but when Luke wrote about the work of the Lord, it was in these words:

"So **the church** throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied." Acts 9:31.

When Luke wrote about the work in Antioch of Syria it was:

"Now there were at Antioch, in **the church** that was there, prophets and teachers. . . ." Acts 13:1a.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

In Ephesus Paul labored to establish the Lord's work. He called to him the elders of this work and here is what he said to them:

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed **the church** of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28.

Paul started the work of Christ in Thessalonica. Later he wrote them a letter. Note how he addressed them:

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto **the church** of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: . . ." I Thess. 1:1.

The thought of oneness is similarly spoken of in I Corinthians 1:2. When Paul writes to "the churches of Galatia" he is not referring to churches separate in beliefs and practices, but rather to the several congregations in the province of Galatia. The same application can be made concerning the "seven churches of Asia" to whom John wrote in Revelation 1:4.

Indeed we can say with Paul when we view the history of Christ's church in its first thirty-two years of existence "There is **ONE BODY . . .**" Eph 4:4.

Answer These Questions

1. What is meant by the phrase "uniquely individual"?
2. In what way did not Christ build any church of the twentieth century?
3. What is our divine responsibility concerning the building of the church?
4. In what three ways was the church one in the beginning?
5. Give three places in the Bible other than in the book of Acts where the church is spoken of as one.

* * * * *

Christ promised to build His church **Through Inspired Human Agents.**

"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 16:19.

Does it seem strange that Jesus would in one breath speak about building His **church** and then immediately say what He did about "the keys of the kingdom"? It does unless we understand the church and the kingdom to be the same institution.

Note this beautiful reference to the Messiah:

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon His shoulder;

and He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut and none shall open." Isa. 22:22.

The possession of "the key" is a sign of authority; even today we speak of giving someone "the key to the city," suggesting that he has the right of access to all the benefits of that city.

How did the Christ promise to use these keys? Note that the same power promised to Peter is given to all the apostles. (cf. Matt. 18:18.) So the answer is obvious: **He planned to use this power through His apostles.**

The "keys" of opening and closing, of loosing and retaining, would of necessity be the words spoken by the apostles. The thing to be bound to or loosed from would be **sin**. The power which would enable the apostles to speak these words would be the Holy Spirit.

These twelve men had been in a period of training for more than three years. The preparation they then received was all directed toward this greatest of all events. Jesus had made some very definite promises about this divine ability. (cf. John 16:13; 14:26; 15:26.)

The events that occurred on the day of Pentecost fulfill so perfectly the promises concerning the keys of the kingdom that it is strange that these promises were ever applied to any other occasion. Note:

Prediction

"And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit. Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." John 20:22-23. Note, please, that this must have been a prediction inasmuch as ". . . the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." John 7:39b.

Fulfillment

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." "And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:4; 38.

Answer These Questions

1. Does Christ refer to the church and the kingdom as one institution in Matthew 16:18-19? Explain your "yes" or "no" answer.
2. When was Isaiah 22:22 fulfilled?
3. How can it be demonstrated that Jesus promised the power of the keys of the kingdom to all twelve apostles?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

4. How did the period of training during the ministry of Jesus prepare the apostles for their task in using the "keys of the kingdom"?
5. Can you honestly say you could explain to someone else how Christ established His church through the apostles?

Examination Four

1. Name two ways in which the church belongs to Christ.
2. Name three relationships we sustain to Jesus and what responsibilities these involve.
3. How is the real value of the church pointed out by the price that was paid?
4. Show how Christ is **not** building His church today.
5. Show how Christ is building His church today.
6. In what two ways was the church **one** when it was established?
7. Mention two places in the Biblical record where the oneness of the church is seen.
8. What does Paul mean when he speaks of "**churches**" in Asia? (cf. Rev. 1:4.)
9. What is the significance of the figure of "keys" as in Matthew 16:19 and Isaiah 22:22?
10. What personal benefit did you derive from this lesson?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart"*

THE CHURCH'S
ONE FOUNDATION



Christ is the foundation of the church's

- LIFE
- HOPE
- PROGRESS



LESSON FIVE

THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"So great is the certainty in regard to our Gospels that even the heretics themselves bear testimony in their favour; and all acknowledging them, each endeavours to establish from them his own opinions."

—Irenaeus (2nd century)

What a marvelous testimony this is from one so near the divine source of the sacred writings. The question that probes my conscience is, "will I be like the heretics of old and seek to establish my opinions with the Gospels, or will I allow the Word to speak for itself to my life?"

After a season of prayer, read carefully these scripture references: I Cor. 3:1-11; John 12:24; Matt. 4:1-4; John 13:1-18; Heb. 9:2-3; 7:11-12; Rev. 22:1-11; Matt. 28:18-20; Matt. 6:1-10; John 6:1-53; Matt. 7:24-27.

Affirm or Deny But Tell the Reason Why

1. Jesus is never called the foundation of the church. The scriptures infer this, but never state it.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
1. The "corner-stone" of a building now is exactly like the "corner-stone" of Jesus' day.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
3. Jesus promised that if we became a Christian we would no longer have a desire for the "flesh" and the "lusts thereof."
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
4. Christ is our "life;" therefore, all our conduct must be measured by what He would do.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
5. Disgust and impatience are virtues in disguise.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
6. Some people make much over the tabernacle of the Old Testament as a type of the church. This emphasis is fanciful and cannot be supported by the scripture.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
7. The church will make wonderful progress if we ever come to receive, in all its fullness, the authority of Christ. (cf. Matt. 28:18-20.)
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

8. Angels could never be examples of obedience inasmuch as they live in heaven where there is no sin. (cf. Matt. 6:10.)
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
9. Christ is "the Head of life" only to the extent that we want Him to be.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____
10. It would be wrong for someone other than a preacher to baptize a person seeking salvation.
Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____

LESSON DISCUSSION

Have you ever heard of the "wailing wall" of the Jews in the present city of Jerusalem? Today this wall is not visited by any of the nation of Israel because it is held by the Arabs as part of their possession in the Holy City. Prior to this year hundreds and thousands of Jews have stood before this wall in an attitude of deepest concern. But why? Because it is here that they can best mourn over the dispersed nation of Israel, and pray for its restoration. It is here that they can more easily remember the glory that once belonged to the house of David. But why before this one wall? There are many walls in Jerusalem that are almost identical in appearance to this one. The reason is found in the stones that form it. Some of them are the very stones that Solomon used in the building of his beautiful temple for Jehovah. As a special point of interest, they are purported to be **the foundation stones** of Solomon's temple.

Just here there is a fact of particular concern for our understanding of the foundation of the church in the Bible. Peter, David, and Paul all call Jesus "the chief corner-stone." (cf. I Pet. 2:6; Acts 4:11; Psalm 118:22.) Paul also refers to Jesus as the one foundation for the church in these words:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Cor. 3:11.

The stones in the base of Solomon's temple measured nineteen feet long, eight feet high and some three or four feet wide. The chief corner-stone of a temple had these gigantic proportions for a very good reason. The corner-stones of our present day buildings are but ornamental. Any importance attached to them is honorary and artificial as far as the construction of the building is concerned. But this was not so in the apostolic age nor in the ages prior to the first century.

When Peter in holy boldness told the council that they, the builders of God's house, had "rejected the head of the corner" or the "chief corner stone" they rose in indignation. Why? (cf. Acts 4:11; 5:33.) Because by the measurements of the corner-stone was

the whole building plumbed. All measurements horizontal and vertical finally related to the corner-stone. As well as being the basis for the measurements, because of its size the corner-stone also formed the essential part of the foundation.

It then can be said of Jesus, as the chief-corner stone of God's house, that in Him all things consist or hold together.

The important thing in building the house or temple of God is to know the exact measurements of the corner-stone.

Christ is the foundation of the church in a number of ways. Shall we consider several aspects of this?

1. He is the foundation of the church's spiritual life.

What measurements will be followed in the building of our spiritual life according to the corner-stone? By measuring the chief corner-stone we can find the specifications we are to use in building our spiritual life.

In the present study we shall take but one measurement: it is best to know the detailed specifications of **one** measurement rather than to look hastily at many measurements.

We find by careful measurement that **spiritual life will follow only after a death has taken place.** Jesus explained this as He gave us the parable of the wheat seed:

"... Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." John 12:24.

This measurement is clearly seen in the life of Jesus.

(1) **He died to the glories of heaven** to come to a stable in Bethlehem. What supreme condescension it was for "the Word to be made flesh,"

"... who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, (or held on to) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." Phil. 2:6-7.

In this act Jesus has taught us that spiritual life requires a death to pride.

(2) **He died to the personal satisfaction of physical appetites** and remained hungry. Hear Him deal the death blow to the suggestion of Satan through the appetites:

"... It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matt. 4:4.

In our life of physical satisfaction, in our life of softness and luxury, it is almost unheard of to deny any appetite of the flesh. Yet if we are to live the life of the Spirit, there must be a denial of the flesh. Do you suppose Jesus was any less hungry for bread **after** the temptation than He was **before**? Of course not. If we are going to live a life of the Spirit instead of the flesh we must remain hungry in a number of realms. We had just as well settle it that we will

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

either satisfy the desires of our higher natures and leave our lower natures in hunger or vice versa. There must be a death produced by refusal, and this goes on continually.

(3) **Jesus died to the desire for revenge.**

Was Jesus tempted in this area? Certainly He was, for He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. What a temptation it must have been for Him to seek revenge on those who so hated Him. How unjustly He was treated, not only at His trial, but in so many other ways and at so many times. Yet He left vengeance unto His Father. There must be a death of this desire in our lives if we build according to the chief corner-stone a life in the Spirit.

(4) **There was a death to impatience and disgust in the heart of the Master.**

How often was the patience of Christ tried? After a day of teaching and healing when He would turn to His disciples for companionship and find nothing but carnality and self-seeking, the natural response would be impatience and disgust. But is this found in the life of our Lord? We can only say "no," because there was a death that had taken place in His heart. When He went to the garden, He knelt in prayer and poured out His heart to the Father on behalf of His poor, weak disciples. Will we make our lives according to this pattern?

(5) **Jesus died to the temptation to rank and position.**

We can read several times of an attempt on the part of His overzealous, material-minded disciples to make Him king; and did He not come to be king? He was called "Jesus, the King of the Jews." Yes, but not the type of king the followers had envisioned—no flashing swords, no marching armies, no pomp or ceremony. But was there no temptation to take the short cut to glory? Perhaps there was, but Jesus had died to this suggestion of the evil one. Will we become great on Christ's terms or on the terms of the world?

These are but a few of the specifications found as we measure the corner-stone for building the spiritual life. May God help each one of us to "measure up."

Answer These Questions

1. What does the "wailing wall" of the Jews have to do with the foundation of the church?
2. What caused the council to grow angry at Peter? (cf. Acts 4:11.)
3. What is the **one** essential measurement for a spiritual life?
4. What is meant by the thought that Jesus "remained hungry"? How is this applied to individuals today?
5. Why would Jesus be tempted to be disgusted or impatient? How is it possible to die to these temptations?

2. He is the foundation of the Church's Hope.

If our hope of heaven is to be built on Him what will the specifications be? We want to measure the chief corner-stone for the dimensions of hope that we might build our hope accurately, on a sure foundation. The measurements of our hope can be found in the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle. Note:

This half-wood and half-tent structure carries some beautiful symbolism for the Christian, but it will be our purpose to consider only the Holy of Holies. This room was a perfect cube fifteen by fifteen by fifteen feet. It was walled on three sides with boards of acacia wood and in the front with the veil.

Our hope of heaven is measured in blood:

"For there was a tabernacle prepared, the first, wherein were the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the Holy Place. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holy of holies; . . . but into the second the high priest alone, once in the year, **not without blood**; . . . But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but **through His own blood**, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Heb. 9:2-3, 7a, 11-12.

The veil that separated the ordinary worshiper from the Holy of Holies was torn open at His death. This was but an earthly representation of what happened in heaven. "We have a hope both sure and steadfast, entering within the veil, that is to say **His flesh**." (Heb. 10:20b.) When His flesh was torn and the blood shed, heaven was opened for all men.

"And He is the propitiation (or mercy seat) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." I John 2:2. Our hope of heaven then must be built upon the shed blood of Christ.

There is a further thought to be emphasized here: the blood opened the door for the high priest, and without the application of that blood there was no atonement. So it is with the blood of God's lamb slain, the blood is the cleansing element, but without the application of that blood there can be no sure way into heaven for the worshiper. Have you applied the blood?

As to how this blood was applied we refer you to the day of Pentecost and the devout men there who found the application of the blood and the sure hope of heaven. If our hope of eternal life is built on any other foundation, we have a false hope. If not, why not?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Answer These Questions

1. How wide, how high, and how long was the Holy of Holies?
2. Besides the shedding of the blood, what else was very important?
3. Why did the high priest go into the Holy of Holies once a year?
4. What was the veil that was torn to open heaven for us?
5. (If you have access to a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia, look up the following and answer for supplementary work.) Draw a diagram showing the plan of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies with the items of furniture in each.

* * * * *

3. He is the foundation of the Church's Progress.

- (1) Christ gives the incentive for progress. Hear Him:

"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, **All authority hath been given unto me** in heaven and on earth. **Go ye therefore**, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:18-20.

The authority of Christ is the great incentive for the church's progress.

Christ is not here personally to lead the church; the angels of heaven are not going to lead the church in triumph. Christ depends on men and women to further His cause. It is only as we are willing to take, personally, the authority of Christ that we will move in the discipling of all the nations.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray: "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth." Matt. 6:10. How is it that the heavenly beings are a pattern for our obedience? Is it because they cannot sin? No, no. They have sinned. The record plainly states that angels were cast down. How is this true then? It would seem that the authority of Christ must be better understood in heaven than it is on earth. The heavenly beings have the centuries and milleniums of time to tell them that it pays to serve Jesus. The presence of Christ is another help that says again and again it pays to serve Him.

The incentive for progress is not only in His authority, but in His promise of being with us. Have we lost our "God consciousness"? The Apostle Paul constantly felt that he was a workman together with God, with Christ. It is only when we are conscious that we are working with Christ that we can truly make progress for Him.

"We are constantly straining to devise new methods, new plans, new organizations to advance the Church and secure enlargement and efficiency for the gospel. This trend of the day has a tendency to lose sight of the man or sink the man in the plan of

organization. God's plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than anything else. Men are God's method."

—*The Preacher and Prayer* by E. M. Bounds.

Do you not see that all depends on Christ? Do you not see that all depends on you? Do you not see that all depends on Christ with you?
(2) Christ provides the means for our progress.

He is the "bread of life" for the traveler's strength. John 6:35.

In thinking of the "bread of life" we should remember the heaven sent manna of the Old Covenant. It would sustain all the nation of Israel, but it had to be gathered by **each one** if they were going to receive its benefit of nourishment. So it is with each of us and our heaven sent bread. There must be a personal appropriation of Christ in our minds and hearts before He can or will become the nourishment for our spiritual life, and enable us to make the progress we so desire. One other point of consideration is that the manna had to be gathered **each day**. So there must be a daily denial of self and a daily feeding on the "bread of life."

(3) The church's progress individually and collectively is in Christ. He gives the authority, the incentive, and most of all, He gives the reward for the progress. This is not the reward of heaven, but the blessed reward of the salvation of precious souls right here and now—the true progress and reward of the body of Christ.

What would it mean to you to win a soul to Christ? Think of the inexpressible privilege of being the one to break upon the understanding of some precious soul the news of salvation; to see the knowledge of that soul's need asserting itself; to see the anxious expression on the face, the intense soberness of attitude and remark, and then to one glad day see that same one step out to come to the feet of Jesus. What a blessing then to grip their hand, and with that handclasp feel the very pulsation of the heart; to think for a moment in your own heart of the question that is to fall from your lips; to know in your innermost self that nothing you could ever say would be of greater importance: "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God?" And then to stand by the grave of this one who has responded to the Word. Oh, it is a watery grave, true, but a grave none the less. You can then lead this penitent sinner out into the water, to there lower him into the grave. As you thus bury him, you can look into the face of the object of Jesus' love. You can watch the water cover the old man; then gently lift from the water a new man, a new creature, a new life, a new child of God in Christ Jesus. This can be and should be the privilege not only of the preacher, but of every Christian. It was in the first century.

As we have measured the corner-stone on the matter of spiritual progress, how have we built our lives on this point?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Answer These Questions

1. What two things form the incentive for the progress of the church?
2. What means does Christ provide that makes our progress possible?
3. What is the reward for progress promised to us?
4. Is there a place in the scriptures that seems to suggest a final inspection day? If so, where? If so, what is the penalty for faulty workmanship?
5. Show how Matt. 7:24-27 applies to the thought of the right foundation.

Examination Five

1. Name and explain three things that must "die" if we are to have spiritual life.
2. How does the "chief corner stone" become the basis for the whole house?
3. Name two ways that the Holy of Holies is like our hope of heaven.
4. In entering into the Holy of Holies the shedding of blood was important. What was as equally important?
5. Name two incentives for progress that Christ gives us as the church.
6. Name and explain the means for the progress.
7. What is the reward for progress?
8. (On these last three questions do a little independent thinking on this subject of the foundation of the church before giving your answer.) What is meant by the term "spiritual life"?
9. Could a person or a church sincerely build upon a false foundation of the hope of heaven? If so, how?
10. If we are not accepting the authority of Christ, what is the matter?

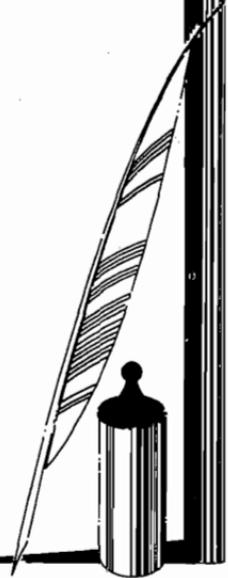
*Lay these words upon
thy heart''*

GOD GAVE HIM TO BE

HEAD

over all things to the church

LEGISLATIVE
EXECUTIVE
JUDICIAL



LESSON SIX

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"If at the present time some cynic or candid friend sought to make the punishment fit the crime, and proceeded to compile an encyclopedia of the mistakes that had been made by critics and commentators on the Old Testament, and placed beside each the real facts that have recently come to light, it would surely run into volumes."

—*Sir Charles Marston*

Tell me, my soul, art thou wholly sincere when thou sayest "Upon thy law will I meditate both day and night"? What is it that occupies thy thoughts in thy conscious hours? Lay these words upon thy heart:

Eph. 1:22-23; II Tim. 3:16-17; Acts 18:24-28; II Pet. 1:3; II Cor. 3:1-11; Jude 3; Rom. 2:1-16; John 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:5-11; II Cor. 5:10; I John 1:7-9.

True or False

- 1. Christ is the Head of the church only insofar as we are willing to have it so. Explain your answer.
- 2. No organism or organization can exist without a head.
- 3. John 21:15-17 suggests that Jesus made Peter the head of His church. If not, what does the text teach?
- 4. The pattern for the church is complete in every respect as given in the New Testament. (cf. II Tim. 3:16-17.)
- 5. It is always good to consider what several men have said about any scripture in consideration before we form our interpretation of the passage. Explain.
- 6. All we need to know of philosophy for the winning of souls to Christ is in the New Testament. Col. 2:3; 9.
- 7. We should observe the ten commandments today. Explain.
- 8. The Roman Catholic church decided upon the num-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

ber of books in the New Testament; i.e., that there should be twenty-seven instead of twenty-six or twenty-eight. Explain.

- 9. The New Testament was not completed in its present form until about 250 A.D.
- 10. There will be some on the day of judgment who will be condemned because they never knew the law. Explain. (cf. Rom. 2:13-15.)

LESSON DISCUSSION

There is little use to discuss the truthfulness or scriptural basis of the thought of the Head of the church without a personal acceptance of it in the heart of each member of Christ's body.

This is an awesome subject. What would it mean in the life of the church for every Christian to know the reality of the headship of Christ? What a restoration, what a transformation would occur! The facts of the case are that we are failing to a large extent to accept Him as "head over all things to the church."

There are a number of ways in which this word "head" can be used in reference to Christ and the church:

He is head of the church as a general is head of an army.

He is head of the church as a king is head of his kingdom.

He is head of the church as the chief shepherd is head of all under-shepherds, and of all the sheep.

He is head of the church as that portion of the physical body of man called the head is the total source of direction for all the members of the body.

It is in the last sense that we wish to think of the subject. First, a word or two as to the immense importance of this position held by Christ:

- 1. The head of any organization or organism is as important as its existence.** The very existence of either an organization or an organism is related to the head. The headship might be vested in several men as in the case of an organization but the principle still holds. How healthy the organization is, depends largely upon the decisions of the head. The same thing holds true of an organism. How exceedingly careful we should be as members of God's organization or organism that we truly have Christ as head and not some usurper. **Honestly now, who is giving you directions?**
- 2. The head is inseparably linked up with progress.** The directions of the head for progress may be short-circuited somewhere before

they are carried out, but essentially the progress surely depends upon the head. Suppose we have a false head. Shall not the directions also be false; and shall not the progress be in error and not in truth? How is our progress in the Christian faith? If we are dissatisfied with it, it is because of one of two things. Either the directions have been failing to come through, or the source of these directions is not Christ.

- 3. The proper head is essential for the permanence of any institution or person.** What happens to a kingdom when a despot secures the throne? History is a plain teacher on this point. That kingdom cannot long endure. When the human head loses its usual facilities the body is in danger of self-destruction. Who is the true head in your life, not the professed head, but the **real** ruler of your spirit? Is the permanence of your life assured? How eternally important it is to have the right head for our spiritual lives, and of God's organization, the church.

There is one other matter that should be understood before we develop the manner in which Christ is head of the church. It ought to go without saying that man can never be, and has never been, the head of Christ's church. Jesus did not constitute Peter the head of the church. In the reference where this is claimed by certain advocates (Matt. 16:19) Jesus gives to Peter the power to "bind and loose." Does this constitute him head over the church? If so, then there were twelve heads, for He gave this same power to all twelve of the apostles. (cf. Matt. 18:18; John 20:20-23.)

John 21:15-17 is produced as a proof text for the claim that Jesus made Peter head of the church. It is thought by certain persons that the injunction "feed my lambs" and "feed my sheep" gave Peter jurisdiction over the whole church or over the whole flock of God. If this power of feeding the flock is what constituted Peter the human head of the church, then the Ephesian elders were also the heads of the church for Paul told them to "feed the flock" or "the church of the Lord." (Acts 20:28.) Peter, along with the other apostles, were but servants in the great kingdom of Christ, all on the same level of service, all fulfilling their own office of apostles, not heads.

There is yet another way that we can have a human head to the church. It consists of admitting with our mouths that Christ is head, but denying it in practice. We deny it for we follow the directions of men instead of Christ. Are we going to let men be the interpreters of Christ's will for us? Will we admit that Christ in heaven is the head of the church and then follow, on earth, the interpretations of His will as given to us by men?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

There is nothing wrong with interpreting the word of Christ, indeed, that is what is being done in writing these lessons. But are you going to accept every word of this as the truth simply because it is so written? When will we learn that schools, publishing houses, and teachers are the interpreters of Christ's will, but **are not any source of authority?** Christ alone, as He speaks to us through His Word, is the true and only source of authority. He has spoken once and for all to all the saints in the faith, once for all delivered. (Jude 3) When will we hear Him?

Shall we now consider just what it means for Christ to be head over all things to the church? (cf Eph 1:22-23.) (Remember you are bound to accept only as much of this lesson or any other lesson as you can find supported by the Word of God.)

(1) IF GOD MADE CHRIST HEAD OF THE CHURCH, AND HE DID; AND IF GOD GAVE HIM ALL AUTHORITY, AND HE DID; THEN CHRIST WOULD HAVE ALL LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY AS HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

It is the task of the legislature to formulate the laws of the land. Christ is the legislative head of the church. Therefore, it was His responsibility to make the laws for the operation of His kingdom or divine government. This He did. Christ, through the Holy Spirit and the writers of the New Testament, gave to the church the inspired laws for its direction. Let us look at the laws the Great Legislator has given us:

1. They are complete and are able to furnish us unto every good work. II Tim. 3:16-17. By reading the fifteenth verse of this chapter you will note that Paul had reference, in this admonition to Timothy, to the Old Testament scriptures, but the application of this principle is broader than the Old Testament. Note: "EVERY SCRIPTURE (is) inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." II Tim. 3:16-17.

Now mark the words of the fourteenth verse:

"But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." Timothy was asked by Paul to abide in the things he had learned. The greatest share of his learning came from Paul. Paul felt the words he wrote to Timothy and others were inspired. (cf. I Cor. 2:6-10; 12-13.) Therefore, Timothy would have undoubtedly included the writings of Paul with the Old Testament scriptures in

becoming the complete man spoken of by Paul. Our total source of truth **in teaching** should be the inspired Word.

In attempting to demonstrate **the validity of any position** our recourse should only and always be the Word of God. When we feel **error has been taught** or it being taught, the correction of such must come from the inspired Word. If the person in question is sincere and honest and accepts with you this source of authority, error can be corrected, even as in the case of Apollos. (cf. Acts 18:24-28.) If we are to grow in our knowledge of God or likeness to the Saviour, there is but a single source for such instruction. If, then, we believe this, how is it that we so often refer to the works of men before the Word of God? Is it because we only believe this in theory and not by experience?

2. In them we have ALL THINGS that pertain to life and godliness. Read carefully this beautiful passage from God's book as recorded by Peter:

"Seeing that His divine power hath granted unto us **all things** that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and virtue." II Pet. 1:3.

Is this a reality with us? Is this the sincere philosophy of our life? Do we truly believe that in and by Christ Jesus we have all that we need for this life and the life to come? Is He in truth, "the Way" of life for us? Must we go outside the teachings of the Word for our understanding in moral conduct? Whether we realize it or not we **are** all following some way of life. Our way may be a modified, adulterated form of Christ's way. Are we going to be satisfied with second-hand human interpretations of Christ's way? How long has it been since you prayerfully, personally read the Sermon on the Mount? This Sermon on the Mount is not the total expression of Christ's philosophy of life, but it is a good starter. Then you might take up a careful study of the Apostle Paul who **found** the Way, the Truth and the Life. Paul is a personification of II Peter 1:3.

Not only is the Word to provide for our life here and our relationship with one another, but it will give us **all things necessary** to our relationship with God. We need not wonder if we are acceptable in the sight of God when we are assured that He has given us **all things necessary** to present us before Him without spot and blameless in His sight. (cf. Jude 24-25.)

3. These laws are contained in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

Whereas the entire Bible is surely the inspired Word of God, it is in the New Testament that Christ has legislated for the Christian.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Note this comparison and contrast between the Old and New Covenants:

II Corinthians 3:1-11

The Old Covenant

Written on tables of stone. vs. 3.
Of the letter. vs. 6.
The letter kills. vs. 6
Called a ministration of death.
vs. 7
The glory of it was passing away.
vs. 7.
Passeth away. vs. 11.

The New Covenant

Written in tables that are hearts
of flesh. vs. 3.
Of the spirit. vs. 6.
The Spirit giveth life. vs. 6.
The ministration of the spirit. vs.
8.
The glory was to remain or "be
with glory." vs. 8.
Remaineth. vs. 11.

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second." Heb. 8:7.
Refer to Galatians 4:21-31 for another comparison and contrast.

Answer These Questions

1. What is the one essential in making the headship of Christ more than just a scriptural truth?
2. In what three ways is the importance of the head pointed out?
3. Give two reasons why you do not believe that Jesus made Peter the earthly head of the church.
4. Name three ways that the scriptures furnish us completely.
5. Show three comparisons of the two covenants in Galatians 4:21-31.

* * * * *

(2) IF GOD MADE CHRIST HEAD OF THE CHURCH, AND HE DID, AND IF GOD GAVE HIM ALL AUTHORITY, AND HE DID, THEN CHRIST WOULD HAVE ALL EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY AS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

It is the task of the executor to carry out the laws formulated by the legislator. This we know Christ has done. But just how was this accomplished? Let us examine this subject briefly.

Because there is so much confusion and error on the subject of the canon of the New Testament (look up the word "**canon**" in a dictionary) we feel that it would be very profitable to understand just how it is that Christ brought these twenty-seven books into existence—and how it is that we have twenty-seven instead of twenty-six or twenty-eight. There is one very easy answer to this question as to how **Christ executed the laws of His church and caused them to be written in these twenty-seven books.** Is it simply that the Holy Roman Catholic Church decided upon the matter and therefore we owe the existence of our New Testament to

them? Perhaps you have heard or read this before. Do you have an answer for it?

We are indebted to Milligan in his book, "Reason and Revelation," for most of our information in this section.

"The Canon of the New Testament, consisting of twenty-seven books, rests, in like manner, on the authority of the apostles and other inspired members of the Primitive Church. This is evident,

(1.) From the entire unanimity with which all the primitive Christians received and adopted these books as their only infallible and all-authoritative rule of faith and practice.

For, be it remembered,

"(1) That on all speculative questions resting on mere human authority the disciples of the first and second centuries were exceedingly prone to differ in their opinions. This was a necessary consequence growing out of their previous education. They had been collected into the Christian Church from all the religious and philosophical parties of the then known world, and, as a matter of course, they brought into their new relations many of their old habits and modes of thought. Some of them were inclined to Platonism, some to Aristotelianism, some Epicureanism, some to Stoicism, some to Phariseeism, and some to Sadduceeism. This old leaven soon began to work throughout the entire body. One began to say, 'I am of Paul;' and another, 'I am of Apollos;' and another, 'I am of Cephas;' and another, 'I am of Christ.' Sectarianism was, in fact, the natural tendency in all the congregations, and nothing but **Apostolic authority** could have prevented a division of the primitive church into a great number and variety of contending sects and parties. This is evident from nearly all of Paul's epistles, as well as from the united testimony of ecclesiastical historians. See, for instance, the first volumes of Mosheim, Geiseler, and Neander.

"(2) But on the question of the Canon there were some additional and special reasons that must have inevitably led to divisions in the primitive church, had it in any sense or in any measure been a speculative question. On this assumption every one would have been inclined to receive those books as canonical which most fully coincided with his own philosophical opinions and religious prejudices—just as it now is with those who practically disregard the authority of God's Word; so that in a short time the church would have been hopelessly divided, and every little sect and party would have had its own favorite canon.

"(3) But, notwithstanding these plain and inevitable tendencies to strife, and division, and sectarianism in the primitive church,

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

and especially on the question touching their rule of faith and practice, it is, nevertheless, a remarkable and well-authenticated historical fact, that **on no other question has any body of men ever been more fully and firmly united.** Indeed, the unity of Israel on the question of the Old Testament Canon, is the only parallel case known in history. During the first three centuries, the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, and the thirty-nine of the Old, were the only ones that were quoted as canonical by any Christian writer. And at no period of the Christian Church were any of these twenty-seven books rejected by any Christian writer or teacher after a fair examination of the evidence. It is true, that for a time, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the Second of Peter, the Second and Third of John, that of Jude, and the Apocalypse, were by some regarded as of doubtful authority. But this only proves that the formation of the New Testament Canon was a matter of great care and concern among all true Christians. For as soon as they had fully investigated the matter, and had clearly ascertained from the testimony of competent witnesses, that these books had been written and endorsed by inspired men, that was, with them, an end of the controversy. They then no longer hesitated to regard and receive them as canonical.

“Here, then, we might perhaps safely rest the whole question; for even from the premises now before us, it evidently follows that the canonical authority of these books rests on the authority of the apostles and other inspired teachers of the primitive church.

(2.) This conclusion is greatly confirmed and strengthened by the consideration that **these twenty-seven books were all in existence, and most of them extensively circulated in the churches, and actually quoted as canonical by the Apostolic Fathers, and others, for more than fifty years before the cessation of miraculous gifts.** The evidence on this point is full and satisfactory; and I think that a few observations will make it plain and obvious to all.

Be it remembered, then,

“(1) That the apostles were all fully endowed with these supernatural gifts. Through them they were enabled to understand the great scheme and mystery of redemption, to reveal it to others, and also to demonstrate to all who sought to know the truth, that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to every true believer. This is evident from such passages as the following: Matt. 10, and also 28:18-20; Luke 24:48, 49; John 14:26 and 16:13; and the entire Book of Acts.

“(2) That the apostles had power to bestow these gifts on other

persons, and that they often actually did this for the double purpose of converting the world and of edifying the church. See, for instance, Acts 8:14-25; Rom. 1:11 and II Tim. 1:6. See also I Cor. 12 and 14.

“(3) But as God is no respecter of persons or of churches, and as the primitive churches were all equally needy in this respect before the books of the New Testament were written, it is but fair to conclude that what was done for Timothy was also done for Mark and Luke, and all others who were called to labor in word and doctrine; and, moreover, that whatever gifts were bestowed on the Samaritans and the Corinthians would, in like manner, be bestowed on all other churches, under similar circumstances, and hence that **most, if not all, of the first evangelists and bishops of the Christian Church were, like Timothy, endowed with these extraordinary spiritual gifts.**

“(4) Many of these would of course outlive the apostles and it is but reasonable to suppose that some of them would continue to minister to the wants of the churches, until at least the middle of the second century. Polycarp, for example, one of John’s disciples and bishop of the church of Smyrna for about eighty years, suffered martyrdom in A.D. 166. And if Polycarp’s ministry continued so long in Asia Minor, it is fair to presume that some other evangelists and bishops who had seen the apostles, and who had received from their hands these extraordinary gifts, would also continue to labor for other churches in other parts of Christendom till at least A.D. 150.

“(5) However these gifts were received and imparted, one thing is certain, **that those who possessed them were divinely qualified to judge of the character of any document, and to decide infallibly whether it was of God and had any just claims to a place in the Canon or not.** This is evident from such passages as the following: ‘If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord.’ (I Cor. 14:37.) ‘And ye have **anointing** (a spiritual gift) from the Holy One, and ye know all things.’ (I John 2:20). And in the twenty-seventh verse of the same chapter, John adds: ‘And as for you, the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but as His anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in Him.’ The only remaining question, therefore, to be considered is simply this: Whether the aforesaid twenty-seven books were in existence long enough to be thoroughly ex-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

amined and approved by inspired men before the cessation of miraculous gifts in the churches? For I do not think it necessary to pause here in order to prove that while these gifts continued they were constantly exercised in the defense of the truth; nor is it necessary to prove that the whole church would receive and respect the accredited decisions of her inspired men as the voice of God in such matters. It is enough to show that the aforesaid books were all in the hands of at least some of the churches for a number of years before the age of miracles had passed away; and on this point it gives me pleasure to say the evidence is full and satisfactory. True, indeed, it is now difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine, with absolute certainty, the precise time when some of these books were written; but all writers who have any claim on our respect for their learning and candor concede that they were all in existence before the close of the first century."

In conclusion we can say that Christ executed His laws through the Holy Spirit, through the holy apostles and it is recorded in His holy Word, the New Covenant.

Answer These Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word "canon" as it relates to the New Testament?
2. Why do the Roman Catholics claim they formed the canon of the New Testament?
3. Why is it strange, yet true, that the entire primitive church accepted only the twenty-seven books as inspired?
4. What do spiritual gifts have to do with the acceptance or rejection of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament?
5. Since some of the writers of the New Testament were not apostles, how were they selected to write some of the books of the New Testament?

* * * * *

(3) IF GOD MADE CHRIST HEAD OF THE CHURCH AND HE DID, AND IF GOD GAVE HIM ALL AUTHORITY, AND HE DID, THEN CHRIST WOULD HAVE ALL JUDICIAL AUTHORITY AS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

The legislator originates the laws, the executor carries them into action and permanent form, and the judge passes on the infractions of such laws.

Christ is possessed of **all wisdom** as legislator, **all power** as executor, and **absolute justice** as judge. It will be our purpose to notice how Christ becomes the judge of all men. (cf. John 5:22; 12:48.)

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

1. In the case of administering justice to the alien sinner, the following procedure is followed:

(1) the law of God is made known to him either through the law of nature (cf. Rom. 2:13-15) or through the preaching of the gospel. (cf. Rom. 8:2.)

(2) All men have sinned and fallen short of God's expectations expressed in His law. (cf. Rom. 3:23; 3:9.)

(3) The penalty for disobedience to God's law is death. Rom. 6:23. This death is the "second death" (Rev. 21:8) or the death of the soul, (Ezek. 18:4) not the death of the body.

(4) God has provided a perfect payment for man's sin. A substitute who will take on Himself our guilt and penalty and suffer for us. Isa. 53:5-6; I Pet. 2:24; II Cor. 5:21.

(5) When the sinner accepts this marvelous expression of God's love (John 3:16) God can be both "just and a justifier" (Rom. 3:25). Just, inasmuch as His law is upheld, and a justifier, inasmuch as provision for justification has been made for the sinner through Christ.

The love of God searched the wisdom of God for a way to reconcile the justice of God with the mercy of God; the result was the sending of His Son as the sinner's substitute.

Christ provides for perfect justice for all sinners. On the great day when He shall judge all men He will judge the world in light of the fact that He has provided justification for all men. If they refuse it, they will suffer eternal punishment in spite of the love of God and the death of Christ.

2. In the case of administering justice to the Christian, we have this procedure:

(1) The law of God is known to him or he would not have become a Christian.

(2) He is admonished to:

Add virtue to his faith, knowledge to his virtue, self-control to his knowledge, patience to his self-control, godliness to his patience, brotherly kindness to his godliness, love to his brotherly kindness. If we do these things we will not be idle nor unfruitful, and we will have made our calling and election sure and there will be supplied unto us the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (cf. II Pet. 1:5-11.)

(3) On the great day when we all shall be manifest before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account for the deeds done in the body (cf. II Cor. 5:10) we will then be received into the

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

eternal kingdom, not because we merit it, but because of God's grace and our faith. (cf. Eph. 2:8-10.) We are not saved by works, but we must be faithful unto death to receive the crown of life. Rev. 2:10.

3. In the case of administering justice to the backslider, this is the procedure:

(1) He knows the law of God, for he became obedient to that law at one time.

(2) He has fallen away into "the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." (cf. Acts 8:20-24.)

(3) The backslider is admonished to not only be conscious of his sin, but to pray, and in his prayer to freely confess his sin. In doing this he has the promise of the inspired writer that he will be cleansed from all unrighteousness. I John 1:7-9.

What power the head of the church possesses—indeed ALL POWER.

Legislative—All laws, complete laws.

Executive—Carried out by the Christ-inspired men, and written by them in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

Judicial—Providing perfect justice for sinner, saint, and backslider.

Examination Six

1. Show three ways that the immense importance of the head was shown.
2. How is Matthew 16:19 used by certain advocates to show Peter as the earthly head of the church? How may this argument be refuted?
3. How can we admit with our mouths that Christ is head of our church and yet deny with our lives this is true?
4. Name two characteristics of the laws the great Legislator has made for the church.
5. Give two differences between the old and the new covenant.
6. What is the task of an executor?
7. What is the meaning of the "canon of the New Testament"?
8. Why is the complete unity of the primitive church in the acceptance of the twenty-seven books an argument for their inspiration?
9. How do spiritual gifts relate to the establishing of the canon of the New Testament?
10. Name the three persons with whom Christ deals judicially.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

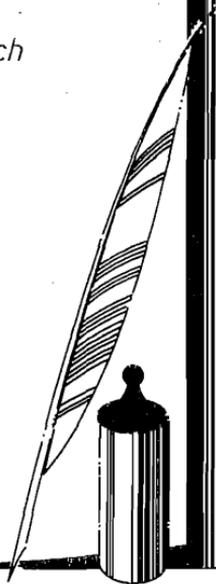
TEMPORARY OFFICERS IN THE CHURCH

APOSTLES

1. *Their name, its meaning*
2. *Their number*
3. *The nature of their office*
4. *Conclusions*

PROPHETS

1. *Their name, its meaning*
2. *Some prophets in the church*
3. *The nature of their office*
4. *Conclusions*



LESSON SEVEN

THE TEMPORARY OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"For more than a thousand years the Bible, collectively taken, has gone hand in hand with civilization, science, law—in short, with the moral, intellectual cultivation of the species, always supporting and often leading the way."

—*Samuel Taglar Coleridge (1772-1834.)*

We trust that the quotations given at the headings of each lesson are a help to you—but most of all, that they will stimulate you to a closer search of the "blessed book" for yourself.

Mark these references:

Heb. 3:1-2; Matt. 10:2-4; 19:28; Rev. 21:14; Acts 13:1; 14:14; Gal 1:19; Acts 15:13; 22; Acts 1:8; Luke 24:48; John 15:27; John 16:13; Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6; 1:21-22; 10:40-41; 11:27-28; 21:10-11; 15:32; I Cor. 14:1-40; Acts 20:24-30; 27:22-24; II Pet. 3:3-4; Rev. 1:1-3; I Cor. 13:9-10.

Right or Wrong

- 1. In one sense of the word, every Christian is an apostle.
- 2. In no sense of the word was Christ an apostle.
- 3. The selection of Matthias (cf. Acts 1:14-26) was premature and not with God's sanction. Paul was to be the twelfth apostle, not Matthias.
- 4. If men were close enough to God we would have apostles in the church today.
- 5. The twelve apostles were to be witnesses for Christ (Acts 1:8) in a sense in which none of us could be.
- 6. The miracles performed by the apostles were always given to confirm their message.
- 7. If we had faith today like the Christians of the first century, we, too, could perform miracles.
- 8. Without the presence of one of the twelve apostles—or Paul, no man was given the gift of prophecy.
- 9. There were many prophets, male and female, in the Corinthian church. (cf. I Cor. 14:1-40.)
- 10. The offices of the apostle and prophet were but temporary. Where is this stated in the New Testament?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

God has not left the management of His kingdom up to the sagacity and ingenuity of man, but has given us His Word which furnishes us completely unto every good work. (cf. II Tim. 3:16-17.)

The heaven sent organization was practical in the first century of the church and brought great victories to the cause of Christ. The seeming failure of the church today is not because of any fault in God's plan, but rather because of man's non-compliance with and substitution for the divine pattern. (cf. Heb. 8:5; Matt. 15:7.)

It will be our purpose to consider but two of the officers in the divine organization—the apostles and prophets.

THE APOSTLES

1. The Name; its meaning.

The word "apostle" means "one sent," approximately what we would mean by the word **missionary**.

2. The Uses of the Name.

- (1) Refers to **Christ** as sent from God; "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider **the Apostle** and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus." Heb. 3:1.
- (2) Refers to the **twelve** and Paul as those sent by Christ: Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas, and the brother of James, Matthias who took the place of Judas Iscariot, and Paul, who was "as one born out of due time." (cf. Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 1:12-13; 26; I Cor. 15:8.)

Some feel from such passages as Matthew 19:28 and Revelation 21:14 that there were but twelve apostles and that the action in the selection of Matthias was premature. Such advocates would have Paul as the twelfth apostle and not Matthias. Following are some reasons which we feel would show that this theory is not right:

1. Luke gives no hint that the action was premature. He recorded the selection of Matthias thirty years or more after the event took place. Surely if this were a hasty decision he would have given us some hint concerning the fact.
2. Luke plainly states "He," (Matthias) "was numbered **with the eleven apostles**." Acts 1:26. "Peter standing up with **the eleven**." Acts 2:14.
3. Luke speaks of him as one of the twelve: "And **the twelve** called the multitude of the disciples unto them . . ." Acts 6:2. It is more probable that Paul was an apostle **extraordinary** and is not at all included in the reference to the twelve.
- (3) Refers to **Barnabas, James**, the Lord's brother, as those sent by the church. Barnabas was sent by the church in Antioch. (cf.

Acts 13:1; 14:14.) James was an apostle of the church in Jerusalem. (cf. Gal. 1:19; Acts 15:13; 22.)

In this last sense all Christians can be apostles. We have all been sent forth to bear fruit unto God. We would think of missionaries as especially fulfilling this use of the term "apostle."

3. The Work of the Apostles or The Nature of Their Office.

- (1) This quotation from **Conybeare and Howson** is especially good on this point: "They were appointed by Christ Himself with absolute power to govern His church; to them He had given the keys of the kingdom of heaven with authority to admit or to exclude. They were also guided by His perpetual inspiration so that all their moral and religious teaching was absolutely and infallibly true. They were empowered by their solemn denunciations of evil and their inspired judgments on all moral issues to bind and to loose, to remit and to retain, the sins of men. This was the essential peculiarity of their office, which can find no parallel in the after history of the church. But, so far as their function was to govern, they represented the monarchical element in the constitution of the early church, and their power was a full counterpoise to that democratic tendency which has sometimes been attributed to the ecclesiastical arrangement of the apostolice period."

—Chapter 13. *Life and Epistles of Paul.*

- (2) There were four duties that were peculiarly theirs. Note:

1. **To bear witness in behalf of Christ.** This word "witness" carries the thought of witness as that of an ambassador or envoy. Look up these words in the dictionary and see how the witness of an ambassador would be different than the witness of anyone else.

"But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8. cf. Luke 24:48; John 15:27; Acts 26:16.)

We are all to be witnesses in behalf of Christ but not in the sense the apostles were, for they were **eye witnesses** of Christ and His resurrection. (cf. Acts 1:22.) They were ambassadors on behalf of Christ. (cf. II Cor. 5:20.) Read carefully this whole chapter and decide just who the ambassadors were.

2. **They were to reveal the laws or truths of Christ's church.** "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself, but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak: and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come." John 16:13. (cf. Luke 24:49; John 14:26.)

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

If the Holy Spirit was to guide the apostles into **all the truth**, what is the purpose of any further revelation of so-called truth today?

The apostles were led into all the truth in the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth. The truths that were used by them in the establishing and confirming of Christ's church were written by them and by those to whom they gave the gift of inspiration in the twenty-seven books that we now have in our New Testament. This is stated here as a fact to be given scriptural proof later.

3. **They were to demonstrate the deity of Jesus and their own apostleship by various miraculous signs and wonders.** There are so many places where this truth is found that we will only point out a few:

(1) Peter and John with the lame man at the Gate Beautiful. Read Acts 3:1-10 for the healing; Acts 3:11-13 for the purpose of the healing.

(2) All the apostles. Read Acts 5:12 for the signs and wonders; Acts 5:13 for the purpose of the signs and wonders.

(3) Peter. Read Acts 9:32-33 for the healing; Acts 9:35 for the purpose and result of the healing.

(4) Paul at Paphos. Read Acts 13:9-11 for the sign; Acts 9:12 for the purpose.

(5) Paul and Barnabas at Lystra. Read Acts 14:8-10 for the healing; Acts 14:11-18 for the result.

Since the deity of Jesus has been confirmed and the word of the apostles has been established and written, what further need is there for confirmation by signs and wonders? (cf. I Cor. 13:12.)

4. **They were to confer on others the power to work miracles.**

(1) **Those of Samaria:** "Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: for as yet **it was fallen upon none of them:** only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then **laid they their hands on them,** and they received the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:14-17.

(2) **Those of Ephesus.** "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." Acts 19:6.

(3) **Timothy.** "For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee **through the laying on of my hands.**" II Tim. 1:6.

In these three incidents a precedent is established. The power

to speak in tongues, prophesy, work signs and wonders, was obtained by the laying on of the apostles' hands. If the apostles are absent today, the powers would also be absent. If not, why not?

4. Their office was temporary. There Are No Present Day Successors To The Apostles.

We say this because:

(1) The qualifications given by Peter exclude men today. (cf. Acts 1:21-22.)

1. Must have accompanied Jesus, personally, from the time that John was baptizing to the time of Christ's ascension.

2. Must have been a witness of Christ's resurrection. (cf. Acts 10:40-41.)

(2) The nature of their duties indicate the temporariness of the office.

1. They were to testify as to Christ's resurrection from the dead so as to confirm His deity. (cf. Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:22.) This testimony is still with us in written form. We have none who could qualify here as such witnesses. If one cannot fulfill the duty of an apostle, one cannot be an apostle.

2. They were to lay down the laws for the church. This has been done. We have been led by them into all truth. What further need is there for an apostle today?

3. They were to confirm their word with signs and wonders. The truthfulness of their word has been demonstrated. What further need have we of such signs?

5. Conclusions. This quotation from W. L. Hayden is so well expressed that we will let it stand as the summation and conclusion to this section:

"The thirteen apostles chosen, ordained and endowed by the newly crowned Messiah faithfully and fully executed their commission. When they entered into everlasting rest, the church was established, with all needful ministries to edify, extend and perpetuate it throughout all coming centuries. Then the extraordinary, which was necessary to found a new institution was succeeded by the ordinary, which is sufficient to teach, regulate and govern the subjects of Christ's kingdom according to the laws that went forth from Jerusalem. The revelation of God was completed. The word of faith is henceforth nigh every believer, even in this mouth and in his heart. The apostolic office ceased and evangelists and pastors became the permanent teachers and superintendents of the church."

—*Church Polity, pages 33-34.*

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Answer These Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word "apostle"? How does it refer of Christ?
2. Do you believe that Matthias was an apostle? If so, why? If not, why not?
3. In what sense were Barnabas and James the Lord's brother apostles?
4. Are we as Christians apostles in any sense of the word?
5. What is meant by this phrase as it refers to the twelve apostles: "They represented the monarchical element in the constitution of the early church?"
6. What is an ambassador and how may this word be applied to the twelve apostles?
7. What was the purpose of the testimony of the apostles to the resurrection of Christ?
8. What was the reason for the signs and wonders of the apostles?
9. How were others than the apostles enabled to perform miracles?
10. Give three reasons why you believe we do not have successors to the twelve apostles.

* * * * *

PROPHETS

1. The Name: its meaning and application.

The word "prophet" is taken from the two Greek words "before" and "to say." In the Hebrew it is taken from the word "to boil up like a fountain." In both the Old and the New Testament it is one who, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, speaks the words and thoughts of God, whether they relate to the past, to the present or to the future."

—*Scheme of Redemption by R. Milligan, page 298.*

Note these six references in which the word is used, three in the Old and three in the New Testament: Deut. 18:18-19; I Kings 12:22-24; Isa. 1:1; Acts 2:17-18; 11:27-28; II Pet. 1:19-21.

2. Some Prophets of the New Testament Church.

- (1) **Agabus.** "Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius." Acts 11:27-28.

"And as we tarried there some days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And coming to us and taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." Acts 21:10-11.

THE TEMPORARY OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

In this case it is easy to see that Agabus was a prophet who exercised the power of foretelling future events. He did this "by the Holy Spirit."

- (2) **Judas and Silas.** "And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them." Acts 15:32. With these prophets we have a different phase of the work emphasized. "Exhorting or comforting and confirming or edifying." This would have the element of teaching under divine direction.
- (3) **Prophets from Jerusalem.** Acts 11:27. The only one of the several prophets that came from Jerusalem was Agabus. The work of the others is not mentioned.
- (4) **Prophets in the church at Antioch.** "Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul." Acts 13:1.

These men seem to be both teachers and prophets. Were they teachers because they were prophets? It is probable. What they taught or what they foretold is not stated.

- (5) **The prophets in Corinth.** Read carefully I Corinthians 14:1-40 for this explanation. A good commentary to help you understand would be McGarvey and Pendleton Commentary on this epistle of Paul.
- (6) **The apostles** by virtue of their office and position could and did perform the duties of prophets. "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them." Acts 20:29-30.

"And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee." Acts 27:22-24.

"Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." II Pet. 3:3-4.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show unto His servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John; who bare witness of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, even of all things that he

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: the time is at hand." Rev. 1:1-3.

3. The Prophet Was a Temporary Officer.

We say this for the following reasons:

(1) The nature of his office as related to his duties.

1. His work was to reveal God's message to man. (I Cor. 14:29-33.) "Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." Eph. 3:5.

As soon as the message was fully revealed and in permanent written form, there was no longer any need for His work.

2. His prophesying was part of the divine credentials of the church. (I Cor. 14:24-25.) As soon as the church's divinity was established the duties of His office were finished.

3. His duties were just "in part" and were to "be done away" when "that which is perfect" was come. "For we know in in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." I Cor. 13:9-10. "That which is perfect" we understand to refer to the New Testament.

4. The holders of this office by virtue of their position and duties were builded with Christ as a part of the church's foundation. "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone." Eph. 2:19-22.

If the prophets were to be in the foundation of the church it does not seem at all reasonable that their office would continue after the foundation was laid.

(2) The nature of his office as related to its origin.

1. "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets . . . "And He gave some to be apostles: and some, prophets . . ." I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11. But the questions arise **how** did He set and **how** did He give? And **where** did He set and **where** did He give?

We have already answered the question as to just where He set the prophets in the church. He set them in the foundation of the church.

But there remains the question as to HOW a prophet was made. God created the office but how were the men selected? Here is a reference that should help us:

"And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and

THE TEMPORARY OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

prophesied." Acts 19:6. This seems to indicate that this gift was given like others through the laying on of the apostles' hands.

Answer These Questions

1. Give the complete definition of the word prophet both from the Old and New Testaments.
2. Give two facts about Agabus as a prophet.
3. What was the work of Judas and Silas?
4. What was the work of the prophets in the Corinthian church?
5. Give three reasons why you believe that the office of prophet was a temporary one.

Examination Seven

1. Give the meaning of the word "apostle" and show how it applies to Christ.
2. Give two reasons for accepting Matthias as one of the twelve.
3. In what sense are all Christians "apostles."
4. In what way were the apostles "witnesses for Christ"?
5. What two things were the wonders and signs of the apostles to demonstrate?
6. How could the apostles pass on to others the miraculous powers they possessed? Prove your answer.
7. Give two reasons for saying the office of the apostle was temporary.
8. Give the meaning of the word "prophet."
9. Name two prophets of the New Testament and tell what they did.
10. Give two reasons for saying the office of the prophet was temporary.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

HE GAVE SOME TO BE

EVANGELISTS”

1. *The name, its meaning*
 - A. *General*
 - B. *Specific*
2. *Evangelists of the church*
 - A. *Philip*
 - B. *Timothy*
 - C. *Titus*
 - D. *Barnabas*
 - E. *The apostles*
3. *Duties*
 - A. *Preaching*
 - B. *Other duties*
4. *Qualifications*
 - A. *Stated*
 - B. *Inferred*



LESSON EIGHT

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

THE EVANGELIST

"Moses was the first hygienist and the greatest. The Mosaic laws in regard to food have never been upset. Read the Bible and learn how to live.

—*Sir James Cantlie, F.R.C.S. British Physician*

By reading the Bible we can learn "all things that pertain to life and godliness." II Pet. 1:3. But if we do not personalize these expressions, we will in truth learn nothing.

Here are some of the references used in the following lesson:

Acts 8:4 11:19; 21:8; 4:36-37; 18:28; 20:20; 5:42; Eph. 4:11; I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11; 4:5; Rom. 10:14-15; Titus 1:5-9; I Cor. 15:1-4; 1:18; 21; II Pet. 3:9; Titus 1:13-14; I Thess. 4:1; 5:12; II Thess. 2:1; I Pet. 2:11.

True or False

- _____ 1. An evangelist in the New Testament sense of the word is the same as an elder.
- _____ 2. An evangelist is distinguished from a pastor in that he moves his field of labor more often. (i.e. according to the divine pattern in the New Testament.)
- _____ 3. The evangelist of the New Testament did not hold an office, but rather did a work.
- _____ 4. There are no evangelists today who measure up to the New Testament standards.
- _____ 5. Most present day evangelists are more elders than evangelists.
- _____ 6. No evangelist of the New Testament ever had to answer to a "Board" of elders.
- _____ 7. An evangelist could do a much better work if he were a bachelor like Paul.
- _____ 8. The job of the evangelist had to do with selecting and ordaining elders and deacons.
- _____ 9. An evangelist should be able to meet all the qualifications of an elder.
- _____ 10. The true evangelist is called of God.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

It might be well to give some reasons for concluding that there is such an office in the church today. There are some who contend that the office of evangelist went out of the church at the same time that the offices of apostles and prophets did. The reason this position is held is that such persons feel that the evangelists were acting as "personal agents or representatives" of the apostles in the tasks of appointing and ordaining elders and deacons. The four reasons given by R. Milligan cannot be improved upon in showing the permanency of this office. (The following is not a direct quotation, but a summary based on his thoughts.)

1. **The nature of the work assigned to the evangelist makes the office** a perpetual one. Their job was to convert sinners, to feed the flock of God, to teach the ignorant. While time endures this will be necessary. Therefore the office must be perpetual.
2. **Evangelists from the beginning received their commission from churches**, and not directly from Christ, as did the apostles and prophets. This can be shown in the case of Timothy in which the hands of the eldership or presbytery were laid upon him. (Acts 14:1-3, I Tim. 4:14.) The imposition of the hands of the eldership (probably of Lystra and Iconium) was for the purpose of setting him aside for the work upon which he was embarking. Paul laid his hands upon Timothy (II Tim. 1:6.) to impart to him those miraculous gifts which in that age were necessary in order to enable him to fulfill the commission which he had received from the church of Lystra and Iconium. Since we still have local churches after the order of those of that day, we have the prerogative of setting aside evangelists.
3. **Paul told Timothy to choose certain faithful men and commit to them what Paul had committed to Timothy.** II Tim. 2:2. This hardly needs comment; it is only necessary to ask, what was the work of Timothy, and then realize that he was to commit that work to others and then they **in turn were urged to commit the work to others.** If this admonition was followed by Timothy and those who succeeded him, we have the permanence of the office assured.
4. **The office has actually been continued from the beginning to the present day.** That evangelist was the name by which these servants of the church were usually designated in primitive times seems evident from the testimony of several of the Christian fathers. Eusebius, for instance, the learned Bishop of Caesarea, A.D. 315-340, thus speaks of evangelists who lived and labored during the reign of Trajan. A.D. 98-117. Eusebius Eccl.

Hist., Book III, Chapter 37.

1. The Name Evangelist: Its Meaning.

1. **General.** The term simply means "a proclaimer of good news" and has general application to all Christians. Acts 8:4; 11:19. Each Christian is held responsible to "let his light shine;" to be the "salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13-14) and should realize that God has given him the task of reflecting the light of the Christ; of permeating the earth with the teachings of the Lord.
2. **Specific.** In a specific sense the term has reference to one of the offices in the church of Christ. Note:
 "And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Caesarea: and entering into the house of **Philip the evangelist**, who was one of the seven, we abode with him." Acts 21:8.
 "And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; **and some, evangelists**; and some, pastors and teachers." Eph. 4:11. (cf. I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11; 4:5.) In Romans 10:14-15 the term "preacher" is used as the word evangelist is ordinarily used.

Answer These Questions

1. Why do some folk feel that there is no present day office of evangelist?
2. Give three reasons for believing the office of evangelist is a permanent office.
3. In what sense is every Christian an evangelist?
4. How is the term used specifically?
5. What other name could be applied to the office?

* * * * *

2. Evangelists of the Church.**(1) Philip.** Acts 21:8.

1. Who was he? He was one of the seven chosen to care for the widows of Grecian Jews. Read Acts 6:1-6 carefully.
2. What did he do as an evangelist? Read carefully Acts 8:4-13 and 26-40 and note the following:
 - (1) Upon being scattered with other Christians he went to Samaria and proclaimed unto them the Christ. Acts 8:4-5.
 - (2) He confirmed his word by signs. Acts 8:6-7.
 - (3) He baptized believers, including Simon the sorcerer. Acts 8:9-13.
 - (4) Following the instructions of an angel and the Holy Spirit he met, taught, and baptized the treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia. Acts 8:26-39.
 - (5) He preached to all the villages on the Philistine Plain until he came to Caesarea where he remained for ten years or more. Acts 8:40 and 21:8.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

(2) Timothy. II Tim. 4:5.

1. Who was he? He was a young man that was converted through the ministry of Paul in his first missionary journey. Paul later found him faithfully living and working for Christ. On this occasion (Paul's second journey) he took him as his helper. Evidently at this time the elders from the churches of Lystra and Iconium laid their hands upon Timothy and ordained him in the office of the evangelist. Paul probably gave him the spiritual gifts at this same time. (cf. Acts 16:1-3; II Tim. 1:6; 1:3-5.) Timothy accompanied Paul on the rest of the missionary journey as it took them through Philippi, Thessalonica, Bearea, and Corinth. While Paul was on his third missionary journey and at Ephesus he sent Timothy and Erastus on missionary business to Corinth. Acts 19:22; I Cor. 4:17; 16:10. A short time after this he met Paul in Macedonia, and united with him in sending Christian salutations to the church of Corinth. II Cor. 1:1. In Romans 16:21 he sends greetings to the church at Rome from Corinth. From Corinth Timothy accompanied Paul on his last visit to Jerusalem. Acts 20:4. He was with Paul when Paul was a prisoner in Rome. Phil. 2:19; Col. 1:1. Finally, he was left at Ephesus about the same time that Titus was left in Crete, most likely A.D. 65.
2. What did he do as an evangelist? This answer would include a number of his duties that we want to consider under another heading, so we will not produce it here.

(3) Titus. Titus 1:5-9.

1. Who was he? As near as we know he was a convert of Paul. He traveled with Paul. He was left by Paul on the isle of Crete to help the church there. The epistle of Paul to this evangelist was addressed to him while Titus was on this isle.
2. What did Titus do as an evangelist? The scriptures are silent as to any personal activity. The same duties are specified for Titus as for Timothy. Each was to appoint elders, each was to reprove, rebuke and exhort, each was to see that none taught anything contrary to the sound doctrine.

(4) Barnabas. Acts 4:35-37.

1. Who was he? He was the traveling companion of Paul on the first missionary journey. He was mentioned in Acts 4:36-37 and Acts 11:22-30. Read these verses carefully.
2. What did he do as an evangelist? He proclaimed the word with Paul. He appointed elders. Such duties are those of an evangelist, as is seen from the above study of Timothy and Titus. (cf. Acts 11:22-26; 13:2-5; 14:7; 21:23.)

(5) The Apostles.

By virtue of their office and position, they, of necessity, per-

formed the functions of the office of the evangelist until such a time as others became qualified for the task. The apostles, as apostles, had certain duties which were strictly apostolic and which none other could do. Aside from their special duties and prerogatives they were evangelists in that they continued to preach (Acts 8:25), to appoint and ordain elders (Acts 14:23), and do other things which an evangelist was supposed to do.

Answer These Questions

1. Give two things that Philip did as an evangelist.
2. When was Timothy set aside as an evangelist and who did it?
3. Give two important facts about Titus.
4. What are two things that Barnabas did as an evangelist?
5. In what sense were the apostles evangelists?

* * * * *

3. The duties of the Office of Evangelist.

1. Preaching. II Tim. 4:2.

(1) Where the New Testament evangelists did their preaching.

(3) In the temple. Acts 3:11; 4:4; 5:21; 42.

1. Publicly. Acts 18:28; 20:20.

(1) Before sinners. Acts 2:14-47.

(2) Before ecclesiastical authorities. Acts 4:5-12.

(3) In the temple. Acts 3:11; 4:4; 5:21; 42.

(4) In the synagogue. Acts 9:20.

(5) In the market place. Acts 17:17.

How we can take a lesson from these inspired spokesmen. There were many places where the Word was proclaimed publicly. If it was not convenient, these men provided their own opportunity. Are we that willing to proclaim the Word publicly today?

2. Privately. Acts 5:42; 11:12-15.

(1) From house to house in Jerusalem, Ephesus and other places. Acts 5:42; 20:20; 11:12-15.

(2) In the desert. Acts 8:26-39.

(3) By the river side. Acts 16:13-14.

(4) Everywhere. Acts 8:4.

One of the saddest lacks in the church of today is personal preaching, commonly referred to as personal evangelism. It is as much a part of the task of the evangelist as the public preaching.

(2) The message or subject of the preaching. I Cor. 15:1-4.

The gospel or good news was the one message. The facts of the good news which bring about man's salvation are the "death, burial and resurrection of Christ." These facts of the good news include any and all other things that may be necessary to an acceptance of and obedience to the gospel. Note:

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

1. The subject of "**repentance**" was included. (Luke 24:47). Men needed to repent before they were ready to accept the forgiveness provided in the gospel. (cf. Acts 2:38; 17:30-31.)
2. The "**remission of sins.**" (Luke 24:47) In speaking of this they would be telling of the promised results of the acceptance of the gospel.
3. "**Christ.**" (Acts 8:5) This is an abbreviated way of stating the subject. The beautiful life of Christ was introduced in order that His death for our sins might be understood and appreciated.
4. "**The word of the Lord.**" Acts 8:25. This is but a way of stating the source of this good news; it proceedeth from the Lord.
5. "**The whole counsel of God.**" Acts 20:27. There are various ways of saying the same thing, but whether these men preached repentance, remission of sins, Christ, the Word of the Lord, or the whole counsel of God, they ultimately announced that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried and that He hath been raised from the dead, (I Cor. 15:1-4) and upon the basis of these facts, men were called to the forgiveness of sins and the hope of heaven. (cf. Rom. 10:8; I Cor. 1:23.)

(3) **The purpose or aim of preaching.**

1. The ultimate purpose was the salvation of mankind. Acts 2:40; Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 1:18; 21; I Tim. 1:15; II Pet. 3:9.
2. The immediate purpose might have been to inform, to instruct, to move to action, to confirm, to convince, to set right, etc.

(4) **Some of the elements of preaching in the preaching of the New Testament evangelists.**

1. **Teaching.** II Tim. 4:2b.

- (1) Sinners are informed of their sinful and lost condition and instructed regarding salvation and what they must do to be saved. Acts 2:37-38; 5:28; 42; 11:26; 18:11.
- (2) The Christians are given a knowledge of their relationship to God and of the things that He expects of them as His children.
- (3) The backslider learns of his condition and what he must do to be restored again to the divine family. Acts 8:9-17, 18-23.
- (4) Those who suffer are comforted through the hearing of God's word and promises. Matt. 5:10-12; Rom. 15:4; I Thess. 4:18; Rev. 21:3-4.

2. **Exhorting.** Acts 2:40.

- (1) The sinner who has been taught concerning his condition and God's plan for his salvation is advised, encouraged, urged, and persuaded to obey the gospel. Acts 2:40; 19:8; 26:28.
- (2) The Christians are encouraged and urged to do all things

necessary for the maintenance of their spiritual life. Acts 11:23; 14:22; 20:1-2; I Thess. 2:11.

“Exhort” is an action word. It is one thing to tell a person what he must do, it is quite another to so speak as to create a desire on his part to do as he has been told. This art of exhortation is much needed in the church today. Exhortation was a real power in the primitive church (Rom. 12:8) and it needs to be restored. It will never be restored, however, until the reality of what is taught becomes a part of the teacher.

3. Charging, reproving and rebuking.

(1) False and vain teaching was counteracted and corrected. I Tim. 1:3; II Tim. 2:14; Titus 1:13-14.

(2) Those who trusted in riches had their faith transferred to God. I Tim. 6:17.

4. **Admonishing and warning.** Christians are notified of their faults and of approaching or possible dangers. Acts 20:29-31; II Cor. 11:3-4; 11:13-15; Gal. 1:8-9; Col. 1:28.

5. **Reasoning and proving** are elements of preaching and they bring to a knowledge of the truth those who are in darkness through blindness and false teaching. Acts 9:22; 17:2-2; 18:19; 19:8-10.

6. **Beseeking.** This accomplishes the same purpose as exhortation. I Thess. 4:1; 5:12; II Thess. 2:1; I Pet. 2:11; II John 5.

7. **Commanding.** This is similar to charging and moves to action either the sinner or the Christian. Acts 2:38; 10:48; II Thess. 3:4, 6, 10, 12; I Tim. 4:11; 5:7.

(5) The duties the evangelist performs through preaching.

1. The making of Christians and the establishing of a church. Where ever the gospel was preached and the obedient believers were assembled together, there was a church established. This was true in Jerusalem, Acts 2:41; 8:1; in Thessalonica, Acts 17:1-3; I Thess. 1:1; at Corinth, Acts 18:1-11; I Cor. 1:2.

2. The evangelist is to confirm the Christians in the faith and establish them in regard to practice and conduct. Acts 2:42; 14:22; 15:41; Rev. 3:2; I Tim. 3:15.

3. The evangelist is to refute, counteract and correct false and vain teaching. Acts 13:6-12; 14:11-18; 15:1-31; 19:18-19; I Tim. 1:3; II Tim. 2:14; Titus 1:13-14.

4. He is also to discipline the elder who has been accused of sin by two or three witnesses. I Tim 5:19-20.

5. Another duty is to set in order the things that are wanting in the church. Titus 1:5; Acts 19:1-7; I Cor. 5:1-13; 6:1-11. There are a number of things in the church of today that could be set in order. This will never be done by an evangelist that is not a true servant. The wise evangelist secures the co-operation of those whom he seeks to inform, help or correct.

Answer These Questions

1. State three places where the New Testament evangelists preached publicly.
2. Mention three places where private preaching was done.
3. Show how repentance and the whole counsel of God relates to the preaching of the gospel.
4. What is the difference between the ultimate and immediate aim in preaching?
5. What is the meaning of the element of exhortation in preaching?
6. In what are evangelists to "charge" or "command" in their preaching?
7. Mention three duties the evangelist accomplishes through his preaching.
8. What are some duties of the evangelist which might be considered as apart from preaching?

* * * * *

- (1) The evangelist is to appoint or ordain elders. Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 5:22. (This subject will be fully considered in the study of the ordination of church officers.)
- (2) The evangelist is to be an example in all things. I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7-8.
- (3) That the evangelist, by reason of his office, must of necessity do the work of an elder, deacon, and Christian appears to be self-evident. Especially is this true in a new congregation where there are no Christians qualified to be elders or deacons.

4. Qualifications of an evangelist.

(1) Those Stated.

1. He must be a man of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness and peace. I Tim. 6:11; II Tim. 2:22.
2. He must be a man of purity. I Tim. 4:12c; 5:22b.
3. He must be a diligent student of God's Word. II Tim. 2:15.
4. He must be gentle and apt to teach. II Tim. 2:24.
5. He must be a man of contentment. I Tim. 6:6-10.
6. He must be one who avoids foolish questions. II Tim. 2:16; 23; Titus 3:9-10; I Tim. 6:3-5.
7. He must be one who will conscientiously fulfill all his duties. I Tim. 4:15-16; 6:12, 14, 20; II Tim. 4:5.
8. He must be one who is not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord. II Tim. 1:8.
9. He must be willing to suffer hardship. II Tim. 2:3; 4:5.
10. He must be an example in all things. I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7-8.

(2) Those Implied.

1. He must first of all be a Christian of the highest type.

2. He must be a speaker who is capable of delivering in a clear, forcible and becoming manner the whole counsel of God.
3. He must have strong burning convictions regarding his message. Titus 3:8.
5. He must be as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove. Matt. 10:16.
6. He must meet all the qualifications of an elder. The duties of an evangelist and elder are similar and overlap each other to some extent; it therefore seems logical that his qualifications should exceed or at least be equal to those of an elder.

Be sure to read every scripture reference if you are to derive the greatest benefit from this book. Remember, God's Word must prove these words to be correct.

Answer These Questions

1. Name two things an evangelist does apart from preaching.
2. Why and when does an evangelist do the work of an elder?
3. Name three scriptural qualifications for an evangelist.
4. Name two implied qualifications for an evangelist.

Examination Eight

1. Give three reasons for believing that there is such an office as the evangelist in the church today.
2. In what sense are all Christians evangelists?
3. Tell three things that Philip did as an evangelist.
4. How did Timothy become an evangelist?
5. In what sense were the apostles evangelists?
6. How could an evangelist preach repentance and still be preaching the good news?
7. What is the meaning of the term "exhort" as it relates to preaching?
8. Name two other elements in preaching besides "exhorting" and explain their meaning.
9. Name two things an evangelist does apart from his preaching.
10. Give three scriptural qualifications for the evangelist.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

“HE GAVE SOME TO BE
ELDERS”

1. *The names, their meaning.*
 - A. *Elder.*
 - B. *Bishop.*
 - C. *Pastor.*
 - D. *Teacher.*
2. *Elders of the church.*
 - A. *The apostles.*
 - B. *Those of Jerusalem.*
 - C. *Those of Ephesus.*
 - D. *Those of Philippi.*
3. *Duties.*
 - A. *As elder.*
 - B. *As bishop.*
 - C. *As pastor.*
 - D. *As teacher.*
4. *Qualifications.*
 - A. *Positive.*
 - B. *Negative.*



LESSON NINE

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH The Elders

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."
Acts 17:11

"In its variety and clarity of moral statements, the weight and compactness in which they are expressed, the earnestness with which they are enforced, the examples by which they are illustrated, above all, in the vivid, emotional character which pervades it, as contrasted with the cold abstractions of mere philosophy, the New Testament towers above the best ethical treatises of pagan antiquity."

—Henry Rogers

The New Testament is addressed to the heart: to your heart is the message sent. Its purpose has fallen to the ground until we have taken the time, thought, and energy necessary to make the message of the New Testament ours. Have you ever thought of memorizing **one** verse a day from the New Testament? By learning from memory one verse a day you would have memorized all of Paul's epistles in three years.

Read these verses carefully (and their context):

Gen. 24:2; 50:7; Num. 11:16-17; Matt. 13:37-38; Acts 4:8; 6:12; 11:30; 21:18; 24:1; 20:17; 28; 13:1; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 20:31; Eph. 4:11-12 Phil. 1:1; I Pet. 5:1-2; I Tim. 5:17; 3:1-6; II Pet. 2:25; I Cor. 12:28; Titus 1:1-10; 2:3; Col. 3:16; II John 1; III John 1; II Tim. 1:11; Heb. 13:17 I Thess. 5:12-13; James 5:14-15.

Multiple Choice

1. The term "elder" means: 1) An older man. 2) A "wise one."
3) A director.
2. The term "bishop" is used in the New Testament to denote: 1) The highest office in the church. 2) An overseer of a local congregation. 3) The office immediately above the elder.
3. The term "pastor" as used in apostolic times referred to: 1) The preacher of a local church. 2) An elder. 3) An office between that of the bishop and the elder.
4. The teaching of the local congregations of the first century was immediately under the direction of: 1) The apostles. 2) The elders. 3) The Holy Spirit.
5. The term "elder" as used for an officer is of what origin? 1) Hebrew? 2) Greek? 3) Roman?
6. Which term carries the thought of rulership? 1) Bishop? 2) Elder? 3) Pastor?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

7. Which word means "shepherd"? 1) Pastor? 2) Elder? 3) Teacher?
8. Which statement do you believe, and why? 1) A married man who has but one child cannot be an elder. 2) A single man can be elder. 3) Only a married man who has more than one child who are believers, not accused of riot or unruly, can be an elder. 4) The ideal man for the office would be a married man with faithful children, but this does not exclude a single man from the office.
9. "Not given to much wine" means: 1) Not to drink at all. 2) Not to drink in excess, or "no drunkard." 3) To drink in moderation.
10. The qualifications for the eldership as given in Timothy and Titus are: 1) Impossible of meeting by any one man. 2) Ideal, but not to be met in actual practice. 3) Not at all impossible of attainment; indeed, no more (with the exception of rulership and teaching) than what is required of every Christian.

LESSON DISCUSSION

How beautifully these prophetic words can find their fulfillment in the eldership of Christ's church:

"And I will set up shepherds over them, who shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be lacking, saith Jehovah." Jer. 23:4.

Note a New Testament parallel:

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church . . . (and Paul said) . . . Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:17; 28.

There is no more important office in the church of the Lord than this one. For this reason, it will be the part of wisdom to be very deliberate and thorough in the study of this subject.

1. First of all, notice the names that are applied to this office and their meaning.

1. Elder.

"**The elders** therefore among you I exhort, who am a **fellow-elder** . . ." I Pet. 5:1. "Let **the elders** that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching." I Tim. 5:17. "**The elder** unto the elect lady and children, whom I love in truth . . ." II John 1.

The word "elder" is of **Hebrew origin** and was used extensively as an official title. Note:

"And Abraham said unto his servant, **the elder** of this house, that ruled over all that he had, . . ." Gen. 24:2. (cf. 50:7; Num. 11:16-17.)

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE ELDERS

We are interested in the word "elder" mainly as it applies to an office in the church of the New Testament. In the New Testament the word "elder" or "elders" is used as referring to the office of a Jewish ruler as well as an office in the church. Note:

- (1) "And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and **elders** and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem." Acts 4:5. In this instance it refers to the elders of the Sanhedrin, the highest court of the Jews. (cf. Acts 4:8; 6:12; 11:30.)
- (2) "And when they had appointed for them **elders** in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commanded them to the Lord, on whom they had believed." Acts 14:23. This must have reference to an office in the churches of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe for Paul and Barnabas could not make men older by appointment. (cf. Acts 21:18; 24:1.)

The New Testament Greek word is "presbuteros" which means literally "of age," "the older," "advanced in life," "senior." Not every older man can be an elder in an official sense. Something more is required than mere age. Since no age is specified in the scriptures, we therefore conclude that a man is old enough to be an elder when he has acquired the characteristics and qualifications necessary for the proper direction of the affairs of the church. The age or attainment of growth in the faith is more important than mere age as pertaining to the physical.

The word "presbytery" which appears in I Tim. 14:14 is the Greek word "presbuterion" anglicized and which, if translated, would read simply, "elders." Note this very fine statement:

"Elders, among the Jews, were the rulers of the people, prominent men who took the lead in directing and controlling affairs. The elders of a city corresponded to our councilmen, just as we now call them 'city fathers.' The elders of the people were their representatives and rulers in government and management of affairs pertaining to the public welfare. As an official term, therefore, this word expresses the idea of government by men of age, prominence, experience, and wisdom. It indicates that this office is one that imposes important duties and grave responsibilities, and that it should be filled by men who are competent to perform the work devolving upon them officiently and successfully. It indicates that an incompetent eldership is a great misfortune, and disastrous in its consequences."

—*W. L. Hayden, Page 51, Church Polity*

2. **Bishop.**

"Faithful is the saying, if a man seeketh **the office of a bishop**, he desireth a good work. The bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach." I Tim. 3:1-2.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

"For the **bishop** must be blameless, as God's steward . . ." Titus 1:7a.

"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the **bishops** and deacons." Phil. 1:1.

The word "bishop" is of **Greek origin**. It is from the Greek word "episcopos" the literal meaning of which is "overseer," "guardian," "superintendent." "Bishop" is the anglicized form of the Greek. In I Peter 2:25, the word is used in reference to Christ.

Specifically the name (though generally used in the plural) denotes one who has been appointed to oversee or superintend the interests of some particular congregation. (cf. Phil. 1:1.) It is never used of bishops over more than one congregation.

The terms "elder" and "bishop" are used interchangeably in the New Testament and refer to the same office. Note:

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the **elders** of the church. In verse 28, while talking to the same persons, He calls them "bishop:" "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you **bishops**, . . ." Acts 20:17; 28.

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint **elders** in every city. . . ." Then in speaking of the qualifications of the same he calls them "bishops," "For the **bishop** must be blameless, as God's steward . . ." Titus 1:5; 7.

3. **Pastor.**

"And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and **some, pastors** and teachers." Eph. 4:11.

"**Feed** the church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28b. (the verb form of pastor.)

"**Tend** the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God." I Pet. 5:2a. (the verb form of the word "pastor," "poimen" in the Greek.)

As the word appears in Ephesians 4:11 in the plural form it literally means "shepherds." As Christ is referred to in I Peter 5:1-4 as the "Chief shepherd" in relation to the elders it would suggest that the elders are "under shepherds."

4. **Teacher.**

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly **teachers** . . ." Eph. 4:11. (cf. I Cor. 12:28; Acts 13:1.)

Teaching is a specific duty and leading function of the office of elder, hence, he is called "teacher." (cf. I Tim. 3:2c; 5:17; Titus 1:9.)

The "pastors and teachers" of Ephesians 4:11 refer to the same office, as can be seen from the grammatical construction. Note: "And

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE ELDERS

He gave some to be . . . pastors and teachers." Those referred to by "some" were both to shepherd and teach.

Except for the evangelist, the elder is the only officer who must be able to teach in order to qualify for his office. The elders are teachers but there may also be teachers who are not elders. This can be understood in this sense: The elder is called a "bishop" which means "overseer" or "superintendent." This infers two things regarding his duties as a teacher. 1) That he does not do ALL teaching himself. 2) That he is to oversee or superintend ALL teaching.

In a lesser sense, every Christian is supposed to teach. (cf. Matt. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Titus 2:3; Heb. 5:12; Psalms 51:13.)

Answer These Questions

1. Why is the office of an elder so important?
2. How was the word "elder" used in the Old Testament?
3. What is the meaning of the word "elder" and how does it apply to the office?
4. What is the meaning of the word "bishop"?
5. Prove that the terms elder and bishop are used interchangeably.
6. In what sense is Christ a pastor?
7. Prove that the words "pastors and teachers" in Ephesians 4:11 refer to the same office.
8. In what way is the elder to carry out the task of teaching in the church?

* * * * *

2. The Elders of the Church.

1. The Apostles.

"The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, . . ." I Pet. 5:1.

"The elder unto the elect lady and her children, . . ." II John 1.

"The elder unto Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth," III John 1.

Peter and John are the only ones who name themselves as elders. We can see in what sense they were elders in the same manner that we have observed them as evangelists. In the absence of elders in various places they did the work, not only of an evangelist to get the church started, but also the work of an elder to keep the church in order.

Paul evidently considered himself an elder, for in speaking to the Ephesian elders he said, "In all things I gave you an example, . . . Acts 20:35. In II Timothy 1:11 he called himself a teacher which task was that of an elder.

2. Those of Jerusalem.

"And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

cannot be saved. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles **and elders** about this question. They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and **the elders**, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and **the elders** were gathered together to consider of this matter . . . Then it seemed good to the apostles and **the elders**, with the whole church, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas . . . and they wrote thus by them, The apostles and **the elders**, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting." Acts 15:1-6, 22a, 23. (cf. Acts 21:17-18.)

From these verses concerning the elders of the Jerusalem church it can be observed:

1. They were a separate group from the apostles and had a task to do that the apostles were not going to do.
 2. They were representative of the church.
 3. They were wise men who knew the will of the Lord.
3. **Those of Ephesus.**
The work of the men of Ephesus will be considered in another section of the study. At this time, read Acts 20:17-37 to gain an insight into the life and work of these men.
4. **Those of Philippi.**
We have no record as to what these officers of the Philippian church, as mentioned in Philippians 1:1, did.

Answer These Questions

1. In what sense were the apostles elders?
2. Why does it seem that Paul evidently felt he was an elder?
3. What two facts do you learn of the elders of the Jerusalem church?
4. What two things did you learn of the Ephesian elders by reading the text?

* * * * *

3. The Duties.

1. **As Elders.** (Whereas we are considering the same man, the duties are being considered under the meaning of the various names.) Acts 11:30; 20:17; 21:17-18.

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE ELDERS

By referring to what has already been learned about the elder it is evident that: as elders they were the official representatives of the congregation; they were to represent, and act on behalf of, the church in regard to any business concerning which it was not necessary, advisable or possible for the whole congregation to be gathered together.

In Acts 11:29-30 we have the elders of the Jerusalem church acting as representatives of the church in receiving an offering from the church in Antioch.

In Acts 20:17-37 we have the message of Paul to the Ephesian elders; they were so instructed to enable them to better manage the affairs of the church in Ephesus.

In Acts 21:17-18 we have once again the elders representing the church in Jerusalem.

2. As Bishops. Overseers or Superintendents.

- (1) "To rule." This is a general term involving all their duties. Read carefully these references. I Tim. 5:17; 3:5; Heb. 13:7, 17. The word "rule" in the Greek means literally "to be over," "to superintend," "to preside over;" also "to care for" or "give attention to." This ruling is to be done in the proper manner, spirit and attitude.

"Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock." I Pet. 5:2-3.

"Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith." Heb. 13:7.

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them; for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief; . . ." Heb. 13:17.

(2) Specific duties as a bishop.

1. **To watch in behalf of souls.** Hebrews 13:17 suggests that these men took very seriously their charge that God had given them that the members of the congregation where they labored were to be instructed and cared for in the very best way possible.

2. **To administer discipline.**

"But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves. I Thess. 5:12-13.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

“(But if a man knoweth not to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God)” I Tim. 3:5.

These references seem to include both instructive as well as corrective discipline in the work of the bishop. The task of the bishop also, is to admonish and labor for and love the church as a father loves, labors for and admonishes his children. This can only be true when they show themselves worthy of such a work.

3. To minister to the sick.

“Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him.” James 5:14-15.

It would be most helpful to you if you would do as much research on this scripture text as possible. Before you form any definite opinion, please remember that the spiritual gift of healing was found among the elders of the first century. It cannot be proven from this text that the elders here mentioned had the gift of healing. On the other hand, neither can it be proven that they did not.

It is important to remember that elders today do not possess spiritual gifts which enable them to make infallible decisions and speak by inspiration. This fact does not annul their position, but it does make us careful as those who know their limitations.

3. As Pastors, or shepherds.

- (1) **General business**, involving all their duties as shepherds.
 1. They are to take heed to **all** flock. Acts 20:28. How needful it is for this admonition to be heeded. Do the present day elders know of the spiritual welfare of each member of the congregation? They should, since the Word teaches that is a definite part of their responsibility.
 2. They are to **tend** the flock of God which is among them. I Pet. 5:2. This scripture means that the feeding of the flock, with the Word of God, is another part of the work of a bishop.
 3. Bishops to exercise **oversight** of the flock. I Pet. 5:2. In this particular phase of their work they would be acting as superintendents as well as shepherds.
- (2) **Specific duties** as shepherds or pastors.
 1. They are to feed the flock. Acts 20:28.
 2. They are to watch out for wolves. Acts 20:29-31.
 3. They are to help the weak. Acts 20:35.
 4. They are to be an example. I Pet. 5:3.

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE ELDERS

4. As Teachers.

- (1) It is definitely stated that bishops are to teach: "holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, . . ." Titus 1:9a.
- (2) This teaching is described as "laboring in the word." I Tim. 5:17.
- (3) Their teaching is also to include exhortation. ". . . that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, . . ." Titus 1:9.
- (4) Their teaching is further described by the words, ". . . men that spake unto you the Word of God. . ." Heb. 13:7b.
- (5) In their teaching they should have the ability to "convict the gainsayers." Titus 1:9.

Answer These Questions

1. What does the word "elder" suggest as to duties?
2. Name two specific duties associated with the work of a bishop.
3. Give two specific duties as shepherds.
4. In what way are the shepherds to be examples?
5. State three truths concerning the teaching of an elder.

* * * * *

4. The Qualifications. I Tim. 3:1-7; II; Titus 1:6-10.

1. Positive qualifications.

- (1) He must desire the office and seek it. I Tim. 3:1. This would suggest that a man should consider the office one of privilege and he should constantly be preparing his life so as to be a fit candidate for it.
- (2) The bishop must be without reproach or blameless. I Tim. 3:2a; Titus 1:6a; 7a. He would hold this position before man and not God for no one is blameless or without reproach before God. As the persons of the congregation, where he is contemplating the office of elder, view his life, they should be able to find nothing blameworthy about it.
- (3) The husband of one wife. I Tim. 3:2a; Titus 1:6b. There has been a good bit of discussion over this verse as to whether this would exclude a single man from the office. The following should be carefully considered before a decision is reached:
 1. The grammatical construction both in the Greek and the English does not suggest this exclusion. The Greek word for "husband of one wife" could be literally translated "a one woman man," not that he must be married, but if he is, he should not be a polygamist but a "one woman man." From the English construction it would not be necessary to use the modifier "one" if all that is intended is that a man must be married.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

2. The moral conditions of that time were such that polygamy was practiced by many outside, and even some inside of church. The terminology used by Paul was for the purpose of preventing this evil practice.
3. John, the apostle; was an elder (II John 1; III John 1) and it is evident that he remained single. He was left a son to a desolate mother. John 19:26-27. Tertullian, the writer, spoke of John in this manner: "Here, too, we may, without much hesitation, accept the traditions of the church as recording a historic fact when they ascribe to him a life of celibacy."

We conclude therefore that a single man may hold the office, but a married man must have only one wife. (If you cannot accept these conclusions, please do not disfellowship us because we cannot accept yours.)

- (4) The elder must be temperate. I Tim. 3:2c; Titus 1:8f. Three thoughts are expressed in the Greek. "Having power over one's self, abstaining from wine, curbing one's desires or impulses."
- (5) Sober-minded. I Tim. 3:2d; Titus 1:8c. The thought in the Greek is, "Of sound mind, sane, in one's senses." (cf. Eph. 5:4.)
- (6) Orderly. I Tim. 3:2c "Of good behavior, modest."
- (7) "Given to hospitality." I Tim. 3:2f; Titus 1:8a. (cf. I Tim. 5:10.)
- (8) He must be a sound, capable and willing teacher of the Word. I Tim. 3:2g; Titus 1:9.
- (9) Not given to wine (K. J. V.); no brawler (R. V.) I Tim. 3:3a; Titus. 1:7d. A brawler is one who quarrels noisily, creates an uproar or starts a row.
- (10) He must not be a striker. I Tim. 3:3b; Titus 1:7c. The word in the Greek means, "smiter, pugnacious, quarrelsome."
- (11) Gentle. I Tim. 3:3c. "Equitable, fair, mild." The bishop must be willing to be taught; willing to admit error and to change his mind; not weak but approachable.
- (12) He must rule his own house. I Tim. 3:4-5; Titus 1:6c. This applies to one who has children. Peter was married (Matt. 8:14) and was an elder (I Pet. 5:1) but there is no record that he had any children.
- (13) He must have a good testimony from without. I Tim. 3:7. He must be one who practices what he preaches.
- (14) A love of good. Titus 1:8b.
- (15) He must be holy. Titus 1:8c. (cf. Heb. 12:14.)
- (16) He must be just. Titus 1:8d. "Righteous, observing divine and human laws, upright, passing just judgment on others." (cf. John 7:24.)

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE ELDERS

2. Negative qualifications.

- (1) Not contentious. I Tim. 3:3d. "Given to angry debate, quarrelsome." One who loves strife and wrangles over non-essentials, could not qualify as a bishop.
- (2) No lover of money. I Tim. 3:3c; Titus 1:7f; I Pet. 5:2.
- (3) Not a novice. I Tim. 3:6. "A new convert, a beginner" would be considered a novice.
- (4) Not self-willed. Titus 1:7b. "Self-pleasing, arrogant."
- (5) Not soon angry. Titus 1:7c. "Easily provoked, irritable."
- (6) His wife must not be a slanderer, but grave, temperate, and faithful in all things. I Tim 3:11.

Answer These Questions

1. What is meant by the thought that an elder must "seek the office"?
2. How could a man be "blameless"?
3. Do you believe a single man could hold the office. If so, give two reasons.
4. What is the meaning of "not given to wine"?
5. Give three negative qualifications for an elder, or a bishop and explain their meaning.

* * * * *

5. The work of the elder and evangelist compared.

1. Their fields of labor.

- (1) The evangelist has a universal field of labor. "The field is the world." (Matt. 13:37-38). Inasmuch as one man cannot preach the gospel to the whole world, he will most profitably concentrate his efforts to certain localities.
- (2) The elders have only a local field of labor. They are set apart for the work of overseeing, pastoring and teaching the Christians of one particular congregation. Should an elder leave his field, it follows that he would cease to be an elder.

2. The people with whom they work.

- (1) The evangelist is to convert sinners and confirm Christians, as has already been explained in the study on the duties of an evangelist. Thus we see that his work is with both sinners and saints.
- (2) The elders are to work mainly with Christians. They are spiritual overseers, pastors and teachers and are responsible to the Lord to see that each person that is saved stays saved.

3. The length of time with one congregation.

- (1) The evangelist must stay in one place long enough to establish a church and confirm it.
 1. He will preach long enough in one place to make a group of Christians.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

2. He will teach the Christians and stay long enough to see that men are properly trained and qualified to become elders. (cf. Acts 20:31.) How long this will take is open to question.
 3. When properly qualified elders are appointed the autonomy of the local congregation becomes complete. It is capable of self-government and can exist independent of the evangelist. The evangelist can then move on or make this congregation headquarters for further evangelistic work, whichever he and the flock may agree upon.
- (2) The elder is located with one congregation, unless he becomes disqualified through sin or for some other reason.

Examination Nine

1. What is the difference in meaning between the word "elder" and "bishop"?
2. Prove that the terms "elder" and "bishop" refer to the same office.
3. What is the meaning of the term "pastor"?
4. Give two facts about the Jerusalem elders.
5. Name two specific duties of the bishops.
6. State and explain two specific duties of the pastors.
7. In what sense is an elder a teacher?
8. Give and explain three positive qualifications for an elder.
9. Explain why a single man could be an elder.
10. Give and explain three negative qualifications for an elder.

REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSONS ONE THROUGH NINE OF THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

True or False

- 1. Jesus spoke Latin as His native language.
- 2. The word "church" means "called out."
- 3. This word has a non-Christian as well as a Christian use.
- 4. Christ made a specific use of the word "ekklesia" in Matthew 19:16.
- 5. The church belongs to Christ because He taught about it.
- 6. Salvation and church membership are spoken of as the same condition in the New Testament.
- 7. The church is the greatest plan of God because it was planned by Him from the beginning.
- 8. The creation of the church was one of the secondary purposes of Christ.
- 9. The church in the Bible is complete in some of its work and organization.
- 10. The divinity of the church is seen in its founding, organization and direction.
- 11. Although the church in the Bible was not new it did carry some unusual applications of old truths.
- 12. There is no clear picture of the church until you reach the book of Acts.
- 13. Mount Zion and Mount Sinai compare in several particulars.

Fill In The Blanks

- 1. There are some persons who claim that the church began in the days of ----- . Others feel that the church began ----- .
- 2. Isaiah 2:1-3 stated that something would be established on top of the mountains. What was it? -----

- 3. Daniel 2:44 stated that "the God of heaven" would do something. What was it? -----
- 4. How many world kingdoms were represented by the great image?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- What were they?
5. Zechariah 12:10 and 13:1 said that something would be opened in Jerusalem. What was it?
6. Jesus said something would start from Jerusalem. What was it? What does this have to do with the establishment of the church?
7. What are the "keys of the kingdom"?
8. Give the six questions and answers that prove the church was established in 34 A.D. in the city of Jerusalem.
- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- (5)
- (6)
9. Give two scriptural proofs that the church and the kingdom are the same institution.
-

Multiple Choice

1. Christ said that : a. Preaching in His name. b. Worship in His name. c. Hope in His name—would begin from Jerusalem.
2. The "proper people" were present in Jerusalem, in that they:
a. Were devout Jews. b. Were all Jews. c. Were all believers in Christ.
3. The proper power present on the day of Pentecost was: a. The Word of God. b. The baptism in the Holy Spirit. c. The power of conviction for sinners.
4. The proper preachers were present in that: a. They loved Jesus. b. They preached the Word. c. They had been selected, called and commissioned by Jesus.

REVIEW EXAMINATION

5. Jeremiah 3:14-18 stated that the Lord give the people shepherds who would feed the flock: a. With knowledge and understanding. b. At all times. c. Beside the green pastures.
6. Jeremiah 3:14-18 spoke of the ark of the covenant. It said: a. They would make a new one. b. They would forget it. c. They would break it up.
7. "The tabernacle of David" according to Amos 9:11-12, as fulfilled in Acts 15:14-18, refers to: a. The Temple in Jerusalem. b. The church of Christ. c. The twelve tribes of Israel.
8. Jerusalem was the center of: a. The map of Palestine. b. The commerce and industry of that day. c. Art and culture.

WHY? Give the reason for the following.

1. WHY was the story about the boy and his boat told?
2. WHY can we say that the church twice belongs to Christ?
3. WHY can we say that Christ is **not** building His church today?
4. WHY can we say that Christ is building His church today?
5. WHY do we say the church was one when it was established? (Show the qualities of oneness in its establishment)
6. WHY would not the seven churches of Asia pose a problem in division?
7. WHY could we say the Christ did not **personally** keep His promise about building His church?
8. WHY was the figure of a key an appropriate one to use in showing power and authority?

HOW Did The Following Occur?

1. HOW does the "wailing wall" of the Jews in Jerusalem help us in our understanding of the foundation of the church?
2. HOW does the corner-stone become essential to the whole building?
3. HOW is death important to life in the foundation of the church?
4. HOW was Christ an example to us in putting to death the deeds of the body? (Specify.)
5. HOW is the holy of holies of the tabernacle connected with our hope?
6. HOW does the veil of the holy of holies relate to our hope?
7. HOW does Christ become the incentive for the progress of the church?
8. HOW is the reward for progress related to this present life?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Affirm or Deny, but Tell the Reason Why

1. The head of any organization is not as important as its existence.
Affirm Deny Why
2. The proper head is essential for the permanence of any institution.
Affirm Deny Why
3. Jesus constituted Peter the head of the church in Matthew 16:19.
Affirm Deny Why
4. Any teacher or preacher can become the head of the church to someone.
Affirm Deny Why
5. When Paul wrote to Timothy and said: "Every scripture given by inspiration is profitable for teaching etc. that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" he was referring to the Old Testament scriptures.
Affirm Deny Why
6. The Canon of the New Testament rests on the authority of the apostles and other inspired members of the Primitive Church.
Affirm Deny Why
7. The fact that there were spiritual gifts in the church before all twenty-seven books were finished and after they were finished has nothing to do with their being accepted.
Affirm Deny Why
8. Christ will not judge everyone, inasmuch as some have been judged already.
Affirm Deny Why

One Word Will Answer The Following

- 1. A word that means "one sent."
- 2. The man who was "numbered with the eleven apostles."
- 3. The "apostle" of the church in Jerusalem.
- 4. The word that carries the thought of "ambassador or envoy."
- 5. That into which the Holy Spirit was to lead the apostles.
- 6. What the apostles gave through the laying on of their hands.

- 7. The name which means "to say before."
- 8. The prophet from Jerusalem who foretold of a famine.
- 9. When this was come "that which was in part will be done away."

Answer YES or No to the Following

- 1. The nature of the work assigned to the evangelist does not make the office a perpetual one.
- 2. The evangelists were commissioned from churches.
- 3. The office of evangelist has been continued from the beginning to the present day.
- 4. The meaning of the term evangelist is "a worker for God."
- 5. In a specific sense this term has reference to all Christians.
- 6. Philip is the only man in the New Testament who is specifically called an "evangelist."
- 7. Timothy was very likely an evangelist for the church in Ephesus.
- 8. Titus was an evangelist left on the isle of Crete by the Apostle.
- 9. The evangelists of the New Testament preached both publicly and privately.
- 10. The evangelists of the New Testament had only two grand objectives in their preaching.
- 11. There are at least ten definite qualifications for an evangelist.

Answer These Questions

- 1. Give the meaning of the following terms: "elder, bishop, pastor."
- 2. In what sense were the apostles "elders"?
- 3. What duty is inferred by the name "elder"?
- 4. What duty is inferred by the name "bishop"?
- 5. What duty is inferred by the name "pastor"?
- 6. Give two positive qualifications of the elder.
- 7. Give two negative qualifications of the elder.
- 8. Give two comparisons of the work of the elder and evangelist.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

“HE GAVE SOME TO BE

DEACONS”

1. *The name, its meaning*
 - A. *General*
 - B. *Specific*
2. *Deacons of the church*
 - A. *Those of Jerusalem*
 - B. *Those of Philippi*
3. *Qualifications*
 - A. *Positive*
 - B. *Negative*
4. *Their work*
 - A. *The table of the Lord*
 - B. *The table of the poor*
 - C. *The table of the minister*



LESSON TEN

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

The Deacons

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"The first and almost the only book deserving of universal attention is the Bible. I speak as a man of the world to men of the world, and I say to you, 'Search the Scriptures' The earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hopes that they will prove useful citizens of their country and respectable members of society."

—John Quincy Adams

To finish the quotation Mr. Adams made: "Search the scriptures for in them ye think, ye shall find salvation." Let us work carefully that a knowledge of salvation and of Christ are obtained in part by searching the scriptures. The Bible **does not** say, "let someone else search the scriptures for you." This is a personal matter, open to every Christian. Shall we ask someone else to give an account of our knowledge of salvation?

Read carefully these references:

Matt. 20:26; Mark 11:35; John 12:26; Acts 6:1-6; Rom. 15:8; I Cor. 3:5; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; 4:7; I Thess. 3:2; I Tim. 3:8-13; Phil. 1:11; Matt. 25:34-40.

Fill In The Blanks

1. The term "deacon" means _____
2. There are several persons to whom this term is applied. Could you name three of them? 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____
3. Name two qualifications of the persons who is to become a deacon.
1. _____ 2. _____
4. Name a few places (geographically speaking) where deacons were present. 1. _____ 2. _____
5. Name two specific tasks that you feel a deacon could perform.
1. _____ 2. _____

Why do you suggest these?

LESSON DISCUSSION

All the offices of the church need to be so carefully understood that a person wanting to serve in any of them would know just what

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

the Lord expected of him—as an evangelist, as an elder or as a deacon.

Another introductory word needs to be said: None of these offices, either by way of qualifications or duties, are too lofty for present day attainment. The difficulty in this area has to do with human interpretation and application of these qualifications and duties. Some men (and some who are now in office) are very obviously not at all qualified. On the other hand, in the eyes of some, no one could ever measure up to their estimate of the application of these terms. But, thanks be to God, the decision of who is or is not qualified, is not left in the hands of man. More explanation on this point will be found in lesson twelve.

1. The name, its meaning and use.

1. **General.** The word “deacon” is from a Greek word that means “a waiter, attendant, servant or minister;” and this is taken from the verb “to wait upon, to serve, to minister;” and this again is derived from the word “to run, to hasten.” The essential idea is “**active service.**”

In this sense it was applied to:

- (1) Christ. Rom. 15:8; Gal. 2:17.
- (2) To the Apostles. Matt. 20:26; 23:11; Mark 11:35; I Cor. 3:5.
- (3) To evangelists. Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; 4:7; I Thess. 3:2.
- (4) To all faithful servants of Christ. John 12:26.
- (5) To civil magistrates. Rom. 13:4.

2. **Specific.** The word is used to denote a particular class of “servants.” Servants in an official sense. Note:

- (1) “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and **deacons.**” Phil. 1:1.
- (2) “**Deacons** in like manner must be . . . And let these also first be proved; then let them **serve as deacons** . . . for they that have **served well as deacons** gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” I Tim. 3:8-13.

It would seem from a careful reading of these verses that there is a distinct office in the church. This office of deacon ought to be occupied and fulfilled by men.

Answer These Questions

1. Why do some people feel that no one can attain to the office of elder, evangelist or deacon?
2. What is the meaning of the term “deacon”?

THE PERMANENT OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH—THE DEACONS

3. Name three persons to whom the word is applied in a general sense.
4. What is meant by the phrase "let them first be proved"? (cf. I Tim. 3:10.)
5. What is meant by the phrase "great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus"? cf. I. Tim. 3:13.)

* * * * *

2. The deacons mentioned in the New Testament.

1. Those of Jerusalem.

"Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the Word of God and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven of good report, full of the spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them." Acts 6:1-6.

Note that whereas these men are not called deacons in the noun form, they are so called in the use of the verb. Their appointed task was "to serve tables." The word from which we have the two-English words "to serve" is the same Greek term that is translated "deacon" in the noun form.

If a foreman hired a man to dig a ditch he would be a ditch-digger. If the church in Jerusalem appointed these seven men to serve the church, they were then servants or "deacons" of the Jerusalem church; a capacity in which none of the other members of the church served.

2. **Those of Philippi.** They are only mentioned. No record is given as to what they did as servants of the Philippian church. Phil 1:1.
3. **Those of Ephesus.** Since it is thought that Timothy was in Ephesus when Paul wrote to him, the instructions here were probably applicable to the deacons at Ephesus. I Tim. 3:8-13.
3. **The qualifications of a deacon.**
 1. **Must be of good report.** He should have a life above all honest reproach in the eyes of the congregation, the community and his immediate neighborhood. (Acts 6:3a.)
 2. **Must be full of the Holy Spirit.** This means that the deacon's

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- life will be empty of self and full of God's Word and of prayer. Then, the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the heart of every Christian, will be able to direct him. (Acts 6:3b.)
3. **Must be full of wisdom.** He must be one who acts wisely in all his contacts and dealings with his fellowman. (Acts 6:3c.)
 4. **Must be grave or serious.** The meaning of the Greek word "grave" is, "August, venerable, reverend; to be venerated for character, honorable." (I Tim. 3:8a.)
 5. **Not double-tongued.** He must not be a person who speaks one thing before Christians and something else before the world. (I Tim. 3:8a.)
 6. **Not given to much wine.** The word "much" seems to be for the sole purpose of forbidding drunkenness and does not in any way indicate that a little wine is permissible. (I Tim. 3:8c.)
 1. **Not greedy of filthy lucre.** "Not greedy of base gain." I Tim. 3:8d. "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." (I Tim. 6:10a.)
 8. **He must hold the faith in a pure conscience.** James McKnight has this comment to make: "He must hold fast the doctrines of the gospel with a pure conscience; he must not, from fear or self-interest either conceal or disguise these doctrines." (I Tim. 3:9.)
 9. **He must first be proved.** The word "prove" in the Greek means also: "To test, examine, scrutinize (to see whether a thing be genuine or not); to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy." The names of the deacons should be made known to the congregation before they are set aside to the office. The word "also" in verse ten would seem to indicate that the elders were also given this period of examination or proving. (I Tim. 3:10.)
 10. **The husband of one wife.** He must not be an adulterer either by act or by thought. (I Tim. 3:12a.)
 11. **He must rule well his own children.** The deacon is to exercise Christian rule over his own children. (I Tim. 3:12b.)

Answer These Questions

1. How can it be proven that the seven men at Jerusalem were deacons?
2. In what way does I Timothy 3:8-13 have reference to the deacons at Ephesus?
3. What is the meaning of "filled with the Spirit"? (cf. Acts 6:3.)
4. What is meant by "not given to much wine"? (cf. I Tim. 3:8.)
5. Why would a deacon be tempted to be "greedy of filthy lucre"?

4. The work of the deacons.

In Acts 6:1-3 we read the first account concerning the work of a deacon. The following quotation is very much to the point on this subject:

"To wait on the secular concerns of the church was, therefore, the limit of their (deacons) **official** duties. Their office comprehended nothing less, and it certainly embraced nothing more. It conferred no authority whatever, either to teach or to preach, in either the public or the private assembly. The Elders must all be **apt to teach**, and every Evangelist is required to **preach the Word**. But, in all that is said of the Deacons in the New Testament, there is not given a single intimation that either teaching or preaching is any part of their office.

They may, indeed, in a certain sense, preach the Word **unofficially**. This is, to a certain extent, the duty and privilege of every disciple. Revelation 22:17. And certainly there is no better time to administer to the wants of the soul than when we are feeding and clothing the body. Every Deacon should, therefore, 'know his opportunity' and improve it. He should ever be ready to speak a word of comfort and consolation to the weary soul while he is laboring to supply the wants of its clay tabernacle. But, in doing so, it is well to remember that he acts simply as a Christian, and not as an officer of the church.

—R. Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, page 341-342.

Following W. L. Hayden's outline, we could say that the task of the deacon has to do with **waiting on tables** today as it did in the past:

1. **The Table of the Lord:** or the care and the preparation of the emblems of the Lord's Supper: These duties could and should include the care of the entire building. This is no small task and should not be treated as such. Those who prepare the emblems and keep the meeting house clean are as truly serving the Lord as any and every other servant of Christ. The efficient cleaning of the house of worship is something of a problem in a number of places. Let the deacons take upon their hearts the responsibility of doing this job as "unto the Lord." Someone has truly said that the only man more important than the preacher in a public service is the janitor.
2. **The table of the minister.** Having help in this particular field would be a marvelous boon to the average minister. What a joy to have someone who could help in the thousand little tasks that need to be done in the efficient management of the administration of an average size church.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Someone will doubtless think this refers to the job of a church secretary . . . and **they are exactly right.**

This is, indeed, a field where a deacon can serve, that of secretary to the minister or to the church. The business matters of the Lord's work should be managed with no less efficiency than that of any other work.

3. **The table of the poor.** When will the church awaken to her heaven-sent responsibility in this area? The benevolent agencies in the world today are here because the church has failed in fulfilling the desire of the Lord. Hear His words again:

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." Matt. 25:34-40.

It is the major task of the church to give the bread of life, but it is rather difficult to feed the soul while the body is crying for physical nourishment.

Answer These Questions

1. How can we scripturally say that the official duties of the deacon were in the secular concerns of the church?
2. How could anyone preach "unofficially"?
3. What is meant by the care of "the Table of the Lord"?
4. How could the deacon take care of "the table of the minister"?
5. Is the church, through the deacons, meeting the need of the "table of the poor"? How can this need be adequately met?

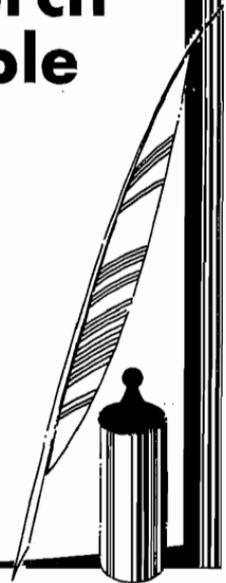
Examination Ten

1. Why do some feel that men today, cannot measure up to the qualifications for the office of a deacon?
2. Give two persons to whom the term "deacon" is applied in a general sense.
3. Prove that the seven mentioned in Acts 6:1-6 are deacons.
4. Give and explain five of the qualifications of the deacon.
5. Enlarge upon the qualification of "first be proved."
6. Into what area do the "official duties" of the deacon enter?
7. What is meant by "the Table of the Lord"?
8. In what way would the minister be helped by the deacons?
9. Do you honestly feel that we, as a church, could be held accountable for feeding the physically hungry?
10. What part of this lesson was the most important to you?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart"*

**THE WORK OF
THE WOMEN**

**in the Church
in the Bible**



LESSON ELEVEN

THE WORK OF THE WOMEN

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"A library of sixty-six books written over a period of 1,600 years by forty different men in almost every station of life, bound between the covers of one volume that rings throughout with one great, glad, harmonious message to the human race, is absolutely inconceivable unless Divine inspiration and direction are admitted."

—Henry Clark

The Bible does not contradict itself—men may contradict each other in their attempt to understand the will of God, but the Bible, itself, is not contradictory. Do you know what the Bible teaches about the work of women in the church? Be careful in your answer. Do you **know** what the **Bible** teaches, or what someone **said** the Bible teaches? There is sometimes a vast difference.

Here are some references to search before you read what the author of this book has written:

Gen. 1:27; 2:18; 21-24; 3:16; Gal. 3:28; I Cor. 11:3, 7, 12; Eph. 5:20-33; I Tim. 2:12; Eph. 4:11, 12; I Cor. 12:28; Titus 2:15; I Tim. 5:17; I Cor. 14:33-35; I Tim. 2:11-14.

Affirm or Deny But Tell The Reason Why

1. Mary Magdalene (cf. Matt. 28:1-8.) was the first evangelist as she announced the resurrection of the Christ.

Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____

2. There is neither male nor female "in Christ." Therefore, it is totally inconsistent to shut a woman out of the office of evangelist. (cf. Gal 3:28.)

Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____

3. Paul sent greetings to at least three women who labored in the Lord (cf Rom. 16:1, 12) and spoke of women who worked with him. (cf. Phil. 4:3.) If these women were preaching in Paul's day, why should we object to them doing so today? Some say we should not object.

Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____

4. A completely literal interpretation of I Corinthians 14:34, 35 would prevent women from singing or praying in the congregation.

Affirm _____ Deny _____ Why _____

5. There are women missionaries and preachers who are doing

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

a wonderful work for the Lord and Jesus said "by their fruits ye shall know them." Does not this fact sanction women preachers?

Affirm Deny Why

6. There is really very little a woman can do for the Lord other than be a good housewife and mother—which is a most worthy work.

Affirm Deny Why

LESSON DISCUSSION

The subject matter upon which this Lesson Discussion is based, follows closely a treatise on the subject of "Woman's Work" as written by W. L. Hayden.

The chief question to be considered under this head, as it stands related to church polity, is this: **According to the scriptures, have women a right to be pastors and evangelists?** It is important that the question be clearly defined and correctly understood. The question is not, "May women sing, pray and speak in religious meetings, teach in Sunday School, or make temperance addresses?" At proper times and places, and under proper circumstances, a woman may do any of these that she is capable of doing. She has a right to enjoy and exercise the freedom permitted to her under the law of liberty, and wherein that law does not restrict her, she is not to be bound. The question is this: "May women be pastors and evangelists? May they occupy these important official positions in the government and work of the Church of Christ?"

To answer this question properly, it will be necessary to consider some other questions, which underlie this one, and which must be understood in order to have the right understanding for this question. These other questions are two in number, and are as follows:

1. What is the true relation of the sexes to each other?
2. What are the principles of the law of Christ which pertain to these offices which He has established in His church?

In answering these questions, the Word of God is the supreme and final authority. It is here assumed that the teaching of the New Testament bearing upon this subject is as applicable to this age as it was at the time it was written, since the gospel of Christ is to continue to the end of time, and is for all nations. It is not for us to explain away any part of scriptural teaching. Whatever the scriptures teach concerning any subject should be accepted as an end of all controversy "Where the scriptures speak, we speak; and where the scriptures are silent, we are silent." The only question then is: "What do the scriptures teach with reference to this subject?" Our appeal is "to the law and the testimony."

1. What is the relation of the sexes to each other?

In considering this question, attention is first invited to the Mosaic account of the creation of man:

"And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." (Gen. 1:27)

"And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmeet for him." (Marg. R. V.—or "answering to him." Gen. 2:18.)

"And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Gen. 2: 21-24.

From this account it is evident that man and woman are of the same nature, constituting one race, but differing in sex, and in those peculiarities which belong to sex. They are companions and complements of each other. Having the same nature, men and women have many faculties and characteristics in common; differing in sex, they have corresponding differences in physical, mental and moral endowment. Generally, women are smaller and weaker than men; the female organism is more delicate and sensitive than the male organism. For this reason, woman is less able than man to endure the strain of public life, and to bear the excitement incident to large assemblies. Physically, man is the protector because he is stronger and hardier; and woman, "the weaker vessel" needs protection.

Intellectually, the sexes may be considered equal, and yet they are not entirely the same. Among men, as a rule, the intellectual predominates, while among women the emotional nature is more in evidence. Hence, in matters that require cool, critical, impartial judgment, men are better fitted to act than women. In matters that call out the sympathies of humanity, women are better qualified than men. Men are more competent than women to wear the judicial ermine; women are naturally better equipped than men to minister to the sick and suffering.

"O, woman! In our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light, quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!"

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Socially, man and woman are equal. Heathenism degrades woman to a position of slavery; Christianity elevates her to her rightful place—that of equality with man. It is with reference to social position and privileges that Paul says, “There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Gal. 3:28. In Christ, all occupy a position of equality as members of the family of God. Although equal in rank, in the social realm woman’s powers are superior to man’s. She is the center and charm of society; this is her recognized place and sphere, and here her powers shine most brilliantly.

Morally, woman is more susceptible than man: She can rise to greater heights of refinement and purity, and sink to lower depths of depravity and wickedness. Says Macalua: “History proves that although woman, swayed by lofty impulses, approaches the angels, yet when yielding to a master passion, she is capable of a refinement of wickedness which men never attain.” Woman, if she rightly develops this attribute, can be another Sarah, a Hannah, or an Elisabeth: But, she can also be a Delilah, a Jezebel, an Athaliah, or a Herodias. Woman is naturally more religious than man, owing to the predominance of the emotional factor in her nature. This accounts, in part, for the fact that the majority of church members are women. Woman possesses the spirit of reverence, devotion and worship to a greater extent than man.

* * * * *

Answer These Questions

1. What is the essential question under consideration in this discussion?
2. In what way does woman possess the same “nature” as man?
3. In what particular is woman “the weaker vessel”?
4. Intellectually man and woman are the same, yet different. How is this true?
5. In what way is woman superior to man?

* * * * *

In matters of **authority** and **government**, woman is to be in subjection to man. This does not imply inferiority of nature, but is necessary to order and good government. God said to Eve: “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” Gen. 3:16b. This does not teach that the rule of the husband should be arbitrary, unjust or tyrannical, but it does teach that it is the husband’s pro-

vince to rule, and the wife's to be in subjection. Abraham ruled righteously over his household, and his wife, Sarah, obeyed him, "calling him lord." The Apostle Peter calls wives who are in subjection to their own husbands "Sarah's children."

Says Paul: "The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." Man "is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man: for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God." I Cor. 11:3, 7b-11.

Paul says again: "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being Himself the Saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it." "Nevertheless, do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband." Eph. 5:22-25; 33.

Evidently these passages from the writings of Peter and Paul teach that the husband is superior in authority, and that the wife should be in subjection to her husband. The husband should love his wife even as himself, and the wife should reverence and obey her husband. This teaching is neither antiquated nor abrogated, as some would have it, but is a part of the law of Christ, and will continue in force to the end of time. It is applicable to this age, and is as much needed now as it ever was in the history of mankind. When this law is observed in the spirit, as well as the letter, by both parties, it produces model husbands and wives, and makes happy homes. In harmony with this teaching, Paul instructs Timothy "not to permit a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." I Tim. 2:12. It is necessary to the peace, good order, and welfare of church and society that woman's subordination to man shall be regarded and maintained.

This brief consideration of the relation of the sexes presents to us the following picture of woman: woman is physically inferior to man, intellectually his equal, socially his superior, morally more susceptible, and religiously more devotional; and while she is man's companion and equal, in point of authority she is subordinate to him. Her place in society and her sphere of activity should be in harmony with the qualities and peculiarities of her nature, and her

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

work and responsibilities should be such as she is best fitted to fulfill within her proper position and relations. This indicates that her place and sphere are to be found in domestic and social life.

The view just presented is in accord with that of leading scholars and writers on this subject. In commenting on the Mosaic account of the creation of woman, after speaking of the dual sense of the word **Adam**; Charles Louis Loos says: "the words of Jehovah declare unmistakably that in the general compass of human life, in all human experiences, woman stands and works as the indispensable complementary associate of man, according to the ability granted to her. Kant well expresses this when he says, 'Only man and woman together form the full and entire man; one sex completes the other.' The Bible doctrine of this dual nature of the **Adam**, and the exposition here given of it, do not necessarily involve the identity of the two parts—the man and the woman—nor their equality in nature and in their relations to each other and to human life."

Says John Ruskin in "Sesame and Lilies": "We are foolish, and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the 'superiority' of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things. Each has what the other has not; each completes the other, and is completed by the other. They are in nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depend on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give. Now their separate characters are briefly these: The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer the creator, the discoverer, the defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, whenever war is just, wherever conquest necessary. But the woman's power is for rule, not for battle, and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement and decision."

Says Harriet Beecher Stowe: "I would have it felt by those who are seeking to elevate woman, that the work is to be done, not so much by creating for her new spheres of action, as by elevating her conceptions of that domestic vocation to which God and nature have assigned her. It is all very well to open to her avenues of profit and advancement in the great outer world; but after all, **to make and keep a home** is, and ever must be, a woman's first glory, her highest aim. No work of art can compare with a perfect home. The training and guiding of a family must be recognized as the highest work a woman can perform; and female education ought to be conducted with special reference to this. Now women have a sphere and profession of their own—a profession for which they are fitted by physical organization, by their own instincts, and to which they are directed by the pointed and manifest finger of God—and that sphere is **family life.**"

The relation of the sexes is beautifully expressed by Longfellow in the following lines from the "Song of Hiawatha":

"As unto the bow the cord is,
So unto the man is woman.
Though she bends him, she obeys him,
Though she draws him, yet she follows—
Useless each without the other."

The relation of the sexes, then, is that of companionship, in which each is the complement of the other; socially equal in rank, differing in powers and peculiarities, there are corresponding differences in activities and responsibilities. Equality in social position, or in intellectual ability, is not a warrant for identity in duties and activities. In this great busy world there is a division of labor according to the adaptation and qualifications of each class, and the same is true of the sexes. The relation of the sexes, and woman's proper position in society, must be duly considered in determining her sphere of work and responsibilities. Distinctions based upon natural laws and conditions are as enduring as time, and cannot be ignored without destroying the very foundations of society. Woman's work and duties must be found in that which is appropriate to her sex, suited to her position in society, and consistent with her place as subordinate to man.

Answer These Questions

1. In what matters is the man to rule over the woman?
2. In what manner could a man "rule" so as to disobey Christ? In what way could a woman refuse to take instruction of the Lord?
3. What was said of the dual nature of "Adam"?
4. According to Ruskin why are we foolish to talk of the "superiority of one sex to the other"?
5. According to Harriet Beecher Stowe what is the woman's "first glory and highest aim"?

* * * * *

2. **What are the principles of the law of Christ which pertain to those offices which He has established in His church?**

To answer properly this second question, the arrangements that Christ has made for the government of His kingdom or church must be kept in mind:

"And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ." Eph. 4:11, 12.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues.” I Cor. 12:28.

It has been shown that in the kingdom of Christ the following order of officers is established: 1) Apostles of Christ. 2) Prophets. 3) Evangelists. 4) Pastors and teachers.

In the government of the church, then, Christ has placed these four classes of officers, and to them are committed the government and management of His church and its interests. The first of these, the apostles of Christ, are, under Christ, the Head, the master builders or architects, who superintend the erection of the spiritual house, the Church of Christ. They furnish in the name of Christ the plans and specifications for the spiritual temple, and give directions to the workmen who are engaged in its construction. All things are to be done according to the instructions of these architects, the inspired apostles of Christ. Although dead, and therefore not personally with us, their authoritative instructions are found in their writings in the New Testament scriptures.

The prophets, next in order to the apostles, were inspired teachers in the church during its infancy, while the volume of revelation was yet incomplete. They were assistants of the apostles in the guidance and training of the infant church. When the church had become fully developed, and revelation had been completed by the writings of the apostles, the order of prophets, being no longer needed, was discontinued. This leaves in the government of the church two classes of officers—evangelists and pastors. These constitute the living, earthly representatives and official executors of the government of the church of Christ. Let us ascertain the functions of these two classes of officers.

1. **Evangelist.** Philip, Timothy, Titus and others were evangelists in the primitive church. Timothy was solemnly enjoined by the apostle Paul “to do the work of an evangelist.” What is included in the office and work of an evangelist? Without attempting an exhaustive enumeration of duties, it will be sufficient to specify the more important. It is the duty of an evangelist to preach the gospel and make Christians. This is signified by the meaning of the word **evangelist**. But this does not exhaust the duties of this office. It is the duty of an evangelist to gather together the disciples of a locality and organize a church. This involves instructing the members in their duties, in the nature of church organization, in the manner of procedure, in the qualifications of church officers, and instructing the officers in the duties devolving upon them respectively. In short, the whole care, guidance and training of infant and weak churches devolves upon the evangelist. It

is the duty of an evangelist "to set in order the things that are wanting" in the churches that are under his jurisdiction, and bring them up to the standard of fully organized and efficient working churches. In a word, the evangelist is the field-officer of the church, who occupies the outposts, and goes out into new fields and destitute regions, making conquests for the Master, caring for weak and struggling congregations, and developing them into efficient, well-organized and self-supporting churches. Clearly, the office and work of an evangelist are of great importance, imposing grave responsibility, and requiring the exercise of much authority in the administration of the affairs of Christ's Kingdom.

2. **Pastor.** The words pastor or shepherd, presbyter or elder, bishop or overseer, are all applied in the New Testament to the same officer; in scriptural use they all refer to the eldership of the church. These elders are to have the oversight of the church, the management and control of its interests, and they are to exercise a shepherd's watchcare over the spiritual flock. The duties of a pastor or elder are included in two general classes, viz.: teaching and ruling.

(1) **Teaching.** The elders of a church are its official teachers. They are to feed the flock of God with the pure milk of the Word and the strong meat of Gospel truth. This work of teaching may be done publicly, in the meetings of the church, or privately, in house-to-house visitation among the members. It includes instruction, confutation, admonition and exhortation.

- (2) **Ruling.** The elders of a church are its authorized rulers. Everything in the management and direction of the affairs of a church comes within their jurisdiction, and under their supervision. Christ, then, has established in the church two classes of permanent officers, to whom He has entrusted the direction and control of the interests of His kingdom on earth. The performance of the duties of these offices involves the exercise of important authority. The evangelist is "to speak and exhort and reprove with all authority" (Titus 2:15), and elders that rule well are to be counted worthy of double honor. (I Tim. 5:17.) To those officers are assigned important duties in the work of the gospel, involving grave responsibilities, and conferring high authority. The evangelist is a general officer, going from place to place as his work requires. The pastor or elder is a local and permanent officer, doing his work in the community in which he lives. Their work is largely, though not wholly, the same, the work of evangelist being more comprehensive than that of

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

pastor. Both, however, are charged with the work of directing and promoting the interests of the Kingdom of Christ.

Answer These Questions

1. How was the work of the Apostles described?
2. "In short" what would you say the work of the evangelist is?
3. Name two of the New Testament evangelists.
4. Give two facts concerning the teaching of the New Testament "pastor."
5. Give two facts about the "ruling" of the New Testament pastor.

* * * * *

3. Now for the important question: **according to the scriptures, have women a right to be pastors and evangelists?**

May women be chosen to fill these important official positions in the church? May they be made the official teachers and rulers of the congregation? May they be appointed to go forth in the world, preach the gospel, baptize converts, organize churches, educate the members and officers in their duties, set in order the things that are wanting in the churches—in a word, do the work of an evangelist?

As the question is a double one, each part will be separately considered and answered.

1. **May a woman be made a pastor, elder or bishop of a church?**

Let us examine the qualifications of a pastor or bishop and see whether a woman possesses the requisite qualifications. "**The bishop must be without reproach.**" Many women there are who have this qualification. "**The bishop must be the husband of one wife.**" Does a woman possess this qualification? Can a woman be the husband of one wife? A man can have a wife and be the husband of one wife, but a woman cannot. Does the fact begin to dawn upon your minds that pastors, elders or bishops must be **men** and not women? Is it not evident that the pastorate or eldership is restricted to men? If there is any meaning in Paul's language, if he spoke by the Spirit of God, the question is settled. A woman is not eligible to the pastorate or eldership of a church. By divine authority woman, on account of her sex, is debarred from being an official teacher and ruler in the church. The first and fundamental requisite for the eldership is that the person shall be a

man. Not until the teaching of the Word of God is disregarded can a woman be made pastor of a church.

2. **May a woman be made an evangelist and do the work of an evangelist?**

In answering this question your attention is invited to the following considerations:

- (1) If a woman is not eligible to the eldership of the church, still less is she eligible to the office of evangelist, since, as we have seen, the latter office is more comprehensive and imposes greater responsibilities than the former. If, therefore, a woman is not permitted to be a pastor, still less is she permitted to be an evangelist.
- (2) The Greek word **enaggelistees**, "evangelist," is masculine in gender. The feminine form, **enaggelistría**, "a female evangelist," is found in post-apostolic ecclesiastic literature, but it does not occur in the inspired writings. These facts restrict the office to men and indicate that it is a departure from New Testament teaching for women to be evangelists.
- (3) The evangelists of the New Testament period were all men. No woman filled the office of evangelist in the primitive church. There were "helpers in Christ Jesus," fellow-laborers with the apostles, both of men and women, but they were not evangelists. They did not fill the office or do the work of an evangelist. There are many kinds of workmen necessary in erecting a building, but they are not all of them architects, masons or carpenters—some are painters, others plasterers, hod-carriers, teamsters, and helpers in other ways. So there are many workers in the church who are neither pastors nor evangelists. **It is illogical to conclude that persons are evangelists because they labor in the Lord, unless it be shown that there is no other way of working in the Lord than by being an evangelist.** Since, however, there are other ways of working, the conclusion that the fellow-workers whom Paul mentions are evangelists is wholly unwarranted. A candid and critical examination of the history of the primitive church necessitates the conclusion that there were no women evangelists in the days of the apostles.
- (4) Preaching by women is a post-apostolic condition which exists chiefly among heretical and fanatical sects. The earliest account of preaching by women is in the beginning of the third century. In "Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia," article "Preaching," the following statement is made: "Preaching by women was strongly for-

bidden in the Catholic Church, according to Paul's explicit direction, but was a feature with the heretics, and even with the Montanists, much to Tertullian's dislike."

In modern times, preaching by women is found in those sects which have erroneous views of the work of the Holy Spirit, or which have defective views of the authority of the inspired writings. In one case, the practice is the result of fanatical delusion, the speakers professing to follow an inward illumination of the Spirit; in the other, it is the result of rationalistic presumption, the speakers boldly setting aside apostolic teaching by the dictates of their own reason. In neither case does the practice rest upon the teaching of the scriptures with reference to this subject. From all these considerations it necessarily follows that the scriptures do not authorize a woman to fill the office or do the work of an evangelist.

Answer These Questions

1. Why couldn't a woman be made a "pastor, elder or bishop"?
2. Give three reasons why a woman could not be an evangelist.
3. Was not Mary at the tomb an evangelist as she went to tell of the resurrection of Christ?
4. Is there any historical record of women evangelists? If so, when and where?
5. Do you agree with Hayden's conclusions concerning modern day women evangelists? If so, why? If not, why not?

* * * * *

Having seen that according to the scriptures women are not permitted to be pastors or evangelists, let us proceed a step further and inquire into the reason of this prohibition. If the scriptures gave no reason for it, we would still be compelled to accept the fact of prohibition and submit to it, walking, not by our own sight, but by faith in the superior wisdom of our divine Lord, by whose authority the prohibition was given. But since reasons are given in the scriptures for this prohibition, it is proper for us to ascertain what these reasons are for limiting woman's sphere of activity.

The reasons for these limitations are found in the following scriptures: "As in all the churches of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home:

for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." I Cor. 14:33-35.

"But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression." I Tim. 2:12-14.

Let us now carefully and candidly examine these passages and ascertain what they teach upon the subject under consideration.

1. Paul does not permit a woman to teach or to speak in the churches.

The church in Corinth had departed from the uniform usage in the primitive churches in permitting women to speak in the meetings of the church. In correcting this local disorder, Paul refers to principles of universal and perpetual obligation. The meaning of Paul's prohibition, in its permanent application, is to be determined by the general principles involved, and not by the disorder in Corinth. When Paul says, "It is shameful for a woman to speak in the church," he may refer to custom and prejudice of a temporary nature. But when he says, "Let them be in subjection, as also saith the law," he refers to something that is universally and perpetually binding. Paul's direction to Timothy, an evangelist, is not local or temporary, but general and permanent in its application. Paul's language in these two passages prohibits woman from being a public official teacher in the church. This much is certainly taught beyond question. While the language might be construed to mean more, it cannot be understood to mean less, without explaining it away entirely. And in the light of what has already been considered, this appears to be the force of the apostle's language. Certainly the language cannot signify less than a prohibition of public instruction by women in the meetings of the church.

2. The reason for this prohibition is given.

Women are commanded to be in subjection, and are not permitted to have dominion over men. Public instruction involves the exercise of authority, and in a mixed assembly, as in the general meetings of the church, this authority will be exercised over both men and women. Hence, for women to teach in the meetings of the whole congregation would be to exercise authority over men. But such exercise of authority is inconsistent with woman's position of subordination to man. Paul says, "For it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law." "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness." The law requiring woman to be in subjection to man was given in Eden and has been in force during all dispensations. This law is for all ages and nations. Woman

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

is forbidden to do that which is a violation of this divine law. But it is a violation of this divine law of God for a woman to be a public teacher in the church. Therefore, since women are to be in subjection and not to exercise authority over men, they are not permitted to be public teachers.

3. The Apostle gives reasons also for woman's subordination to man.

These are two in number. The reasons are:

- (1) "For Adam was first formed, then Eve."
- (2) "Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression."

Woman was created after man, from man, and for man. This is the first reason for her subjection to man. Woman was first in the transgression, being beguiled by the tempter through the greater susceptibility of her nature. This is the second reason for her subordination. These reasons are both of them stubborn facts, not changeable customs. They will always remain just as they have been during all these centuries. They are unaffected by the lapse of time or change of manners and customs and, these facts are the reasons given by Paul for woman's subordination to man. Therefore, the law requiring woman to be in subjection to man will never be changed; it will continue in force so long as the world stands. Inasmuch as this law subjecting woman to man, is the reason for prohibiting woman from teaching in the church, this prohibition, then, does not rest on changeable custom, but on the inherent nature of the sexes and their proper relations to each other. Therefore, the law of Christ which prohibits women from being pastors or evangelists will remain in force as long as this world endures. This prohibition, based upon distinctions and relations which are inherent in the sexes, cannot be disregarded without violating a fundamental and universal law of God, which was given to regulate the relative position of the sexes.

The whole field of discussion having now been examined, the teaching of the scriptures upon this subject may be summed up, and embodied in the following proposition: **In the kingdom of Christ, women are prohibited from filling official positions of superiority and authority over men, and are required to be in subjection to the divinely appointed rulers of the church as "helpers in Christ Jesus."** God has placed in the church helps and governments. Women are permitted to be helpers, but are not permitted to be governors. They are hence prohibited from occupying those official positions which require the exercise of authority in the instruction and government of the church. It is for this reason that women are not included among apostles, evangelists or elders of the church. However with-

in certain limitations, and in subordination to the properly authorized rulers of the church, women may in many ways be "helpers in Christ Jesus" as were Priscilla, Phebe, Persis, Tryphena and Tryphosa in the time of the apostles. Subject to these limitations and the laws of expediency and love, women may do whatever they are capable of doing in Christian work the same as men. Within these limitations and under these laws, **a woman may do anything that a man may do who is not a pastor or evangelist.** The law of love requires that all things be done in peace and harmony, and to the edification of the church.

The law of expediency requires that propriety and adaptation be considered in the division of labor and assignment of work to different individuals, both male and female, and such arrangements made as will secure the best results for the cause of Christ. In obedience to these laws, women, as well as men, may sing, pray and talk in social meetings, teach in the Sunday-school, and work in temperance, benevolent and missionary societies. Women may be deaconesses in the church, and render valuable service in various kinds of loving and helpful ministries. In work among the poor and neglected classes, among the degraded and outcast—especially of their own sex—in charitable work among the sick, suffering and dying in the hospitals, and other ministrations in mission fields, there are activities where women can work more successfully than men. In these and other ways women may be "helpers in Christ Jesus" and promote the cause of Christ by the use of the powers with which God has endowed them. They should have as much liberty in this respect as the law of Christ authorizes or permits, but no more. Wherein the law of Christ leaves them free, let them not be restricted, but let them use their freedom for the good of humanity and the glory of God.

Women must not presume to partake of the forbidden fruit of official authority in teaching God's Word and governing His church. Alas—too many men have made sad and disastrous failures in this matter, but it will make matters still worse to disregard the Word of God and put women in the place of authority in the work of the church.

The teaching of the scriptures on the subject of woman's preaching has now been fully considered. The subject is one of great moment, affecting important interests in the kingdom of Christ. A law of God of universal and perpetual obligation, and the authority of Christ, the divine Head of the Church, are involved in this question. Let there be no trifling or presumption in a matter of so grave importance. Nadab and Abihu were destroyed by fire for offering strange fire before the Lord. Uzzah perished for violating a law of God. Fifty thousand and seventy men of Bethshemesh were smitten by God for presumptuously and irreverently looking into

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

the ark of the Lord. Korah, Dathan, Abiram and all their company perished, and Uzziah was smitten with leprosy because they transgressed the law of God in presuming to offer incense, a duty which pertained only to the priests, the sons of Aaron. Set aside the law of Christ upon this subject, and the authority of Christ is overthrown in everything. The very foundations of our holy religion are destroyed. Beware of laying unauthorized hands upon sacred things and divine commands.

In pleading for the Bible, and the Bible alone, and in advocating a return to primitive Christianity in faith and practice, as it is taught in the New Testament, it behoves us to manifest a profound reverence for the teaching of God's Word, and an unswerving loyalty to Christ, the sole and supreme Lawgiver in His kingdom. In demanding a rejection of human authority in matters of religion, the Word of God should not be made void by our own traditions. The **prohibitory** as well as the **preceptory** commands of the Word of God should be observed.

Answer These Questions

1. Give your own explanation of I Corinthians 14:33-35.
2. What "law" is referred to in I Corinthians 14:33-35?
3. What is the true application of I Timothy 2:11-14 to the teaching of women? Who may she teach and who should she not teach?
4. Give and explain the two reasons for woman's subordination to man.
5. Can women hold the office of deacon?

Examination Eleven

1. Give two ways in which woman is equal to or superior to man.
2. In what matters and in what manner is man to rule woman?
3. Is it not foolish to talk of the superiority of one sex to the other? What is a better approach to the subject?
4. Why would a woman be excluded from the work of an elder?
5. In what sense may women be evangelists?
6. Why would a woman be excluded from the work of an evangelist?
7. Do a little research work on this question: Since there is "neither male nor female in Christ Jesus" how can we say woman cannot be an elder or evangelist?
8. If a woman does not speak in church, is this going to prevent her from singing? If not, why not?
9. Did not Priscilla teach a man? See Acts 18:22-26. Explain.
10. What can we say concerning the success of present day women preachers?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

THE ORDINATION OF OFFICERS

1. *The words, their meaning*
2. *The selection*
3. *Three examples*
 - A. *Evangelists*
 - B. *Elders*
 - C. *Deacons*
4. *Some conclusions*
 - A. *All not revealed*
 - B. *The three steps*



LESSON TWELVE

THE ORDINATION OF OFFICERS

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"How many ages and generations have brooded and wept and agonized over this Book! What untellable joys and ecstasies, what support to martyrs at the stake from it! To what myriads has it been the shore and rock of safety—the refuge from driving tempest and wreck! Translated in all languages, how it has united the diverse world!"
—*Wilt Whitman*

What is it in the Book that caused persons to weep and agonize and rejoice? Has the Bible aroused any such deep response in human hearts today? Is it not the depth of understanding of this Book that determines the answer? Oh, to know **Him**—but this knowledge can never be apart from the Book.

Read again these references:

Acts 6:1-6; 14:23; Titus 1:5; I Tim. 3:10; Acts 16:1-3; 13:1-3; I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6; Acts 11:22-26.

True or False

- 1. There is no example of any type of the election of officers in the New Testament.
- 2. In the New Testament the evangelist selected and appointed the elders for the church.
- 3. There is no specific method given in the New Testament for the selection of officers.
- 4. The Holy Spirit has a very essential part in the selection of officers.
- 5. The selection of Timothy by Paul in Acts 16:1-3 is a good example of the ordination of an evangelist. (cf. II Tim. 4:14; I Tim. 1:6.)
- 6. The seven men at Jerusalem were servants, but for a special need and could not be considered "deacons" of the Jerusalem church.
- 7. The bishop was appointed to oversee the elders and deacons.
- 8. No man can serve who does not first of all desire office.
- 9. There ought to be a time of "proving" or apprenticeship for those who are to be officers.
- 10. The evangelist is to direct the church by himself when there are no qualified men to be elders or deacons.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

It is imperative that we understand the details of this lesson, that we not only understand it, but that we understand it very well. This is true because so much difficulty has arisen, and is yet with us, over the so-called "election of officers."

There are multitudes of both elders and ministers who will testify to the truthfulness of the above statement. Mark carefully each point in this study. "Prove all things and **hold fast** to that which is good."

1. The meaning of the words "ordain and appoint."

These words appear in **three places** in the New Testament:

1. "Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may **appoint** over this business." Acts 6:3.
2. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and **appoint** elders in every city, as I gave thee charge." Titus 1:5.
3. "And when they had **appointed** for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed." Acts 14:23.

In Acts 6:3 and Titus 1:5 the Greek word is "kathistemi." Literally it means "To set, place, put." As pertaining to our subject it means "To set one over a thing, in charge of it; to appoint one to administer an office." Note carefully that the **selection** of these seven from among the multitude was the responsibility of the church. The setting or placing was the task of the apostles. This particular thought will be discussed more fully in the latter portion of the lesson.

In Acts 14:23 the Greek word is "kheirotonao." This word is translated "ordain" in the King James' version and "appoint" in the Revised Version. **Robert Young**, in his analytical concordance, gives this literal meaning: "To elect by stretching out the hand." **Thayer** defines the word as follows: "To vote by stretching out the hand; to create or appoint by vote; to elect, appoint, create." It would seem here that the entire process of selection and appointment is embraced in this word.

2. The Selection of Men For The Offices In the Church.

1. The Holy Spirit has a part.

The Holy Spirit has given, in the New Testament through speakers and writers He has inspired, the qualifications for church officers. Those men who meet the Holy Spirit's specifications are the ones He has designated to hold the offices. Note these references: Acts 13:2.

"And the **Holy Spirit said**, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them . . ." Acts 13:20.

THE ORDINATION OF OFFICERS

"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the **Holy Spirit hath made** you bishops . . ." Acts 20:28a.

In thinking of the Holy Spirit's part in the selection of the men for officers we must not forget that the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, through spiritual gifts, probably had a part in the selection of men for the offices in the Apostolic period. This does not, however, annul the fact that the Holy Spirit is the one today who gives us the qualifications for the men in the offices of the church.

2. The evangelists had a part.

(1) In Acts 14:23 the appointment involved the selection by the church, and the setting into the office by the apostles, with the approval of the congregation. In this case the evangelists (apostles) lead in the action of appointment.

(2) In Titus 1:5 Paul instructed Titus to "ordain" or "appoint" elders. We would understand this word to suggest the termination of the ceremony, i.e. after the selection had been made and the approval given, then Titus was to "set" the men into the office.

(3) Acts 6:1-6 tells of the whole process of selection and appointment. Note: 1) The qualifications were given by the apostles. 2) The multitude selected seven men, from among the larger group, who met these qualifications. (Just **how** this was done is purely a matter of conjecture, but that "the brethren" did it we **know**.) 3) After the seven were "chosen" the apostles placed them into the office by the laying on of hands.

This reference should be a warning to every evangelist who tries to do the will of the Lord: "Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins." . . . I Tim. 5:22.

3. The congregation has a part.

From the above references and comments it should be rather clear what part the congregation has. It might be well to briefly outline it again:

(1) To "look out" the men who meet the divine qualifications.

(2) In I Tim. 3:10 men for deacons are to be "proved" before they are placed in the office. If this was true of the deacons, it would surely be also true of the elders. This would necessitate a period of time in which the congregation would be made aware of the nominees for the offices; during this period of time the lives and abilities of these men could be either approved or disapproved by the members of the congregation.

Answer These Questions

1. Why is it essential to understand this lesson very well?
2. Give the two meanings of the word "appoint."
3. What is the Holy Spirit's part in selecting men for the office?
4. What is the part of the evangelist in the selection?
5. Concisely state the part of the congregation in the selection officers.

* * * * *

3. Three New Testament Examples Of Selecting Men For Office.

1. The selection of an evangelist.

"And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek." Acts 16:1-3.

It would seem in this case that Paul found a young man who had demonstrated by his native abilities and work that he was able to do the work of an evangelist. Timothy was of "good report" like the deacons and elders. In his case the source of the report is mentioned; the churches of Lystra and Iconium. From what we have learned previous to this record we know that Paul laid his hands upon Timothy and gave him special spiritual gifts. II Tim. 1:6. We also know that the hands of the "presbytery" were laid upon Timothy to grant him the "gift" of the office of an evangelist. I Tim. 4:14. Although such a procedure is not here mentioned, it is altogether within possibility that such did take place when Timothy was called from Lystra.

In the light of the above we would say that Paul found a young man well reported of for his labors ("first proved") by two churches. He circumcised him for expediency, laid his hands upon him to grant special powers; the hands of the elders of Lystra and Derbe and possibly Iconium were laid upon him to grant him the gift of the office of evangelist and they departed for the work of evangelizing.

2. The selection of elders.

Since Acts 14:23 has already been discussed, it is only necessary to say here that the New Testament does give an example of the selection of elders.

3. The selection of deacons,

The text, Acts 6:1-6, has already been developed. Deacons were selected for the church.

Answer These Questions

1. How did Timothy show himself to be a candidate for the office of evangelist?
2. Why was Timothy circumcised?
3. When were the hands of the elders laid upon Timothy? Why? Who were the elders?
4. Why did Paul lay his hands on Timothy?
5. Who selected the elders in Acts 14:23 and the deacons in Acts 6:1-6?

* * * * *

4. Some Conclusions Derived From A Study Of These Examples And Comparative References.

1. All points involved in the method of selecting men are not revealed in any case. So, within the limitations fixed by these examples, other scriptures, and good sense, it is necessary to conclude that God has left unmentioned details up to the church.
2. The general method consists of **four steps**, any of which may be first. Circumstances determine the order of these steps.
 - (1) **A man makes known his desire to hold an office.** This desire can be made known either before or after the man is approved by the church. It is a man's moral and Christian liberty to apply for, accept or decline any office. We say the above for the following reasons:
 1. An elder must state his desire for the office if his qualifications are to be made known to all concerned. (cf. I Tim. 3:1.)
 2. It seems reasonable that Timothy desired to be an evangelist (or he wouldn't have been doing the work that he was) and that he made this desire known either with or without a suggestion from Paul or the churches. (Acts 16:1-5.)
 3. The seven men of Acts 6:1-6 may not have known prior to this time that there was an office of "servant" in the church, yet when approached by the church concerning the matter, they desired or at least were willing to hold the office of deacon. To put a man in office who does not desire to be there usually yields poor, if not bad, results and is not in keeping with God's will.
 - (2) **A man proves himself or establishes the fact that he is qualified for the office.** This can be done in giving the man a number of tasks in which he can serve in an "unofficial" capacity. In the discharging of these tasks he gives evidence of his qualities or lack of them to a wise observer. Evidence that this is true is found as follows:
 1. Deacons are to be proved (I Tim. 3:10) and if it is

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

necessary that a deacon be proved, it is even more important that an elder or an evangelist also be proved.

2. It would be impossible for a church to know of a man's qualifications unless he had first proved himself.
3. It would be foolish for the church to put in office a man concerning whose qualifications she was wholly or partially ignorant.

(3) **Of the men who have thus "proved" themselves the congregation selects the men they want in the office.** Just how this "looking out" (cf. Acts 6:3) was done, we are not told. We know that it should be done decently and in order. A committee of men to receive nominees for the office could be one way. After this nominating committee had received the names of all those the persons in the congregation feel should be in the office, their names are posted and a period of time elapses in which any complaint against them can be made known to the nominating committee or to the elders of the church if they have such. Scriptural proof that such a procedure should be followed is as follows:

1. In Acts 6:3 the "looking out" was done by the multitude of the disciples. We are not told how, but the above procedure could have been followed. The point is that the responsibility of making a selection among those who were qualified was up to the congregation.
2. In Acts 14:23 the meaning of the Greek word indicates voting by the show of hands. The churches in Derbe, Iconium and Lystra were not voting on the qualifications of the office. That was already established by the Holy Spirit. They were voting on a "looking out" or "selection" among the men who were qualified as to just which ones would fill the office. Surely among the ten thousand Christians in Jerusalem there were more than seven who met the qualifications; hence the need for selection. So in the churches in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, there was a need for a selection. It was in this "looking out" or selection that the voting took place.

(4) **After the men for the office are chosen, and a selection among them has been made, after a period of time has elapsed for examining their lives and the qualifications, they are appointed to the office by the laying on of hands.**

Answer These Questions

1. Why is it necessary for a man to make known his desire for the office? How is this to be done?
2. What is meant by the term "first proved"? How is it to be done?

THE ORDINATION OF OFFICERS

3. In what way is a congregation to "look out" men for the office? Among what persons shall they "look"?
4. What was the reason for the "voting" of Acts 14:23?
5. How are the men finally appointed to the office? cf. Acts 6:3-6.

* * * * *

(1) Specific New Testament Examples:

1. The deacons. Acts 6:1-6.
2. Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:2.
3. Elders. Acts 14:23.
4. Timothy. Acts 16:1-5; I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6.

Some conclusions derived from a study of these examples:

1. Concerning the purpose of the procedure.
 1. To impress upon all concerned their new and added responsibilities. First, the responsibility of the officer to the Lord and the congregation for the conscientious fulfilling of all his duties. Second, the responsibility of every individual Christian to the Lord and the congregation to honor those in office by maintaining his scriptural relationship with them.
 2. To make known to all concerned that certain ones are recognized by the church as being duly authorized and set aside for a special work. In this regard it might be well to say that certain ones who were already officers were set apart for a special type of work, within the scope of their respective offices, to a special field of labor. (cf. Acts 13:1-2.) Paul was already an evangelist by virtue of the fact that he was an apostle. Barnabas worked with Paul in the evangelistic field prior to this. (cf. Acts 11:22-26.)
 3. The purpose is not to impart a spiritual gift or any special power. This may have been part of the purpose in the days of the apostles, but it cannot be today. Only the apostles had the miraculous ability to bestow spiritual gifts by the laying on of their hands. (cf. Acts 5:12; 8:14-15; 19:6, 11; Rom. 1:11; II Tim. 1:6.) The elders could not impart any power to anyone and especially to an apostle, yet they laid their hands on Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:1, 2.
2. Concerning those who are in charge of the ceremony and are to impose their hands. From the scriptures cited, these seem to be logical conclusions:
 1. The evangelist or evangelists will preside and impose their hands. Acts 6:1-6; 14:23; cf. Titus 1:5. If there are elders in the congregation, they also may impose their hands with those of the evangelist. I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6. The elders may preside if no evangelist is present or if the one being set aside is an evangelist himself. Acts 13:1-2.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

3. Concerning the essential parts of the ceremony.
 1. Prayer, fasting, and laying on of hands are three indispensable elements because of our scriptural examples.
 2. It is clear that more than these three things are necessary for the sake of an orderly and harmonious procedure. Since no more than prayer, fasting and the laying on of hands is mentioned, it appears obvious that God has left the rest of the ceremony up to those in charge. It is important that any additions to the ceremony aid and add to the purpose of the service. Anything that does not is vain, detracts from the service and covers up the real meaning for the occasion.
4. A sample ceremony.
 1. A time of fasting and prayer is specified. At least one meal should be omitted and the time spent in prayer and meditation about the seriousness of the occasion at hand, and the responsibilities involved. Every Christian in the congregation can participate in this.
 2. A time and place of assembly is specified.
 - (1) The service is opened by the evangelist or whoever presides.
 - (2) He introduces the service with appropriate remarks and prayer.
 - (3) He exhorts the congregation with regard to their responsibilities to the Lord and their relationship to the officer elect.
 - (4) The one being set aside comes before the people and kneels.
 - (5) The evangelist and elders each place their hands (or hand) upon the head of the kneeling officer.
 - (6) The evangelist charges him with the responsibility of his office and prays.
 - (7) This concludes a simple service which may be varied or added to within scriptural and reasonable limits.

Answer These Questions

1. How would the laying on of hands impress both the candidate and the congregation?
2. What gift or gifts are imparted by the laying on of hands?
3. Who is to lay hands on whom?
4. What are the three essential elements in the ceremony?
5. What is meant by fasting? Who must do it? Who ought to do it?

* * * * *

W. L. Hayden in "Church Polity" has something to say concerning elders which may be applied with similar force to the other

offices as well. "If it be asked, 'What should be done if a church does not have in its membership persons who are scripturally qualified for elders', I answer, 'Wait until it does have persons scripturally qualified.' If such persons are not in the church, make some temporary or provisional arrangement until persons possessing the requisite qualifications can either be found or developed . . . With some temporary provision for the management of its interests, a church will prosper better without elders than with incompetent ones, who do not die and will not resign. The grace of resignation is not apt to abound in that kind of persons. And their blunders in office, and their wilfulness in refusing to surrender the office when called upon to do so by the church, sometimes result in disaster and ruin to the church. Paul says to Timothy: 'Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure.' (I Tim. 5:22) Great care should be exercised that only proper persons are ordained to the pastoral office. The wisdom that is from above, and not human wisdom, should guide in this matter, and in all things that pertain to the welfare and prosperity of the church of Christ."

Examination Twelve

1. Give the two meanings of the word "ordain or appoint."
2. State briefly the part of the evangelist in the selection of men.
3. How did Timothy recommend himself to the office of evangelist?
4. Why is it essential that the men "desire the office"?
5. In what way could a man be "proved" for the office?
6. How did we suggest a congregation could "look out" candidates for the office?
7. What is the purpose of the laying on of hands?
8. What is not the purpose today that might have been the purpose in apostolic times?
9. Name the three essential elements in the ceremony.
10. What shall we do if we have no qualified men?

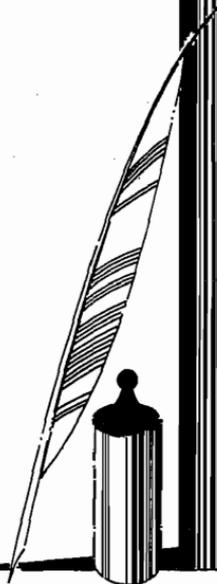
*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

MEMBERSHIP

*in the Church
in the Bible*

A COMPREHENSIVE VIEW

Ten Timely Truths



LESSON THIRTEEN

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH A COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF THE SUBJECT

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"If we cannot rely on scripture as a communication from God, we have nothing to take its place; and all our present joy, as well as our future hopes, must melt away into utter ignorance respecting all that lies beyond the range of science, and utter hopelessness as to all beyond this present world."

—Canon Edward Hoare

Every member of Christ's church should be able to answer these questions listed below. If, after reading the questions, you do not agree, give a reason for your answer.

1. Give two reasons why you believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God.
2. Give one scriptural reason why you follow the precepts of the Bible.
3. Give a scriptural definition of sin.
4. Prove from the Bible that all have sinned.
5. What penalty does God have for sin? Give the scripture that answers this question.
6. What are three reasons why you believe Jesus is divine?
7. How did Christ remove the penalty of sin? Explain your answer.
8. Is there anything a man can do to be saved? What? Specify with scripture.
9. Name two scriptural advantages in being a Christian.
10. Name one thing the Bible says about the second coming of Christ.

LESSON DISCUSSION

Introduction

To be a member of the church of the New Testament meant the same as it did to have the forgiveness of sins or to be saved. Here is evidence of this fact:

1. In Acts 2:47, two things were happening "day by day":
 1. Persons were being saved.
 2. These same persons were being added by the Lord to the church.
2. In speaking of our position as Christians, Paul says: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." I Cor.

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

12:27. The church is the body of Christ: “. . . and He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church which is His body, . . .” Eph. 1:22-23. The same thing that made persons Christians, placed them in the body of Christ or His church.

3. The church is spoken of as “a holy temple” and as “the house of God” and Christians are said to be builded into, and thus members of, this “spiritual house.” I Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:19-22; I Pet. 2:5.

To be a member of the church of the New Testament meant that one had his name enrolled in the Lamb’s book of life in heaven: “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, . . .” Heb. 12:23a. “He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.” Rev. 3:5. (cf. 20:12; 15; 21:27.)

The Purpose of This Lesson

In the following pages you will find a general consideration of God’s entire plan of salvation. This material is put in such a form so as to not only instruct you, but to enable you to instruct others. **This material is available in a book separate from this one so it will be possible for you to teach others in their homes.** It is our persuasion that every Christian should be able to effectively teach the plan of salvation.

At least two scripture references should be memorized for each page in the teaching. Inasmuch as most unchurched people are more familiar with the King James’ version of the Bible, this translation is used throughout the study of, “Ten Timely Truths.”

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

Ten Timely Truths

with manual on

“How to Use Ten Timely Truths”

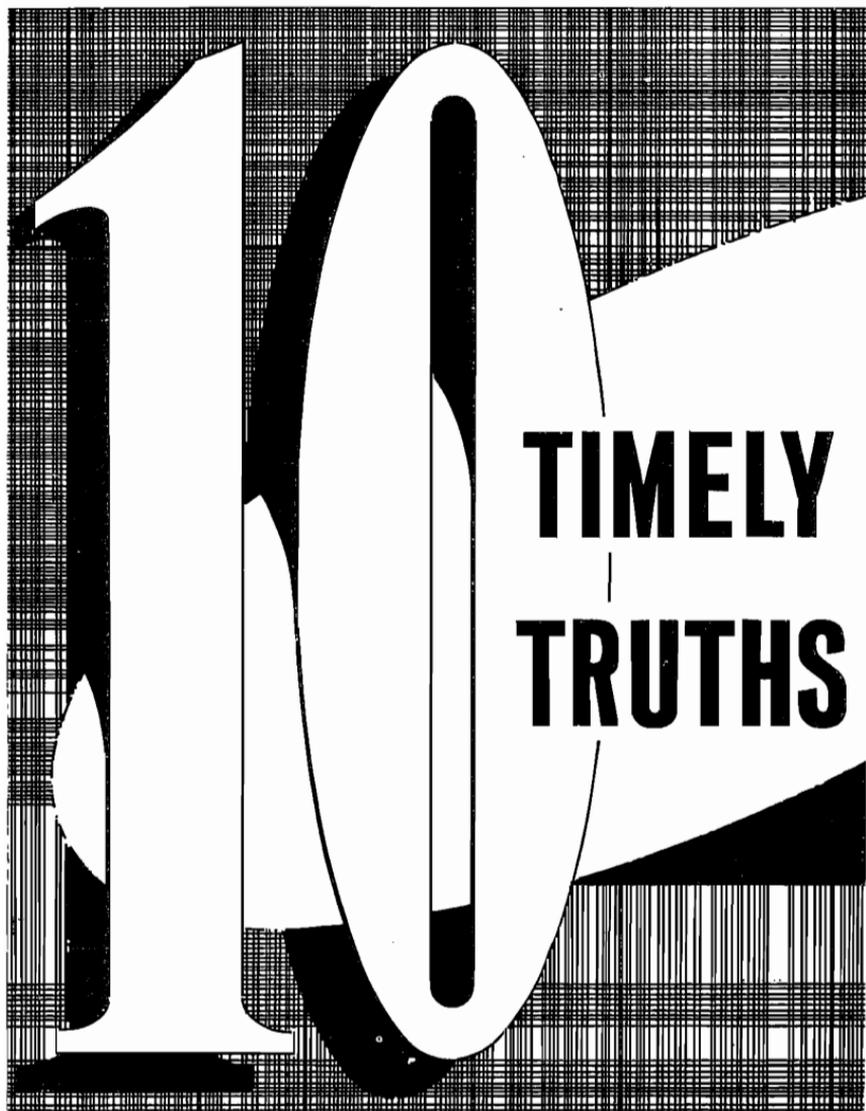
\$2.00

Order from:

COLLEGE PRESS

Box 1132

Joplin, Missouri 64801

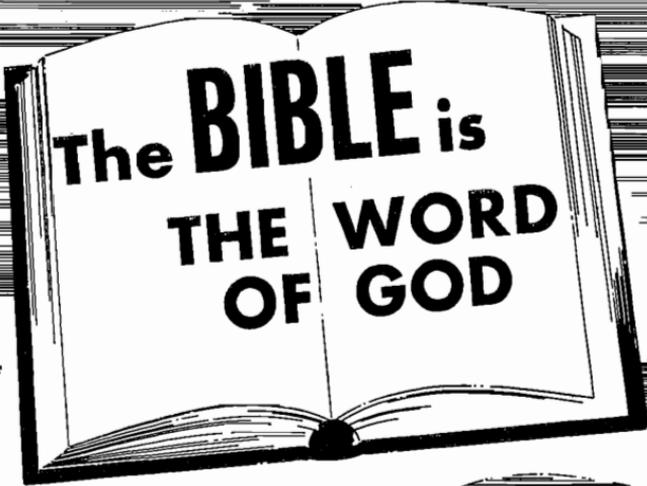


*There is nothing so
Timely as Truth*

THY WORD IS TRUTH . . . John 17:17

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Truth Number 1



**The BIBLE is
THE WORD
OF GOD**

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God."
(II Timothy 3:16)

SCIENTIFIC FOREKNOWLEDGE PROVES THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

Long ago the Bible said that—

1. The earth is round.

"It is he that sitteth upon the *circle* of the earth." (*Isaiah 40:22*)

2. The earth is suspended upon nothing.

"He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (*Job 26:7*)

(Men once thought the earth was supported on gigantic elephants, or turtles, or some such things.)

3. Light can be divided.

"By what way is the light parted?" (*Job 38:24*)

(We divide light up into different colors by a prism.)

4. The seas are all in one bed.

"Let the waters under the heaven be gathered unto one place, . . . and God called . . . the gathering together of the waters . . . Seas." (*Genesis 1:9-10*)

(All earth's great oceans are connected together, and are actually one great sea. The Bible indicated this before men discovered it by sailing around the earth.)

***Only God could have revealed such information
in ancient times.***

FULFILLED PROPHECIES

PROVE THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

God predicted in the Bible that—

1. Babylon would be a desolation.

19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chal-dees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Go-mor-rah.
20 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be

dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. (*Isaiah 13: 19-20*)

It is!

2. Egypt would be a weak kingdom.

14 And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Path'-ros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom.

15 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. (*Ezekiel 29:14-15*)

It is!

3. Nineveh would be hid, that is, buried and lost.

7 And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nin'-e-veh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

11 Thou also shalt be drunken: thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy. (*Nahum 3:7, 11*)

It has been!

4. Jerusalem would be trodden down by Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (*Luke 21:24*)

It has been!

Only God could have foretold such things!

BECAUSE IT IS THE WORD OF GOD THE BIBLE SPEAKS TO OUR HEARTS

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.” (*Hebrews 4:12*)

The fact that the Bible speaks to our hearts, and changes us for the better, shows it is a divine book.

You do believe that the Bible is God's word, don't you?

THE BIBLE contains

God's will

for you and me

HOLY BIBLE

*Thy word is a
lamp unto my
feet, and a light
unto my path.*

Truth Number 2

Psalms 119:105

**The Bible contains directions
for our lives now as well as
the true record of past events**

“The law of the LORD is perfect,
converting the soul: the testimony of the
LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

“The statutes of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart: the commandment of
the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”
(Psalm 19:7-8)

“We have also a more sure word of
prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye
take heed, as unto a light that shineth
in a dark place.” *(II Peter 1:19)*

Truth Number 3

**All disobedience
to God's will**

is called

SIN

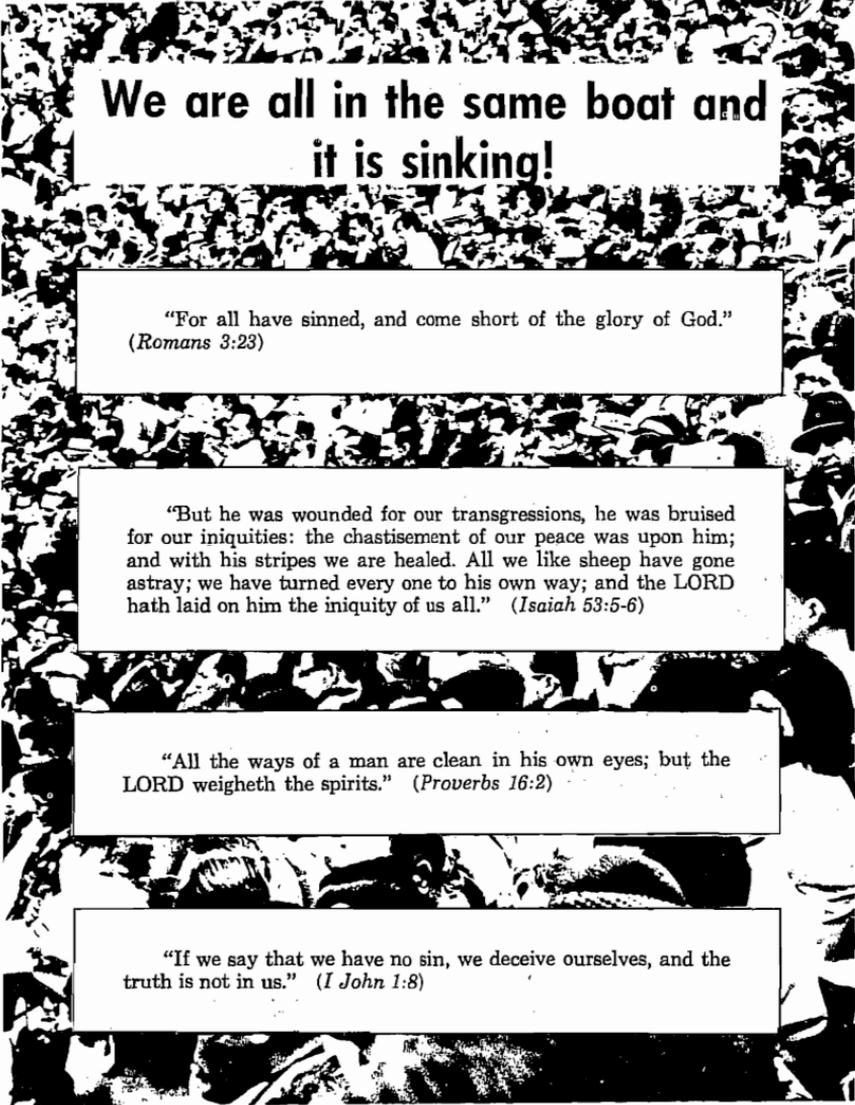
Sin consists of—

- Doing what we are told not to do.
- Not doing what we are told to do.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” (*I John 3:4*)

“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (*James 4:17*)





**We are all in the same boat and
it is sinking!**

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
(*Romans 3:23*)

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (*Isaiah 53:5-6*)

"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits." (*Proverbs 16:2*)

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (*I John 1:8*)

The wages of **SIN**



is

DEATH

Truth Number 5

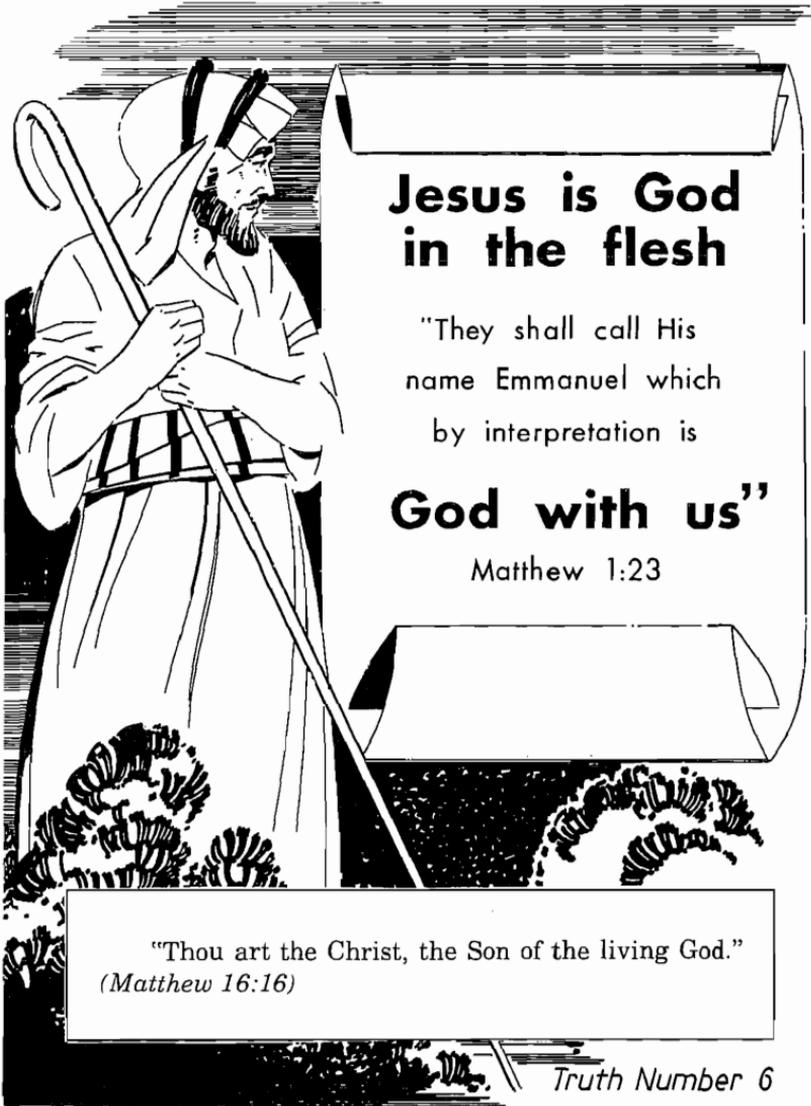
There is no law when there is no penalty!

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (*Romans 6:23*)

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” (*Ezekiel 18:20*)

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (*Revelation 21:8*)

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” (*Matthew 25:41*)



**Jesus is God
in the flesh**

"They shall call His
name Emmanuel which
by interpretation is

God with us"

Matthew 1:23

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
(Matthew 16:16)

Truth Number 6

Power over disease



“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.”
(*Matthew 4:23*)

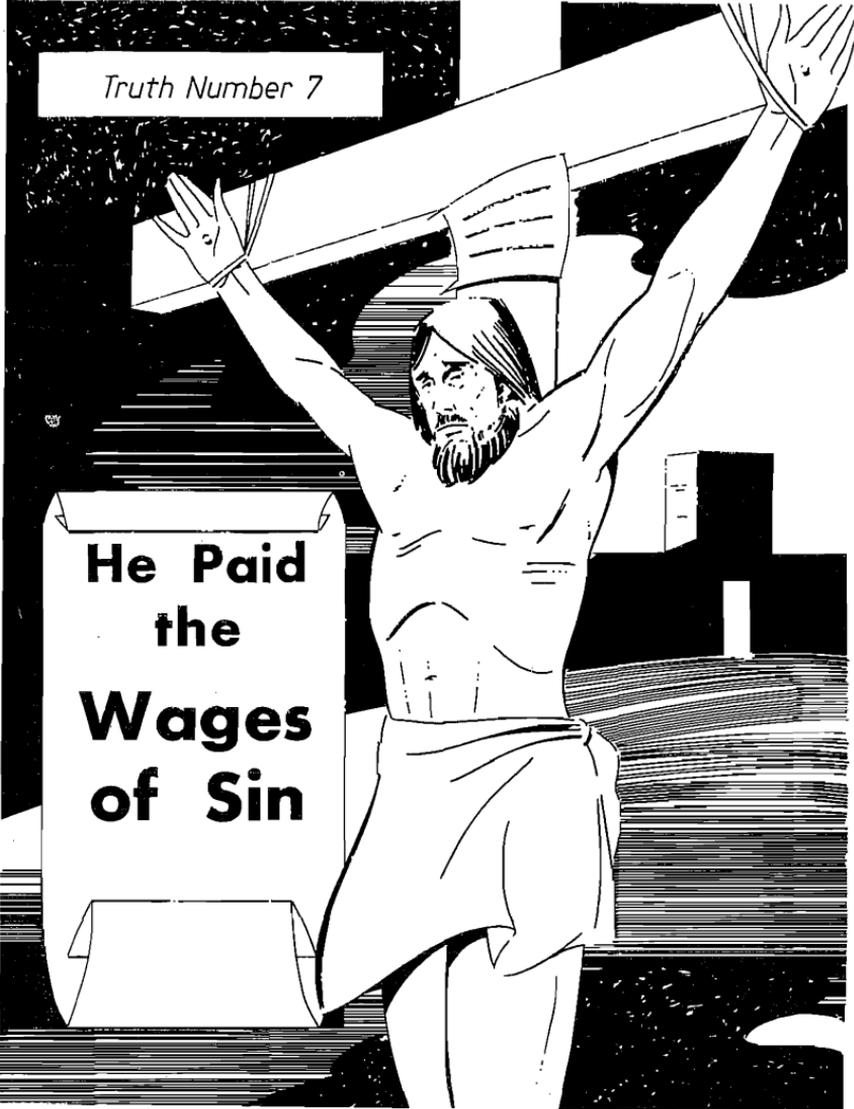
Power of creation



THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

"And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company. And they did so, and made them all sit down. Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. And they did eat, and were all filled; and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets."

Luke 9:12-17



THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” (*I Peter 3:18*)

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (*I Peter 2:24*)

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (*II Corinthians 5:21*)

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more than, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” (*Romans 5:6-9*)



“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (*Matthew 7:21*)

“Blessed are they that *do* his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” (*Revelation 22:14*)



BELIEVE

B

elieve on the Lord

Jesus Christ and

thou shalt be saved

Faith

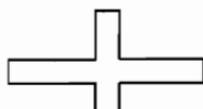
•

“But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (*Hebrews 11:6*)

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (*Romans 5:1*)

Jesus said, “If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” (*John 8:24*)

**Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God?**



REPENT



...the times of
ignorance God winked
at ; but now
commandeth all men
everywhere to
repent

Faith Repentance

• •

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness. (*Acts 17: 30, 31*)

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (*II Peter 3:9*)

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, (*Luke 15: 17, 18*)

You will repent of any known sin in your life . . . won't you?



CONFESS

W

hosoever therefore
shall confess me
before men, him
will I confess also
before my father
which is in
heaven

Faith Repentance Confession

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (*Matthew 10: 32, 33*)

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (*Romans 10:10*)

14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (*Matthew 16:14-17*)

Will you now confess Christ
as the Son of God?



BE BAPTISED

A

nd now, why tarriest
thou? arise and
be baptized, and
wash away thy
sins, calling on
the name of
the Lord

Faith Repentance Confession Baptism

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (*Mark 16:16*)

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (*Galatians 3:26, 27*)

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (*Acts 2:36-38*)

36 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. (*Acts 8:36-39*)

BIBLE BAPTISM REQUIRES

1. Water:

36 And as they went on *their* way they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? (*Acts 8:36*)

2. Much water;

23 And John also was baptizing in Ae'-non near to Sa'-lim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. (*John 3:23*)

3. Going down into the water;

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. (*Acts 8:38*)

4. Figure of burial;

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (*Colossians 2:12*)

5. Figure of birth;

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. (*John 3:5*)

6. Bodies washed;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (*Hebrews 10:22*)

7. Coming up out of the water;

16 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: (*Matthew 3:16*)

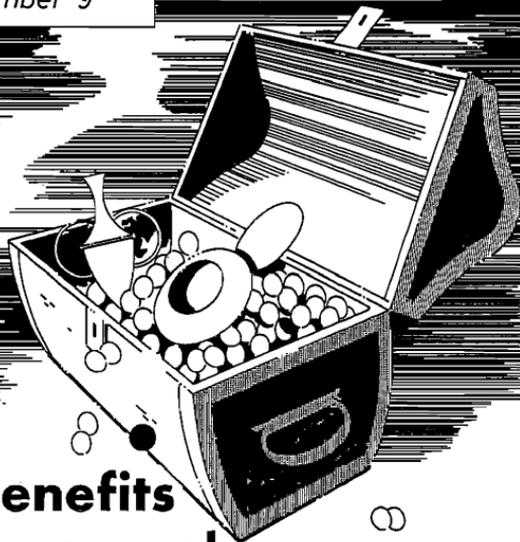
8. Figure of resurrection;

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (*Romans 6:4*)

Only immersion fulfills all these descriptions.

"There is ONE baptism." *Ephesians 4:5.*

Truth Number 9



**The benefits
of the gospel are
GREATER than**

GOLD

BENEFITS OF THE GOSPEL

1. Forgiveness of sins

"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (*Hebrews 8:12*)

2. Gift of the Holy Spirit

"Repent, and be baptized . . . and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (*Acts 2:38*)

". . . strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."
(*Ephesians 3:16*)

3. God's Care

"My God shall supply all your need." (*Philippians 4:19*)

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."
(*I Peter 5:7*)

4. Eternal life

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (*John 3:36*)

**You can accept Christ
now**

or reject Him...



22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I
do then with Jesus which is called Christ?
Matthew 27:22

**What will you do
with Jesus?**

Truth Number 10

It is all so wonderfully simple . . .

1. You do believe Jesus is the Christ . . . do you not?
2. You will repent of any known sin in your life . . . won't you?
3. Will you now confess Christ as the Son of God?
4. When do you want to be baptized into Christ?

HOW TO USE TEN TIMELY TRUTHS

How I do wish I could take each one of you on a call with me into the home of someone who needs the gospel. One demonstration would be worth a hundred thousand words. It could be that we can help simulate such a call through these pages. Do you want to come along?

Someone is heard to say, "But how can we enter into a discussion of the subject of salvation?" It will be easier to explain if we give an example or two:

Meet Mr. Green. He has attended the Methodist church spasmodically. He happens to be home on his vacation when you call. You have never met him before, but when you tell him of your mission, i.e. that you are a minister of the Church of Christ calling or visiting in the homes of the community (if you are not a minister, you could say you are a Christian worker from the Church of Christ with the same purpose as above stated. Do not forget to be pleasant and casual and emphasize the word "in" in your approach.)

He lets you into his home. Once inside the house you must decide whether you intend this to be a social call or one in which you teach the plan of salvation. We have pre-supposed that the latter purpose is yours as you face Mr. Green. Here are a number of suggestions based upon the experience of teaching in hundreds of homes:

Select something in their home or life that directly relates to the "Ten Timely Truths" as given in the opening pages of this chapter.

"Mr. Green, I notice you have several nice books in your book case. You must have some interest in reading." Wait for some type of response. Since your remark appears to be only a passing pleasantry, he will respond in the affirmative. Then you can say, "I have a book here that should be of great interest to you, and, indeed, to all people." As you say this you should show him the cover of the book which bears the words "Ten Timely Truths."

Another approach that has been used is as follows: "What do you think of the weather we have had of late?" After some response is given, then you say, "Someone has said, everybody talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it! But that is *not* the way to treat *all* the works of God. I brought along with me a book that should be of interest to you." (If you are not

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

seated in a place where you could conveniently show Mr. Green the book as you say the last words, move over to a place where he can look on as you open the pages of the book.)

One other introduction: "What do you think of the present trend of events in our world?" Some response is given. You can then rejoin by saying, "It does appear that we can really depend on very little in these days, doesn't it?" (An affirmative response.) There is *one* thing we can *always* depend upon. We can always count on *truth*. I have a book here called "Ten Timely Truths." I am sure you will like its message to you."

These are but three examples that could be multiplied a hundred times. If no good indirect introduction opens, rather than losing an opportunity for teaching, use a sincere, humble, direct introduction. Here is one that has been used innumerable times. (We assume that your calling is done "two by two.") Your companion in calling introduces the teaching of "Ten Timely Truths" in the following words: He says, "Mr or Mrs. (mentioning your name) has a book with him or her that he or she would like to show you a portion of." Or you could use this simple, straight-forward statement: "I brought along a book I would like very much to show you, Mr. Green. It is called 'Ten Timely truths'."

Teaching The Ten Timely Truths

The book is opened to the page bearing the words "There Is Nothing So Timely As Truth." "Thy Word Is Truth." John 17:17. Here is approximately what has been said so many times: "Mr. Green, I am sure you can agree with this statement. 'There is nothing so timely as truth,' for truth is something you can use anytime, anywhere, with anyone. Here is what Jesus said about this grand subject of truth: (Pointing or referring to the statement on the page) 'Thy Word is Truth.' John 17:17. That is the first truth we want to consider."

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

As you refer to the picture you should say, "The Bible is the Word of God. There is some thought today that one cannot be scientifically intellectual and believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. But that notion is not based upon fact. Notice (referring to the statement *Scientific Foreknowledge Proves the Bible is God's Word*). Here is some amazing information: (Reading from the page while pointing to it) Long ago the Bible said that—

"1. *The earth is round.* (Still reading and referring intently to the page.) 'It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth.' This is found in Isaiah 40:22—written by a prophet who lived hundreds of years before our Lord came to this earth. Why would Isaiah use this descriptive phrase concerning the earth if God had not placed this thought in his mind before he penned it on his manuscript?

"2. Once again, in the oldest book in the Bible we have these startling words—'He stretcheth out the north over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.' Job 26:7. More than a thousand years before Jesus came, Job spoke of God hanging the earth upon nothing. Pictures recently published of space exploration—pictures taken of our planet from the moon so beautifully illustrate this ancient Bible verse. But how could the writer of Job know this? Only because God placed such knowledge in his mind before he wrote it. If God did this for one verse, would He not have done it for all he wrote? Indeed the Bible makes this claim of itself. (Referring across the page at the bottom of the left hand page.) 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God.' (II Timothy 3:16).

"Once in the long ago, men thought the earth was supported on gigantic elephants, or turtles, or some such things. (Reading from the page.) But at the same time such ideas were in the minds of some men, God placed the truth about the world in the minds of a few men—the authors of His book—the Bible.

"3. We know today (but we have not always known) that light can be divided or parted. We do this with a prism. I'm sure you have seen such, haven't you, Mr. Green? (Wait for response.) Once again in the oldest book is this amazing statement, 'By what way is the light parted?' (Job 38:24). We have a device for doing it but only God is the power behind such an accomplishment. But Job asked the penetrating scientific question 1,000 years before Jesus lived. Who gave him the thought in that far off distant unscientific age? Only God.

"4. Mr. Green, have you ever held a globe in your hand and turned it around? If you have, you have noticed something very unique about the blue space on the globe, i.e. the water on that globe. *The seas all connect and are all in one bed.* Now read these Bible verses with me (pointing to the page). 'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered unto one place, . . . and God called . . . the gathering together of the waters . . . Seas.' (Genesis 1:9-10). (Continuing to read from the page), All earth's great oceans are

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

connected together, and are actually one great sea. The Bible indicated this before men discovered it by sailing around the earth or by photographing the fact by outer space photography. Mr. Green, we can agree, can't we, that (pointing to the bottom of the page) *only God* could have revealed such information in ancient times. But this is not all. (Turning the page and referring to the top.)

FULFILLED PROPHECIES PROVE THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

"There are so many predictions in the Bible—we shall only examine a few of them here.

"1. There was once a great city much larger than Chicago. It was called Babylon. A prophet of God had the audacity to make this crushing prediction while Babylon was a thriving metropolis. (Read slowly the verses Isaiah 13:19, 20 from the page.) Today we cannot even find parts of the city. It is a monstrous mound of rubble. The spade of the archaeologist uncovers more and more of its former magnificence. How impossible it seemed then—how true it is today! Only God could be behind such a prediction.

"2. And of the great nation of Egypt. It was once the leading nation of the world. At the height of its power the prophet Ezekiel had the audacity to promise that in some future day Egypt would be a weak kingdom (referring to the page—read slowly and meaningfully the two verses from Ezekiel 29:14, 15). What is the strength of Egypt today? For centuries the weakness of this nation has stood as a living testimony to the accuracy and truthfulness of the word of God.

"3. For hundreds of years no one was sure just where the city of Nineveh was located. This giant of the Eastern cities had apparently disappeared from the face of the earth. Some men even doubted the Biblical account was anything more than fiction. Then in the late 18th century its gigantic ruins were found. But the Bible foretold this long ago. The bold prophet Nahum said, 'Nineveh, that great city would be hid, that is, buried and lost.' (Read the text with emphasis.) Nahum 3:7, 11.

"4. Last of all, but surely not least of all, is the prediction of Jerusalem. This is even now being fulfilled. (Read very deliberately from the page.) 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' (Luke 21:24). The city of Jerusalem today is a center of commercial and political interest

on an international level. It could hardly be described now as 'trodden down.' The age for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles could fast be drawing to a conclusion. We could be in the time when our Lord will soon be revealed from heaven. We can see the truth of God's word being fulfilled before our eyes.

"I'm sure you will agree with this statement on the bottom of this page. When we consider each of these fulfilled prophecies we must say, 'Only God could have foretold such things!'

"Because God is love His word reaches our hearts. We would expect this wouldn't we? i.e. if God who loves us speaks to us in a book, we would expect them to be words of love. To read the Bible carefully and personally is to find these words to be so very true. (Refer to the center of the page. Read the verse from Hebrews in a very thoughtful tone of voice.) 'The word of God is quick (this means alive) and powerful (it has the mind of God behind it) and sharper than any two-edged sword (because it does what no sword could ever do), it divides the deep areas of man's nature,' i.e. his soul or self-consciousness from his spirit, i.e. his sub-consciousness. God's word speaks to every part of our daily living or our 'soul-life' and reaches into the deep inner life of man and helps him to see himself as God sees him.

"Only the Bible can really, deeply, permanently change man for the better. This alone ought to be enough to indicate its source. (Read the statement:) 'The fact that the Bible speaks to our hearts, and changes us for the better, shows it is a divine book.'

"(Slowly, looking directly at the prospect, refer to the final statement on the bottom of the page.) 'You do believe that the Bible is God's word, don't you?' (Get some response from this question.) But it is not enough for us to believe that the Bible is true. It is equally important that we understand that — (turn the page and read from the left hand page, i.e., Truth Number 2).

THE BIBLE CONTAINS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU AND ME!

You may then continue as follows: "The Bible is a unique and solitary book. It, above all other books you own, claims to be the message of God for your life. It purports to give to you God's instructions for your living.

"Mr. Green, suppose you went out to your mail box tomorrow morning and there you found a long white envelope with your name on it. On looking at the return address, it said:

Washington, D.C.
Office of the President

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Such words would surely be a surprise to you. 'Washington, D.C., Office of the President.' What can this mean? 'It must have been delivered to the wrong person,' you say to yourself. You look again, but there in clear-cut print is *your* name.

"With a trembling sensation gripping you, you tear off the end of the envelope. You unfold the official-looking letter, and there, sure enough, is a personal letter to you from the President of the United States of America. What does it say? What is said really makes little difference to our point. The fact that the President has written will cause you to read and reread his every word.

"This, some perhaps will say, is somewhat exaggerated, but what we are to say next is not from imagination, nor is it an exaggeration. I want to say, *you have within your possession a personal message to you from the highest authority in heaven and earth.* The message of Almighty God to you, in the Holy Bible.

"The Bible is not only a message from the highest authority in the universe, but is also the loving instructions of a heavenly Father to His children. (Read from the page the boldface type.)

"Mr. Green, have you ever been away from your wife any length of time? (Wait for a reply.) Well, suppose you were away for a few weeks. I'm sure you would look anxiously for those letters written to you by your loved one, wouldn't you? Now, suppose after you had arrived back home your wife was going through your suitcase and found the packet of letters she had written to you, but she saw to her utter amazement that they were all unopened. What would she think? Well, Mr. Green, it is just so with the 'love letters' our Heavenly Father and His wonderful Son have written to us. Do they lie unopened in your home? Here is what the wise man David said: (Read very thoughtfully from the book.)

"If the Bible contains God's will for you and for me, and we know it does, it would naturally follow (turn the page) 'all disobedience to God's will is called sin.'

"How often do we hear persons spoken of in a slighting way and called a 'sinner' or 'My, what a *sinner* he turned out to be.' What is sin? Really and truly now, do we have any positive Bible definition of sin? Yes, we have and here it is: (point to the first reference on the page.)

"'. . . for sin is the transgression of the law.' I John 3:4. Where is God's law? In the Bible, of course. So sinning simply

becomes a violation of any of the eternal laws of God revealed here in His Word, the Bible.

“But, oh, what a terrible thing is sin! How tragic to realize that we have sinned against God. When you break the laws of the State, you sin against the State. When you break the laws of the United States, you sin against the Federal Government. But when you break the law of the Eternal God, think what you have done. *You have sinned against the highest authority known to man.*

“Mr. Green, do you know the story of the prodigal son? (Usually they do. If they do not, you can tell it in a brief interesting way.) Look here. (Find it in his Bible.) This is an excerpt from the story of the prodigal son. ‘I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have *sinned against heaven*, and in Thy sight.’ Luke 15:18.

“After this son had spent all the father had given him, he began to be in real need, and finally ended up in the pig pen feeding the swine. But one day he came to himself, and realized what he had done. What we have read is what he said. He knew then what every man needs to know, *sin is against God, against heaven.*

“Sin has a positive *and* negative aspect to it. Disobedience consists in failure to do right as well as overt action in doing wrong. Here it is well stated. (Read from the top of the page.) ‘Sin consists of—Doing what we are told not to do. And—Not doing what we are told to do.

“I’m sure you will agree with the next truth. It is: (turn the page) the fact that ‘*All Have Sinned! We are all in the same boat and it is sinking!*’ (Point this out on the page.) The words listed here are the specific acts of sin we all commit. Perhaps we are not guilty in one area, but we are in another. These are terms God uses in His word to identify sin. Let’s read this reference here from Romans 3:23—‘For *all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God.’

“Who does it say here has sinned? (After a minute they should answer ‘all.’) Who does that include? (After a bit they will say ‘everyone.’) Does that include you? (They are pressed by the circumstances to acknowledge it.) What have you done then? (Patiently and kindly, hold them to the point until they say ‘I have sinned.’ The above series of questions will really work, but also, *you must be praying while you use them.*)

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

“Here is a beautiful passage from Isaiah 53:5-6. It speaks of our Lord and of you and me. (Read very tenderly.) Notice how we have sinned and who has sinned. We sin like sheep. We get away from the loving shepherd and go our own way. We are glad God has taken care of our need by laying our sin upon Jesus.

“Each of us could justify his mistakes. How true this reference is: ‘All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits.’ Proverbs 16:2. But we also all know that when God weighs our hearts we will come up short. We will be weighed in God’s scales and be too light to balance.

“We know if we say we have never sinned we are only trying to deceive ourselves. We do not deceive God, or our friends. This is what God has said. (Read from the page.) I John 1:8.

“The law of God cannot be broken without a penalty. God says (turning the page) ‘The Wages Of Sin Is Death!’

“The ‘*death*’ spoken of here is not physical death, for notice: (referring to the second reference:)

“ ‘The soul that sinneth, it shall die . . .’ Ezekiel 18:20.

“As you must know, Mr. Green, the *soul* is the inward man, the real person who lives within this house of flesh called a body. Your body is only the instrument of your soul. So the responsibility for the act is not with the body, but with the soul; just as the responsibility for murder would be with the man, not with the gun or the instrument used. Responsibility rests with the man who used the gun. But let us go one step further in this illustration and say that it was not the responsibility of the body of the man, but rather the soul of the man which *used his body in performing the act of murder*. So it is that God pronounces the penalty of sin against the proper entity—the soul of man. What is the penalty against man’s soul or spirit? Consider the Word of God on this subject:

‘But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; *which is the second death*.’ Revelation 21:8.

“Everyone will die once, but those who pay the penalty of their sin against God will suffer not only the first death, that of the body, but also the ‘second death,’ that of the soul. God calls this second death ‘the lake of fire.’

“Here are the words of Jesus on this subject:

'Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' Matthew 25:41.

'But,' someone says, 'I cannot understand that, and I am not so sure that I really believe it. Now here,' they are heard to say, 'why can't God forgive a man like a father forgives his son? Are we not all sons of God after all? Why cannot God be as kind and loving as an earthly parent and forgive us if we ask Him?'

"Well, now, that is a very good question, and it deserves a Bible answer. When God has made a law, what good would it be without a penalty? But God *has* given a penalty. He states that the *one* penalty for sin is Hell. The penalty of sin or the result of sin, God states shall be the lake of fire. Who will suffer that result? The persons that commit sin, of course. And who has committed sin? 'The whole world.' Yes, even as John wrote, 'the whole world lieth in the evil one.' I John 5:19. As Paul affirmed, 'all the world may be brought under the judgment of God.' Romans 3:19. As we have here: (Read from the top of the page.) 'There is no law when there is no penalty!'

"That is one reason for being concerned enough to talk to souls, because we believe just what God has said. The *one* result of all men's sin is going to be everlasting hell for that soul who has sinned. God sees the world in that state, and despite their rebellion against Him and His law, He loves them and longs to forgive them. He sought for a solution and it was found in the sending of His only begotten Son.

"Mr. Green, I know you remember what John 3:16 says, do you not? Yes, that's right.

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.' John 3:16.

"Why was God concerned about the world? Because it was perishing. Why was it perishing? Because of its sin. (Turn page.)

JESUS IS GOD IN THE FLESH

"When God sent His Son into the world, He had a name; the angels who announced His birth said: (Refer to the page.) 'They shall call His name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, *God with us*.' When Jesus came into this world He was indeed, 'God with us' . . . 'God in the flesh.'

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

“Right now you will not see any apparent connection with this thought and what we have been saying, but you will. Listen carefully. Isaiah prophesied of the birth of this child. Notice what he said: (Find it in his Bible.)

‘For unto us a *child* is born, unto us a *son* is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.’ Isaiah 9:6.

Did you note the import of these words? At the same time that *the child was born*, ‘*a son was given*.’ The child born in Bethlehem was the Son of God. See what John said about Him:

‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ John 1:1.

Then notice what happened to this person who is called ‘the Word’:

‘And the Word *became flesh*, and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.’ John 1:14.

Who was made flesh? *The great Son of God*. He who was in the beginning with God and who *was God*. Now, the proof or the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God is found in His

POWER OVER DISEASE

“Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, cleansed the lepers. Note here: (Read from the page at the bottom.)

“But why did He do those things? To relieve the sufferings? Yes, but with a greater motive in mind—that men would have reason to believe that He was indeed ‘God in the human flesh.’ Here is an interesting picture (turn the page) of another of His miracles:

POWER OF CREATION

“Jesus took a little boy’s lunch of five loaves and two fishes, and *created* enough food to feed five thousand people. This is the record of it in Luke. (Refer to the page; you need not read it unless necessary.) This was as much an act of creation on the part of Jesus as it was for His Father, through Him, to create the world in the beginning.

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

“Jesus did all these many mighty works, wonders and signs, that we might indeed believe that He was the Son of God. But His real purpose in coming into the world was to (turn the page) pay the wages of sin.

HE PAID THE WAGES OF SIN

“A certain man had two sons named James and John, and he loved them as his own soul. The two boys, as they lived in their father’s house, in the process of time developed very different personalities. It wasn’t long until they had graduated from grade school, and then high school. The father wanted his two sons to have every advantage in life, so he sacrificed greatly and helped them attend college.

“Both of the sons took a law course, but somehow John fell into the wrong company, and began to drink. In a year or two he dropped out of school and everyone said he was a drunkard. He disappeared from sight, and in time was heard of no more. This grieved the heart of the father greatly.

“James graduated from law school and became a very successful lawyer. In a few years he had been promoted to the bench as a judge. A few months after he became a judge there appeared in his court a most sorry spectacle. It was a drunken vagrant. His hair was long and disheveled, he was bleary-eyed and unshaven, his clothes were wrinkled and dirty. He shuffled up between two officers and stood with his head down before the judge. As the judge called for the opening of the case, the culprit looked up and as he did so, a sudden chill passed down the back of the judge. There, despite all his filth and sin, was none other than his own brother. He asked his name and it was mumbled out in a low voice. Then the judge called him sharply by his first name: ‘John!’ The poor creature looked up startled . . . then a look of unbelieving amazement passed across his face. ‘James,’ he stammered, ‘my own brother.’ ‘Yes,’ said James, ‘the very same, but where have you been and what have you done?’ ‘That should be rather obvious,’ John answered rather sheepishly. Jim looked away a moment to control his emotions, and then he said, ‘John, why are you here? What have you done?’ John simply looked at the floor. The judge scanned the book before him and said, ‘It here states you have been taken on three or four counts. Is that right, John? Are you guilty, John?’ ‘Yes, I guess I am guilty, Jim,’ was the dismal reply.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

"A hush fell across the court room as the time for the decision drew near. What would the judge do to his own beloved brother? Jim said in tones that rang with firmness: 'John, I find you guilty, and I must fine you the maximum penalty of the law.'

"As the fine was given a gasp went up from all present. But even before the words of the sentence had died out on the air, Jim had laid aside the robes of his office as judge, and stepping down from the bench was now standing alongside his brother. He reached into his pocket and took out his wallet, and freely paid the full amount of the penalty.

"Mr. Green, that is exactly what God has done for you and for me. He has pronounced upon sin a great penalty and then in the person of His Son He came and paid that penalty for us. Isn't that wonderful? Notice the reference that states this very truth:

'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.' I Peter 2:24.

This great truth runs throughout the whole Bible. Hear Isaiah:

'But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' Isaiah 53:5-6.

(Sometimes it is more convincing if we make the reference more personal, so that it reads like this:) (Turn back to truth #4 or to this passage in his Bible.) 'But He was wounded for Mr. Green's transgressions, He was bruised for Mr. Green's iniquities; the chastisement of Mr. Green's peace was upon Him; and with His stripes Mr. Green is healed. *All* we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned *everyone* to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.'

"Because He was the Son of God He was able to do this; able to be made a substitute for the sins of the whole world. The Apostle Paul had this to say about Him: (Refer to reference on the page.)

'For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' II Corinthians 5:21.

Again, Mr. Green, let us apply it to you personally,

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

'For he hath made him to be sin for Mr. Green, who knew no sin; that Mr. Green might be made the righteousness of God in Him.' II Cor. 5:21.

Isn't that glorious good news? That is why the message is called 'The Gospel.' 'Gospel' means 'good news.' Because Christ, the eternal Son of God, paid the wages of sin, God is able through Him to forgive us all our trespasses."

Conclude this page by reading the last reference on the page (Rom. 5:6-9) and then say, "As much as we do believe this, we must respond to it. Notice — (turn the page.)"

MAN MUST DO SOMETHING TO BE SAVED

"It is wonderful to stand and look at the cross (refer to the picture) and to see the Christ there. It is marvelous to know what He accomplished there for us and the world. It was on the cross He purchased our salvation. But, 'man must *do* something to be saved.' (Read from the page.) Notice this reference: (at the top of the right hand page)

"It is not enough to call Him 'Lord' or even to acknowledge His death for us. There must be action. We must become involved in a response to His love for us.

"The obedience we give to the commandments of the Lord is not going to earn eternal life—this is a gift. But we *must* none-the-less find out what these commandments are and obey them. Notice this reference in Revelation 22:14. (Read from the page.)

"What is His will? What are His commandments? Here is the first one. (Turn the page.)

'But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' Hebrews 11:6.

And once again: (Reading from the page Romans 5:1).

"Our Lord made it very clear that it is not optional. He said: (Read John 8:24 from the page.)"

Looking directly at Mr. Green, say, "Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? (Wait for response.)

(Turn the page.) "Our Lord also says, (Read from the page) ' . . . the times of ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.'

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

“Someone has said that repentance is feeling sorry enough for your sin to quit it. Jesus said:

‘I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish.’ Luke 13:3.

“How essential repentance is can be seen from these plain words of the Master. Without it, there is utterly no hope. What, then, does repentance mean? The word itself suggests a change of mind. Of course, this change of mind is *about sin directed toward God*. So we could properly say that repentance is *a change of mind brought about by a godly sorrow for sin that results in a complete change of conduct*. God is surely good to us, isn’t He, Mr. Green? (‘Yes, He surely is,’ he replied.)

Consider this:

“God is longsuffering and good to us to the intention that He might give us opportunity to see ourselves as He sees us and turn to Him in true repentance. After all, Mr. Green, what else should we do with our sins but repent of them? We do not want to hold on to them, for they will do us no good here and now, to say nothing of their condemnation on the day of judgment. What a time of refreshing comes when we truly repent of our sins. Notice what God has to say about it in this reference: (Read from his Bible—II Peter 3:9.) A real example of repentance is found here. Do you know the story of the prodigal son? Here is what is said about him.” (Read Luke 15:17, 18). Ask the question at the bottom of the page. “Real repentance will be followed by a willingness to: (Turning the page.)

CONFESS

“This is a confession of Christ before men. Here is what the Saviour said about the subject:

‘Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.’ Matthew 10:32.

“This is not a confession of your sins before a man, but an acknowledgment of your faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Note the statement of Paul on this point:

‘Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' Romans 10:9-10.

"Although He had done no wrong, Jesus one day stood before Pontius Pilate to be judged. While standing there in Pilate's judgment hall, Pilate asked Him this question: 'Art thou the Christ?' Jesus replied to him, 'Thou has said.'

"Paul the apostle, upon writing to a young minister, spoke about this incident before Pilate. Notice what he said about it: (Read from his Bible.)

'Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou was called and *didst confess a good confession in the sight of many witnesses*. I charge thee in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, *who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession*.' I Timothy 6:12-13.

Here you notice that Paul called the statement that Jesus made a 'good confession.' It was a simple acknowledgment that He was indeed the Christ, the Son of God.

"Here is a grand example of the good confession. It was made by the Apostle Peter. (Read from the page. Ask them while referring to the page:) Will you now confess Christ as the Son of God? (Wait for response. Be deliberate—no hurried effort here.) Mr. Green, do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? ('Yes'.) Then in that very statement you have made the confession. But notice: (Turn page.) there is another step to take—

BE BAPTIZED

"We must be baptized. The question on the page is a very pertinent one:

'And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' Acts 22:16.

"This question is very pertinent *if* we have accepted everything that has preceded this question (refer to the preceding pages). This question was first put to Saul of Tarsus who became Paul, the mighty apostle of the Gentiles. I do not know whether you are acquainted with the story of the conversion of Saul, or not. (He said that he was.) Well, then, you can appreciate the circumstances of the question. Saul had been struck down on the Damascus road by a bright light. In the light he saw Jesus Christ

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

and He spoke to him. Jesus accused Saul of personal sin against Him. Saul then knew, what you know now, that he had sinned, that the wages of his sin was death. Also that his sin was against Jesus. When he saw Jesus, he must have known that He was indeed the Son of God. And he knew the preaching he had heard of the suffering of the Christ for his sins was all true. He then realized that Jesus paid the wages of sin for him. The light made him physically blind, but it surely opened the eyes of his heart. In that condition Saul was led into Damascus. There he stayed for three days and nights in prayer without food or drink.

“We could truly say Saul had believed and repented and that on the Damascus road he had acknowledged Jesus as Lord, but were his sins washed away? Let us have Jesus answer this question. (Read from the page.)

‘He that *believeth and is baptized shall be saved*; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.’ Mark 16:16.

“As this question was asked of Saul by a humble disciple named Ananias, so it could be asked of any who know and believe as Saul did.

‘And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’ Acts 22:16.

“The blood of Christ was shed upon the cross but it is in Christian baptism that the application of His blood is made for personal sins. Here is what Peter said: (Read from page.)

“The question inevitably comes up, ‘How is one baptized? By sprinkling, pouring, or by immersion in water?’ Does the Bible say anything on this important question? Yes, yes, indeed it does. (Turn the page.)

‘And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.’ Acts 8:36-39.

“A eunuch of great authority from Ethiopia became convinced of his need of baptism at the time he and the preacher were riding in a chariot. Notice the circumstances: ‘. . . he commanded the chariot to stand still: and *they went down both into the water . . .* Philip baptized him and then *when they were come up out of the water . . .*’ So we can learn from this reference that they walked down into the water. If Philip was to pour water on the eunuch’s head or sprinkle a few drops on him, why walk into the water? But then, for the sake of discussion let us say from this passage (apart from the Greek meaning of the word ‘baptize’) that we cannot discover by what mode the eunuch was baptized by Philip.

“By reading carefully this page we can remove all questions about this subject. Notice this complete list on just what is required in Bible baptism:” (Read very carefully and thoughtfully the eight points on the page.)

When you get down to the bottom of the page, read with real emphasis and participation with the prospect the very inevitable conclusion: “Only immersion fullfills all these descriptions. So ‘There is *one* baptism.’ ”

Perhaps you could ask the prospect at this juncture: “Have you been baptized?” If he says “no” you could say, “You do want to be baptized—do you not?” (Wait for a reply.) If he replies positively, or if he does not—do not argue with him—proceed on to the ninth truth.

THE BENEFITS OF THE GOSPEL ARE GREATER THAN GOLD

“This wonderful plan of salvation we have been discussing was spoken of by Jesus when He was on earth. He spoke of it in a figurative form. Note what He said:

‘Again, the *kingdom of heaven* (or our salvation in Christ) is like unto a *treasure hid in a field*; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.’ (Find this in the Bible and refer to it.)

“What a glorious discovery, ‘a treasure hidden in a field.’ Jesus said that this discovery should fill us with joy, and it does, indeed. Mr. Green, when you accept this Saviour I have been presenting to you, what do you suppose you will become? A Methodist, a Baptist, a Presbyterian, a Catholic? Why, none of

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

these. It will simply make you a Christian. And I know you want to be that, do you not? (He said that he surely did.) Notice the great benefits of your acceptance of this Saviour: (read from the page):

“The benefits of the gospel are greater than gold.’

“Here are some of them:

1. *Forgiveness of sins*: (Read very carefully, full of personal concern and application this reference from Hebrews 8:12).

When God forgives our sins He also *forgets* them! What a wonderful comfort this is to our hearts. Because He against whom we have sinned has forgotten our sins it makes it easier for us to do the same thing.

2. Our Lord has a wonderful birthday present for you!

When you and I repent and are baptized we are promised the coming of the Holy Spirit. Notice this beautiful promise. (Read from the page Acts 2:38). When the Holy Spirit comes into our bodies He comes for the purpose of powerfully strengthening our inner man. Notice here: (Read from the page Ephesians 3:16).

It is wonderful to know that God and Christ live in us by and through their representative the Holy Spirit. What a joy it is to be the temple of God and Christ because we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit!

3. But this is not all. We have the care of our heavenly Father. When we accept Jesus as our Saviour then God becomes our Father. Notice these words about His interest in you and me: (Read from the page Philippians 4:19 and I Peter 5:7).

Isn't it wonderful to have this promise? (Wait for a response. A constant participation on the part of the prospect needs to be maintained by the teacher.)

4. The final promise on this page has to do with heaven. Jesus said, (referring to the page and John 3:36) ‘He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.’ The rest of that verse says, ‘he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.’ I am sure you want to believe and obey the Son of God, don't you, Mr. Green? (Wait for a response.)

“Here is wonderfully good news.” (Turn the page.) Read from the top of the page, “You Can Accept Christ NOW—or reject Him.

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

“Here is the governor of Judea at the trial of our Lord. He is deciding what he will do and calling upon the multitude to make a decision about Jesus. Notice what he asks: (Read from the page.) ‘Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?’ Matthew 27:22.

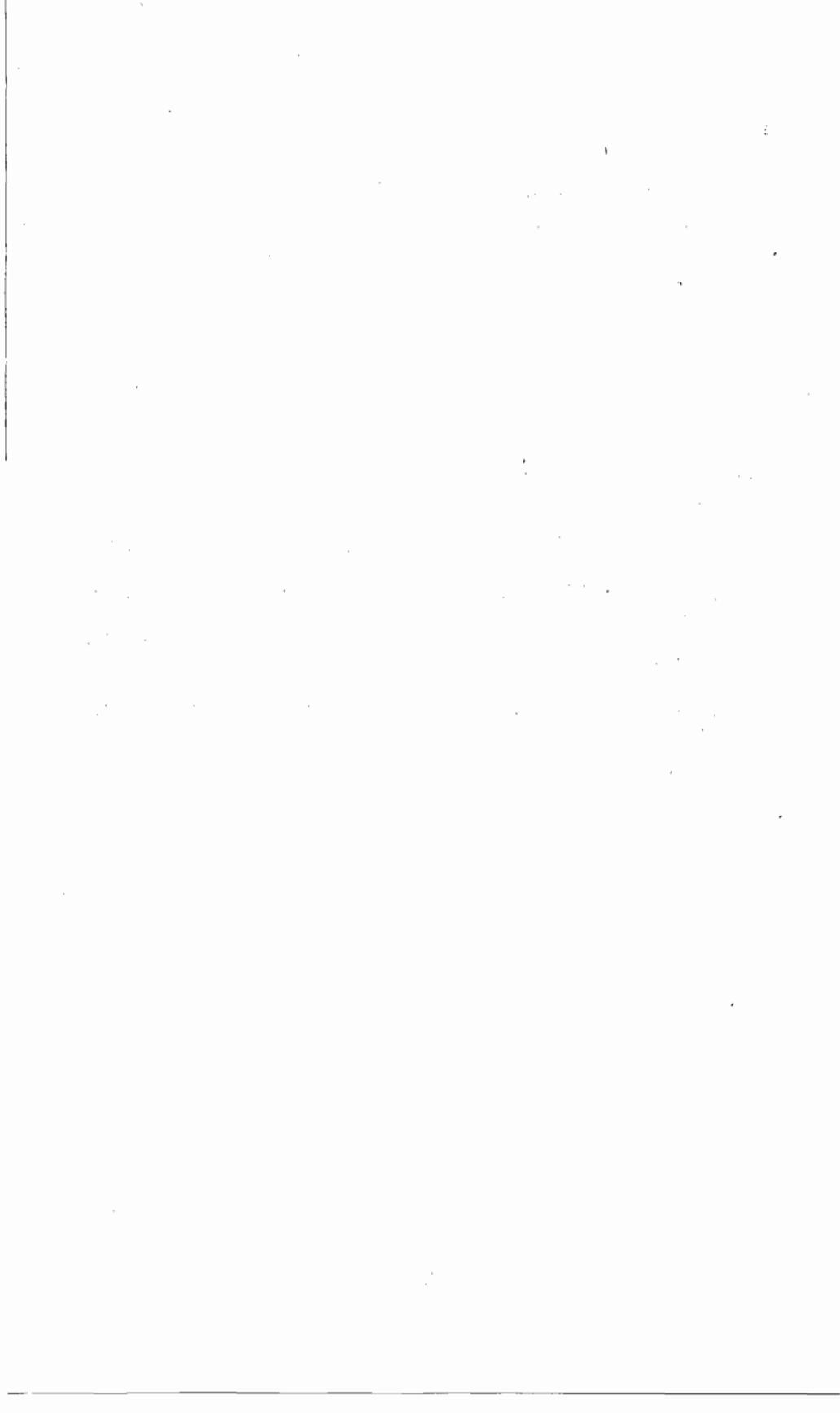
“The multitude and Pilate decide to crucify Him. The question is still ours to answer. What will you do with Jesus?

“I know you want to accept Him as your personal Saviour and Lord. Isn’t this your decision, Mr. Green?” (Wait for some affirmation.) Then refer to the last page. Read very thoughtfully and wait for sharing in the thoughts.

After the fourth question, you can tell him you can prepare right away—NOW—for his baptism.

Examination Thirteen

1. List the **Ten Timely Truths** in order (no scripture references are necessary here.)
2. Give two scripture references for truth number two—explain briefly the application.
3. Give two references for truth number three—explain briefly the application.
4. Explain the “second death” as in truth number five. Two references.
5. Give the two evidences of the deity of Jesus—write references.
6. Explain HOW Jesus paid the wages of sin. Give two references.
7. Give four things a man must do to be saved. Write a scripture reference for each.
8. Name two of the benefits of the gospel with reference for each.



*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

MEMBERSHIP

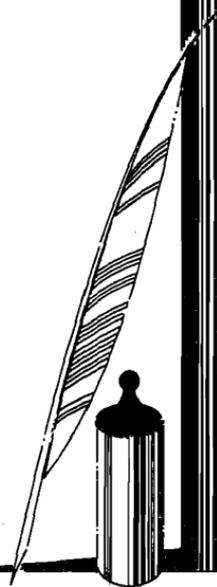
in the Church

in the Bible

REQUIRES FAITH

in the Bible as God's Word,

in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God



LESSON FOURTEEN

FAITH IN THE BIBLE AS THE WORD OF GOD FAITH IN JESUS AS THE CHRIST

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"The scriptures not only contains, but abounds with genuine prophecies. The predictions were not written after the events. Their accomplishment cannot be explained by chance. The fulfillments are too many, the descriptions too clear, too full, many of the details too striking and too minute to admit of their being explained by any other theory. **They are the result of foreknowledge.**"

—John Urquhart in *Wonders of Prophecy*

If you were being examined concerning your faith, how would you answer these questions?

1. Do you believe the Bible contains the Word of God or that it is the Word of God? Explain.
2. Do you believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible? Explain.
3. Are all parts of the Bible as true as others?
4. How can we be sure that the Bible as we have it is the same as when it was first written?
5. Has not science proven that the earth is more than four thousand years old? (Cf. The dates in many Bibles as to the creation of the world.)
6. In what sense is Jesus the Son of God? Are we not all sons of God?
7. Give three reasons why you believe Jesus is the Son of God.
8. Is it necessary to know **why** we believe Jesus is the Son of God? For what reason?
9. What is a modernist? A fundamentalist? A liberalist? A neo-orthodox?
10. Is it possible to have a very "orthodox" belief in the Bible and the Christ and yet be lost? If so, how?

LESSON DISCUSSION

Here are seven reasons why we believe that the Bible is the Book from God.

1. Consider: **THE BIBLE'S DIVINE UNITY.**
The impossible accomplished.
 1. The Bible was written by **forty different men**, ranging from shepherders to kings.
 2. The Bible was written on **three different continents.**
 3. It was written in **three different languages.**
 4. It was written **over a period of more than fifteen hundred years.**
 5. It was written **to cover the history of man for more than four thousand years.**

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

And yet the Bible tells one continuous story with no contradictions.

2. Consider: THE BIBLE'S FULFILLED PROPHECY.

History written ahead of time.

1. The manner of Jesus' death foretold seven hundred years before it happened. Psalms 22:16. (cf. John 19:18; 20:25.)
2. The persecution of the Jews foretold five hundred years before it happened. Deuteronomy, chapter 28. Seventy particulars specified.
3. The destruction of great cities foretold in detail:
 - (1) The city of Babylon. Isaiah 13:17-21; Jer. 51:26; 37.
 - (2) The city of Tyre. Ezekiel 26:4-14.
 - (3) The city of Sidon. Ezekiel 28:20-23.
4. The four ruling nations of history described by Daniel. Daniel 2:1-45. He lived in 600 B.C. and prophesied that there would be four, and only four world kingdoms.

There is only one answer—God directed the writing of the Bible.

3. Consider: THE BIBLE'S STATEMENTS PROVED BY ARCHAEOLOGY.

A message from the dead.

1. The walls of Jericho did fall as the Bible stated. The spade has uncovered them. (Pocket Bible Handbook by H. H. Halley.)
2. King Sargon did live and reign. (Isa. 20:1) His name appears often in the history uncovered by archaeology. (New Biblical Guide, Vol. VI.)
3. King Solomon was the world's richest man. The pick and shovel have found the ruins of his former glory. (New Biblical Guide, Vol. V, pages 218-234.)
4. There was a den of lions in Daniel's day. Archaeology has found such a den in the very city in which Daniel was held captive. (Dead Men Tell Tales by Harry Rimmer, pages 326-327.)

The statements of the Bible are proven historical facts.

4. Consider: THE BIBLE'S INDESTRUCTIBILITY.

That which cannot be destroyed.

1. Antiochus Epiphanes, a Syrian King tried with all his great authority to destroy the Old Testament in the second century before Christ, but failed.
2. The Roman emperors waged ten distinct general persecutions against the Christians and the scriptures, and all utterly failed to destroy God's Word.
3. The Roman Catholic Church was guilty of burning thousands of Bibles and of putting to death hundreds of its translators at the stake and yet the Bible lived through it all.
4. Infidels and athiests have in all centuries striven with all their intellectual power to discredit and destroy the Bible; they have died and have been forgotten while the Bible lives on.

In the face of such opposition, only God could have delivered the Bible.

5. Consider: **THE BIBLE'S SAFE DELIVERANCE FROM THE INSPIRED WRITERS TO US.**

The Bible through the ages remains unchanged.

1. We can trace the Old Testament back to the time of Ezra in the fifth century before Christ, where we find it in every essential, just as we have it today.
2. The New Testament can be traced back to the days of the apostles. Men then living quote from the New Testament of their day and these quotations (which are in written form) agree perfectly with the New Testament of today.
3. There is no evidence from any field that would lead us to believe that our New Testament is any different than when it was originally written by its Holy Spirit inspired writers.

The truths of the Bible are unchanged.

6. Consider: **THE BIBLE'S MARVELOUS INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD.**

The greatest moral force in the universe.

1. In England, a Bible land, there is only one murder to every 178,000 inhabitants. In Holland, a Bible country, there is only one murder to every 100,000 of the inhabitants. In Spain, where there is no Bible, there is one murder for every 4,113 inhabitants. In the city of Rome there is one for every nine hundred fifty inhabitants. (**Reasons Why I Know The Bible Is The Word Of God**, by Wm. E. Biederwolf.)
 2. In London, a Bible city, there are four illegitimate children for every one hundred legitimate ones. In Paris, where the Bible is scarcely ever read, there are forty-eight for every one hundred. In Rome, where this book is suppressed, for every one hundred legitimate children there are two hundred forty-three illegitimate ones. (**Reasons Why I Know The Bible Is The Word Of God**, by Wm. E. Biederwolf.)
 3. If you know the history of education or of jurisprudence, you know with the Bible is the foundation of both of them.
7. Consider: **THE BIBLE'S SUPERIOR TEACHINGS.**
- As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are God's Words above man's.
1. The Bible draws clear moral distinctions. There is no blurring of them as in the case of the heathen religions and most of human speculations.
 2. The Koran (the book of the Mohammendans) teaches that the mountains were created to keep the world from moving. The Hindus are taught that the earth rests on the back of an elephant. (cf. Jer. 31:37; Job 26:7b.)
 3. No other book of religion or philosophy sets forth so pro-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

found and rational a teaching concerning God. He has all the attributes which God ought to have. He is holy, all wise, all powerful, just, merciful, eternal and universal. This conception of God is carried throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Every one of the writers of the Bible had the same idea of God. "The most learned, acute and diligent student cannot, in the longest life, obtain an entire knowledge of this one volume. The more deeply he works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds the ore; new light continually beams from this source of heavenly knowledge, to direct the conduct and illustrate the work of God and the ways of men; and he will at last leave the world confessing that the more he studied the Scriptures, the fuller conviction he had of his own ignorance and of their inestimable value."

—*Sir Walter Scott*

Answer These Questions

1. By how many writers were the books of the Bible written?"
2. How many languages and how many continents were involved in writing the Bible?
3. What is the strength of the argument of the unity of the Bible?
4. Give two prophecies fulfilled in the death of Jesus.
5. Give two facts that were prophesied concerning the persecution of the Jews.
6. Tell in your own words the prophecy of the destruction of Tyre.
7. What have archaeologists found concerning Jericho?
8. Who was King Sargon?
9. Who was Antiochus Epiphanes and how did he help to show the Bible's divinity?
10. What do you know about the Roman emperors and the inspiration of the Bible?
11. What is the reasoning behind the argument of the indestructibility of the Bible in proving its inspiration?
12. How do we know that the Old Testament as we have it today is the same as it was when it was first written?
13. How do we know that the New Testament has not been changed since it was written?
14. How is the influence of the Bible shown in the matter of murder and adultery?
15. Give two ways in which the Bible's teachings are superior to those of other sacred books and beliefs.

Faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

We present here eight startling facts which are a basis for our faith in Christ.

1. Consider: **THE PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.**

He was described hundreds of years before He came.

Prophecy	Its Nature	Its Fulfillment
Gen. 3:15.....	The seed of the woman.....	Matt. 1:18; Gal. 4:4
Isa. 7:14.....	Born of a virgin.....	Matt. 1:23; Luke 1: 26-35
Micah 5:2.....	Birthplace.....	Matt. 2:1-6; Luke 2:4
Jer. 31:15.....	Massacre of the innocents.....	Matt. 2:17-18
Isa. 5:39b.....	Sinless	John 8:46; Heb. 7:26
Psalms 22:16.....	Piercing of hands and feet.....	John 20:27

“Surely this is the Son of God.”

2. Consider: **THE VICTORY OF JESUS OVER ALL SIN.**
He accomplished what no man before Him or after Him has been able to do.
 1. He met every temptation of Satan and came out victor. Matt. 4:1-11.
 2. He challenged His enemies to find sin in Him. They were unable to do so. John 8:46.
 3. He was tempted in all points, yet did not sin. Heb. 4:15.
 4. His opposers could “find no fault” in Him. Luke 23:4, 14.
“I find no fault in this man.” Jesus Christ was the sinless one.
3. Consider: **THE MIRACLES PERFORMED BY JESUS.**
The power of Jesus was the power of God.
 1. His power over nature—He rebuked the wind and the sea. Luke 8:24.
 2. His power over gravity—He walked on the water. Matt. 14:26.
 3. His power over disease—He healed the ten lepers. Luke 17:14.
 4. His power over death—He raised Lazarus from the dead. John 11:44.

Behold, all nature bows to the mighty hand of Jesus!

4. Consider: **THE PERFECT CONSISTENCY OF HIS LIFE.**
He was one who practiced all that He preached.
 1. He taught love. He exhibited it to the uttermost.
 2. He taught forgiveness. He exemplified it, even praying while dying for the forgiveness of those who rejected, mocked and crucified Him.
 3. He taught unselfishness. Not one thought or deed of His was ever selfish.
 4. He taught the rejection of temptation. He rejected the most alluring.

He demonstrated with His life the truth of His words.

5. Consider: **WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT JESUS.**
God’s Word unhesitatingly calls Him “Immanuel,” “God with us.”
Matthew 1:23.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

1. It says He was pre-existent. Micah 5:2; John 8:58; 17:5; I Cor. 15:47; Col. 1:17.
2. It says He has divine power, or "all power." Matt. 28:18; John 11:25; 14:6; Phil. 2:9-11.
3. It says He has divine presence, or is "present everywhere." Matt. 28:20; 18:20.
4. It says He has divine wisdom or "all wisdom." Matt. 11:27; John 2:15-25; 21:17; Col. 2:3.

To believe the Bible is to believe that Jesus is divine.

6. Consider: THE CLAIMS OF JESUS TO BE THE CHRIST OR THE SON OF GOD.

If you believe the words of Jesus, then you believe in His deity.

1. In answer to the reference of the woman at the well to Christ, Jesus said, "I that speak to thee am He." John 4:25.
2. In answer to the blind man who was asking concerning the Son of God, Jesus said, "He it is that speaketh to thee." John 9:36-37.
3. Jesus plainly said, "I am the Son of God." John 10:36.
4. Jesus allowed men to worship Him. John 9:36-38. (Everyone admits that Jesus was a good man, but unless Jesus is what He claimed to be, He is by no means a good man. Good men do not tell lies, nor do they allow men to worship that which is not God.)

These are the claims we would expect God to make if He were to manifest Himself among men.

7. Consider: THAT THERE ARE NO CRITICISMS TO RECORD AGAINST THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

His was the only life in the world that has been free of honest reproach.

1. **Renan**, the famous critic: "Jesus is in every respect unique, and nothing can be compared with Him. Be the unlooked for phenomena of the future what they may, Jesus will never be surpassed."
2. **Strauss**, another professed skeptic: "Christ is the highest object we can possibly imagine with respect to religion, the being without whose presence in mind, perfect piety is impossible."
3. **Lecky**, another critic: "The simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disputations of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists."

We know that Jesus is the Son of God because of the testimony of His enemies.

8. Consider: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

The resurrection of Jesus can be established by factual evidence.

1. Jesus appeared eleven times after His death, appearing to

- as many as five hundred brethren at one time. I Cor. 15:6.
2. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, His followers, even the faithful few, gave up in despair, and fled in hopeless dismay. Following His appearance to them, they were willing to die for their faith in Him as the risen Christ. Men do not give their lives for that which they know to be false.
 3. There is factual evidence that within less than twenty-eight years after the crucifixion, the entire Christian church, without exception, believed that the one sole ground of its existence was the fact that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead.
- The resurrection of Jesus has more evidence for its proof than any other fact in history.

Answer These Questions

1. Give two scriptures that were fulfilled in the life of Jesus.
2. Give two facts in Christ's victory over sin.
3. Cite two miracles that show the power of Christ is the power of God.
4. Show how Christ was consistent in His life and teachings. Be specific.
5. Give three things the Bible says about Jesus that proves His divinity.
6. Show how we cannot accept Christ simply as a good man.
7. Give three testimonies of the enemies of Christ as to the purity of His moral character.
8. What evidence of His divinity is there in the resurrection of Christ?
9. What one evidence appeals to you as being the most conclusive as to the Bible being the inspired Word of God?
10. What evidence appeals to you as being the most conclusive as to Jesus being the Son of God?

Examination Fourteen

1. Explain the argument from Divine Unity.
2. State two prophecies that have found their fulfillment. Give the book and chapter in which they appear.
3. Specify two attempts to destroy the Bible.
4. Give an example of the Bible's influence in the world.
5. In what way is the Bible superior in its teachings?
6. Name two miracles performed by Jesus that prove His divinity.
7. What does the Bible say about Jesus that proves His deity?
8. Did Jesus claim to be divine? Specify two places.
9. What have the critics not criticized about Jesus?
10. What is there about the resurrection that proves the deity of Jesus?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

MEMBERSHIP

*in the Church
in the Bible*

*REQUIRES A CONSCIOUSNESS OF SIN
AND REPENTANCE*



LESSON FIFTEEN

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH REPENTANCE

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"This almost universal inaccuracy and unreliability of the Greek and Arab historians with reference to the Kings of Egypt, Assyria and Babylon is in glaring contrast with the exactness and trustworthiness of the Hebrew Bible. It can be accounted for, humanly speaking, on the grounds that the authors of the Bible records were contemporaries of the Kings they mentioned, or had access to the original documents, and secondly, that the Hebrew writers were good enough scholars to transliterate with exactness; and thirdly, that the copyists of the Hebrews originals transcribed with conscientious care the text that was before them."

—Robert Dick Wilson

We have every reason to believe the Bible is historically dependable. The writers are reporting facts. What then shall we say of the plain promise in the Bible that there shall be a day when the world will be judged in righteousness by the man who God has appointed. (cf. Acts 17:30, 31.) To the fact that the Word shall judge us in the last day, what shall be our response? (cf. John 12:48.) Do not these facts place a heavy responsibility upon each one of us to search the scriptures?

A heart probe for all those interested in Salvation

Check One

1. I **do not** feel that sin is an inevitable human weakness, but a conscious violation of God's holy law.
() This is only theoretical with me; I have no feeling on it one way or the other.
() This is a relative matter; we are the product of our background and therefore can hardly be held accountable for our choices.
() This is the true expression of my heart. I feel very keenly about my personal relationship with a personal God.
2. Hell is not "a condition"; it is "a place." "Everlasting punishment" (cf. Matt. 25:41, 47) is a terrifying thought.
() I have always felt that there could be no place of everlasting torment if God is love.
() The punishment of the wicked will be a condition of extinction and not of consciousness.
() As awesome as the thought might be, I can only stand in holy reverence before God's truth.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- () My concept of this subject has never crystalized into a conviction in my mind.
3. "When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride."
- () I have sung these words many times, but I have never thought in any particular way as to their application to me.
- () I cannot intellectually accept the doctrine of substitution contained in this verse.
- () When I consider my sinfulness and God's holiness, I am drawn to the cross as iron to a magnet.
- () I am happy to accept God's solution for my sin whether I understand it or not.
4. Repentance is the one great need of the human heart.
- () I have never fully understood the subject; therefore I am unprepared to state any convictions on the matter.
- () I believe in repentance, but I do not feel that any man has a right to specify in the matter.
- () I know I need to be in a constant attitude of repentance. I propose to ever yield my will to His will.
5. God is able, by the renewing of our minds, to transform any life to conform to the image of Him who loved us and gave Himself up for us.
- () Man is what he is by reason of heredity and environment; therefore no violent change is to be expected.
- () Repentance is a relative subject and is therefore best left up to each individual.
- () The transforming power of the Son of God as seen in the lives of Saul of Tarsus and Peter, the fisherman, is repeated over and over again in the lives of men and women today.

LESSON DISCUSSION

The Steps to Salvation:

A Consciousness of Sin, its Penalty and the Atonement. Also the subject of **Repentance.**

(A consciousness of sin)

1. God's definition of sin. Rom. 14:23: ". . . and whatsoever is not of faith is sin."
"Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness and sin is the transgression of law." I John 3:4.
"To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17.
2. God says that all have committed sin.
 1. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23.

2. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." Isa. 53:6a.
3. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, Cursed is everyone who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them." Gal. 3:10.

This fact is not only stated by God, but is demonstrated on every hand each day we live.

3. A consciousness of sin's penalty.

God says there is a penalty for sin. There is but one reason for this penalty, and that is "sin;" there is but one penalty, and that is "death" or eternal punishment.

1. "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23a.
2. "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36.
3. Compare: II Thess. 1:7-9; John 8:24; Rev. 20:15; 21:8.

4. A consciousness of the atonement.

God has provided pardon or forgiveness for all sinners.

1. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." 53:6.
2. "But we behold Him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He should taste of death for every man." Heb. 2:9.
3. "And He is the propitiation (or covering) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." I John 2:2.
4. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16.

5. God's terms of acceptance.

The following are the terms laid down by God for the sinner's acceptance in appropriating the death of Christ to his sin:

1. Realize your sin and its penalty. Rom. 3:23; 6:23.
2. Realize that Christ died for you, or took your penalty upon Himself. Isa. 53:6.
3. A repentance of your sin. (That in your life which is contrary to God's law.) "I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish." Luke 13:3.
4. A confession before men of your faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and your personal Saviour. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10:10. (cf. Matt. 10:32-33.)
5. Be baptized for the remission of your sins. "Now when they

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:37-38.

This is God's truth taken directly from His Word. Let each one ask himself, "How do I stand in relation to the truth of God; has my sin been forgiven?"

Repentance

What is repentance? The word, "repentance," as found in the Greek language of the New Testament, simply means, "a change of mind." It is more fully defined in its relation to man and God! Repentance is a change of mind, brought about by a Godly sorrow for sin, which results in a complete change of conduct. II Cor. 7:10.

(What are the steps to Repentance?)

A conviction of your sin. Luke 15:17-19.

1. A conviction that you have sinned against God. Your sin may or may not affect the lives of others, but it does affect your relationship with God.
 - (1) "I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." Luke 15:18.
 - (2) "Behold, Jehovah's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He will not hear." Isa. 59:1-2.
2. A conviction that the penalty for your sin is death or eternal punishment. This is the penalty for all sin; God makes no category of sin; there is but one penalty for sin and that is "death;" There is but one reason for this penalty, and that is "sin."
 - (1) "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23a.
 - (2) "For the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23a. (cf. Rev. 20:15; 21:8.)
3. A conviction that there is nothing within you that will rid you of sin or its penalty. All of your good deeds and acts of morality will not rid you of the fact that you have sinned and are under a penalty which you will be compelled to pay.
 - (1) "For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord Jehovah." Jer. 2:22.
 - (2) "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man;

but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me out of the body of this death?" Rom. 7:22-24.

A contrition or sorrow for your sin. II Cor. 7:10.

1. A Godly sorrow because you have broken the law of your loving Father. God does not designate; He simply says "law," thus demanding obedience or punishment upon the part of man for all the law He has given to him.
 - (1) "Everyone that doeth sin, does also lawlessness and sin is lawlessness." I John 3:4.
 - (2) "For it is written, Cursed is everyone who continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them." Gal 3:10b.
 - (3) "The Lord . . . is longsuffering to youward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." II Pet. 3:9.
2. There is sorrow in consideration of your lost condition and eternal destiny. This is not an interpretation of the Bible, but plain statements of God's word.
 - (1) "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36.
 - (2) "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus; who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might." II Thess. 1:7-9.
3. You will have sorrow in view of the evil influence you have exerted while in sin. Your sin has not only condemned your own soul, but has contributed to the eternal loss of others.
 - (1) "For none of us liveth to himself; and none dieth to himself." Rom. 14:7.
 - (2) II Kings 21:1-17; II Chron. 33:11-19: Through Manasseh's evil influence, he led his son and his nation into sin and condemnation. Although he repented later, the seed he had sown brought forth its terrible harvest.

A decision to forsake your sin. Luke 15:17-20; Isa. 55:7; Ezek 33:11.

1. A whole hearted decision that will involve your will, your intellect, your emotions, and your conscience.
 - (1) "And He said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy **heart**, and with all thy **soul**, and with

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- all thy **mind**. This is the great and first commandment." Matt. 22:37-38.
- (2) "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your **heart**." Jer. 29:13.
 2. A decision that is made not only initially, but continually, a daily decision.
 - (1) "And He said unto all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23.
 - (2) "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." Rev. 2:10b.
 3. A decision that not only considers the escape from sin and its penalty, but also the obligations of the Christian life.
 - (1) "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." Acts 2:42.
 - (2) "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh." Heb. 10:25.

What are the results of Repentance?

1. A death to sin. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" Rom. 6:1-2.
2. A hatred for sin. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity." Heb. 11:8. "Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." Jude 23.
3. Not living any longer in sin. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" Rom. 6:2.
4. A desire to confess before men Christ as God's Son and your Saviour. "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Matt. 10:32-33. Having a faith in Christ as God's Son, and having repented of sin, a person will be anxious to make such a confession.
5. A desire to be baptized to "wash away sins." "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name." Acts 22:16. Paul had repented and was told to be baptized for the remission of his sins. (cf. Acts 2:38.)

Answer These Questions

1. What is God's definition of sin?
2. Cite two scripture references that state that all have sinned.
3. What is the penalty of sin? Give two references.
4. Give two references that show how God provided for the penalty of sin.

5. State God's terms of acceptance, with one scripture reference for each.
6. Give the complete definition of repentance.
7. Show how we have sinned against God.
8. What is the meaning of the term "death" as used in Romans 6:23?
9. Why will not good deeds avail on the day of judgment? Give scriptural proof.
10. Why should we feel contrition in relation to the law of God?
11. Why should our lost condition cause us sorrow?
12. How does our sin affect others?
13. What is meant by a wholehearted decision to forsake sin? i.e. what is involved in this decision?
14. Give scripture references that teach that our decision to forsake sin should be a continual decision.
15. What are the obligations of the Christian's life involved in a true decision to forsake sin?
16. Name three results of repentance.

* * * * *

REPENTANCE

The following discussion on the subject of "Repentance" is taken from "Evangelistic Sermons" by Robt. T. Matthews.

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Luke 24:47.

In all true evangelistic preaching, the Way of salvation ought to appear clearer and clearer with every sermon. No one should be left ignorant nor inquiring. All uncertainty should be dissipated. Every doubt should be dissolved. The light of the Gospel should be an unclouded light for the sinner's anxiety and need. And all the time, too, in showing this clear way, we shall be impressed by another remarkable fact, if we preach the Gospel as the Apostles preached it. The clearness of salvation and the motives of salvation go impressively together. The Gospel shows the sinner, not only what he must do to be saved, but why he should do it, and how he must do it. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, because it is both light and motive; its light and motive are verily the power of God.

Here it is, unmistakably: "Repentance and remission of sins"—there is the duty of the sinner, and there is the blessing for him. So were duty and blessing preached by the apostles, beginning from Jerusalem on that notable day of Pentecost. The duty was clear, the blessing was immediately ready. But read on, "Should be preached in His name." There is a motive of it all. It is a Gospel for both head and heart. There is light for man's ignorance, and there is

strength for man's weakness. The commandment of God is proclaimed to man, "that they should all everywhere repent." But it is no cold, abstract commandment of duty, terrifying the sinner's heart, and leaving him cowed and helpless, to repent as best he can. The light of man's duty shines in the larger light of God's love, and the truth falls gently upon the heart: "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

All this we want to hear and hold together. "Repentance and remission of sins,"—the duty and the blessing; but "in His name"—the motive. The more deeply you feel your responsibility to repent, the more keenly will you feel your need of the name of Christ, to repent thoroughly and savingly. Surely what we all desire is sincerity of purpose and deed. It is no time for hasty action. Surface work will not answer. Gospel repentance is no light matter. You do not want to be deceived, nor misled, nor kept waiting in doubt; but certainly you do not want to repent in a half-hearted, impulsive way. It is, indeed, something strangely pathetic—these wayward, these feeble desires to be better. I might ask the question, in genuine sympathy, Do you not want to be a better man? A better woman? A better child? And I am sure that heart after heart would stir with a tiny flame anyhow; bruised and battered lives would look around and move a little; even downright wicked persons might stop and listen for a moment. But if repentance is to have its perfect work, it must be in the name of Jesus Christ. Nothing short of that name, its light, its character, its power, its authority, can make you and me repent soundly. Gospel repentance is something far more than chance desires of being good. It is something surer than just swearing off from sin now and then, and afterwards wallowing in the mire more filthily than ever. It is something happier and brighter than cold, stoical efforts to cure our faults by ourselves, without any concern for the evil that lurks away down secretly in the depths of our hearts.

The history of missions will make this clear to us. More than a hundred years ago the Moravian missionaries, in their work of faith and toil of love, landed among the icy mountains of Greenland. There they preached—what? Honest, devoted men of God, they thought that they were preaching as they ought to preach. They thought that a sinner, a heathen, needed to hear not the Gospel first, but the Law. The Law must first convict him of sin, and slay him; and then he would be ready to hear the Gospel of salvation. Not Christ first, but Moses—not Calvary, but Sinai, was the order. They thought that only by the Law could come at all the knowledge of sin. So they preached; and the more they so preached, proclaiming only the Law of righteousness and its voice of condemnation for every transgressor, the more they wondered at the

result. The Greenlanders acknowledged their sins; but the acknowledgment? Somehow it lacked depth, warmth, tears. There was no broken heart, no contrite spirit. The poor heathen saw that he had not always done right, so his conscience accused him; and he saw that he needed to be better. But he did not see the need deeply, searchingly, thoroughly. There was no upheaval of life in him. He was not moved, intelligently and powerfully moved, to repent. One day one of the men entered the hut of a missionary, where the latter was translating the Bible. The Scripture was the story of the crucifixion of the Saviour. When the Greenlander curiously inquired what was going on, the preacher, from some cause, began to read the story of the Cross, and to tell its meaning. Strange to say, and yet not strange to say, a human heart was touched—the fountain of tears was broken up—again a mortal man could see Christ openly set forth crucified—again a sinner could say, “He died for me;” and there was great joy in Greenland.

When Jesus Christ said that repentance should be preached in His name, He meant it. His name is the only reason and power that can cause one to repent radically and thoroughly. The Cross is the light for us all to behold sin in, and for us to study our own sins by it. The background of our guilt looks all the darker around the pure life and precious self-sacrifice of the Son of God. The thunder of Sinai is not as powerful to convict us of sin as the silent suffering of Calvary. “In His name”—not in the name of Moses—so the apostles preached, and so God granted repentance unto life. The Gospel as fulfilling the righteousness of the Law; God commending His own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; the grace of God bringing salvation to all men, and teaching self-denial and a new life—these are the constant notes of the New Covenant, both to Jew and Gentile. Let us more and more realize how it is that the name of Christ works this deep and genuine repentance, along with the remission of sins.

What, then, is repentance, and how much is it, in the name of Christ? What is it that you feel and do in repenting? What is it as truth in Scripture and as experience in life? We need not wonder that, if a popular definition of it were called for, an answer would be loosely given that it is sorrow for sin. Well, there can be no repentance without sorrow for sin. That is very true. But you might be sorry for your sins and yet not repent. You might sorrow for a long time, and keenly, and yet not repent. You might shed rivers of tears, and yet not repent. You might grieve over your wrongdoing until your heart ached, and you were driven almost distracted, and yet not repent. You might feel wounded and sore and unspeakably sad, in a dumb agony of regret, and yet not repent. Your sins might arise before you and torment your conscience, and bring you heavy days and sleepless nights, and still there might never be repentance.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

This is altogether intelligible. It is true in God's Word, and it is true in life. Listen! One of the most solemn phrases of the Bible is this—"the sorrow of the world." Paul uses it in the very Scripture where he is teaching a note of repentance. He says: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret; but the sorrow of the world worketh death." There is the doctrine, deeply and awfully true to life. "The sorrow of the world"—the like of it was seen in Judas. Do you remember how he felt and did after his betrayal of the Master? When he saw the Master condemned, a change came over the traitor. A torrent of regret surged back upon his soul. The thirty pieces of silver burned his fingers. He brought back the money to the chief priests and elders, and he came not only feeling his guilt, but confessing it—"I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood." Sorrow for sin, even confession—what came of it all? "And he cast down the pieces of silver into the sanctuary, and departed; and he went away, and hanged himself." Remorse and suicide! "The sorrow of the world worketh death."

Let men be careful that their sorrow for sin is something better than worldly sorrow. There is so much of that, and it does no good. It is a sorrow poisoned through and through with pride. It may be just a bad feeling that one has because his sin has found him out. He feels uncomfortable when the eyes of the town are upon him, and everybody looks at him or points at him as a marked man. His name is stained, and his self-respect is thereby wounded. Self—self—self, in a dark, dark shadow of regret that at last deepens into midnight gloom—this may be the picture of one's sorrow over one's sins, the sorrow of desperation and despair. We are not to deceive ourselves by regrets and tears. Sentimentally feeling bad is not going to bring us salvation. Be careful how you indulge such superficial feelings. Have you wept when you have heard some anecdote of a death-bed? Have you started a little as the memory of past immorality pricked your conscience? Do you shudder when the dread reality of God's judgment fills your mind for an instant? Are you possibly feeling more or less compunction of heart as a confessed sinner? It may be all selfish sorrow. It may do you no good. It may turn out to be the sorrow of the world that worketh death.

Repentance is something more than sorrow for sin. It is something more than feeling bad and shedding tears because we have sinned. Repentance grows out of sorrow; but that sorrow is what Paul calls "godly sorrow," "sorrow according to God." "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret." As much as I insistently teach that repentance is more than sorrow, because I do not want you to stop with being sorry for your sins, and especially selfishly sorry, I would not have

you get the impression that sorrow for sin is of little account. Nay; we cannot be too sorrowful over our sins, if we sorrow "according to God." "Godly sorrow" there must be, deep and full, in every genuine conversion.

It means, simply and beautifully, does it not, a sorrow in which God is? Already, in the beginning of that great change within, God is there. The light of His love shines in the sinner's heart. Sinners are not left to themselves, to hear awful voices of judgment, and to tremble and weep while they feel their guilt, and try to work up a sufficient degree of penitence, in fear of the Judge of the universe. God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself; and the ministry of reconciliation is ever a ministry of light and love, in which the sinner may repent, and be saved. Sorrow, sorrow for sin there is to be in the sinner's heart, as deep as life or thought, but never a throb of penitence in which the love of God is not felt, never a tear in which the light of God does not shine. The sorrow of the world is morbid, bitter; but godly sorrow is sweet and relieving and healing. No; you cannot sorrow too much your sinful life, if it is the name of Christ that works in your heart, and convinces you of your great need of the great salvation. Christ shows you and me what we are; and He shows us ourselves in the light of what He is, and what you and I ought to be in becoming like Him. That suffering, that death, that rising again from the dead, were all to enable us to repent in His name—to repent with His sacrifice for sin working in our hearts, renewing the very springs of our lives, and starting a new growth of goodness through our characters—to repent in a surety of authority and experience, both what Christ does for us and what He does in us, so that the repentance might be unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret. Let the sorrow have its perfect work. Do not wipe away a single tear. Pray rather with the Psalmist, "Put thou my tears into thy bottle." Come and kneel at the Saviour's feet, and wet them with your tears. Let every sin call for a tear. But (oh! blessed thought) let it be a sorrow of tears, healthy while full, hopeful while humbling, because it is according to God, as you behold the light of His love in giving His Son to die for you, that you might be saved.

Here, then, is repentance, distinctly. It is something more than sorrow. Godly sorrow produces it. It is simply, but surely, a change of will—a change of will for the better. Deeper than tears, more than sorrow, more than surgings of emotion, it is the radical work of the Gospel on the will. Something must come of the tears, something must come of the sorrow. It is godly sorrow, so genuine, so powerful, working its way down to the center of moral responsibility, melting the hardness, electrifying the motives, until the prodigal child is convinced, persuaded, aroused, and speaks aloud the great change within—"I will arise, and go to my Father." How striking-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

ingly and beautifully that is described in the Parable! There he sat in his rags, hungry, starving, lonely, deserted. And as he sat there among the swine, "he came to himself." that tells the story. A man comes to himself in the extremity of his need. It is the picture of the true spirit of a man in any serious need of life. We are never ready to appreciate any kind of blessing until we come to ourselves—until we see how helpless we are, alone, unaided, uncheered, to be anything or to do anything in this world. If one wants to be a scholar, he must come to a deep sense of his own ignorance, in comparison with the universe of knowledge, before he is really ready to learn and to know. If you would do good to humanity in its very lowly calls for help, you are not prepared, not qualified in heart, to do such service, until you have been humbled before the mountains of difficulties that encompass all wise philanthropy. We never appreciate one another in love or friendship until we see clearly what life would be bereft of such companionship and care. In all these ways and experiences we may come to ourselves; and we can look up, and around, and above, and we see how little each one is in himself, by himself, how dependent on others and on things about us for every good.

Man's greatest need is God—His life, His love. You come to yourself as, in some serious hour, you feel how poor, and hungry, and helpless, and wretched you are without Him. That experience may come in different ways. It may come in some awful deed of sin, barefaced crime before the community; or in the hard struggle against a devilish temptation where you at last give up in despair; or in the bankruptcy of your worldly fortunes; or by the little grave where all your earthly hopes are buried. It may come not suddenly, but slowly, slowly, up through the well-taught, well-reared life of a young man or a young woman, in which there has been no deep ploughing of sin, but where there has been a quiet, silent, spiritual growth amid common trials and disciplines, the faith of motherhood becoming the faith of childhood, the faith of the child the faith of the man, and a life of large thought and daily prayer and pious culture of the heart more and more deeply realizing, by its very possession of God, how miserable and lost it would be without Him.

The prodigal son came to himself. In that self-revelation, where his poor, forlorn life stood out before his eyes in all its nakedness and helplessness, there arose the fact of his father's house, his father's love, and bread to spare. He saw it all, saw it as never before; utterly hungry and destitute, he felt how much that home and comfort were to him, as he ejaculated, "and I perish with hunger." Then came the climax. Then came the crisis. Then came the change. Then and there he repented. When he felt most deeply his sin and guilt, how guilty and undeserving he was, felt it most keenly

in the very light of his father's love, he repented—"I will arise, and go to my father." That was repentance, the very moment, the very truth, the very experience. It was the radical change of his will. It was the radical change of his will, produced in the sense of his utter helplessness, the light of his father's love shining over him, and the fact of that far-off home drawing him. It was the radical change of his will, spoken aloud and heard beyond the stars—"I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

That is the example for every sinner, the example of repentance in its crisis and genuineness. Do you feel that you are a sinner? Do you feel your sins haunting your conscience, and holding you to dread account? Do you see how far short you have come of duty both to God and man? Does the Gospel of the glory of God show you to yourself, and make your poverty of spirit and imperfection of character stand out glaringly? But do you, oh! do you, behold the Fatherhood of God, made so plain in His Son Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself up for us? Does not that love, that sacrifice for sin, touch you—humble you—soften you—draw you? Does not the name of Christ beget in you a sweet and godly sorrow, and gently open the fountain of tears? Do you not long, hungrily long, to be forgiven and saved? Now is your time, if those feelings of guilt and sorrow and hunger are there. It is the crisis of your life. The commandment of God comes to you more searchingly than ever, Repent! Guilty, sorrowful, needy, you ought to repent. You ought to say out of an honest heart, feeling its guilt of past sins, but just as deeply feeling its responsibility to accept the present salvation, you ought to say—"I will arise, and go to my Father." Do not let those feelings die away and leave you unsaved. Do not let this serious hour pass, and nothing good come of it. With sorrow in your soul, with tears in your eyes, the goodness of God leading you, repent here and now. Let that simple, distinct crisis of responsibility have its way. Convicted, persuaded, unresisting, yielding, surrendering, speak as you feel, in the spirit of the old song, "Lord, I give myself to thee; 'tis all that I can do."

That is repentance—the time, the truth, the experience. It is the radical change of your will. It shows itself, it proves itself, in what immediately follows, and continuously follows. When the prodigal son of the Parable repented, when he spoke the deep change of his heart and will, "I will arise, and go to my father," then the story reads at once, "And he arose, and came to his father." That is what you will do, if you genuinely repent. You will arise, and confess Christ as your Saviour and Lord. That is what God's Word calls "doing works worthy of repentance." Sorrow—repentance—reformation—here is repentance in origin and result. It originates

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

in godly sorrow; it results in reformation of life. Sorrow, the change of heart—repentance, the change of will—reformation, the change of conduct,—this is the lucid order of the teaching of the Gospel. And the Gospel insists on the last as well as on the first or the second. That is the reason that we must insist, too, on the result of repentance. So will its genuineness be proved. “Godly sorrow worketh repentance”—we need to hear that. “Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance”—that is a capital note also to be sounded in preaching the Gospel.

John the Baptist sounded it distinctly. A preacher of repentance, “preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins,” as the multitudes went out to be baptized by him, he warned them, “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance.” He compared life to a tree. There at the root was the axe of judgment. “Every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” He preached in figures; but he applied his figures to the plain prose of duty. Here came the multitudes, in their excitement, asking Him, “What then must we do?” And the answer was ready, just what they needed to do—“He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise.” It was a straight lesson in unselfishness. And the publicans, the greedy taxgatherers, they came to be baptized, inquiring, “Master, what must we do?” They heard their sin; they heard their duty—“Extort no more than that which is appointed you.” Soldiers, in active service, under drill and command every-day, they are drawn to the wonderful preacher of righteousness, and ask, with a stir of new feelings, “And we, what must we do?” “Do violence to no man, neither exact anything wrongfully; and be content with your wages.” “Fruits worthy of repentance”—reformation of conduct, how we appear before others, what we do to others—that was the religion of life preached to the eager crowd on the banks of the Jordan. It was a lesson of charity and philanthropy. It was a duty of honesty and justice. It was a standard of self-control and contentment. That kind of life would prove whether men had duly repented or not.

So also was the preaching of Jesus. Did He shield a poor adulteress, as her accusers were ready to stone her to death? Did He shame them, as He Himself, in His spotless chastity, felt ashamed for them, blushing, as He stooped and wrote on the ground? Did He gently look upon the woman when the accusers silently stole away, and did He speak the superabundant grace of God, “Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way”? It was spoken in a love that immediately touched the conscience and braced the will of the poor creature, both to repent and reform—“From henceforth sin no more.” Did His mercy, His condescension, His sweet companionship, His lovable humanity, win the publican Zacchaeus? “Zacchaeus, make haste,

and come down; for today I must abide at thy house"—is that the sight, the simple word, the overflowing spirit of love that warmed the heart of the extortionate tax-gatherer, and melted him to repentance? Hear this whole-hearted pledge of reformation immediately made—"Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore four-fold."

So, also, was the Apostolic preaching. It caused the Ephesian sorcerers to bring the books of their trade, and make a bonfire of their iniquity, as they believed and were saved. It made the rough Philippian jailer tender in feeling and kind of hand, as he washed the stripes of the imprisoned preachers by whom he was baptized. It terrified the worldly Felix as he heard Paul reason of righteousness and self-control, and the judgment to come. Paul could congratulate the Corinthians on what they had become through the redemption of the Gospel. Some of them were once fornicators, idolaters, thieves, drunkards, extortioners, this was the note of congratulation that implied the reformation worthy of the repentance as it was produced by the Gospel of all grace—"But ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

We hear the call for ethical preaching. It is a reasonable call. We hear the demand for a revival of righteousness. It is an altogether just demand. The Gospel of grace is a Gospel of morality. It preaches repentance in the name of Christ—the change of mind, heart, will; and that change must bear fruit in a new life. Let sinners mark the result. Let them see that the reformation of conduct must also appear. What is it that you need to do? What has been your bosom sin? Where must you specially cease to do evil, and learn to do right? Do you swear? Do you take the name of God in vain? Has the use of by-words become a habit with you? Or is drunkenness your failing? Is the appetite for strong drink a raging thirst in your veins, so now by long indulgence, or, alas! inherited as taint in the blood? Have you been dishonest in trade or betrayed the trusts of others? Is your temper a fiery one, and has your tongue dropped wrath? Does selfishness beset you, perhaps coarse, perhaps amiable and aesthetic, so that it would be a very revolution in your life to think of others and do them good? Have you been unthankful? Discontented? Disagreeable?

Do these words sound too pointed, too severe? A young boy lay upon his sick-bed, convalescing, after the long battle with fever, weak, pale, thoughtful. One day he called his devoted mother to his side, and asked her to bend down; he had something to tell her. And with his thin arms around her neck, he spoke from the heart—"Mamma, I am so glad that I am going to get well; I was not always a good boy when I was well; I used to say naughty

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

words when I played with the other boys; but I have asked God to forgive me, and I am going to be a better boy when I get up again." Do we doubt there was joy in Heaven over that child's repentance as he found his way back to duty, believing in the goodness and grace of God? Yes, the young heart may have its simple sorrow, and may repent in the light of a Saviour's love, and may begin building a spiritual character.

These are some of the needs of the hour—one of this person, another of that person, and so on. Let them be duly emphasized, without any slurring whatever. Let each one think of himself, not of his neighbor. As the grace of God brings us salvation, let us hear its doctrine, its discipline, that we are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, godly in this present world. Joining the Church—making a profession of religion—being baptized, what is the good of it unless the heart is in it, and a new life comes from it? Tears are idle, feelings are worse than wasted, and leave you harder than ever, if the will, energized by the strength of the might of God, does not directly and persistently aim to break off sins by righteousness. While you sorrow, pray, repent, and receive the promises of the Gospel, it ought all to be a purpose and a joy that tell on your conduct before the world, in your family, wherever you are seen and known, so that you could say in all good conscience—"I know I am a better man." That is the life worthy of your repentance.

But let us, let us, I beg you, keep all the truths of the Gospel before us—the new life, and the motive for it; the intense morality of Christian character, and its health and inspiration from repentance in the name of Christ. Do not agonize in remorse over your sins. Do not close your eyes in blind sorrow as you feel your guilt. Certainly not. And do not expect to cure every fault you have the hour you are forgiven, nor be surprised if the fact confronts you that you have a conflict with evil yet to be endured. You do not repent once for all. Repentance is a life-long duty. It is a daily duty. The deepest feeling of sorrow for sin is yet to come. It will come, as your old faults harass you, and perhaps bring you to the dust. It will come especially as you better understand your own heart—the evil ever lurking there: that experience of humility, prayer, self-renouncement, which is known fully only as one sees the highest good, and sees more and more that he can attain it only in the grace and strength of God. Expect to repent every day—every day fresh purposes, fresh resolutions, a new will to do right, as you aspire, "All my springs are in thee." Begin this very hour. If there is godly sorrow for sin, if there is the hunger to be forgiven, if there is a desire to be better, that is the auspicious beginning. Let the goodness of God lead you to repentance.

Examination Fifteen

1. What is God's definition of sin?
2. What is the penalty for sin? Give a scripture reference.
3. Give a scripture reference that shows that Christ has provided pardon for all sinners.
4. What is repentance? (Give the short definition.)
5. State two things that should be involved in our conviction as a step to repentance.
6. State two things our sorrow should include.
7. What is a "whole hearted decision to forsake sin"?
8. What is meant by an "initial decision" and "a continual decision"?
9. Name two results of repentance.
10. What part of this lesson benefited you the most?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart"*

MEMBERSHIP

*in the Church
in the Bible*
REQUIRES

CONFESSION

BAPTISM



LESSON SIXTEEN

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH CONFESSION AND BAPTISM

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"Today man sees all his hopes and aspirations crumbling before him. He is perplexed and knows not whither he is drifting. But he must realize that the Bible is his refuge and the rallying point for all humanity. In it man will find the solution of his present difficulties and guidance for his future action and unless he accepts with clear conscience the Bible and its great message, he cannot hope for salvation. For my part, I glory in the Bible.

—Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia

In light of the above statement an outsider might ask the following questions. How would you answer them?

1. Does the Bible teach, as I have heard, that we must confess our sins before men? If so, where?
2. I am not ashamed of my faith in Jesus, but I do not want to make a spectacle of myself by saying so in public. Is this attitude wrong?
3. I would rather confess with my life than with my mouth. I have seen too many who say one thing and do another. Do you agree?
4. I do not feel baptism has anything to do with salvation. I have seen many who were never baptized living better lives than those who were. How can you disagree with this fact?
5. The mode of baptism is not important. The important thing is the purpose for the act. Isn't this true?
6. The thief on the cross was never baptized and he was saved. Am I wrong in trusting in the same grace Jesus extended to him?
7. I cannot imagine that water could have anything to do with my salvation. Does the Bible agree with me?
8. I could never believe that my mother was lost just because she was never immersed in water. What do you say?
9. Isn't it a fact that men were forgiven in various ways in the New Testament? As for example: Cornelius and his household had the Holy Spirit **before** they were baptized (cf. Acts 10:48). The jailer was told to believe and he would be saved (cf. Acts 16:31). Those in Antioch of Pisidia were granted remission of sins through belief (cf. Acts 13:38, 39).
10. If sprinkling or pouring is not the Bible mode of baptism, who originated it?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

The Steps to Salvation:

The Members of the Church—Confession:

CONFESSION

We present here some plain statements from God's Word on this subject.

1. What is Confession? Confession is an audible expression of belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, given before men, looking forward to salvation through the name of the one confessed. Matt. 10:32-33.

2. Why should this confession be made?

1. Because our salvation depends upon this confession. Here are the words of God on this subject: "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10:9-10.

So we can see that this confession becomes an essential part of our forgiveness.

2. Because upon our confession of Christ before man depends the confession of our name by Christ before God. "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before man, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Matt. 10:32-33.
3. Because there is a blessing placed upon this confession by Christ. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." Matt. 16:16-17.
- 3. Who should make this confession?** The individual who has come to a belief in Jesus as the Christ, "the lamb of God," slain for the sins of the world, and who has whole-heartedly repented of all sin in his life. (Acts 8:37.)
- 4. Where should this confession be made?**
 1. "Before men." Matt. 10:32-33. That is to say, in the presence of others, thus giving them the witness of your faith in Jesus as the Christ, and your personal Saviour.
 2. "In the sight of many witnesses." I Tim. 6:12. In the sight of others who, hearing your statement of belief in Jesus as the Christ, will be influenced to glorify God if they are Christians, or to consider their own salvation if they are sinners.

5. How often should this confession be made?

1. Initially. That is, once before men, preceding the forgiveness of your sins or baptism. "And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Acts 8:36-38 and compare Acts 22:16.
2. Continually. Following the forgiveness of our sins, we should never be ashamed of Christ, but should be willing at all times to confess that He is the Christ and our Saviour. By our lives we should demonstrate that He has saved us from sin. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." Mark 8:38 and compare John 9:22.

The following study on "The Good Confession" is written by Robert T. Matthews.

THE GOOD CONFESSION

"And didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses."—I Tim. 6:12.

Could there be a finer thrill of memory! Paul appeals to the past while exhorting Timothy in the pursuit of eternal life. He bids Timothy to look back, and recall a scene and rehear a voice. There in Lystra, a city lying on a dreary plain at the foot of a volcanic mountain, the population generally idolators, there in the very first days of Paul's and Barnabas' preaching, a Jewish boy was modestly standing in the sight of many witnesses, a grandmother's kindly eye resting upon him, and a mother's heart throbbing with joy. He is but a little way in his teens; yet, in the hushed assembly, bravely and beautifully he speaks aloud the faith of his youthful heart—"I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God."

It was the good confession, as Paul definitely and preeminently calls it. Not a **good profession**, as it appears in the old version, but as it is accurately translated in the Revised Version, **the good confession**. Paul stirringly appeals to that, as he incites Timothy in the spiritual conflict. For Timothy there was in the thought of it, all the tenderness of a sweet human memory—his boyhood days, the devoted care of him by his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, his learning of God and the Messiah to come, the familiar walks and faces of his native town, and that memorable day when, in the presence of parents, neighbors, friends, he declared his heartfelt

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

allegiance to the Son of God. He was a man now, a minister of the Gospel, with an experience of twenty years' service under Paul, and just then charged with a laborious mission in the idolatrous city of Ephesus. But in that far-off time, in that far-away scene, as Paul knew, and as Paul urged, the grown man, as he recalled it all, would find an ever-fresh and powerful motive for manhood's duty and hope. "Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses."

"The good confession." It is something definite. It is something distinct. It is concerning a Person. But while definite and distinct, and concerning a Person, it is, as set forth so frequently in the Scriptures, a rich and varied confession, not in any one form of words. Here is the fine interest of our study. We want to see the meaning of this confession, its broad and deep meaning, and how good it is. It must be singularly good that, while so definitely and distinctly concerning a Person, and making a powerful motive for one's whol spiritual life, at once a memorial and an ideal, it is not expressed rigidly in a theological formula, but flows out in richness and variedness of utterance, always more in meaning than the mouth can speak, always clear and simple in what is spoken, even by childlike lips. There is all this interest about the good confession, as it is taught in the Word of God, now the voice of an individual heart, or again the flower of a timely development of Apostolic doctrine. Let us study it thus together, a personal speech, warm from the heart of a believer, or a progress of doctrine in some new outgrowth of revelation.

1. Jesus is walking among men. It is at the outset of His earthly mission. And already men are confessing Him. Mark how definite and distinct the confession! Andrew, abiding with Jesus and hearing His teaching, goes forth at nightfall to find his own brother, and goes confessing, "We have found the Messiah." Philip, called by Jesus, hastens to find Nathanael; and again there is a confession, definite, but varied in the heart's joy—"We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael, guileless, devout, inquiring, at last convinced by what he saw and heard, speaks the faith of his heart—"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art King of Israel." So the record of confessions runs. There is no hard and fast form of words, no mechanical repetitions, no unintelligent memorizings. Men are speaking out of the throbs of a new life that they find in themselves. Each man speaks, as the heart gives him utterance. The presence of Jesus, the words of Jesus, the deeds of Jesus, are stirring the depths of human experience, and blessing those that receive Him in faith and love; and every keen sense of

the need of Him, and every fresh attraction to Him, and every new-found comfort in Him, brings forth a confession, definite and distinct, and rich and varied. Jesus once, as many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him, turned to the Twelve, and touchingly asked, "Would ye also go away?" It was, of course, the impulsive Peter that answered for all their hearts' devotion: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." And this passionate need and attachment finds its intelligent, pointed confession—"And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." So distinct it is, and again beautifully varied in the fullness of the soul's faith. Even the depths of sorrow, illumined by the comfort of Jesus—here, too, the believer confesses with the mouth a good confession. For she has met the Lord, and heard His assuring word—"Thy brother shall rise again." She has heard His word, as it becomes a finer light in light—"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." And when the heart is challenged concerning its belief of this wonderful light radiating from the very presence of God, it does not stumble, it sees a truth, it feels a comfort, it sums up its faith in unhesitating confession: "Yea, Lord: I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world." Do we not begin to see why it is worthily called the good confession? Men and women are seeing Jesus, hearing Him, following Him, receiving from Him blessing after blessing—light, comfort, hope—and their hearts must speak concerning Him. It is the intelligence of faith as well as the sincere gratitude of faith. They say what they think of Him. They speak out who they think He is. To some such pronouncement must every study of Jesus finally come. This One whose character is spotless, who imparts life in teaching truth, who consoles all sorrow, who goes about doing good, who promises the resurrection of the dead—what are we to think of Him? Whose Son is He? Let the answer be clear and definite. The mind craves it. The heart prompts it. We cannot be satisfied with Renan's rhetoric. Let us speak out. Let our words not evaporate in figures. Let them crystallize in confession. Those first believers—Andrew and Philip, and Nathanael and Peter, and Martha—confess Him; and the full and definite confession of the harp of faith, harmonizing its divers tones, is the strain, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

"The Christ"—here is the first stage of the good confession; here is its first, continual emphasis. Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. The word was no strange one to a Jew. It was to him

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

a rich word of Jewish history—this term, Christ in Greek, Messiah in Hebrew, Anointed to us in English. An anointed one—a Christ—was a familiar person in Israel. Peter and Martha could look back and see priests anointed, prophets anointed, kings anointed. It was the sign of God upon them for their office—consecrating them, giving them authority, protecting them. They were His anointed ones, as they spilt the blood of bulls and goats, or taught a message of truth and duty, or ruled the people in equity. But Philip and Nathanael now beheld Him who towered above all the anointed ones of other days. Here was the Priest of the priests, and Prophet of the prophets, the King of the kings—greater than Abel, and wiser than Moses, and more royal than David. They were the types: He was the antitype. They were the shadows; He was the substance. The service of these anointed priests, prophets, kings, was not to be fulfilled in Him, the Anointed, the Messiah, the Christ. The true Israel could not mistake Him. His presence was fragrant with prophecy; His speech echoed many a word of Old Testament teaching; His look was that of a Jew. The true Israel, needy, hungry, sore, could but find Him, and straightway confess Him. He was just that real to Andrew and Philip. They might not comprehend Him fully; they might stumble at this or that word; but they understood what they did understand of Him. Fearing God and loving truth, with good and honest hearts, they could take in the testimony of the Christ's own concerning Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." As they saw all this, and themselves were blest by Jesus, they could but remember the Word of the Lord; and putting the two together, they confessed, at once in clear thought and fervent gratitude, their definite, satisfied faith—"Thou art the Christ."

This is the origin of "the good confession," as it was succinctly and familiarly called a quarter of a century later among those early Christians. We see it here in the making, as it centers upon the person of Jesus, and means so much while it speaks so briefly—a word of truth to those first believers, and a word out of their hearts, and a definite word with their mouths. And this is the first stage of meaning—it confesses the Christ. It thinks and speaks of Jesus distinctively as the Messiah, the Anointed. It is the Jewish aspect and emphasis of the good confession. While Jesus was upon earth, and when He had arisen from the dead and ascended into Heaven, both be-

fore and after, the Jewish believers think and speak of Him as the Christ. So Peter preached Him to Jews on the day of Pentecost; and so Paul proclaimed Him in Rome to the Jews that came to the apostle's lodging. Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ—this was the Apostolic message for the temple, and for the synagogue, and for the place of prayer by the river side. So they in Jerusalem believed, and so the noble Bereans. Out of the Old Testament Scriptures was the argument made, and the testimony of apostles enforced; and many a Jew that believed in God was persuaded to believe in Jesus as the Christ of God. It was a vital faith, an intelligent faith, spoken from the peace and joy of a Lydia's or a Crispus' heart—"I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God."

2. There is another stage in the growth of the good confession. Later on, in the spread of the Gospel, it takes on a specially vivid aspect; it develops a particularly stronger emphasis. I do not mean that this tone was not heard before. It was sounded necessarily in the harmony of the idea of the Christ. It had, too, a distinct note in Peter's very sermon on the day of Pentecost. Nor do I mean that this vivid aspect, this stronger emphasis, as it is progressively developed, darkens or silences all else of this good confession that went before. No; for doctrine, the confession, fully and definitely, that Jesus is the Christ, is heard in the Scriptures from the last Apostolic voice. Yet there is indubitably in Paul's teaching a fresh, singular, impressive voice, a pointedly recurrent voice, on confessing Jesus. Again we shall see how divinely rich is the idea of this good confession, whose fulness of meaning no one form of words contain; and again we shall see how definite and emphatic it can become for practical understanding and benefit, in this doctrine peculiarly Paul's own.

The very first fact of the matter is striking. The word Christ, in Paul's use, undergoes a change. It is not always, with him, an official word. It does not always emit, under his dictation, its peculiar sense, **anointed**. He does not always mean to bring out that sense. Nay, very, very often he practically lets it go altogether. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, frequently transcends the Jewish meaning of the word **Christ**. Mark how again and again he uses it, not officially, but personally. "Christ" becomes on his lips, so significantly, a dear, warm word for the person of Christ. The larger, complete idea of Christ's person swallows up the special notions of His office, as these are seen and embodied by the Jewish mind. How fervently personal is this word with Paul. "Christ died for us"—"For to me to live is Christ"—"Christ in you, the hope of glory"—

a hundred times over, indeed, does Paul speak in this deeply vital and personal way of Jesus of Nazareth, not saying, the Christ, but simply, Christ.

It means plainly enough that the "secret of Jesus," a fine phrase of this day, Paul had thoroughly mastered. Jesus as a personal character for love and imitation, Jesus as a power in the heart, Jesus as a motive in duty, Jesus as a life in men's lives—all that He taught, all that He did, all that He was in the way of spiritual light and influence, received and realized continuously in human experience—this truth, which even a certain school of skepticism consents to, was a shining reality for Paul. And so real and living is Jesus for Paul, that the apostle, speaking and writing the name Christ, drops off any purpose of emphasizing its Hebrew conception of office, and uses it of the risen and exalted Jesus, who dwells henceforth in the hearts of His disciples, the very fullness of God for human lives and duty.

But, mark you! Paul makes a definite confession of Jesus. Jesus is this fullness of life for him, in a beautiful spiritual reality that cannot be reasonably gainsaid; but the apostle does not lose himself in vague mysticism. Out of this fullness of life he, too, confesses the good confession. He speaks of Jesus definitely and distinctively. He brings out a fresh aspect, he makes a particular emphasis of the good confession. The emphasis is heard in his preaching. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord." The Lordship of Jesus—this is what Paul sets forth with an emphasis and variety peculiarly his own. The idea is wrapped up in the Hebrew conception of the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed. The Christ is, indeed, Prophet, Priest, and King. But Paul singles out this Kingship. He emphasizes it. He enforces it. It is, with him, a distinctively strong note of the good confession. Listen: "No man can say Jesus is Lord but in the Holy Spirit." What he thus preaches and teaches, the Lordship of Jesus, he enforces as a confession of the believer—"the word of faith, which we preach." What is this particular word? "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord"—a faith of the heart, of course, it must first be—"and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead." But while "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," yet, really and definitely, as the apostle immediately adds, "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The Lordship of Jesus Christ—in confession—what a favorite truth it is with Paul! Hear him once more in the sublime climax of his teaching. It is the noble Scripture concerning Christ's emptying Himself, and humbling Himself, and becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the

cross. Then listen to this paean of glory, with its distinct, mighty note of confession: "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Is it not a very definite confession, looked at from whatever point of view? And yet is it not definite and richly varied together? Do you not think there is need of this emphatic note of the good confession? Is it not well that, in the progress of Christian doctrine. Paul should so illustriously set forth the Lordship of Jesus? Is it not a true note for heart and duty that the apostle, in reminding Timothy of the memorable vow, should remind him too "of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession"—the dominant note there the Lordship of Jesus? I do not know a more healthful exhibit of Christian doctrine than this—that Paul should so vividly speak of the personal Christ, words afire with the reality of a life-union with Christ, figures piled upon figures to tell how dear is Christ in sweet intimateness of companionship, and yet that, just as often and just as truly, he should exalt Jesus as Lord, and unreservedly speak his glad obedience to such a Lord. Have you not lived out in yourself the reality of this truth, and found that you deeply needed it? Is it not one of the first true experiences in our turning to God? Do we not feel like saying humbly, just as Saul of Tarsus, blind and prostrate, said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Do you not see more and more why the Lordship of Jesus Christ was such a distinct and constant note with Paul? Why, it is only a little exaggeration of rhetoric to say that, in nearly every speech and writing of Paul's, he expresses the Lordship of Jesus. It is intelligently and devoutly Lord, Lord, Lord, with him again and again. The truth is vital in Paul's doctrine; it is luminously real in Paul's life. The true expression of the life of freedom in Christ, realized as men obey the truth, and the truth a life in Christ Himself—this is the reason that Paul distinctly calls himself "a bond-servant of Jesus Christ," and expressly glories in the signs of his bondage—"I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus." Yes; it is a truth for today—the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Men never needed it more than they need it now. Now, when liberty is a birth-right, an atmosphere, a privilege for all, we need to learn that it can be truly had and enjoyed only in obedience to truth, in obeying Jesus as Lord. It is only this that can save us from anarchies in society, and from the subtler bondage of an

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

aesthetic selfishness. It goes signally to constitute the good confession that we can stand in the sight of many witnesses, and from the heart, definitely and gladly, after Paul, confess Jesus as Lord.

3. The meaning of the good confession still progresses in the Scriptures. It is now a different time, as well as another note. The first century of the Christian era is closing. The Gospel, to repeat Paul's splendid hyperbole, has been preached in all creation under heaven. There are churches of Christ everywhere—in Jerusalem, in Antioch, in Ephesus, in Corinth, in Rome; in provinces and in cities the faith of the Gospel has been established. The martyrs have become a noble army—these witnesses for Christ that have not counted their lives dear; who before the block and in the arena and under torture have steadfastly confessed, "I am a Christian;" who have died, glorifying God in this name. Paul has been beheaded. Peter has been crucified. John alone of the apostles remains. And it is John that teaches a new meaning of the good confession. We may say that Peter emphasizes the Messiahship of Jesus, this office in fulfillment of Hebrew prophecy, an argument addressed to Jews. We may say that Paul sets forth specially the Lordship of Jesus, this authority against the idol gods of the heathen, an appeal to the consciences of the Gentiles. But it was reserved for John to enforce another idea in the confession of Jesus; and again we shall see how definite, how varied, how vital the good confession is.

We rightly call it a progress of meaning of the good confession. It has been wrapped up in Apostolic doctrine all along; but it is brought out, signalized, emphasized in a crisis of the Church's life. The fact results according to a pregnant suggestion—"It might possibly be intended that events, as they come to pass, should open and ascertain the meaning of several parts of Scripture." In a word, John's teaching confronts a heresy. A spirit of antichrist was abroad. A subtle theory was spreading, that the person of Jesus Christ was not a real embodiment on earth. The heresy is called Docetism. It held that the body of the Saviour was only a phantom body. Holding matter to be necessarily corrupt, it taught that the Saviour lived and suffered and died only in appearance. John corners the false doctrine as he characterizes its advocates—"For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the anti-christ."

For a true reason there is, in the doctrine of the last apostle, an enforcement, an emphasis, of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth

was a real appearance of history. It is a fact to be taught and confessed, against all tendencies to make Christ mere influence and sentiment in life. The Docetics denied that He really lived in the flesh. They thought that His spirit was too pure to come actually into contact with a mortal body. But, practically, the oldtime heresy still survives whenever we hear men slighting the Christ of the Gospel, and talking sentimentally about the ideal Jesus. All this sentimental admiration of Jesus, this conception of Him in fanciful lights, this dreamy inhalation of certain flowers of His doctrine—do you not notice how it all etherealizes the New Testament history, and makes the person of Jesus indefinite and unreal? Do you not see how it emasculates the vitality and the vigor of any satisfactory confession of Jesus? Nay, is there not danger, too, that the very orthodox faith in the Divinity of Christ may become half-blind to His real Humanity, and lose the good of that equal fact? Does not often our argument that Jesus is Divine, and that He has been raised from the dead, and that His authority is expressed in the Apostolic Gospel, strangely sound abstract and cold, without the closeness and warmth of the real human life of the Son of Mary?

John's teaching strikes against all these tendencies. As the Docetics think to exalt the spiritual character of Jesus by denying that He actually lived in a body; or as certain modern sentimentalists idealize the Christ of history until there is left only a hazy image of His person; or as the orthodox dogmatist preaches His Divinity and authority without any human flavors and sympathies,—the last apostle teaches emphatically that Jesus was seen, heard, handled, and that this very life manifested bodily was the eternal life that dwelt with the Father.

Mark how definite and beautiful is this two-sided emphasis of the good confession, according to John's teaching. Does it not leave the Humanity of Christ an abiding reality for men? That life there in Judea and Galilee, nineteen hundred years ago, was all so real. He was a baby in His mother's arms. He was a boy in the Temple, about His Father's business. He became hungry by the long fast in the wilderness. He sat by Jacob's well, tried and thirsty. He lay asleep in the end of the ship while the storm was raging. He gladdened the wedding feast with His presence. He was an agreeable guest at the table of the publican. He enjoyed the home of Martha and Mary. He gathered little children in His arms, and prayed over them a blessing. He was touched with compassion as He saw the multitude hungry and faint. He wept over Jerusalem. He wept at the tomb of Lazarus. He sweat, as it were, great

drops of blood in the agony of Gethsemane. There could be no doubt that He was human. Hear Him delight to call Himself the Son of Man. His humanity was real and perfect. Hear Him again and again speak of His example for men. He was a genuine man, growing up and learning obedience to God as His Father. Hear Him over and over protesting His sinless character and His flawless obedience. He was truly human—conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate. And all this real humanness is a live sympathy of Heaven today with every struggling son and daughter of humanity. The High-Priest of our confession He is, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, able to succor the tempted because He once suffered in trial.

All this real, warm, abiding humanity, John puts it definitely and emphatically in the good confession. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." It was no phantom. It was no legendary person. It was no sentimental picture. It was no abstract official. John makes a double emphasis of the good confession. Jesus Christ is come in the flesh—and Jesus Christ is the Son of God. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God." "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also." It was a reality of Divinity. The length and breadth and depth and height of the truth cannot be fully measured by language, not even by an inspired Word. The words for it, from Apostolic lips, are not rigid, though definite; are not exhaustive, though luminous. The Apostolic teaching of it is of history to experience. It was the life that was manifested, the eternal life which was with the Father. That life was real in history—Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; so the believer confesses. But that life was not only of yesterday—Jesus Christ is the Son of God; in that Sonship is the eternal life; so the believer, confessing the Son, hath the Father also. It is a testimony of history that the disciple believes; and it is a reality of experience that he confesses.

"I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God"—this is the good confession. It was confessed by men as they came, in penitence and faith, to the waters of baptism. "Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" exclaimed the Ethiopian eunuch. "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The passage, question and answer, interpolated though it be, yet interpolated early by copyists, proves what was really the custom of the

early Church. The word of faith preached, reaching the heart, became a confession of the mouth—distinct, definite, significant—the good confession, preeminently. It is what we need to preach and to hear again in this age. See how good it may be for you! See what a memory it may become to you! See what a light it is for you, shining more and more unto the perfect day!

Is not its very simplicity as great a good for you? Salvation is preached to you; and it is not a salvation of knotty points that you must unravel before you can be saved. God does not require you to accept a man-made creed to join His Church. This is all—this Divine creed. Believe in Jesus Christ as your Saviour, your Teacher, your Lord. Pledge yourself to trust Him for forgiveness of your sins, and to learn of Him your daily duty, and steadfastly to obey Him. This is all. This is enough. You do not have to know everything, you do not have to dissolve every doubt, before you can love and serve Christ. This good confession of heart and mouth is simple enough for a child understandingly to believe it and to speak it. But it means enough to engage the faith and devout study of a life-long believer. Here is a capital note of its goodness. The light that catches the baby's eye, and leads him to see all his wonderful little world, is the same light that shines on the grown man; but how much more now does he see, and how his sight of things sweeps the very heavens! Christ is the Sun of righteousness rising upon you with healing in His wings. The boy and girl may by faith behold this light of life, and they may begin to live in its brightness, and to see all the knowledge wherever it is shining. This is the beautiful simplicity of the good confession. It is simple as the sunlight is simple—clear, splendid, transcending human gaze, inexhaustible. It is simple for the little child that has faith. It is simple for some of you in those doubts and obstinate questionings that you would give the world to be able to settle. It is more simple still for the long-tried believer, who has felt much and learned much, and yet who, gray-haired and trembling, confesses from the depths of his heart, in a clear-eyed faith, "I know Him whom I have believed." We confess Christ as the light of all truth, and the light of all duty, the light that shows us God, and the light that shows us man as well, and the light that reveals the glory of eternal life. We must begin with this faith, if we are to confess the Christ of Peter, Paul, and John. But this is all that the Gospel requires us to begin with, the beginning of faith in its soundness and its simplicity—simpler than the Nicene Creed, simpler than the so-called Apostles' Creed—this good confession

confessed by Timothy in his boyhood, there in Lystra, as Paul held his hand in the sight of many witnesses.

Definite the good confession is, distinct, a very form of sound words, a rigid landmark against any heresy of unbelief; and yet a confession to see more and more in—the revelation of God in Christ. We may be ever learning, and coming to a knowledge of its truth. It is sublime to stand before our fellow-men, and under the eyes of angels, and to confess, "I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God," and then to go on keeping such a pledge of faith, and seeing larger and larger meanings of Christ's Sonship to God. We study Him in history, but we study Him also in the universe. He is ever for us the Babe in His mother's arms, and the Boy in the Temple, and the Man on the Cross; but He is also the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, in whom and unto whom all things were created, who is before all things and in whom all things hold together. We believe that He taught on the Mount, and healed the sick, and raised the dead; but we believe that in the beginning He was with God, and was God, the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, upholding all things by the word of His power. We confess that He is come in the flesh; but as we see His Gospel redeeming men, regenerating society, transforming institutions and customs, comforting the broken-hearted, scattering the darkness of the grave, we confess, too, words of deep conviction whose meaning, making so much plain, is yet a mystery of light that shines elsewhere than we are now able to see—"We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."

I think that we are going to prove, more and more, the wisdom and timeliness of this good confession in modern, world-wide evangelism. We see how simple it is; we see how all inclusive it is. It shows how real the Gospel is, in its purpose and power on the heart. "Say not in thy heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down:) or, who shall descend into the abyss (that is to bring Christ up from the dead)." Are you seeking salvation? Have you sought for it, and yet have not found it? Does conversion seem to you a very mysterious affair? Have you been taught that you must wait for some sudden and strange feeling as the sign of pardon from God? Have you prayed a great deal, and requested others to pray for you, that you might be saved, and still is the way dark, and do you begin to think of giving up in doubt and despair? Oh! It is unspeakably sad that ever such uncer-

tainty should be thrown upon the Gospel of Christ. There is nothing like it in the preaching of the apostles. They did not go about teaching the people that salvation is to be assured in some definite and peculiar sensation, which is to be prayed for and waited for till it comes, though it be for weeks and months. No; hear how real and simple and powerful the Gospel is. "The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach." Do not be trusting to your feelings by themselves. Do not be watching moods and frames of mind. Look into your heart, and see if the Word of the truth of the Gospel is there. Why, it is there, and in the hearts of hundreds like you who are sorry for your sins and willing to be saved if, as you say, you only could see how. This is the way—this word of faith is become your faith, first in the heart and straightway in the mouth. "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Salvation is just this simple, and oh! just this real. Such a simple faith, your eye not on your poor guilty heart, but upon Jesus as your Saviour and Lord. It is thus simple, if the preachers, in Paul's style, will show it to be so: The Gospel preached, the Spirit of truth in all His power producing faith in the heart, and this faith promptly, definitely, gladly confessed—ah! How our modern religious revivals need this good confession in all its scriptural distinctness and timeliness.

Is there faith in your heart? Do you believe in the crucified and risen Lord? Then confess it with your mouth. Do you hesitate in fear? Are you holding back because you are ashamed? There is your trial. Your faith must come to the test, whether it be real and living. "In the sight of many witnesses"—here they are, your fellow-men, your own loved ones, beholding you, the angels of God looking down, the Lord Jesus waiting for you to confess His name. "The good confession," so simple, so beautiful, will you stand forth and courageously confess it, and begin the good fight of the faith, as God calls you to eternal life? "Baptism for the remission of your sins."

MEMBERSHIP IN CHRIST'S CHURCH REQUIRES BAPTISM

We present here some plain statements from God's Word on baptism.

Who is to be baptized?

1. The person who has faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16a.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

2. The individual who has come to a conviction of his sin and its penalty, and who has whole-heartedly repented of this breaking of God's law. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:37-38.
3. The person who has confessed with his mouth before men his faith in Jesus as the Christ the Son of God. "And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts 8:36-37.

How is baptism to be performed?

1. With water. "Behold here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Acts 8:36.
2. With much water. "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salem, because there was much water there." John 3:23.
3. By going to water. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John to be baptized of him." Compare Acts 8:36.
4. By going down into the water. "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Acts 8:38.
5. By coming up out of the water. "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him." Mark 1:10.
6. As a burial. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death." Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.
7. As a birth. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5.
8. As a resurrection. (Like unto the resurrection of Christ) "We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:4.

What are the purposes of baptism?

1. For the remission of sins. "And Peter said unto them, Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." Acts 2:38a.
2. For salvation. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16.
3. To enter into Christ. "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were

- baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" Rom. 6:3.
4. To put on Christ. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." Gal. 3:27.
 5. For the washing away of sins. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name." Acts 22:16.
 6. To receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "And Peter said unto them, repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38.
 7. To enter into the trinity. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matt. 28:19.
 8. To enter into the kingdom of God. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5.
 9. To be saved. "Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." I Pet. 3:21.
 10. For obedience to a divine command. "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." Acts 10:48.

Facts about sprinkling.

1. Sprinkling as a mode of baptism was begun by the Roman Catholic church, and was originated by them as a law of the Roman Catholic church. This is an historic fact and can be read in the Edinburgh Encyclopedia Vol. 3, page 236, article "Baptism."
2. The sprinkling of infants for baptism is entirely unscriptural for the following reasons:
 1. The gospel must be preached to the candidate for baptism. Mark 16:15-16. We cannot preach to infants.
 2. Teaching must precede baptism. Matt. 28:19-20. Infants cannot be taught.
 3. The gospel must be heard before obedience. Matt. 7:24. Acts 2:36-38. Infants cannot understand the gospel.
 4. The subject must believe before baptism. Mark 16:15-16. Infants cannot exercise faith.
 5. The subject must be convicted of sin before baptism. Acts 2:37-38. Infants can have no conviction of sin.
 6. The subject must repent of his sins. Acts 2:38. The infant cannot repent.
 7. The subject must make a whole-hearted confession of his faith in Christ. Acts 8:36-37. This is not possible for the infant.

Answer These Questions

1. Is a person saved when he makes the good confession? If not, why not?
2. In what way does our salvation depend upon the good confession?
3. What blessing did Jesus place upon the good confession?
4. Why should repentance precede confession?
5. Why make the confession before men?
6. In what two ways can we continually make the good confession?
7. Why not baptize a person who has not repented?
8. Why does it say in John 3:23 that "there was **much** water there"?
9. In what way is baptism a birth?
10. How do we enter the trinity through baptism?
11. How can it be said we enter the kingdom of God through baptism?
12. Why was sprinkling begun?
13. What are two reasons for not baptizing infants?
14. How old should a child be before he is baptized?

* * * * *

The following discussion is from a message preached by J. W. McGarvey on the subject of "BAPTISM."

Since it has been announced that my subject would be Baptism, I think it highly probable that the question has arisen in the minds of some, Why another sermon on that old hacknied theme? Perhaps the objection has arisen that this subject has been discussed and debated for hundreds of years, and it has never yet been settled. Why, then, continue to disturb the minds of the people with it? This objection involves a serious mistake. The question, it is true, has not in one sense been settled, that is, all the people have not been brought to an agreement in regard to it; but in another and a very important sense, it has been settled thousands and thousands of times; that is, it has been settled in the minds of men and women who have to give an account to God in the great day, and they have acted according to the settlement of it in their own minds. And

it is a necessity laid on you, you cannot avoid it, that you shall also settle the question in your own mind and for your own soul. You cannot go into any church on earth except that of the Quakers, without being baptized—that is, without submitting to an ordinance which the church **calls** baptism. And if you are ever to become a member of any church, with the exception of the one named, before you do so you are compelled to decide in your own mind what baptism is, and that will be settling the question so far as you are concerned. If you answer me, “No, sir, the question was settled for me by my parents when I was an infant, and they baptized me,” even this does not enable you to escape the necessity of which I speak; for you are compelled to decide for yourself before God, whether you will be satisfied with that as **your** obedience to this divine command. So then, to come to some practical decision of this disputed theme, is a necessity laid upon everyone of you, and you will all give an account thereof to God in the day of judgment. Don’t be impatient then when a man proposes to discuss the subject in your presence. Don’t be unwilling to hear him. Whatever may be the position he takes, whichever side of the controverted question he stands on, don’t be unwilling to hear all that he says, and to hear it candidly, to weigh it fairly, so that you may decide the question intelligently.

But a man says, “According to my understanding of this controversy, it requires some knowledge of the dead languages, and especially of the Greek, in order to render an intelligent decision as to what baptism is; and as I am no scholar, I think God will not hold me to an account if I should happen to decide it incorrectly.” Well, that is a mistake. It is a mistake to suppose that it requires scholarship in any dead language to determine what baptism is. And I am inclined to believe—I do believe, that every man who has ordinary common sense can take his own English Testament, and learn from the careful study of it, what God requires of him in order that he may live a life well pleasing in the sight of his Maker. I do not think you will find a Protestant preacher in the United States who will call that proposition in question.

What then is a man to do who does not understand Greek, who is a plain English scholar, and no more? I once heard (a good many years ago), a man of very plain common sense, with no scholarship, not even an accurate English education, make this remark: “If my mind were unsettled in regard to baptism, I would take this course:—I would take my own New Testament, and, beginning at the first chapter of Matthew, I would read it all the way through, watching for that word ‘baptism’; and everywhere I found it, I would examine carefully the passage in which I found it, and learn all I could about it; and when I got through I would put all of this together, and I would make up my mind on the whole sub-

ject of baptism that way. Then I would feel sure that it was God teaching me, and that He would approve my decision." The remark struck me with great force, and I have from that day to this been of the opinion that it is the best way by which any man can proceed to settle this much controverted question. It does not involve a single word in any language but our own. It does not involve arguments and disputations on the subject from other men. It involves nothing but listening to the utterances of God's Word as you have it in your own vernacular, forming your own conclusions, and then taking up your line of action. Now, if that is not safe, I don't know what is. You may imagine it a very big task to read the book through and through, but there is not much more reading matter in it than there is in today's newspaper. I don't think there is as much. I propose to lead you through that kind of an examination of the subject. Will you join me in this plain, simple, child-like search for God's utterances on this important theme?

We will open at the beginning of the Book, but before beginning to read, let us have one other preparation of mind on the subject, which I think is necessary in order that we may reach the safest possible results; and that is this:—If you want to investigate any question without bias of mind, it is a good thing to throw out of your mind by an effort of the imagination, all you know or ever have heard about it, and come to the investigation as if the subject was absolutely a new one of which you had never heard a word in your life before. Come with your mind like a sheet of blank paper, ready for God to write on it whatever you find in His holy Word. I propose, then, that before we begin reading we shall each one imagine that we have never heard the word "baptism" pronounced in our lives. We are not aware that there is such a word in existence; and when we come to it while reading we will not go to the dictionary, Greek or English, but we will pause upon it and see if the Book itself explains it to us; and if so, we will have God's definition of it.

Now we begin at the first chapter of Matthew, and after reading that long list of names, and that account of the birth of the Lord, and His childhood, and in the third chapter the writer introduces John the Baptist; and in verses five and six we read thus:—"Then went out unto him Jerusalem and all Judea, and the region round about the Jordan, confessing their sins." Why, there is a word I never saw before; I never heard of it. I wonder what it means—that these people were **baptized** by that man in the river Jordan. I would like to know what it means, but I believe I will let the New Testament itself explain it to me, if it will. I do not know what was done to those people by John, but can I learn anything about it in this passage? Yes, they were baptized in the river Jordan; that tells

where it was done, and it tells it so plainly that there can be no mistake about it.

So let us read on and see if we can learn more. At the eleventh verse, the same John says to his audience, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I; whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Here is our strange word again, and this time John says "I baptize you with **water**." Well, there is another thing we learn about it—that water and not wine, or milk, or honey, or any other liquid, but **water**, is used in this ordinance.

We read on in the same chapter, and at the thirteenth verse we have these words: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John would have hindered Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" And Jesus said, "Suffer it now, John, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." "Then he suffered Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway from the water." Well, we see what He did when He was through with the baptizing—He "went up straightway from the water." But that is all. It does not tell us what the baptizing was. As regards the act itself that is called baptizing, we are as much in the dark as we were before.

From this whole chapter we learn only this—that when John baptized, it was in the river Jordan; that he used (in some way, we don't know how) **water**; and that after Jesus was baptized He went up straightway from the water, showing that He had been down to it; but that is all we learn, so we read on.

Our curiosity is awakened now, and chapter after chapter, leaf after leaf we turn, and we do not find our word again in its literal sense, until we come to the last chapter of Matthew, eighteenth and nineteenth verses. "Jesus came to them and spake to them, saying, all authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?" Here is our strange word again, and what do we learn about it here? Why, that those men were to baptize in all the nations. It was to be a universal thing. And they were to baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Well, it is becoming interesting. "Baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit," is a very solemn thing, and it is to be universal as the nations of men. We wonder more than ever what it is.

We are through with Matthew now. We will begin in Mark. We may have to read the whole New Testament through before we get our question answered.

The fourth verse of the first chapter of Mark says: "John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of re-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

pentance unto the remission of sins." Here is another place of baptizing. In Matthew we found that he baptized in the river Jordan. Here, we learn he baptized in the wilderness. That puzzles us a little, until we know the geography of Palestine—we remember that a portion of the river Jordan, near its mouth, runs along a barren wilderness on its western bank. This then, tells us in what part of the river Jordan John baptized. "And there went out to him," says the fifth verse, "all the country of Judea and all they of Jerusalem, and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins." Yes, we were right; it is in the "river Jordan" and in the wilderness at the same time.

At the eighth verse, John says to the people, "I baptize you with water;" but we knew that before.

At the ninth verse: "It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized of John in the Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water He saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him." Well, we learned from Matthew that He went up **from** the water, and now it says in Mark that He came up **out** of the water. He had then been down in it. So Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan, and after He was baptized He went up out of the water. It looks as if the baptizing had been done in the water, but still we do not know what it was.

We read on. We go all the way through Mark to the last chapter (the sixteenth) before we learn anything more about it. The fifteenth and sixteenth verses read: "And He said to them: Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Here is that same idea of its universality which we learned from Matthew; and here is an additional thought connected with it, that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; and this adds interest to our inquiry. Still, no light is thrown upon the act itself; so we must patiently go on with our reading.

In the third chapter of Luke we meet with our strange word again, third verse. Speaking of John, the text says: "He cometh to all the region round about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins." It was not only where the Jordan ran through the wilderness then, but in "all the region round about the Jordan" that John preached; and here we also learn that he preached the "baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins." If it was baptism of repentance, a baptism which required a man to repent before he submitted to it, and unto the remission of sins, it must have been a matter of supreme importance. The subject grows upon us by the words used in connection with it, but no light comes yet as to what the particular act itself was. If we had started out, knowing the meaning of the word, we would not have had this

trouble; but we want the New Testament itself to show us its meaning, so we read on.

We read through Luke and into John without additional light; but in the third chapter of John, twenty-second and twenty-third verses, we discover it once more. "After these things, Jesus came and His disciples unto the land of Judea; and there He tarried with them and baptized." So we find from this that not only did John baptize, and not only did Jesus command His disciples to go to all nations and baptize, but that Jesus Himself baptized at one time. "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized." Well, we learned in Matthew, and also in Mark, that John used water in baptizing. Now we learn that when he left the Jordan, he went to Aenon near to Salem, because there was **much** water there; and this shows that he wanted "much water" with which to baptize. But this is a very vague expression. A pitcher-full is much compared with a glassful; a barrel-full is much compared with a pitcher-full; and a river is much compared with any of our vessels of water. So the text is extremely vague when it says "much water." We are learning very slowly as regards the act itself, but we must be patient when we are in search of the truth.

We read on through John without any further satisfaction, and into the book of Acts; and in the second chapter of that book and forty-first verse, we learn that "they that received the words of Peter were baptized, and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." In the thirty-eighth verse Peter says to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." And thus we learn that the Apostles did as Jesus told them—went abroad to preach the Gospel, and required men to be baptized. Peter, in telling them to be baptized says, "Be baptized unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." When we thus find that the gift of the Holy Spirit is connected with it, its importance grows upon us: still there is nothing here to tell us what baptism is.

We read on. We come to the eighth chapter of Acts. We find there that Philip is preaching the gospel in Samaria, and "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Nothing to explain the act itself.

In the same chapter, farther on, Philip and the eunuch are riding in the chariot together, and Philip is preaching to the eunuch. At the thirty-sixth verse we read, "and as they went on their way, they came to a certain water." We have already learned that water was the element used. "And the eunuch said, Behold, here is water; what hindereth me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and

the eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away." We learn additional items from this. We learn that before the baptizing, the baptist and the candidate both went down into the water; that while they were down in the water, the baptizing was done; and that they then came up out of the water. We have not found the answer to our question yet, but we are getting it hemmed in. John baptized in the river Jordan, and at Aenon where there was much water. Now we learn that in performing the act they went down into the water; it was done while they were down there, and then they came up out of the water; and this explains how Jesus came up out of the water when He was baptized: but what Philip did to the eunuch called baptism; what John did to Jesus called baptism—the question on which we started out, it not answered yet.

When we get into the ninth of Acts, we find that Saul of Tarsus was baptized; but nothing is said about it to indicate what the act was; and so in regard to Cornelius; so in regard to Lydia; so in regard to the Philippian jailor. The disciples are carrying out their commission to baptize men, but we find no words in these passages to indicate what the act was.

We read into Romans, the first epistle in the order in which they are printed. In the sixth chapter, third and fourth verses, we read these words: "Are you ignorant that all who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" Ah! There are two new thoughts. When men are baptized under Christ, they are baptized into Jesus Christ, and baptized into His death. The importance of the act still grows. The Apostle proceeds: "We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." What does the Apostle say was done through baptism? "We were buried with Him through baptism into death." Let us pause with that. We have learned before that the persons to be baptized and the man who baptized them went down into the water; the baptizing was done there; and done with the water; then they came up out of the water. Now we learn, that in that baptism they were buried; and if water was the element, what conclusion can we reach than this, that they were buried in the water? That explains at last, what the act was. But if we had never heard of the matter before, we might exclaim, "Bury a man in the water? And if you leave him there, he will drown." But he is not to be left there; for Jesus came up straightway out of the water. Philip and the eunuch came up out of the water. Well then, it was a temporary burial and not a permanent one, would be our conclusion. But not to allow anything to rest upon mere inferences, however logical, let us read a little farther and see if we can find any light on that particular point.

We read on, then, and when we come into the second chapter of the epistle to the Colossians and twelfth verse, we have this language. "Having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God who raised Him from the dead." Jesus Christ was buried in the tomb and on the third morning He came up. "Having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye were raised with Him," makes our burial in water a representation of His burial in the tomb, and our rising from the water, of His rising from the dead. This burial explains some of the things that we met with before. It explains why a river like the Jordan was used instead of some smaller water. It explains why much water was needed and found at Aenon—enough to bury men. It explains why, previous to the baptism, they went down into the water. They could not bury a man without doing so. It explains why, at the termination of it they always come up out of the water. We learn then, that baptism is an act in which a man is buried in water and raised again in imitation of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is done by the command of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; the blessing which follows the act is the remission of our sins; the act brings us into Christ, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and it is followed by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If this is all true, my friends, it is a most solemn, interesting and precious ordinance. We cannot overestimate the value of it. We cannot consent to speak of it as a mere external act. It is the most solemn and significant ordinance ever appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, not excepting that in which we partake of His broken body and shed blood.

When I was in Palestine, if I could have found beyond all doubt the very sepulchre of Joseph, in which the Saviour was laid away, and where He lay so still until the resurrection morning, I would have prized the sight of it above all that I saw. I would have been glad to go in and stretch myself upon the same bare, rock floor, and to have some friend roll a stone to the mouth of it, that I might realize by imagination my Saviour's burial. We cannot do that. We are not permitted to do it. But in this ordinance of baptism we are allowed to do the next thing to it. Laid down in a watery grave in obedience to His command, we allow the water to close above our heads, and then, as though we were dead we are lifted by the strong arm of a servant of God out of that cold grave, and we start to walk in a new life as He started to walk in a new one when He arose from the dead. It is a sacred and a blessed privilege.

When we consider this ordinance in the light of the passages that I have read, we not only see its connection with the burial and resurrection of our Lord, but we instinctively feel that it points us forward to our own death, burial and resurrection. Baptism stands

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

midway in the life of a man who submits to it, very much as one of those old-fashioned guide posts, which we used to see at the cross-roads, with finger boards pointing this way and that. It stands there with one arm pointing back to the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord, and the other pointing forward to our own death, our own burial, and our own resurrection. And as it brings us into Christ, unto the forgiveness of our sins, it imparts to us the blessed hope that when we come to be laid in that grave, a strong arm will lift us out of it as we were lifted out of the burial in water.

Can there possibly arise in the heart of any human being, when these things are considered, any repugnance to the ordinance? Any feeling of disrespect toward it? Any other feeling than a most profound reverence for it, and for the God and Saviour who appointed it? I am sure there cannot.

My dear friends, you cannot be baptized unless you believe in Christ with all your heart. You cannot be buried with the Lord in that holy and solemn way, unless you have repented of all your sins, have cast them behind you, and have stamped your feet upon the service of the devil. If you have done this; if this is the state of your heart, then it is your privilege to be buried with your Lord in baptism. It is your privilege to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; to receive the forgiveness of all the sins of your past life; and to be enabled to walk in a new life—a life of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Does your heart pant for this? Do you hear the voice of Jesus calling you? Do you aspire to that blessing to which He invites you? Then, I beg you to come out, confess the faith which you have in Him, and give Him your life.

Examination Sixteen

1. What is confession?
2. Give two reasons for making the good confession.
3. Who should make this confession.
4. Give a scripture reference that teaches we should make this confession before men.
5. What is meant by "continual confession"?
6. Who is a candidate for baptism?
7. Give three things required in Bible baptism.
8. Give three reasons for baptism.
9. How was sprinkling originated as a mode for baptism?
10. Give three reasons why baptizing infants is unscriptural.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

GOVERNMENT

TERMS ASSOCIATED

Administration

Constitution

Hierarchy

Monarchy

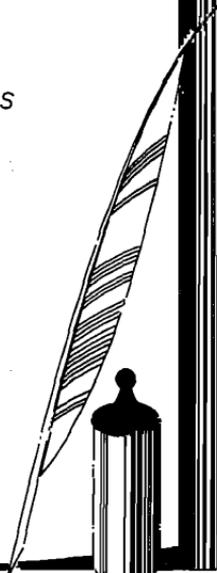
UNIVERSALLY the

form of government is

an absolute monarchy

LOCALLY there are powers

of self-government



LESSON SEVENTEEN

GOVERNMENT

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"Into the framework of world history the history of Israel fits exactly. The Bible records in succession the relations of Israel with Babylon, Elam, Egypt, the Hittites, Assyrians, Babylonians and Persians; and the smaller nations or powers appear in their proper relations to these successively great powers. These are facts that cannot be denied and they afford a foundation for reliance upon the statements of the Biblical documents."

—Prof. R. D. Wilson, Ph. D.

In the last fifteen years there has been more factual evidence uncovered to support the Bible as history than at any other period since the Bible was written. We can count absolutely on the truthfulness of the Bible. But this Book contains more than the facts of history—it tells of man's responsibility to God—and right here we are concerned about what is said concerning the government of the church. Read these references carefully:

Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:23-25 Col. 1:18; 2:10, 18; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 6:3, 5, 6; 11:29, 30; I Cor. 16:3; II Cor. 8:19; I Cor. 5:1-13; II Tim. 3:16, 17.

True or False

- 1. Each local congregation is to be responsible in every way for the government of the church.
- 2. The New Testament is the constitution of the Church of Christ.
- 3. The church is properly considered an absolute monarchy.
- 4. The local assembly is to be democratic in all its decisions.
- 5. A bishop has rule over several congregations in contrast with an elder who rules only one congregation.
- 6. Each local church is responsible to the Lord for the disciplining of its own members.
- 7. There is no emphasis upon the government of the church in the New Testament, therefore the government of each local church is left up to its elders.
- 8. As soon as we organize, we begin to denominate.
- 9. The form of government adopted by the churches of

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

the New Testament was congregational in a certain sense.

- 10. The presbyterian form of government has some basic elements of truth in it.

LESSON DISCUSSION

Introduction

In order to obtain a clear concept of this subject it will be necessary that we understand several terms; note:

1. **Government**

"The ruling power in a political society." (Britannica) "The ruling and administration of a political body." (ibid)

2. **Administration**

"The activity of the state in the exercise of its political powers, including the action of the legislative, judicial, and executive departments." (Webster)

"The exercise of political powers within the limits of the constitution." (T. E. Holland)

3. **Constitution**

"A system of fundamental rules, principles, and ordinances for the government of a state or nation." (Webster)

4. **Hierarchy**

"Any form of government in which the governing body claims to hold its power by divine injunction and which body is limited to the clergy." (Schaff-Herzog and McClintock and Strong)

4. **Monarchy**

"The sovereignty of a single person." It is an "absolute monarchy when there are no constitutional limitations on the monarch's powers." (Webster)

5. **Democratic**

"Pertaining to that form of government in which the supreme power is retained by the people and exercised either directly or indirectly through a system of representation and delegated authority." (Webster)

It is only as we understand and remember these important words and their meanings that we can fully grasp the principles of government as revealed in the New Testament. Let us notice some facts concerning the government of the church in the Bible.

When Considered UNIVERSALLY the New Testament Form of Government Is An Absolute Monarchy.

1. Jesus Christ is the monarch or head of the church.

"And He put **all things** in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head **over all things** to the church." Eph. 1:22. "But speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things unto Him, **who is the head**, even Christ." Eph. 4:15. "For the husband is the

head of the wife, as Christ also is **the head** of the church, being Himself the Saviour of the body." Eph. 5:23.

"And He is **the head** of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence." Col. 1:18. (cf. 2:10; 19.)

2. As monarch or head He has **all power**. The constitution of the church (the New Testament) places no constitutional limitations on His power.

"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." Matt. 28:18. "But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." I Cor. 1:24. (cf. 15:24-28; Eph. 1:22.)

1. Where and how this power is used: (see lesson six) Where He has spoken man has no right but to obey.

- (1) Christ's **legislative** power. His power or authority to enact laws binding upon the whole church. He has enacted the following laws and they are incorporated in the constitution:

1. Qualifications of citizenship. John 14:6; Mark 16:16; etc.
2. Qualifications of officers of the kingdom. I Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-9; etc.
3. Duties of citizens. Matt. 5:3 to 7:27; I Pet. 2:21; etc.
4. Duties of officers. II Tim. 4:2; I Pet. 5:2; Acts 6:1-6; etc.
5. Laws of finance. I Cor. 9:1-13; 16:1-2; I Tim. 5:17-18; etc.
6. Laws of discipline. I Cor. 5:1-13; I Thess. 5:12; I Tim. 5:20; etc.
7. Laws for the reinstatement of the backslider. Acts 8:18-24; II Cor. 2:5-11.

- (2) Christ's **executive** power, His activity in carrying His laws into effect:

1. He eternally rewards those who obey. Heb. 5:9; John 3:36; etc.
2. He eternally punishes those who disobey. II Thess. 1:7-10; etc.
3. He has chosen human agents to make known His law. Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 8:4; etc.
4. He furnishes all things necessary for His human agents. II Tim. 3:16-17; Phil. 4:13, 19; Rom. 1:16; etc.

- (3) Christ's **judicial** power. His interpretation and application of the law:

1. He passes judgment with regard to the keeping or the breaking of His law. John 12:48; Matt. 25:31-45; Rev. 20:11-15.
2. He frees the innocent and sentences the guilty. Matt. 25:46.
3. He pardons those who repent and turn to Him. Acts 3:19; Rom. 5:6-11; I John 2:12; II Cor. 7:10; etc.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

The Church Of The New Testament Is An Absolute Monarchy But Is Granted A Limited Power Of Self-government When Considered LOCALLY.

1. The nature of this power of self-government.
 1. This power is democratic. The people or members of the church have the supreme power. Acts 6:3, 5, 6; Acts 11:29-30; I Cor. 16:3; II Cor. 8:19; (Lesson twelve).
 2. This power is exercised indirectly through the elders who are the official representatives, rulers and overseers of the people. (See "The duties of elders.")
2. The extent or limitations of this power of self-government.
 1. The power of self-government is limited to matters of opinion and expediency.
 - (1) Matters on which there are no definite scriptural instructions.
 - (2) In other words only those matters for which there is no "thus saith the Lord" can be determined by the church.
 - (3) On page 134 in "**Church Polity**" W. L. Haydon asks and answers a question on this subject.

"On what occasions and for what purposes are Christians authorized to vote?"

"They are not to vote on questions of faith, piety or morality. Truth is not to be settled by a vote, nor is any divine institution respecting the worship or morality of the Christian church to be decided by a majority. These are matters of revelation, of divine authority, and are to be regulated by a 'Thus saith the Lord,' and not by a 'thus saith the majority.' But in all matters not of faith, piety or morality, in all matters of expediency, there is no other way of deciding but by a vote of the brotherhood."
 2. The power of self-government is limited to local or individual congregations. The decision of one congregation applies only to that congregation unless approved and adopted by another. That this is true is seen from the following:
 - (1) Church officers were chosen **from the same congregation** for which they were needed. Acts 6:1-6.
 - (2) Elders were appointed "in every church" not over many churches. Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.
 - (3) Paul was supported by churches as individual churches not by an organization over the local church:

"But though I be rude in speech, yet am I not in knowledge; nay, in every way have we made this manifest unto you in all things. Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the gospel of God for nought? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you." II Cor. 11:6-8.

"Howbeit ye did well that ye had fellowship with my af-

- fliction. And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need." Phil. 4:14-16.
- (4) Evangelists were sent out by the local congregation. Acts 13:1-3.
 - (5) The local church did its own disciplining. I Cor. 5:1-13.
 - (6) The churches as individual churches cooperated together in ministering to the "brethren that dwelt in Judea" in a time of dire need. Acts 11:27-30; I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 8:1-24.
- The Administration Of New Testament Church Government.**
1. The activity of Christ and the church.
 1. Christ has provided in His Word all the necessary information for the proper and efficient operation of the church. II Tim. 3:16-17.
 - (1) The church then must first of all search the scriptures to find out what Christ wants done and how He wants it done.
 - (2) For the church to make a decision or perform some action contrary to the divine orders (whether ignorantly or knowingly) is to usurp the power and authority of Christ.
 2. The church as the body of Christ is dependent upon the head in all things.
 - (1) In making decisions on matters of opinion and expediency the church must diligently seek His guidance in prayer and with a willingness to let His will be done.
 - (2) In all actions the church needs divine wisdom, strength and courage, and these can be obtained only through a careful study of His Word and much earnest prayer.
 2. The activity of the congregation and its officers.
 1. The officers.
 - (1) The elders are the divinely appointed rulers and leaders of the church. (See "The duties of elders.") They have their God-given qualifications and duties and the congregation has no business to decide such matters.
 - (2) The deacons likewise have their God-given qualifications and duties and the congregation cannot legislate them.
 - (3) The general running of the church such as the appointing of teachers, purchasing of literature, paying of bills, janitorial work, and so forth, may be handled by the elders and deacons. The congregation need not vote on every little thing that must be done.
 - (4) The eldership should be unanimous in all its decisions. The unity of elders is necessary, for a divided leadership will result in a divided congregation and division is sin-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

ful. (There will be no difficulty here if the elders are all scripturally qualified.)

2. The congregation.

- (1) The congregation needs to decide whether or not a candidate meets the New Testament qualifications for office, and then make a selection of the men they want for the office from those who are qualified. (See "Ordination or Appointment of Officers.")
- (2) On matters of opinion and expediency the church needs to give its approval on all decisions of a serious nature which affect the entire group. We list some possible matters of this nature:
 1. The calling of an evangelist, either permanently or for a meeting.
 2. The purchasing or selling of property.
 3. The disciplining of someone whose sin has become public knowledge and affected the whole congregation.
 4. The congregation as a whole, or its members as individuals have the right on all matters of opinion and expediency to offer suggestions or objections to their leadership.
3. **The activity of the whole local church in regard to its actually carrying out its God-given functions.**

THE SUPERIORITY OF BIBLE CHURCH GOVERNMENT OVER MAN-MADE SYSTEMS

1. **Romanism.** A monarchico-hierarchical government with a human head.

Romanism

Has an imperfect human head who is subject to error and blunder in administration. Claims authority to legislate on matters of faith, piety and morality. The laity or individual members have no voice in the government. All power and authority is limited to the clergy. The local congregation is subject to outside human authority.

New Testament Government

Has a divine Head who is perfect, infallible and capable of faultless administration. Christ is all authority on such matters. Church has no right to legislate concerning them. The individual members are the final authority on all matters of opinion and expediency. The local congregation is not subject to human authority outside of itself.

2. **Presbyterianism.** A form of government in which the elders (or presbyters) are the supreme governing body.

1. In this form of government the lay members have no voice except through an appeal to the presbytery.
2. In New Testament government decisions on all matters of opinion and expediency were subject to the approval of the members.
3. **Congregationalism.** A form of government in which every member has a right to vote and all decisions are made by the congregation.
 1. Congregationalism is subject to error and inefficiency through the placing of all decisions in the hands of many who are unlearned and unqualified.
 2. Christ's government has a qualified leadership to make all decisions. Decisions on matters of opinion and expediency are subject to the approval of the congregation.
4. **Conclusive remarks concerning the superiority of New Testament Government.**
 1. A single, divine Head insures unity and perfection on all matters of faith, piety and morality.
 2. The rights of individual members prohibit oppression on the part of religious officials.
 3. Qualified church leadership works toward perfection of judgment and greater efficiency in governmental administration.

Below is a suggested outline for the efficient functioning or activity of the local church as an organization.

 1. The activity of the church is divided into three main divisions: work, worship, stewardship.
 2. A congregation with three elders could function efficiently with an elder over each division.
 3. A group with two elders could also function effectively by placing a deacon in charge of one division.
 4. Other variations of this will also operate satisfactorily.
 5. The whole arrangement is at all times subject to Christ, the church and the church leadership.

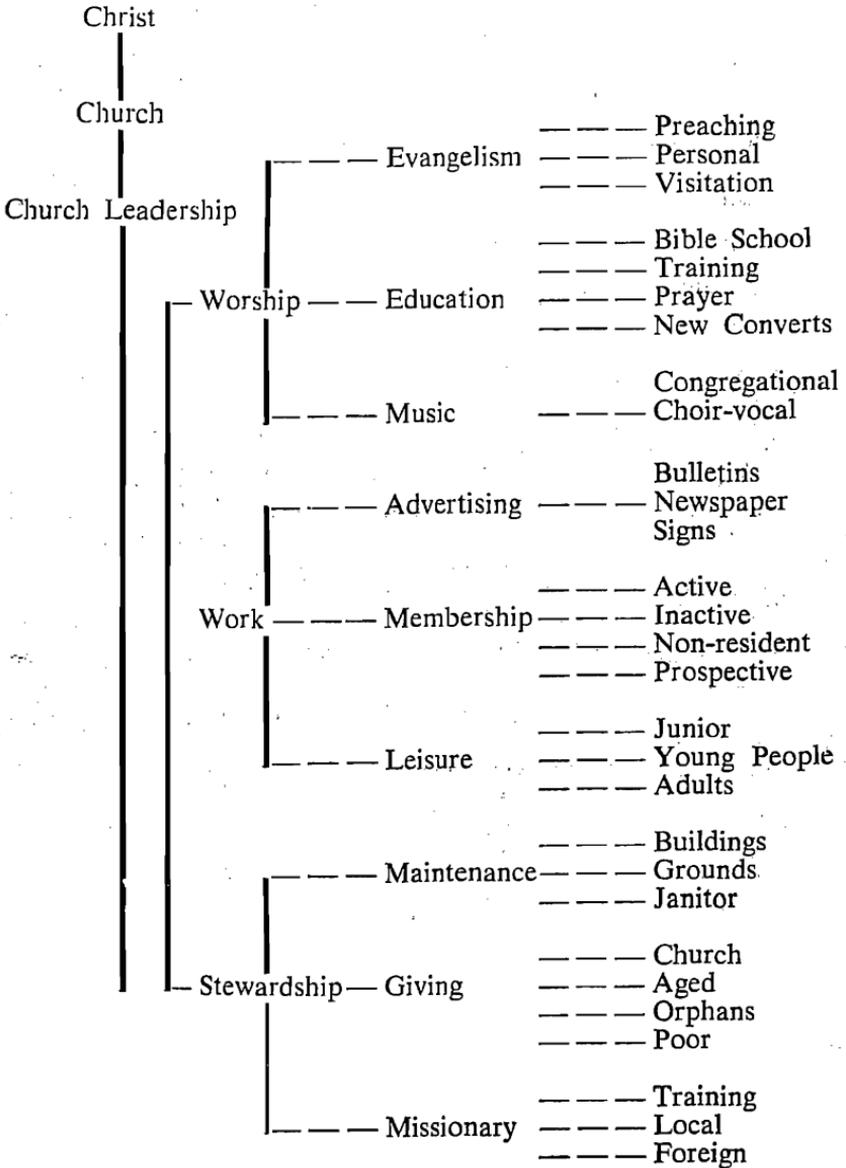
Answer These Questions

1. What is the definition of "government"?
2. What is the meaning of "constitution"?
3. What is a "hierachy"?
4. What is a "democracy"?
5. What is meant by the thought that there are no constitutional limitations on Christ as Head of the church?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

6. Name three laws that Christ has enacted that are incorporated into the divine constitution of the church.
7. How does Christ exercise His judicial power?
8. In what way is the democratic power of the church exercised?
9. To what is the power of self-government limited?
10. Give three reasons for saying that the power of self-government is limited only to one congregation.
11. In what way did the churches cooperate together?
12. Give two things the church does in cooperation with Christ in administering the laws of the Lord.
13. Give two activities of the elders and deacons in the administration of the government.
14. Name two things a congregation should do in church administration.
15. Name two weaknesses of the Roman form of church government.
16. What is the Congregational form of government and what is one weakness?
17. What is the Presbyterian form of government and what is one weakness?
18. Give two facts of superiority of the New Testament form of church government.
19. What is the one essential quality if any church program is to work?
20. Is organization wrong in itself?

CHART SHOWING OUTLINE OF NEW TESTAMENT
GOVERNMENT



THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Historians testify to the independence and autonomy of each local assembly.

A. H. Newman, Vol. 1, Chap. III, Par 5:

"The apostolic churches were independent, yet interdependent." Newman quotes Harnack who speaks of "the independence and sovereignty of the local churches." He quotes Hatch who says: "The theory upon which the public worship of the primitive churches proceeded was that each community was complete in itself." He also quotes Cunningham who says: "The first form of the church was congregational, for every member took a part in its management and every congregation was independent of every other and was a complete church in itself."

Schaff, Vol. 1, Chap. X, Section 65:

"Thus the apostolic church appears as a free, independent, and complete organism, a system of supernatural, divine life in a human body. It contains in itself all the offices and energies required for its purposes. It produces the supply of its outward wants from its own free spirit. It is a self-supporting and self-governing institution, within the state, but not of the state."

Mosheim, Vol. 1, Chap. II, Par. XIV:

"The churches in those times were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers and its own laws. For, though the churches founded by apostles had this particular difference shown them, that they were consulted in difficult and doubtful cases; yet they had no jurisdictional authority, no sort of supremacy over the others, nor the least right to enact laws for them. Nothing, on the contrary, is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there even appear in this first century the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches, from which councils and metropolitans derive their origin. It was only in the second century that the custom of holding councils commenced in Greece, from whence it soon spread through the other provinces (m)."

In his footnotes (m) he shows the difference between the Jerusalem council of Acts 15 and the later and modern councils.

Gibbon, Vol. 1, Chap. XV, (Near the middle of the chapter):

"Such was the mild and equal constitution by which the Christians were governed more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles. Every society formed within itself a separate and independent republic; and although the most distant of these little states maintained a mutual as well as friendly intercourse of letters and deputations, the Christian world was not yet connected by any supreme authority or legislative assembly."

Examination Seventeen

1. Give a brief definition of the following words: government, administration, hierarchy, monarchy, democratic.
2. Give two reasons why you say that Christ is the absolute monarch of the church.
3. Give two laws Christ has enacted.
4. How is the power of self-government exercised?
5. Give two reasons why you believe the church has the power of self-government.
6. When seeking to make a decision in the area of opinion, what should the church do in relation to Christ?
7. Why would it be necessary for the eldership to be united?
8. Name two weaknesses of the Roman form of government and show how the New Testament form overcomes them.
9. What is the principle of the Presbyterian form of church government?
10. What is the principle of government among Congregationalism?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart''*

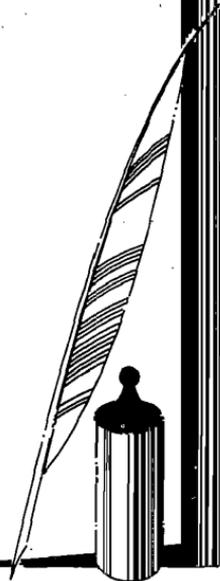
THE
WORSHIP

OF THE CHURCH

What is it?

How expressed?

1. *The day*
2. *The teaching*
3. *The fellowship*
4. *Breaking bread*
5. *Prayer*
6. *Singing*



LESSON EIGHTEEN

THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"Believing that the Bible is, in a special sense, a Divine gift to man, we must believe that it was meant for man's happiness. It brightens what else were inexplicable darkness. It brings the noblest thought in noblest speech. It teaches, it inspires, it consoles, it heartens. Have we not here fit cause for enjoyment?"

—Canon Anthony Deane

It is only as we begin to truly worship God that the Bible offers any of the above mentioned blessings. It is only as our spirits are drawn out in prayer and meditation that the truths of the Book become a living reality to us.

Read these passages with your heart open to God

John 4:23, 24; Acts 2:42; I Cor. 10:16; 11:20, 21; Lev. 24:5-10; Heb. 10:1; Ex. 12:1-14; I Cor. 5:7, 8; I John 1:3; II Cor. 13:14; I Pet. 4:12, 13; Phil. 3:8-14; Phil. 1:7; Titus 1:4; Jude 3; II Pet. 1:4; Acts 4:32; Phil. 4:14, 15; 1:3; I Tim. 6:17-19; Heb. 13:16.

Here are some problems in worship. With your **present** knowledge attempt to solve them. After you have studied the lesson, see if you can improve your answers.

1. Here is a young man who believes in Christ, but for some reason not known to him, he cannot "get in the Spirit" of worship. What shall he do?
2. A young woman is very much disturbed because a piano is present in the room where she wishes to worship. This seems to be the only place she can find. What should she do?
3. A former deacon of a certain church has backslidden. Although he has now returned to the Lord he does not yet feel "worthy" to take of the Lord's Supper. Others are urging him to partake. What should he do?
4. A certain man keeps both Saturday and Sunday as a day of worship. Is he wrong?
5. Certain teachers are stating emphatically that we have no Bible reason for public worship on Sunday. It is an expedient thing to do, they say, but nothing more. What shall be done?
6. A preacher is teaching that the Bible condemns "eating in the church." Others say the Bible teaches "fellowship."
7. A certain elder insists that the giving of money is no act of worship. This same problem bothers many.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

Introduction

1. A scriptural definition of "worship":

Worship signifies or indicates a certain condition or state of the inward man or spirit. The state or condition denoted by worship may be said to be present when the heart or spirit is "bowed in utter humility and adoration to God."

Inward worship is expressed by outward forms, but outward forms do not necessarily indicate inner worship. Worship is a condition of the heart, outward forms may or may express the true attitude of the inward man.

2. Jesus' words on this subject:

In John 4:23-24 Jesus said: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Thus we see that two things are necessary for one to be "a true worshipper:"

- (1) He "must worship in spirit," that is, with the inward man. His whole soul or inward man must be a participator in this matter.
- (2) He "must worship in truth," that is, the outward expression of worship must be directed by and according to the truth.

In this introductory word we have seen that worship is a heart condition and is related to external action only as all acts are the expression of the inner man.

Our procedure in this lesson will be not to discuss the condition of the inner man, but rather to study the outward expression of worship or the acts of worship as given in the New Testament.

We are to consider the church at worship or the collective body at worship. There are many things we could say about the matter of private worship or personal devotion, but since this is a study on the church or called out ones we will confine our remarks to those related to the assembly.

1. The day for the gathering for worship, the first day of the week.

The significance of the first day of the week:

1. Christ arose on the first day of the week. Matt. 28:1-10.
2. The Holy Spirit came on the first day of the week. Acts 2:1-4. Compare Leviticus 23:15 which declares Pentecost to be the first day of the week.
3. The church was established or created on the first day of the week. Acts 2:1-47. (cf. Lev. 23:15.)

4. The plan of salvation was given for the first time on the first day of the week. Acts 2:38.
 5. The first converts to Christianity were made on the first day of the week. Acts 2:41.
 6. We were delivered from the bondage of sin on the first day of the week. Matt. 28:1-6. Romans 4:25.
 7. The Lord's Supper was observed on the first day of the week. Acts 20:7.
 8. Gospel offerings were taken on the first day of the week. I Cor. 16:1-2. (Further study of this subject in lesson twenty-three.)
- 2. Acts which expressed the worship of the New Testament Christians as they gathered on the first day of the week.**
1. Continuing steadfastly in "the apostles' doctrine." Acts 2:42. The importance of this doctrine or teaching is seen as follows:
 1. To continue in any other teaching or doctrine is to worship Christ in vain. Matt. 15:9.
 2. We should mark and avoid those that cause divisions contrary to the doctrine of the apostles. Rom. 16:17.
 3. By continuing in this doctrine the preacher saves himself and those that hear him. I Tim. 4:16.
 4. This is the only doctrine that is profitable. II Tim. 3:16.
 5. We are not to be carried about by other doctrines that are strange. Heb. 13:9.
 6. We must not receive into our homes or bid Godspeed to those who do not preach the fundamental of this doctrine—namely the deity of Christ. II John 9-10.
 7. This doctrine furnishes us completely unto every good work. II Tim. 3:16-17.

All of the above information is surely true and must not be overlooked or treated lightly; however, it is perfectly possible to have all the confidence in the world in the truthfulness of the teachings of the apostles and yet never express worship through the use we make of their teaching. The important thing is our **response** to the reading or preaching of the "apostles' doctrine." Do you bow in humility before God and His holy will? Or do you simply assent to what is being read or spoken? If worship is an attitude of the heart, then we ought to be very careful that our attitude is truly right. God's Word is spoken of a fire (cf. Jer. 20:9b) i.e. in its purifying qualities—but it is not a fire to those who have ears that do not hear and hearts that do not understand. The doctrine of God is indeed "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway." (Psalm 119:105) However, this it will never be and can never be if the heart is not

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

right with God. The heart must be in tune with God to be able to hear Him speak through His Word. Only when we bow in humility and obedience before God as He speaks to us are we worshipping through the apostles' doctrine.

2. Continuing steadfastly in the breaking of bread.

1. Names for this act.

- (1) Communion. I Cor. 10:16.
- (2) Breaking of bread. Acts 2:42; 20:7.
- (3) The Lord's Supper. I Cor. 11:20-21.

2. This act was foreshadowed in the Old Testament.

- (1) The eating of the shew-bread. Lev. 24:5-10; Heb. 10:1.
- (2) The eating of the passover. Ex. 12:1-14; I Cor. 5:7-8.

3. Christ said there would be no life within us if we did not commune. John 6:53-55.

4. To partake in an unworthy manner will make us sick or put us to sleep. I Cor. 11:30.

(Further study of this subject is found in lesson twenty-four.)

3. Continuing steadfastly in prayer.

Since prayer is such a vital subject and it is not further discussed elsewhere in this book, it will be given here a bit more extended consideration than the other expressions of worship.

You will have noted by this time that a number of authors have been called to assist in this wonderful subject of **The Church In The Bible**. Perhaps a word of explanation concerning this plan would be in order just now. It is surely very evident that no man can express this subject in an adequate manner. Who is one individual that he should instruct you to the exclusion of others? Or most of all to the exclusion of your own conclusions from God's Word?

The object of this book is to help you to become as thoroughly acquainted with the subject of **The Church In The Bible** as our brief space permits. Men of the restoration movement have written many, many words on this subject—indeed to many it was the very passion of their lives. The works of some are available and rather well known, such as Alexander Campbell, J. W. McGarvey, Moses E. Lard, Walter Scott, Isaac Errett, D. R. Dugan, F. G. Allen and some others, but there yet remains a host of others of the "Pioneers" and some of a more recent date whose works have all but disappeared. With one exception we have not used the writings of those whose

books are now available, but rather those who wrote and did it well, but for one reason or another they seem to have been forgotten. Excerpts from their writings have made an important addition to this book.

J. H. Garrison wrote in such a wonderfully helpful manner on the subject of **Prayer**, in a small book entitled, "Alone With God," that a portion of it is included here.

ALONE WITH GOD

THE BENEFIT OF PRAYER:

"What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?
And what profit should we have, if we pray unto
Him?"—Job 21:15.

These were the questions of the skeptics in Job's day, and they are the questions of the skeptics in our own day. It is not related that any of Job's unbelieving contemporaries ever proposed a prayer-test, in order to demonstrate its futility, but that is doubtless owing to the fact that the scientific spirit was not so strongly developed in Job's day as it is in ours. It is characteristic of skepticism to doubt or deny the efficacy of prayer, just as it is characteristic of faith to affirm and illustrate its value. The two questions asked in the above quotation from Job, have a very close and vital connection. Our belief concerning the Almighty, as to who, and what kind of Being He is, will determine our estimate of the value of prayer. If the Almighty be only the sum of all things—an impersonal Force that moves the Universe—then prayer is indeed meaningless. But if He be a Personal God—the Father of our spirits—who is deeply concerned in our welfare, and who has revealed Himself as a God who heareth and answereth prayer, then, prayer has infinite value. In this chapter I must assume my readers to believe in the existence of such a God.

Prayer implies the existence of a personal God and man's personal responsibility to Him, and can have no meaning, therefore, to unbelief. But all the great saints of the Bible, and of the annals of Christian history, have been mighty in prayer. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Hannah, Anna, Paul, and the other Apostles, and a host of mighty men since their day were all characterized by their belief in the power of prayer, and by their prayers. The most conspicuous example, however, of the value and might of prayer, both in His teaching and practice, is our Saviour. Often He spent the whole night in prayer—communing with His Father—sometimes alone, at other times accompanied by a few of His most trusted disciples. Leaving

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

the busy streets, or dismissing the thronging multitude, at eventide, He was accustomed to go into the mountain solitude, apart from the gaze of the curious, and pour out His troubled soul in the ear of infinite and all-loving Father. It was on such an occasion, while praying on the mountain too, with Peter, James and John, that He was transfigured before them—a most significant and suggestive fact, indicating that prayer is that attitude of the soul toward God, in which He has chosen to communicate His transfiguring grace and glory to men.

When Jesus, by His example and teaching, had impressed His disciples with the value of prayer, they besought Him to teach them how to pray. In answer to this request, He gave them some important rules and a form of prayer. In the face of such facts as these, what do all the objections which skeptics have urged against prayer amount to? What do I care for all that the Voltaires, Paines and Ingersolls of the world may say against the philosophy or practical utility of prayer, when Jesus prayed constantly, and taught His disciples to pray? Did not Christ come from the bosom of the Father, and is He not higher authority on the value and nature of prayer than the combined wisdom of all the skeptical philosophers of the world? We may, therefore, dismiss at once, as unworthy of serious consideration all the objections which have been urged against prayer, on scientific or rationalistic grounds, and address ourselves to the consideration of the benefits to be derived from it.

In the first place it should be understood that prayer is not only commanded by the highest authority, and commended by the highest examples, but it is rooted and grounded in man's moral and religious nature. It is impossible to conceive of the exercise of man's religious nature without prayer, in some of its elements, as invocation, supplication, intercession and thanksgiving. But why should man **have** a religious nature if it is to find no natural expression? Prayer, then, is essential to the integrity of man's constitution as a moral and religious being. To oppose it, therefore, is to make war on human nature as well as on a divine ordinance, and to neglect it is to slight both a supreme duty and a royal privilege.

In attempting to enumerate the blessings which come to us through prayer, one is at a loss to decide where to begin or to end the catalogue. The best that can be done is to offer a few generalizations, and leave each individual reader to fill up the outline from his own experience. Let us consider prayer then in a few of its more important aspects.

1. **As a means of spiritual growth.** By spiritual growth I mean the development of the religious nature—the increase of faith, hope and love, of patience, purity of heart and moral strength. The relation of prayer to all these elements of Christian character is ob-

vious. They are of heavenly implantation in the heart, through the agency of the Holy Spirit. But our Saviour taught His disciples that the Holy Spirit is given by His Father to those that ask Him, saying, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." (Luke 11:13) Here all "good gifts" seem to be summed up, by Christ, in the Holy Spirit, through whose tender brooding over the human heart, all beautiful graces and holy purposes grow into strength and vigor. Prayer is that exercise of the soul by which it tries its wings in the upper air and seeks acquaintanceship with God. Under its holy influence all that is truest and noblest in human nature is quickened into new life and power. "Prayer has a subjective value. It is necessary to individual piety, produces solemnity, enlightens and quickens the conscience, teaches dependence, gives true views of God, and produces such a change in us as renders it consistent for Him to change His course toward us."

2. **As a means of forgiveness.** The adaptation of prayer to our human nature is seen in the fact, that, although Christians, while in the flesh we are liable to sin, and that God has ordained prayer and confession of our sin, as the means of obtaining forgiveness. There is no other posture of the soul that fits it to be the **recipient** of forgiveness, but that of prayer. To pray truly and sincerely for forgiveness, is to be penitent for the sin we have committed, to feel, in some measure, the enormity of our guilt, and to submit ourselves, once more, to the divine government. This condition of the soul can only find expression in prayer. Who that realizes how our unforgiven sins separate us from God, and hinder communion with Him, can fail, then, to appreciate the value of prayer, by which we "receive mercy and may find grace to help us in time of need"? (Heb. 4:16)

3. **As a means of supplying our needs.** A prominent feature in prayer is **petition**, or asking God for the things that we need. Nor do the scriptures put any limit on these petitions, as our weak faith often does, shutting us up simply to spiritual blessings, and leaving out that large section of our lives which has material needs and necessities. God has respect to our temporal as well as to our spiritual needs. He has taught us to pray for our daily food. If a business man reaches a crisis where a certain amount of money is necessary to save his business from wreck, let him not hesitate to ask God in some way to grant him the favor, if the business is such that he is sure it meets the divine approval. Many a pious man can testify that he has found God's promise to hold good in temporal matters as well as in things spiritual. We are not to make the mistake, however, of placing as much value on these temporal gifts as upon spirit-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

ual blessings. Nor can we always feel as sure that the temporal gift we ask is best for us, as when we ask for spiritual blessings, but it is right to make our requests, subject to the will of God. But what a blessed boon it is, that in every emergency of our lives, it is our privilege to ask help from God: in sickness, to ask for health; in danger, to ask for protection; in temptation and trial, to ask for strength; in moments of perplexity and doubt, to ask for wisdom and guidance!

4. **As a means of comfort and soul-rest.** Reflect a moment on the nature of this present life, with all its cares, bitter disappointments, and bereavements, anxieties for those we love, and its burdens of disease, poverty and age, and consider how direful man's condition without the sweet solace of prayer. In such a world as this who can estimate the value of such promises as these: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6, 7) "Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He careth for you." (I Pet. 5:7) A heart that is cold and callous, and insensible to the sorrows and woes of the world, and to its own perils, may not feel the need of prayer; but a heart, tender and responsive to others' woes, and realizing the awful peril of sin, and with a sympathy so deep and wide that like the Master it can weep over the sins and sorrows of others; would break but for the solace and strength found in prayer. Who of us that have known much of life's bitter experiences, have not felt, at times, that if we could not go into the solitude of our own chamber, and there, **alone with God**, pour out our soul to Him, and seek His divine sympathy and strength, we would break down under the heavy burden? And who of us, in such an hour, when all the world has seemed dark to us, has ever gone to Him in vain? Has not our experience enabled us to sing,

"O how praying rests the weary!

Prayer will change the night to day;

So, when seems life dark and dreary,

Don't forget to pray."

What profit in prayer? Ask the toil-worn pilgrim, who, staff in hand, is nearing the gates of the golden city, and whose hoary head reflects the light of the eternal day, and he will tell you that without it he could not have climbed the difficult paths of self-denial and patient endurance by which he has reached the precincts of the heavenly city. Ask the battle-scarred hero of the cross, who, after many conflicts, is about to lay down life's burden and take up the

crown, and he will tell you that by prayer he gained the victory in every contest. Ask that aged mother in Israel, on whose brow there sets the dew of heavenly peace, and on whose sweet face there shines the light,

“That never shone on land or sea,”

how she has brought out of all her life-struggles and sorrows, the serenity of spirit and the triumphant faith which awaits with fond expectation the reunion of loved ones gone before on that “far-off shore,” and she will tell you that prayer has sweetened all the bitter waters of life for her, and lightened all her burdens.

Ask the great spirits—the heroic men and women—who are now at the front, in the thick of life’s battles, bearing the sneers and reproaches of the world as the representatives of the great social, political and religious reforms of our time, whence they derive strength and courage to oppose popular evils, and endure poverty and scorn for their advocacy of right and truth, and they will tell you that their power cometh from above, and is received through prayer.

And let me say to the young people who may read these pages, if any of you entertain the idea that you can very greatly influence this world for good by any brilliancy of genius, wealth of talent, or capacity for work, which you may possess, aside from the aid which you can only receive through prayer, you have greatly over-estimated your own strength, and under-estimated the magnitude of the difficulties in the way. “Our sufficiency is of God,” and it is only as we link hands with Him, and are upheld by Him that we can make our lives a great potency for good in the world. Learn this, young friends, and if you are proposing to yourselves great life-tasks, which will enroll your names among earth’s benefactors, or to lift your characters in any wise above the common mass, make up your minds to spend much of your time in company with God, seeking His counsel, becoming imbued with His Spirit and being conformed to His image. Prayer is the golden key which unlocks the treasure-vaults of heaven.

Truly, as England’s Poet Laureate has said:

“More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

HINDRANCES TO PRAYER:

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss.”
James 4:3a.

So many and so great are the benefits of prayer, that no one who appreciates them can fail to be interested in the question as to what are some of the chief hindrances to its exercise. It is a common experience with most of us, that when we have tried to pray, there has been the absence of that joy, comfort and peace which true prayer always brings to the soul. For this there must be some cause, and the reason will always be found in us, not in God, who is always gracious, and whose ears are ever open to the cry of the righteous. It is my purpose now to seek for some of these causes that hinder prayer, and make it unavailing.

1. The first of these is **impenitence**. The impenitent man never prays. When it was said of Saul of Tarsus, “Behold he prayeth!” there was furnished the highest possible proof that he was penitent for his past sins, and was a changed man, no longer to be dreaded and shunned as a persecutor of Christ. This is because prayer implies certain conditions that cannot co-exist with impenitence, such as faith in God, a proper reverence for His name, consciousness of our spiritual needs, and a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. The impenitent man has no **taste** for prayer. The desire to pray is about the first sign of true penitence. He that has no relish for prayer, when **alone with God**, and feels no impulse to lift his soul up to God, in confession, adoration, thanksgiving and petition, may well be alarmed at his spiritual state. How dare such an one call himself a disciple of the praying Christ?

Sometimes the soul is driven to prayer by a sense of duty or obligation, or, it may be of **habit**, and experiences no spontaneity of emotion, no joy, no strength of desire, no consciousness of personal communion with God. The words we utter, in a mechanical way, express desires which our souls do not feel, and they seem to rise no higher than our heads. This experience is not infrequently described as God withdrawing His face from us, but a moment's reflection must convince us that the **real** cause of this state of things is to be found in **us**, not in God. “Behold, Jehovah's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue muttereth wickedness.” (Isa. 59:1-3)

Nor is it true to suppose that nothing but gross immorality could

thus hinder our prayers. The soul, like the eye, is delicately organized, and a very subtle form of sin may suffice to quench the spirit of prayer. "It does not require," says a recent writer of national renown, "what the world would call a **great** sin, to break up the serenity of the soul in its devotional hours. The experience of prayer has delicate complications. A little thing, secreted there, may dislocate its mechanism and arrest its movement . . . Even a **doubtful** principle of life, harbored in the heart, is perilous to the peacefulness of devotion. May not many of us find the cause of our joylessness in prayer, in the fact that we are living upon some **unsettled principle** of conduct? I apprehend that there is very much of suspense of **conscience** among Christians, upon subjects of practical life on which there is no suspense of **action**." (Austin Phelps, in "The

Wrong motives in prayer, often vitiate them. An instance of this is given in the text quoted at the head of this chapter. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, **that ye may spend it in your pleasures**." One may ask God for wealth, that he may excel his neighbors in luxurious living and gratify a whole brood of fleshly desires. Another may ask for health or position, that he may use these things for his own pleasure. It is possible, even, to desire spiritual power and unction, the gift of tongues in prayer and preaching, in order that we may thereby gain conspicuity and the honors of the world, along with our increased usefulness. Alas! How deceitful is the human heart! And how seldom do we stop to analyze our motives in asking God for what we desire! Not seldom would we feel abashed at our temerity did we always face squarely the real motives that prompt many of our petitions.

3. **Insincerity**. This may seem to be a grave charge to bring against the prayers of Christians, but we venture to mention it among the actual causes which prevent many of our prayers from being answered. What I mean by it is that we often ask for things which we do not really desire. Our judgment is convinced that the things we ask for are things we **ought** to desire, and that Christians ought to pray for, and so we utter with our lips petitions which our hearts do not endorse. When we pray for the spirit of self-denial, for instance, do we always really desire that this spirit shall so possess us that we may be willing to give up all for Christ's sake? When we ask that all obstacles to Christian growth and usefulness be taken out of our way, do we mean all that this may involve? Suppose it means poverty, trials and sore chastening—are we ready to endure these things for the sake of obtaining higher spiritual good? Here again I cannot forbear quoting from that prince of devotional writers, of whose classic pages I have availed myself elsewhere.

"Many of the prime objects of prayer enchant us only in the distance. Brought near to us, and in concrete forms, and made to grow

life-like in our conceptions, they very sensibly abate the pulse of our desire to possess them, because we cannot but discover that, to realize them in our lives, certain other darling objects must be sacrificed which we are not yet willing to part with. The paradox is true to life, that a man may even **fear** an answer to his prayers. He has not really desired that God would give heed to him, for any other purpose than to give him an hour of pleasurable devotional excitement. That his objects of prayer should actually be inwrought into his character, and should live in his own consciousness, is by no means the thing he has been thinking of, and is the last thing he is ready just now to wish for." —Austin Phelps.

4. **False views of prayer.** In another chapter I have given some attention to that theory of prayer which makes it wholly subjective in its effect. It is easy to see how such a theory, once fully accepted, would undermine faith in the **value** of prayer, and gradually lead to its neglect. That which gives an inexpressible charm, and infinite value to prayer is the plain, scriptural idea, that it is a child of God talking, out of his heart, to his loving heavenly Father, who inclines His ear and listens to His earthborn child with a deep and tender concern. Hold on to that simple faith, dear reader, if you would value rightly the "sweet hour of prayer," whether it be alone with God, or in the assembly of His saints.

Another mistaken view of prayer is, that if God does not answer us **in the way** which we expect and desire, and **at the time** when we think He ought to answer, that He does not hear us at all and our prayer is vain. Hence we cease to pray. This is a mistaken view of prayer. God has not placed in our hands so dangerous a weapon as prayer would be if it at once secured **what we asked and in the way and at the time** we desire. This would be to abdicate His throne in favor of man, and allow us to exercise unlimited power to our own destruction. God is too good and too wise to do that. He knows what is best for us, and His goodness and mercy are as manifest in withholding many of the things we ask for, as in granting others.

"We, ignorant of ourselves,
 Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
 Deny us for our good; so find we profit,
 By losing our prayers."—Shakespeare.

It was this erroneous view of prayer that led some people to doubt the efficacy of prayer, because the life of President Garfield was not spared in answer to the prayers of the nation. More than once it has happened, in my own experience, that God has answered my prayers in a way **directly opposite** from that which I expected and hoped for. At the **time** the answers were not recognized, as

such, but in the light of subsequent events it became clear to me that God had heard my prayer and had answered me in His own way, which of course, was far better than my way. That this is equally true in many instances where we cannot so clearly recognize it, does not admit of doubt. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8, 9)

5. Environment. By this convenient word I mean that the surroundings and associations of Christians, growing out of their business or social companionships, are often unfavorable to the devotional spirit and to the habit of prayer. A man whose business throws him into association with men whose controlling motives are avarice, ambition and worldly pride, must be an unusually devout man not to be injuriously affected thereby. If we add to this what is not infrequently true, that the business itself, in its methods at least, is of doubtful moral propriety, we have a combination of circumstances in which the spirit of devotion cannot thrive. It is certain to be frozen out. In such cases a man has to choose between his business and his soul. He cannot serve God and Mammon, and must make his choice between them.

Young Christians often find that their social comradeship is of such a character as to disincline them to personal piety and to devotional habits. They lose their relish for the lone hour with God, or for the house of God, just in proportion as they drink into the spirit of their companions. As soon as this is discovered, there ought to be no hesitation as to the safe course to pursue. Let there be a change of associates. If this is not possible, see that there is a change in the character of the amusements and entertainments indulged in. Why should not Christian young people become a positive, moulding force in society, so reconstructing its social life as to make it intellectually and morally helpful? If Christians are "the light of the world," they should let their light shine, and not hide it under a bushel.

6. Lack of proper mental and spiritual food. No more is a sound and healthful body dependent on well prepared, nutritious food, than is the mind and heart on suitable mental and spiritual nutriment. Much of the reading done by the young people of today is a positive hindrance to spiritual and mental growth, and the devotional spirit withers and dies under its influence. I feel that I should be recreant to my duty to the young people of this generation not to warn them against that species of literature which creates a disrelish for sober reading, especially for the Scriptures, and is fatal to the devotional spirit. I make no indiscriminate war against fiction, much of which

is healthful and helpful, but there can be no doubt that the habit of indiscriminate reading of light and fictitious literature has sapped the spiritual life and vigor of many Christians, both young and old.

In the cities it is not uncommon that the daily papers, with their record of crimes of all sorts and their sensational news and social gossip, furnish the staple mental food for many older people, even members of evangelical churches. Is it any wonder that this class of people have no **time** for family worship, and for private devotions, and no relish for either? How could it be otherwise? They do not read the Bible with any regularity, and often read no religious papers or books. Their spiritual nature dies of starvation, or of poisonous food. Set this down as true: **The daily, reverent reading of God's Word is essential to the maintenance of devotional habits.** It alone is capable of creating the atmosphere in which the spirit of true piety is fostered and sustained. Hence it will be found universal, we think, that the neglect of prayer is evermore accompanied with the neglect of Bible reading and study.

7. Lack of meditation and self-examination. Though I have adverted to this subject elsewhere, I mention it here among the causes that hinder prayer, or make it formal and joyless. Prayer, to be acceptable to God, must be related to the soul's needs. It must be the sincere expression of the soul's inmost desires. But unless we pause awhile, in the quiet of our own chamber, and introspect our hearts and lives, and examine ourselves in the light of God's Word, there can be no intelligent appreciation of our needs and no fervency of desire for those spiritual blessings which alone can satisfy the soul. My own experience and observation lead me to believe that, ordinarily, prayer lacks both in fervor and definiteness when it is not preceded by a few moments of thoughtful meditation in connection with the reading of the Scriptures. I am also convinced that one of the great evils of our modern life, is that we have allowed business, social pleasures, and other things to rob us of the quiet hour when we can be alone with God in private devotion. Without this solitude, and the quiet meditation for which it gives opportunity, there are apt to be wanting two important elements of successful prayer, namely: **definiteness in our petitions, and intensity of desire.**

* * * * *

4. Continuing steadfastly in **fellowship.** Acts 2:42.

1. The definition of the word.

(1) **English:** The condition of being a fellow or associate; companionship; partnership; joint interest; an association of persons having the same tastes, occupations, or interests.

(2) **Greek:** The word for fellowship in the Greek is "koinonia." In this language it has the following meanings: association, communion, joint participation; intercourse, fellowship; intimacy; a benefaction jointly contributed; a collection; a contribution.

2. How **fellowship** relates to worship.

The response or result of worship in the heart directed to God and Christ is a partnership, association, a joint participation with one another.

3. Notice some things we share together as Christians.

(1) We share in His sufferings. I Pet. 4:12, 13; Phil. 3:8-10.

(2) We share in the common faith. Titus 1:4.

(3) We share in a common salvation. Jude 3.

(4) We share in the proclamation of this faith. Phil. 1:3-6.

(5) We share in tribulation. Phil. 4:14—in the Kingdom. Rev. 1:9.

(6) We share in the Divine nature. II Pet. 1:4.

(7) We share in the glory to be revealed. I Pet. 5:1.

(8) We share in all things. Acts 4:32.

4. What was the response of such an attitude?

(1) It produced a unique social relationship.

Since the early Christians shared a common faith, salvation, tribulation, kingdom, nature, hope, it would be natural to expect them to be drawn together in the closest of social relationships. The multitude and the importance of the things shared drew them together into a single body to share their material blessings as well as their spiritual ones. (cf. Acts 2:44; 4:32)

(2) A sharing with those who taught: Gal. 6:6; Phil. 4:15.

We can only be one when we have first given ourselves to the Lord. The natural response of a worshipful heart is a fellowship with one another. To the Christian of the first century fellowship meant he was a companion and partner with every other Christian, regardless of color or nationality. It meant that he was a sharer with each and every other Christian in the work of the kingdom. Each one was responsible with every other one for the on-going and up-building of Christ's church, His body.

5. Continuing steadfastly in "**spiritual songs.**" Eph 5:19; Col. 3:16.

Let us consider the proper circumstances of singing:

1. To be sung when we are filled with the Spirit. Eph. 5:18, 19.

This is but another way of saying that singing is an expression of worship. When our hearts are at one with Christ, how meaningful are the songs we sing to His praise.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

2. To be sung with grace in the heart. Col. 3:16.

According to the ordinary definition of "grace" it means unmerited favor. With the deep conviction that God's goodness to us is totally unearned and unmerited, we can truly worship Him.

3. To be sung with the understanding. I Cor. 14:15b.

When we consider the meanings of these various expressions of Paul we can come to appreciate the application of Jesus' words "in spirit and truth." (cf. John 4:24) Here is a further word of exhortation that we sing with the "spirit" and not just with the mouth. Our spirit or understanding must participate in order that our singing be acceptable to God, edifying, or of a personal help to the singer. If we eat and drink condemnation to our own souls because we fail to "discern the body" (cf. I Cor. 11:29) would this not also be true of singing if we discern not what we sing? A word should be said as to anti-scriptural songs—how can we sing a lie? It is bad enough to deceive, but to put a lie to music and sing it in unison is surely the worst form of blasphemy!

4. To be sung in Christ's name. Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:20.

This thought is but an extension of the point above. To sing with "the understanding" to the Christian is to "sing unto the Lord."

Answer These Questions

1. Explain why outward forms are not necessarily indicative of worship.
2. What are the two things that Jesus said were essential to worship?
3. What is vain worship?
4. Give three reasons why the church meets together on Sunday to worship.
5. Give three facts that show the importance of the apostles' doctrine.
6. How could we teach or hear the apostles' doctrine and still not be worshipping?
7. Give two names for the Lord's Supper, and their meaning.
8. Why do we say that the shew-bread of the Old Testament foreshadowed the Lord's Supper?
9. Explain how the Lord's Supper becomes spiritual food to you as you eat.
10. How did Christ show the great importance He placed upon prayer?
11. How did Paul show the great importance of prayer?
12. Give three reasons why prayers fail.
13. Give the Greek definition of the word "fellowship."
14. Give two applications of the word "fellowship."
15. Give two circumstances of true singing.

Examination Eighteen

1. What is worship?
2. What did Jesus mean by "worshipping in spirit and truth"?
3. Give three reasons why you meet on Sunday to worship the Lord.
4. Give two reasons why it is important that we continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.
5. Give two reasons why it is important to have the Lord's Supper.
6. Give two things that were said about prayer; one by Jesus, one by Paul.
7. Give two causes of a failure to have the answer to prayer.
8. What is the meaning of the word "fellowship"?
9. What did "continuing steadfastly in fellowship" mean to each and every Christian of the New Testament?
10. Name two proper conditions for worshiping God in song.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

REVIEW QUESTIONS OVER LESSONS TEN THROUGH EIGHTEEN OF THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Explain the following (A sentence of explanation will suffice.)

1. The general and specific use of the term "deacon."
2. The manner in which the deacons of the Jerusalem church were chosen.
3. "Full of the Holy Spirit."
4. "The husband of one wife."
5. The Table of the Lord.
6. The table of the minister.
7. The table of the poor.

True or False

- 1. The chief question considered in the lesson of "Woman's Work" was, "Is it right for a woman to be a pastor or evangelist?"
- 2. In Genesis 1:27 it states that the helpmeet God made for man would be "answering to him," i.e. man.
- 3. From the account of creation is it evident that man and woman are of one race and of the same nature.
- 4. Woman is the "weaker vessel" only in physical considerations.
- 5. Intellectually the sexes may be considered equal and yet they are not entirely the same.
- 6. Socially, man and woman can never be equal.
- 7. Morally, woman is less susceptible than man.
- 8. Woman is naturally more religious than man.
- 9. In matters of authority and government woman is to be in subjection.
- 10. John Ruskin said: "We are foolish, and without excuse, in speaking of the 'superiority' of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things."

REVIEW EXAMINATION

- 11. Harriet Beecher Stowe said: "Woman's highest glory is in the business world."
- 12. Woman is excluded from the office of elder by the qualifications necessary for that office.
- 13. There are some women called evangelists in the New Testament.
- 14. A woman may do anything that a man may do who is not a pastor or evangelist.

Fill In The Blanks

- 1. There is a word which means to "set, place, put" or to "set one over a thing, in charge of it." What is it? -----
- 2. There is a word which means "to elect by stretching out the hand." What is it? -----
- 3. The Holy Spirit had a part in the selection of men for the offices of the church. His selection today is found in His ----- given in the New Testament.
- 4. What does the evangelist "lay" upon the candidates for the offices? -----
- 5. What the candidates should first be before they serve, "first -----
- 6. The young man Paul found in Lystra, who was selected to be an evangelist. -----
- 7. Who laid their hands upon Timothy? (Two cases) ----- and the -----
- 8. The three essential parts to any ordination service are: ----- and -----

Answer The Following

- 1. List the "Ten Timely Truths" with one scripture reference whenever possible.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Fill In The Blanks

1. The Bible was written by _____ different men. It was written on _____ different _____. It was written in three different _____. It was written over a period of more than _____ years. It covers _____ years of history. It is without _____.
2. Psalm 22:16 is a prophecy about Christ's _____.
3. The second chapter of Daniel states that there will only be _____ world _____.
4. Three finds of archaeology that prove the accuracy of the Bible are: a. _____ b. _____ c. _____.
5. Two attempts to destroy the Bible were: a. _____ b. _____.
6. The marvelous influence of the Bible is seen in two realms: a. _____ b. _____.
7. Three evidences of the deity of Jesus are: a. _____ b. _____ c. _____.

Answer These Questions

1. What is the meaning of the term "repentance"?
2. Name two things that are involved in the thought of "conviction of sin."
3. Name two things that are involved in "contrition for sin."
4. Name two characteristics of the decision necessary to forsake sin.
5. Name two results of repentance.

True or False

- 1. Confession is given by life and need not be made with the mouth.
- 2. We are not saved when we confess Christ.
- 3. Christ placed a blessing upon this confession when speaking to Peter.
- 4. Confession should be made both initially and continually.
- 5. Baptism is not baptism if we do not have a proper candidate.
- 6. Baptism is not for the washing away of sins.
- 7. Baptism is described as a resurrection.
- 8. We enter the eternal kingdom of heaven the moment we are baptized.
- 9. Sprinkling was done in the Old Testament for baptism but not in the New Testament.
- 10. Sprinkling was first practiced for baptism in 1311.

Affirm or Deny, But Tell the Reason Why

- 1. A monarchy is "any form of government in which the governing body claims to rule by divine injunction."
 Affirm ----- Deny ----- Why -----
- 2. The church in the Bible is an "absolute democracy."
 Affirm ----- Deny ----- Why -----
- 3. The church in the Bible has no power of self-government.
 Affirm ----- Deny ----- Why -----
- 4. There was absolute local autonomy in the New Testament church.
 Affirm ----- Deny ----- Why -----
- 5. Romanism is a "monarchico-hierarchical" government with a human head.

Answer These Question

- 1. What is the meaning of the term "worship"?
- 2. Give three reasons for meeting together on Sunday.
- 3. What is the meaning of the term "fellowship"?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

THE UNITY

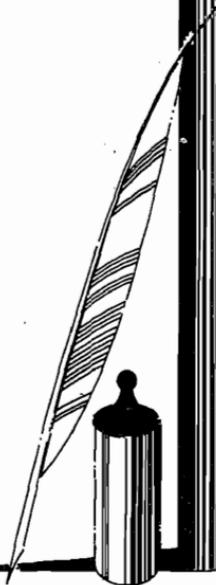
*of the Church
in the Bible*

There is

ONE

{
BODY
KINGDOM
WAY
BUILDING
HOUSE
SPIRIT
HOPE
LORD
FAITH
BAPTISM
FATHER

Revealed in the scriptures



LESSON NINETEEN

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"That which is peculiar to the Bible, and has caused it to be spoken of as one book rather than many—the unity reigning through a work upon which so many generations laboured—gives a vastness beyond all comparison, so that the greatest work of individual genius shows by the side of it like some building of human hands beside the peak of Teneriffe."
—J. R. Seeley

All the creation of God is characterized by unity. It is therefore no wonder, that the Bible is one continuous story without contradiction. It should be the concern of our lives that we individually are united with Christ in God.

Here are the references that speak of the unity of the Church: Dan. 2:44; Matt. 16:19; Acts 9:2; I Cor. 3:9; I Pet. 2:5; John 17:20-23; Gal. 5:20; I Cor. 1:10-17; Eph. 4:1-16.

1. The church is one in a spiritual sense now.
Affirm Deny Why?
2. It is not sensible to expect all men to think alike or to judge alike.
Affirm Deny Why?
3. Any person who came to the New Testament with a whole-hearted desire to follow its precepts could discover the one church of our Lord.
Affirm Deny Why?
4. Jesus prayed for unity (John 17:20-23) and His prayer will one day be answered.
Affirm Deny Why?
5. If Christians could be united on what constitutes a true Christian, life then would have taken a big step toward unity.
Affirm Deny Why?
6. We could never hope to be united on all matters of doctrine—neither, indeed, is it necessary.
Affirm Deny Why?
7. If we truly pray the Holy Spirit will bring about the unity for which we pray.
Affirm Deny Why?
8. There will be many persons with many beliefs in heaven.
Affirm Deny Why?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

9. The task of the evangelist is to so build up the members of the church that they will be able to do the work of ministering and build up the body. (cf. Eph. 4:11-12.)
Affirm Deny Why?
10. There can be many differences of opinion and yet be unity.
Affirm Deny Why?

LESSON DISCUSSION

Introduction

1. The importance of unity.

1. There are plans given in the New Testament for only ONE church.
 - (1) The church is spoken of as "a kingdom"—ONE kingdom. Dan. 2:44. (cf. Matt. 16:19.)
 - (2) It is called "the way"—ONE way. Acts 9:2.
 - (3) It is called "God's building"—ONE building. I Cor. 3:9.
 - (4) It is called "a spiritual house"—ONE house. I Pet. 2:5.
 - (5) It is called "my church"—ONE church. Matt. 16:18.
2. Christ prayed for the unity of all that believe on Him. John 17:20-23. The answer to this prayer is in our hands.
3. Division is sinful. Gal. 5:20; I Cor. 1:10-17. For any man or group of men to establish or support a church which is not according to the pattern revealed in the New Testament is to be guilty of the sin of division, not to mention many other sins.
4. The modern religious babylon is causing millions to be lost. The unsaved world is confused and as a result many become entangled in false teaching and many reject all religion, including Christianity.

2. Three vital facts we need to realize and keep in mind:

1. That salvation, which is the most important thing in the world, is synonymous with church membership.
2. That the pattern for the building and operation of the church is completely outlined in the New Testament.
3. That if we believe and carry out the two above facts we will cut away the foundation of denominationalism and bring about the answer to Christ's prayer which is the unity of the church and the convincing of the world that John 3:16 is true.

3. Two extreme religious views and the truth.

1. One class of people stresses doctrine, insists on a "thus saith the Lord" for everything and yet continues to indulge in the unclean and sinful things of this world.
2. The other class stresses spiritual life, insists on purity of living by abstaining from all worldly pleasures and yet omits doctrine on matters of salvation, church organization, and so forth.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

3. The true position for the Christian is derived from a combining of the two above views. That this was true in the New Testament church and is necessary for Christian unity today we will see in the text to follow.

Let us consider the divine plan for unity as outlined in Eph. 4:1-16.

1. The members of the church must be united in living the Christian life.

"I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:1-3.

1. Christians must agree to "walk worthily" of their calling. Eph. 4:1. (cf. Col. 1:10; I Thess. 2:12.)

1. In order to walk worthily we must "walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:4, 6.

(1) This means that a person's walk as a Christian will be different than it was as a sinner. II Cor. 5:17.

(2) There cannot be unity between sinners and Christians. II Cor. 6:14, 15.

2. Christians must walk in faith if they are to walk worthily. II Cor. 5:7.

(1) We must not worry about the things of this life. Matt. 6:25-34; Phil. 4:19. We must trust God.

(2) Many people are so busy making a living they lose contact with God. They do not trust God. Luke 10:38-42.

(3) The faithful and the unfaithful cannot be one.

3. To walk worthily Christians must walk to please God. I Thess. 4:1.

(1) Many professing Christians walk to please themselves.

(2) If God is the Christian's God then the Christian should try to please Him in all things.

(3) A self-pleaser cannot walk in unity with a God-pleaser.

4. Conclusions:

(1) We cannot have unity as long as some of us refuse to walk worthily of our calling.

(2) Except we all walk in newness of life we cannot have unity.

(3) We must all walk in faith, trusting God rather than the things of the world, if we are to have unity.

(4) We must all walk to please the same person, God, not ourselves.

2. Christians must agree to walk "with all lowliness and meekness." Eph. 4:2a. (cf. Col. 3:12.)

1. To walk in lowliness we must put ourselves down and count

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

others better than ourselves. Phil. 2:2-8. To do this will eliminate two things which cause and perpetuate division.

- (1) Bragging, boasting and general self-glorification.
- (2) The putting of human ideas ahead of God's Word.
2. To walk in meekness we must be mild and gentle, not excitable or violent. (cf. Matt. 5:5; Gal. 5:22-23.)
3. There must be agreement on these things, for the proud cannot walk with the lowly, neither the violent with the meek.
3. Christians must agree to walk with "longsuffering." Eph. 4:2b.
 1. If we walk with longsuffering we will be patient and not take offense or get our feelings hurt easily.
 2. We will not be easily provoked or irritated. We will not lose our temper.
 3. We will be considerate of another's feelings and opinions.
 4. Longsuffering is indispensable to Christian unity.
4. Christians must agree to be "forbearing to one another in love." Eph. 4:2c.
 1. Forbear means to restrain one's self from action.
 2. We forbear because of love.
 - (1) Love is the badge of discipleship. John 13:34-35; I John 4:7-12.
 - (2) If we love the brethren we will restrain ourselves from hatred, jealousy, gossip and unwise criticism. These are actions which cause and perpetuate division.
 3. If we forbear one another we must tolerate a little on the part of others.
 - (1) We cannot tolerate disobedience to God's Word.
 - (2) We may have to compromise our personal opinions.
 - (3) Some people must have their own way on matters of opinion or else they will quit.
 4. Forbearing one another in love is another absolute essential to Christian unity.
5. Christians must agree to give "diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:3.
 1. We must make a constant effort toward peace and steadily apply ourselves toward that end. We must put into practice the things we learn in this lesson.
 2. The unity must be among those who have the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Christians cannot be one with the disobedient or with unbelievers.
 3. True unity brings peace and if there is no peace the unity is outward only and not the unity of the Spirit.
 4. Christians cannot be united with those who make no effort to keep the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
6. The church must have unity of life before it can have unity of doctrine.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

1. We have approached this principle from the wrong direction.
 - (1) We have tried to force doctrine on people who could see nothing Christian in our lives but a Bible.
 - (2) We need to get right before God and with our fellowmen and then present the Christian's plea for unity in a Christian way.
2. The unity of life is essential to unity of doctrine.
 - (1) When we are all living the spiritual life and loving each other we will desire to be together.
 - (2) When people really desire to be together and love God enough to accept His terms there will be Christian unity.
 - (3) Unity of the Spirit will bring unity of doctrine and peace. We must work for spiritual life and love.
2. **The church must be united on matters of doctrine.**

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all, and in all." Eph. 4:4-6.

Unity of doctrine will come as a natural result of unity in spiritual life. There must be unity of belief on the following doctrinal matters.

 1. There must be unity of belief in **the form of the church—ONE body.** Eph. 4:4a.
 1. The church is spoken of in the Bible as existing in the form of one body.
 - (1) Christ spoke of the church as "one flock." John 10:16.
 - (2) The church is spoken of as the body of Christ and Christ has only one body, not many. Eph. 1:22-23.
 - (3) Paul speaks of the church as "one new man" and "one body." Eph. 2:15-16.
 2. The church exists in the form of one body because:
 - (1) It has only one Head, Jesus Christ. Col. 1:18. If there were more than one head there would be more than one body. Christ is not a freak with many bodies.
 - (2) It has only one birth—the new birth. John 3:3-5. More than one body would require more than one birth. We all come into the church by the same birth. I Cor. 12:13.
 3. The members of the body of Christ are Christians, not denominations. John 15:5; I Cor. 12:27.
 2. A belief in **the power for the church—ONE Spirit.** Eph. 4:4b.
 1. Concerning the presence of this one power in the church:
 - (1) The Holy Spirit is present in the church. I Cor. 3:16-17.
 - (2) He is in the church because He indwells or lives in the individual Christian. John 14:17; Rom. 8:9.
 - (3) The Spirit's presence in the church is received as a gift. Acts 2:38.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- (4) This power is given to a person when he obeys the word of the Spirit as given through the apostles which He inspired. Acts 2:38; 5:32.
2. Concerning the purpose of this one power in the church.
 - (1) To convict the world in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment. John 16:8-11; Acts 2:36-37; Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12.
 - (2) To produce in those in the church the "fruit of the Spirit." Gal. 5:22-23.
 - (3) To help each individual in their prayers. Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18.
 - (4) To lead every believer in the Christian life. Gal. 5:16, 18, 25. The Spirit never leads us contrary to the Word which He has inspired. II Pet. 1:19-21.
3. This power can be lost as a result of grieving the Holy Spirit. Eph. 4:30; Rom. 8:9b.
 - (1) The Spirit can be grieved by our living according to the desires of the flesh. Rom. 8:1-11; Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 4:25-31; Acts 5:1-11.
 - (2) This fact makes spiritual living all the more imperative. Rom. 8:5-8.
3. There must be unity of **belief in a better life after death**, the hope of the church—the ONE hope. Eph. 4:4c.
 1. The basis of this one hope:
 - (1) It is based upon the Word of God. Philosophers, both ancient and modern have developed elaborate arguments for the purpose of proving the fact of life after death. Such arguments (apart from the Bible) fall short of their aim. Socrates, who tried to prove the immortality of the soul was asked as he lay dying, "Shall we live again?" He could only say, "I hope so; but no man can know." We can thank our God that He knew the limitations of human reason and gave us a revelation of the fact that there is life after death. This hope is taught in the Bible from beginning to end. Gen. 3:22-24; Rev. 2:7; 22:17, 19.
 - (2) It is based upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I Cor. 15:16-22; I Pet. 1:3. His resurrection gives us a firm belief in His power over death. Heb. 2:14, 15. Jesus was raised from the dead to make justification for us as a great high priest. Rom. 4:25; Heb. 9:11-28. His resurrection is an example and guarantee of our own resurrection. I Thess. 4:13-18; I John 3:2.
 2. The nature of this better life after death:
 - (1) It is to be eternal or everlasting. Luke 18:18; John 3:16, 36; Acts 13:48; Rom. 6:23b; Rev. 2:7; 22:5b.
 - (2) It will be in the presence of Christ, the Father and the

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

- holy angels. I Thess. 4:17; Rev. 21:3, 22-23; 22:3-4; Luke 16:22.
- (3) It will be a life of bliss—the highest degree of happiness. Matt. 6:20; I Pet. 1:3-4; Rev. 21:1-8, 22-27; 22:1-5.
3. The means of attaining this blessed hope and realizing its ultimate fulfillment:
- (1) There is just one way to attain this hope. John 14:6. We must follow the divinely appointed steps to salvation. (For a consideration of these steps see the lessons on the members of the church.)
- (2) We must continue to live a Godly life and be faithful to Christ until death in order to realize the fulfillment of this hope. I Tim. 6:11-16; Phil. 4:8-9; Gal. 5:21-22; Rev. 2:10b.
4. There must be unity of belief in the **one Head of the church**—the ONE Lord. Eph. 4:5a.
1. We must believe that He is the divinely appointed Head. Eph. 1:22.
2. We must believe that He, as Head, has all authority over the church. Matt. 28:18; I Cor. 15:24-28; Col. 2:10.
3. That Christ, being divinely appointed for this position, makes anyone else who would occupy this place a usurper.
4. That the church as the body of Christ must be subject to the one Head—the one Lord.
5. A belief in the **one rule of faith and practice** for the church—the ONE faith. Eph. 4:5b. (This refers to the whole scheme of redemption as it is revealed in the Bible but more especially to the revelation of the New Testament.)
1. This one faith was “once for all delivered.” Jude 3.
- (1) This proves that there will be no other divine revelation.
- (2) God’s Word condemns anything that claims to be another revelation. Gal. 1:6-10.
- (3) God has spoken for the last time through His Son. Heb. 1:1-2.
2. This one faith furnishes us completely unto every good work. II Tim. 3:16-17.
- (1) This is presupposed in that God, in giving a plan to us, would most certainly make it complete and perfect.
- (2) This excludes the possibility of men improving upon God’s rule of faith and practice for the church. His plan needs no subtractions, additions or substitutions and furthermore, God will not tolerate them. I Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

- (3) Within the one faith we have the basis for unity of action on the part of all of God's people. Jude 3.
6. A belief in the **one means for the remission of sins and entrance into the church**—the ONE baptism. Eph. 4:5c.
1. The church of the New Testament knew but one mode for baptism.
 - (1) It is in the form of a burial. Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.
 - (2) It is performed by going down into the water and coming up out of the water. Acts 8:38-39.
 2. The church of the New Testament knew but one class of persons who were candidates for baptism: those who believed in Jesus, had repented of their sins and confessed publicly their faith in Jesus were ready for baptism. (cf. Acts 16:31; 2:38; 8:36-37.)
 3. The church of the New Testament was united as to the purposes of baptism.
 - (1) It was for the remission of sins. Acts 2:38.
 - (2) It was for the washing away of sins. Acts 22:16.
 - (3) It was for the means of entering the one body. I Cor. 12:13.
 - (4) It was for the purpose of putting on Christ. Gal. 3:27.
 - (5) It was for salvation. I Pet. 3:21.
 4. The early church knew that baptism was the means of contacting the blood of Christ.
 - (1) It is the blood of Christ that saves and there is no efficacy in the water. Heb. 9:12, 14, 22; I Pet. 1:18-19; Acts 20:28.
 - (2) Christ shed His blood in His death and in baptism we are buried with Him "into death." Thus we contact His blood. Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 9:21-22; John 19:33-34.
 - (3) Because this is true the New Testament preacher could say, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name." Acts 22:16.
 5. This does not refer to spiritual baptism or the baptism of the Holy Spirit for the following reasons:
 - (1) To make this spiritual baptism is to make the Bible tell a lie. If Ephesians 4:5c refers to spiritual baptism, then we have TWO baptisms inasmuch as water baptism is still with us.
 - (2) Spiritual baptism ceased after the apostles and the household of Cornelius had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Acts, chapters 2 and 10. (A complete study of the subject of the Holy Spirit may be found in another book by the same author entitled, "Acts Made Actual.")

- (3) Because we are **buried WITH Christ** in baptism. Rom. 6:4. Christ was the administrator of spiritual baptism. 3:11. Here Christ is spoken of as a recipient of baptism. Since He does not baptize Himself, it cannot be spiritual baptism.
- (4) Because we are **RAISED from water baptism** in the likeness of Christ's resurrection. Rom. 6:4. If we were buried in the Holy Spirit it does not seem reasonable or desirable that we should be raised out of the Spirit.
7. A united belief in the one Father of His family, the church—**ONE God.** Eph. 4:6.
1. He is one God "over all."
 - (1) He is over all creatively in that He created all things.
 - (2) He is over all judicially in that He will one day judge all.
 - (3) He is over all eternally in that He will maintain His exalted position throughout eternity.
 2. He is one God "through all." (Relating especially to the church.)
 - (1) Through His love the creation of the church was prompted.
 - (2) Through His wisdom the church is organized.
 - (3) Through His Word the church is directed.
 3. He is one God "in all."
 - (1) He is in all in that all are given physical life through Him.
 - (2) He is in all to the Christian in that He gives His Spirit to live in the Christian.
 - (3) He is in all to the church in that He has placed His Word in the church.
- 3. The church must be united on matters of organization.**
- "But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore He saith, When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men. (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4:7-13.
1. The church must unitedly recognize Christ as the leader and director of church organization.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

1. God's grace is bestowed on the church through Christ. v. 7.
2. Christ's right to be director of the church as an organization. vs. 8-10.
 - (1) He died for the church. vs. 9b, 10a. (cf. Acts 20:28.)
 - (2) He is victor over Satan, sin and death. v. 8b.
 - (3) He is King of kings and Lord of lords. vs. 8a, 9a, 10b.
2. The church must agree to accept the offices which Christ gave for the organization of the church. v. 11.
3. The church must agree upon the three-fold purpose of the organization. v. 12.
 1. To perfect the saints. v. 12a.
 2. To minister to needs. v. 12b.
 3. To build up the church. v. 12c.
4. The Christians must agree that this organization will continue until the following things be accomplished:
 1. Till we ALL attain unto the unity of the faith. v. 13a.
 2. Till we ALL attain unto the knowledge of the Son of God. 13b.
 2. Till we ALL become full-grown men—like Christ. v. 13c.
4. **Christians must agree upon the proof of a successful church organization.**

"That we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things unto Him, who is the head, even Christ." Eph. 4:14-16.

 1. That we, as Christians, act like grownups. vs. 14, 15b.
 2. That we speak the truth—IN LOVE. v. 15a.
 3. That we function as a unit—like a normal healthy body. v. 16a.
 4. That the body, the church, increases and builds up itself in love. v. 16b.

Answer These Questions

1. Give three examples of the oneness of the church in the New Testament.
2. What was the burden of the prayer of Christ for unity?
3. What is so blameworthy about division?
4. When will the world believe in Christ?
5. What two facts would cut the foundation from under denominationalism?
6. What are the two extreme views of unity and what is wrong with them?
7. Name two ways in which we can "walk worthily."
8. Give one specific thought concerning "walking with all lowliness and meekness."
9. What is one specific thought concerning walking with "long-suffering"?

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

10. What are two facts concerning "forbearing one another in love"?
11. What is meant by "giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"?
12. Why is it backwards to talk of doctrinal unity when there is not unity of living?
13. How would unity of life help in unity of doctrine?
14. Give two places in the scriptures where the church is spoken of as existing in the form of one body.
15. How does the fact that there is just one head prove that there is just one church?
16. Give two purposes for the Holy Spirit in the church.
17. How can we grieve the Holy Spirit?
18. Upon what two things is the hope of life after death based?
19. Give two facts concerning the nature of the afterlife.
20. Give one fact concerning the one Lord or Head of the church.
21. What is the meaning of the term "faith" as used in Ephesians 4:4?
22. What does God's Word say about "other revelations"?
23. How can we truthfully say that the blood of Christ is applied in baptism?
24. Prove that Romans 6:4 does not refer to spiritual baptism.
25. What is the three-fold purpose of the organization of the church?

Examination Nineteen

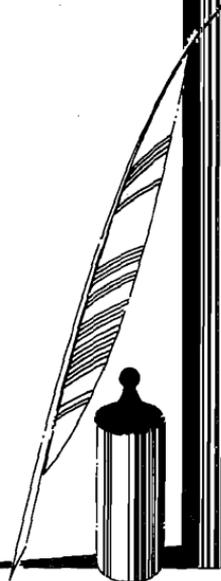
1. From three figures of speech show the oneness of the church.
2. Give two specific thoughts concerning walking worthily.
3. If we are walking with all lowliness and meekness what will be excluded from our characters?
4. Why is unity of life essential to unity of doctrine?
5. In what way is the Holy Spirit present in the church?
6. How can we obtain the one hope of the church?
7. What is the "one faith"?
8. Give two scriptural statements that give the purpose of baptism.
9. Show specifically how God is "over all, through all, and in all."
10. How can the church "build itself up"?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

WHAT IS THERE IN A

NAME?

- *DISCIPLES*
- *SAINTS*
- *BRETHREN*
- *CHRISTIANS*



LESSON TWENTY

INDIVIDUAL NAMES

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"The moving picture house is the church of the modern adolescent, the novel his Bible, and he turns to the tabloid newspaper for the lesson of the day."

—Dorothea Blande

In the American Review

What a tremendous responsibility is borne by every parent, by every Sunday School teacher, yea, by every Christian to teach by life and word the precepts of God's Word—the Bible. The Bible is the best seller, but is not the book the most read simply because it is the book most bought. There is an enemy who does not want this book read; he will do all he can in any way he can to keep us from its pages. This enemy is Satan, the enemy of all truth.

What is there in a name? There is all the meaning put there by the one who originated the name. We, as individuals in the Christian family, have been designated by God with various names. Here are the references that contain some of these names:

Acts 6:1; 9:13; 11:26; I Pet. 4:16; James 2:7.

Fill In The Blanks

1. The name most often applied to individuals in the New Testament is: _____ . It means: _____
2. A "disciple" is a _____
i.e. the leading thought behind the name is _____
3. The term "saint" as used in the New Testament meant _____
4. Christians were called "brethren" in the New Testament because: _____
5. The chief thought in the name "Christian" is _____
6. The name "Methodist" means _____
7. The name "Presbyterian" means _____
8. The name "Episcopalian" means _____
9. One name in the New Testament that has not been mentioned in

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

these questions is: It means:

10. The leading significance of the giving of any name to any individual is in:

LESSON DISCUSSION

Introduction

1. There is sin in the use of human names.

1. Human names exalt humans and Christ does not receive the preeminence the scriptures demand. Col. 1:18; 3:17; Matt. 17:1-8.
2. Human names cause and perpetuate division. I Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1-7.
3. In perpetuating division human names stand in the way of the answer to Christ's prayer in John 17:20-23.
4. Men of many denominations have spoken out against the sin of using human names:

(1) **Spurgeon:** "I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptists' name will soon perish; but let Christ's name last forever."

—*Memorial Library, Vol. 1, page 168*

(2) **Luther:** "I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. St. Paul (I Cor. 1-3) would not that any should call themselves of Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How then does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions; away with them all; and let us call ourselves only Christians after Him from whom our doctrine comes."

—*The Life of Luther by Stork, page 289*

(3) **John Wesley:** "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world, were forgot; that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples at the feet of the common Master, to hear His word, to imbibe His spirit and to transcribe His life into our own."

—*Preface, Par. 9 of Notes on the New Testament by John Wesley*

2. What we mean by the word "name."

1. Webster says, "that by which a person or thing is called or designated."
2. Thus we see that any proper noun and any descriptive common noun or phrase may be classified as a name.

- (1) Some proper nouns are: Jesus, Galilee, Samaria.
- (1) Some descriptive common nouns are: brother, laborer, student.
- (3) Some descriptive phrases are: the house of Simon, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James.

Our purpose in this study is to consider the names and the meaning of the names which are divinely applied to church members.

Answer These Questions

1. Could it not be possible to use a human name for the church or an individual group and yet exalt Christ? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. In Corinth, just what was the purpose of being "called after Paul"? "After Cephas"? (Why not use the name "Peter"? "After Apollos"?)
3. Was the use of the name "Christ" as used in I Corinthians 1:12 sectarian? Can we be sectarian in our use of the right name? If so, how?
4. What is the meaning of "carnal" as used in I Corinthians 3:1?
5. What were the sins involved in the use of human names? (cf. I Cor. 3:3.)
6. Is not the unity for which Christ prayed in John 17:21 only a spiritual unity and not unity in matters of doctrine or belief?
7. Will the prayer of Christ ever be answered? When? How?
8. Show just how the salvation of the world is related to the unity of belief.
9. How is Christ "one" with the Father? How does this relate to the unity of faith?
10. In what sense did Spurgeon use the term "Baptist"? Why did he say this?
11. Lutherans do not feel they are in violation of their founder's desire; how do they reason on this?
12. What is "a party," "a sect," "a denomination"?
13. Lutherans feel they are "Christians first and Lutherans second." What is your opinion of this?
14. Are you not a follower of Alexander Campbell in the same way that some others are of John Wesley?
15. What makes the use of a scriptural or human name sectarian?

* * * * *

The text of the following study on the names of individuals is taken from the book, "New Testament Names" by M. B. Ryan. This book was published by The Standard Publishing Company and is used by permission. The questions have been added by Don De Welt, author of this present book, "The Church In The Bible."

DISCIPLES

The term "disciple" is used seventy-three times in the Gospel of Matthew. In sixty-nine of these instances it is applied to the followers of Jesus. Mark uses it forty-four times, in only three of which he applies it to others than followers of Jesus. In the thirty-eight instances in which Luke uses it, only three refer to others; and in John's Gospel there are four applications of the term to others out of seventy-seven instances of the use of the word.

In the Book of Acts the word occurs thirty-one times, always designating followers of Christ. The Epistles do not use the term. The use of the term, "disciple" is peculiar to the records of the early period of the gospel; the time of heralding and inaugurating the Kingdom.

The commission, as recorded by Matthew, shows the great task of the church to be the making and training of disciples. There is wondrous breadth and scope to this work. The field of operation is "all the nations." Back of it is the authority of Christ: "all authority in heaven and on earth."

Associated with the command is a designation of a means to be used in the process: "Baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Appended to the commission is the gracious promise: "And lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the age." Matt. 28:19, 20.

It is plain from this that the relationship designated by the term "disciple" is of great significance in the religion of Jesus. It is a relation which not only existed in His personal ministry in Judea and Galilee, but which He intended should be perpetuated down to the end of the age, and realized among all the nations. It is a constituent element in the progress of His cause.

A "disciple" is one who is taught or trained. The term indicates relation of scholars to a teacher. The chief distinction about the use of the word in the New Testament is that almost universally it designates a relation to Jesus, as Teacher.

There were disciples of John the Baptist, and disciples of the Pharisees. But the "disciples" of the New Testament books were followers of the young Galilean Prophet, learners under Him, differentiated from all others by having a different Teacher. The term thus emphasized the thought of Christ as a TEACHER, and the relation of men to Him as scholars, being taught and trained under Him. Two great facts receive emphasis here:

1. THE NEED OF TEACHING IN THE THINGS OF GOD.

Ignorance of God is the fruitful mother of the sins which burden and destroy men. I Pet. 1:14. On the other hand, the hardening of the heart which sin induces, deepens our ignorance of God. Eph. 4:

18, 19; Col. 1:21. Man's life, in sin, swings in a vicious circle, from ignorance to iniquity, and from maelstrom ever converging toward the vortex of ruin.

To know God and His will, man needs to be taught. There are many things man can find out for himself. He can discover matter, its properties, its laws and its history by seaching. But spirit can only be known by revelation and God is Spirit.

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." Job 11:7-9.

Spirit is known by what it says, or by what it does. There are some things we can learn about God by viewing what He does. His works speak His praise. "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Psalm 19:1, 2.

"For the invisible things of His since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity." Rom. 1:20a.

The providences of God are also vocal. "Be still, and know that I am God," is said in view of what God is doing in the life of the world. "The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of Jehovah, what desolations He hath made in the earth. He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariots in the fire." Psalm 46:6, 8, 9. He leaves not Himself without witness, in that He does good and gives us from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. Acts 14:17.

But the book of nature, while it tells us there is a God, and that He is a Being of divine power, glorious and skillful and beneficent, does not tell us what He would have us do. Teachers are necessary to bring a knowledge of His will.

In every age God has supplied man's need for revelation. In visions and dreams, and through angel visits, in the early days, men learned God's mind toward them. Later, His will to His chosen people was codified and published through His great servant, Moses. Still later, other prophets came as teachers of God's will, expounding the law, revealing new truth, illuminating the pathway of duty.

And all the while, the eyes of men were turned anxiously toward the future, where it was believed the ultimate teacher in the things of God would appear, and where was to be realized that gracious promise: "All thy children shall be taught of Jehovah; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isa. 54:13.

This teaching of God is a necessity because the world is blinded. Men have, in many spheres, vastly broadened our knowledge by investigation. But it remains true that the world by its wisdom

knows not God. I Cor. 1:21. The humiliating fact stands, that many who have been heralded the loudest as discoverers and exponents of scientific truth, allege—and their allegation is a confession—that they cannot find God.

The microscope does not discover Him. The telescope does not reveal Him. The scalpel does not liberate Him. The drag-net does not confine Him. "And therefore," say the savants, "God is not."

Vain men! Why expect to find Him thus? Their agnosticism is not a disproof of God. It is a proof of their own lack of vision.

Over against this failure of men to discover God, and along with the fact that God has made Himself known through teachers, in all ages, stands another great fact for our consideration:

2. JESUS IS THE SUPREME TEACHER OF GOD.

It was to be expected that somewhere in man's history one should come who should be a Master in this, the highest of the philosophies; one who could make God known perfectly, one who should be an authoritative teacher of the will of God. Jesus Christ is that ultimate Teacher.

1. Jesus claims this place. John 14:6-10.
2. God assigns Him this place. "This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him." Mark 9:7.
3. The Holy Spirit asserts His fitness for it: "In whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." Col. 2:3.
4. The teaching of Jesus stands the test. We are conscious, as we hear Him, that we have at last found God.

And that satisfaction is not disturbed by the succession of events. Many of the philosophies of the ages have gone to the scrap-heap—More of them are on their way there. The teaching of Jesus gains in freshness and pertinency and power with the passage of time. So, to be a disciple of Jesus meets the need of the soul for adequate and ultimate instruction in the things of God.

Discipleship with Jesus has a twofold objective:

First; in the disciple himself, Jesus said to the people of His day, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31, 32. Here is a wonderful result.

Sin is error—missing the mark. Sin is begotten of falsehood, and mothered by ignorance. The truth is God's antidote for sin. Jesus is the Truth. He is the teacher of truth. His teaching is not alone in what He says, but in what He is. He is God manifest. He is the Word which, in the beginning, was with God and was God, and which became flesh and dwelt among men. John 1:1-14. He is full of grace and truth, and men behold His glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father. The words of Jesus are the truth of

God. "My teaching is not mine, but His that sent me." John 7:16. Men are challenged to test them, and prove whether or not they are from God.

"Abide in my word." That is true discipleship. That means living the Word. It is the road to knowledge. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is from God or whether I speak from myself." "Ye shall know the truth."

How true all this is to the very nature of things. We know by doing. Do we ever know without doing? Theoretical knowledge is knowledge of the theory. Practical knowledge is knowledge of the thing. Jesus is a teacher of life. When we live His teaching we understand Him; we know the truth.

Sin is bondage. "Everyone that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin." John 8:34. Sin is king in the sinner's life. It reigns in his mortal body. He is forced to obey the lusts thereof. He presents his members to it, as instruments of unrighteousness. The law of sin which is in his members wars against the law of his mind and brings him into captivity. Rom. 6:12, 13; 7:23. The truth makes him free.

Truth frees us from error. It is light, dispelling darkness and showing us all things in their true shapes. Truth frees us from ignorance; it is the mountain top, from which we can view the whole landscape, as against the crater where our vision is circumscribed, and where what we see is distorted. Truth lived, frees us from friction. The true disciple of Jesus no longer lives at cross-purposes with the Almighty. He wills to do the will of God, and life is attuned to the eternal harmony; it runs smoothly.

What an illumination is here. What a revolution. What a tremendous vantage-point for life. Now all the pregnant powers of life can bring forth their true issues. The noble aspirations of the soul are free now to mount the heights. Life is in its native soil. It can burgeon and bloom in beauty, and find its utmost fulfillment.

Second, in others, through the disciple. The disciple of Jesus is a channel. Through him, and on account of him, the blessing of Jesus is to pass on to others.

This is what Jesus calls fruit-bearing. The disciple of Jesus is a branch in the vine. The disciple is in Christ, as the branch is in the vine. The life of Jesus is in the disciple, as the life of the vine is in the branch. The blessing of Jesus for men comes through His disciples, as the fruit of the vine grows on the branches. The fruit is the only thing about the vine in which its life can be passed on to nourish and support other life. The ministry of the vine depends upon the branches.

The true test of discipleship is in giving Christ to others. Neither God nor Christ has any honor in a fruitless follower. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples." John 15:8.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Answer These Questions

1. What is the total number of times the term "disciple" is applied to followers of Christ; i.e. in the gospels?
2. What does the great commission have to do with the name disciple?
3. What relationship does the term suggest?
4. What is the "vicious circle" that suggests the need for teaching?
5. Why cannot man find God by searching?
6. Name two qualities of the nature of God discovered by viewing His works.
7. If God speaks to us through nature what reason is there for other teachers?
8. Name two ways God communicated His will in ages past.
9. What is the sad confession of many discoverers and men of learning?
10. What does agnosticism prove?
11. What expectation was fulfilled in the coming of Jesus?
12. Give three facts that assert the truth that Jesus is the ultimate teacher.
13. What will be the result of truth in the disciple? (cf. John 8:31, 32.)
14. What is sin? The source of begetting and birth?
15. Where do we fully know the truth?
16. Describe in your words the condition of slavery in the life of the sinner.
17. Describe the freedom in Christ in the analogy of the light and the mountain top.
18. Show three ways that the disciple is like a branch.

* * * * *

SAINTS

The name, or title, "saint" is of common occurrence in the New Testament. While the term "Christian" occurs but three times, this, and allied terms, occur many times.

The terms "sanctify," "sanctified," "sanctification," "saint," "sanctuary," are of kindred meaning. "Sanctify" describes the action; "sanctified," the completed act, or the result; "saint," the person; "sanctuary," the place; "sanctification," the condition or state.

To sanctify means to set apart, to separate, with especial reference to God and His service. Moses sanctified Aaron that he might minister unto God in the priest's office; set apart to that special work. He sanctified Aaron's garments also, and his sons and his sons' garments. Lev. 8:30.

The Tabernacle, and all that was therein, were sanctified, set

apart to one great use, a place for the worship of God. It became thus the sanctuary. Lev. 8:10; Ex. 25:8, 9. Aaron is called "the saint of Jehovah." Psalm 106:16.

In the New Testament the use of the term "saint" is found mostly in the writings of Paul and John, although Luke uses it in Acts, and it is used in the Epistle of Jude and the Epistle to the Hebrews. Paul addresses many of his Epistles to "the saints." They are at Rome and Corinth and Ephesus and Philippi and Colossae. And they are in his mind as he writes to the church in Thessalonica, and to his son, Timothy.

John's use of the word is found entirely in the Apocalypse. The kindred terms, as applied to persons and things, are used by almost all of the New Testament writers. The underlying thought is thus evidently an inseparable part of Christian teaching.

The name "saint" has the misfortune either to be misused, or unused, in modern religious practice. Most Christians do not use it at all in the New Testament sense. It is not a common designation of modern followers of Christ.

There are two uses of the term, in modern practice, which are unscriptural:

1. **The ritualistic use.** In this use of the term, a saint is one who has been canonized by the church. By some fiat, or ceremony, perhaps long after the person has died, he is raised to sainthood, decreed worthy of reverence, even of worship, so, we have a list, or "calendar," of "saints."

They have been selected from the great mass of believers, not always for their singular purity or nobility, it must be said; sometimes, because of some exploit which worked to the advantage of the church, though questionable enough in itself; sometimes for other reasons not more worthy. One here, another there, over the earth, and across the centuries, a considerable host in themselves, but a mere handful as compared with the whole multitude of those whom Christ has called.

And to do these favored ones honor, we have "saints' days," and feast-days, named for them. Churches and schools and monasteries and hospitals are given their names, and used as monuments to their memory.

2. **The denominational use.** A new movement starts in religious thought. The adherents of it wish to distinguish themselves from other Christians. They call themselves "saints," either with or without a qualifying phrase appended. The name thus becomes a distinctive name, a sectarian badge, a sort of fence delimiting the scope of the movement.

Neither of these is the sense in which the term is used in the Word of God. Both of them are mischievous departures, which pervert this most beautiful and significant word, and which, by their

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

reactions, drive the multitude of Christians from the comforting and edifying use of it which the Holy Spirit teaches.

The New Testament significance of the term is apparent. There is deep and splendid meaning in it.

SEPARATION

1. **Separation from the world.** The Christian is a "called out" man. His case is illustrated in Israel coming out of Egypt. It was a severe wrench that broke Israel loose from the land of his bondage. But he came out. He was separated from Egypt.

He was separated by the blood on the door, shutting Egypt out from him, shutting him in with God; by the going "out" under Moses' leadership; by the rolling sea when it had returned to its strength.

The whole process of deliverance, from the first message of Moses to the nation of slaves, on to the moment when the song of triumph rose from the lips of a free people, was a sanctification, a separation of Israel.

So the Christian has heard the call of Christ. It may be hard for him to let go of the world. But Christ lays hold on him with the power of heaven and breaks him loose. He turns away from his old life, under the leadership of Christ.

He breaks his relations with the world. He goes out from it. He passes to the shores of freedom in Christ. He is still in the world, but not of it. He has come into the place of separation. He dwells apart.

Constant emphasis is laid upon this separation of the Christian from the world, in the New Testament. It is everywhere assumed that his break with the world is complete and irrevocable. He must not think of going back—cannot, indeed, even for a moment, without peril. He must not think of bringing forward the old life into the new. The divorce must be complete and final.

The old man must be put off with his doings. Col. 3:9. There must be no conforming to this age; no fashioning one's self after the former lusts. Rom. 12:2; I Pet. 1:14. The works of darkness must be cast off. Rom. 13:12. There must be no provision made for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Rom. 13:14. The Christian is dead to sin, dead to the old life. Rom. 6:2. He is crucified unto the world, and the world is crucified unto him. Gal. 6:14.

It is a vast change. But it is a real one. It is as though the world, once everything to him, and become nothing. For him, "old things are passed away." II Cor. 5:17.

So his separation is, first of all, a separation from the world. But it is more than this. It is, second, separation to Christ. It involves not only divorce, but union. Those who hear the call of Christ, and come out from the world, "turn to the Lord." I Thess. 1:9, 10.

It is not simply a change of location that takes place in sanctification. The "saint" has changed masters. He has entered into a new relationship, a new fellowship.

This, also, is emphasized in the act of turning. When Israel went down into the sea on the way from Egypt, it was a transition. Israel was "baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." I Cor. 10:1, 2. Thenceforth, Moses was their lawgiver, leader, ruler. He stood to them as Jehovah. The baptism in the sea committed them to him irrevocably. They could not go back into Egypt. They were separated unto Moses, under God.

A like significant transition comes to men in turning from the world to Christ. As the Israelites were baptized unto Moses, so the Christian is said to be baptized unto Christ. Rom. 6:3. In Christian baptism there is a renunciation of the world, and a commitment of the life to Christ. Col. 2:11-13. No longer is life to be self-centered or self-determined. Henceforth Christ is King and Counselor, and life is to be determined by Him. And right gloriously is it determined by Him.

First of all, He gives us an adequate motive power. The Holy Spirit is the gift of Christ to the Christian. The whole process of breaking away from the world, of coming into Christ, and of being endowed with this motive power for the new life, is concisely stated in the first gospel sermon, where we would expect to find it: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38. That gift guarantees to the Christian a sufficient power for the high task to which he has been called.

The Holy Spirit is, first of all, the safeguard against the encroaches of the old nature. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death. Rom. 8:2. Our life is newly placed. While still in the body, we are not in the "flesh," but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in us. Rom. 8:9.

It is a familiar thought: Christ in us—we in Christ; the Holy Spirit in us—we in the Holy Spirit. That ensures the victory over the old life. The flesh cannot come back while we live in that union. "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Gal. 5:16. The victory is complete.

But the Spirit is more than the barrier against the old life. He is also the fountain of the new. He guards us; but He also enables us. Through Him life is transformed and the impossible becomes the real. How varied, and how suggestive, the figures by which the Spirit's ministry is set forth. He is a tree, rooting in our hearts, sending forth His branches, bearing fruit.

And such fruit! "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control;" things against which "there is no law." Gal. 5:22. He is a Guide, and, pilgrims that we

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

are in an unfriendly world, we "walk after the Spirit," and are safe. Rom. 8:4-11. He is an Intercessor. And when we know not how to pray as we ought, "the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26.

He is a Witness, assuring us of our standing with God, and keeping before our vision the inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and unfading, which wins us from the corrupt and perishing baubles of the world. Rom. 8:16, 17.

He is the Sanctifier, making good what He was already begun. II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2.

He is the Strengthenener, enabling us to take deep root, and to "be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled unto all the fulness of God." Eph. 3:18, 19.

With this motive power, the "saint" is expected to make progress in the new life. The obligation for this growth into the new is no less emphasized in the New Testament than the divorce from the old. The Christian is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 13:14.

He is to be transformed by the renewing of His mind. Rom. 12:2. He is to walk in the Spirit. Gal. 5:16. He is to put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth. Eph. 4:24. He is to put on the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand. Eph. 6:11-17.

He is to add all diligence, and supply virtue and knowledge and self-control and patience and godliness and brotherly kindness and love, until these things abound in his life, and make him not idle or unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, making his calling and election sure and his fall from the new way impossible, and assuring him an abundant entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. II Pet. 1:5-11.

Such is the New Testament saint. Such are all true Christians. The New Testament makes no distinction. It knows no "calendar" of saints, selecting one here and another there, and excluding the great mass of believers. It knows no sect of "saints" shut off from other believers by peculiar doctrines and practices.

Those who are Christians are saints—all of them. The one term is coextensive with the other. They all have been separated from the world. They all have been set apart to Christ. They all have received the Holy Spirit.

Sainthood is the normal status of the Christian. The name, or title, "saint" involves an experience which is common to all, and signifies a state into which all have come. Some important considerations deserve mention in connection with the New Testament signification of this name.

1. Saint-making is a divine prerogative. No man can make a saint. No conclave of men can make a saint, no matter by what imposing name they may call themselves. All that any man can do toward making saints is, as did Peter and John and Paul, to herald God's message to men to come out from the world and to come to Christ.

The power that breaks men loose, that pries them out of the old life, that starts them along the way out from the world, that separates them from their sins and joins them to Christ, is divine power. We may call it the power of the Holy Spirit who reveals God; or the power of the Word of God which the Spirit reveals—the gospel, which Paul calls “the power of God unto salvation” to all who believe; Romans 1:16, it is all the same. It is not the power of man, but the power of God, which separates men—makes them saints.

Thus it is everywhere set forth in the Word. Jesus prays that His Father may sanctify His disciples in the truth. John 17:17. Paul says that he was appointed a minister of Jesus Christ unto the nations, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Rom. 15:16.

He says to the Corinthians that they were washed, sanctified, justified in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. I Cor. 6:11. He says of the Thessalonian Christians that God chose them from the beginning in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. II Thess. 2:13. Peter calls the Christians to whom he writes “elect . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” I Pet. 1:1, 2.

Paul prays for the Thessalonians that God may sanctify them wholly; that spirit, soul and body may be preserved entire, without blame, at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. I Thess. 5:23. He says of the Corinthians that they are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints. I Cor. 1:1. He tells the Ephesians that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blemish. Eph. 5:25-27.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that Christ, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered without the gate; and that Christ who sanctifieth and His people who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. 2:11; 13:12.

Thus, everywhere, we are reminded that sainthood is a divine gift, a status accomplished by God for man, when man hears the call and turns from the world to Christ. He who has not been made a saint thus cannot be made a saint by fiat of man. He who has been

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

made a saint thus is a saint despite what men may say to the contrary. The pretensions of men that they can determine who shall be saints are empty boasts, and their processes are crude impostures, by whomsoever put forth.

2. Saints can be made out of very common stuff. It is not necessary for a man to have fought a battle, or builded a cathedral, or gone on a pilgrimage, to become a saint. It is not even necessary for him to be rich or learned or powerful.

Paul wrote to "them that are sanctified, called to be saints," at Corinth. He says of them that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called; but that the foolish and weak and base and despised things were chosen. They had not even been good. Some of them had been unspeakably bad.

We speak with bated breath the terms by which he describes their past lives. But he says: "Ye were washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified, in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." I Cor. 6:9-11.

What is necessary to sainthood is first of all a broken spirit and a contrite heart; a feeling of our need; a recognition of our lost condition; and a belief in Jesus Christ as Redeemer. Any man can be made a saint who will give up the world and turn to the Lord.

Answer These Questions

1. Give three terms of kindred meaning to saint.
2. What is the "sanctuary"?
3. What is the meaning of the word "sanctify"?
4. Give three things sanctified by Moses.
5. Give three places in the New Testament where the word "saint" is used.
6. What is the misfortune of the word in religious practice today?
7. What is the ritualistic use of the word "saint"?
8. Why are certain men chosen to be saints?
9. What is lacking in the ritualistic use of the term "saint"?
10. Explain the denominational use of the term "saint."
11. What are the errors of these two misuses of the name?
12. What picture is presented in the word "separation"?
13. Give two expressions from the word that describes our separation. (cf. Col. 3:9; Rom. 12:2; I Pet. 1:14; Rom. 13:14.)
14. What are the two aspects of separation, i.e. the positive and negative elements?
15. How is the picture of the crossing of the Red Sea used by Paul in I Corinthians 19:1, 2?
16. Give two ways in which life is determined by Christ.
17. In what way is the Holy Spirit a safeguard against the encroachment of the old nature?

18. Give two figures used in describing the Holy Spirit's work—explain each.
19. What wins us from "the perishing baubles of the world"?
20. How can we make "our calling and election sure"?
21. If sainthood is the common experience of all Christians, how is it we do not see more evidence of it?
22. Who makes saints? How?
23. Give two scriptural evidences that all Christians are saints or sanctified.
24. What evidence is there that saints are made of "very common stuff"?
25. What is the first essential requisite to becoming a saint?

* * * * *

BRETHREN

The name "brethren" is used with notable frequency by New Testament writers. It is applied to the followers of Jesus in thirty instances in the Book of Acts. Paul uses it copiously. It appears in nearly all his Epistles: in some of them with great frequency. James and Peter and John, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, all use it with more or less freedom. It is one of the most largely used names of Christ's people.

The use of this name emphasizes the democracy of the Christian estate. It is a reminder of at least two things of great significance:

1. The Equality of Christians.

Jesus says: "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, even He who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Matt. 23:8-11.

Christians are sons of God. Involved in sonship is brotherhood. There is one God, and He is our Father. There is one family, and all God's children are in that family. All are equal in their relationship to the Father, and in their status as members of His family.

This is the meaning of those prohibitions: "Be not called Rabbi, masters," etc. "Call no man your father on earth." These restrictions relate, of course, to spiritual things. Here equality is to prevail.

The Christian is on a new plane in this regard. Under the Jewish dispensation there were ranks and orders and classes: priests, Levites, and the people. Out in the world, men strive after dominion, after honor and glory from their fellowmen; and there are classes and ranks and offices, which separate men, and distinguish them, and maintain inequalities among them.

Here it is not to be so. Before God, and in relation to God's

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

favor and blessing, one is not greater than another. And in the Christian relationship one is not to be, or to aspire to be, greater than another save, it may be, in service.

Christians have one Teacher. They may have many "teachers" but they have one TEACHER; not a man—not one of themselves, to be honored and revered above his brethren, but Christ.

And they are all alike disciples of Christ—in His school. They have one Father; not a man, to be feared and obeyed and pleased, thus setting him off from the mass of his brethren as being holier or more mighty than they. But, God, the Father in heaven, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and of all His followers, whose life has been given us in the new birth is the One to whose family we all belong.

They have one Master; not any man who has been set over them to command or to punish. But Christ, the Lord, to whom God has given all authority in heaven and on earth, and to whom all alike are responsible. So, the equality of the children in the family is guarded and maintained.

One cannot but note the contrast between this ideal of Jesus for His people, and that which is embodied in the systems which men invent and perpetuate. The "religions" of the world are largely priestly religions. This is true of what we term the pagan faiths. They separate men into classes, priestly and lay. The priestly classes are ranked in hierarchies with ascending scales of dignity. They are not democracies—but imperialisms.

There are systems claiming the Christian name which notoriously embody this principle. Even the newer cults, which in this day are springing up so rapidly, almost all propose some earthly head—some supposed superior person to whom all others are to pay deference; with more or less of the hierarchical in the relations of the members to each other, and to the head. There grows out of this, distinctions among the people, and inequalities of privilege and power.

How foreign all this is to the spirit and ideal of Jesus, is at once apparent. The Christian community is a family. There are no slaves here, no masters, no favorites. There is no one who has a right to lord it over others. All are alike under the Father's love and care.

All are under the authority of the Elder Brother. All have equal access to the Father, through Jesus Christ, who is the "Apostle and High Priest of our confession." Heb. 3:1. All are equally priests of God, under Him. I. Pet. 2:9. No man has any power or right to stand between his brother and the throne, either to secure him or to deny him any blessing. All spiritual privilege and blessing is in the power of the Head of the family.

Every member has, in his own proper person, free access to it,

through the new and living way that has been opened up. Heb. 10:19-23.

What a clumsy anachronism are all priesthoods and priestly systems! What a monstrous usurpation, for any man to place himself between his brethren in Christ and the throne of God, as the channel through which the divine favor must be sought. What a recurrence to outgrown things, and discredited things, for any class of men to pose as the indispensable dispensers of God's blessings. What a blindness to the realities of the redemption which Christ has wrought, for His people to hand over to a pretentious class the high prerogatives and priceless privileges which Christ has made free to all.

"All ye are brethren." That is the charter of liberties to the Christian community. It is the sentence of doom upon every priestly claimant and system.

Nothing is more vital to Christian welfare than the preservation of this Christian democracy under Christ. The hierarchical spirit is intrusive and persistent. The beautiful simplicity of the early Christian relationship was soon lost in the impertinent encroachments of the priestly ambition. All that Jesus forbade in that memorable prohibition quoted, came into practice among those who still professed to be following Him.

And from that day until the present, on a wide scale, the name of Christ has been called upon systems in which Christians have been compelled to call their brethren "Rabbi," and "Father," and "Master," and where those who would be greatest have had, also, as their ambition, to be served rather than to serve.

Many and notable have been the protests against this violation of the Christian compact; and worthy have been the successes in breaking the impious yoke and coming back into the liberty with which Jesus Christ has set His people free. But it is an instructive fact that within every such movement there springs up speedily the old lies, that some are to be above others in the Christian relationship.

And that peril must be vigilantly guarded against, or those who have been made freemen in Christ will be again entangled in a yoke of bondage. Gal. 5:1.

2. Fraternity.

Brotherhood lived! It is not easily achieved. The old life is a life of rivalry. Sin casts men into cross-purposes with one another. The spirit of brotherhood is killed. Individualism runs riot. "Enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings," are among the works of the flesh. Gal. 5:20. Paul recalled his old life and its bitter antagonisms: "For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." Titus 3:3.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

This spirit gets into all phases of life. Business becomes a selfish competition—an economic war. Politics is an ambitious rivalry. "Society" is a herd-egotism.

The child of God is in the midst of all these tendencies to social disintegration. He has been reared in the midst of them, has been molded by them, and is inevitably involved in them in many ways. It is a tremendous task to ignore them, to rise above them, to deny them. Christians find it hard to be rivals in business, and fellows in religion; to be antagonists in politics, and fellow-helpers in the Kingdom of God; to move in different social classes, and meet on terms of equality in the Christian circle. The competitive instinct dies hard. The class spirit is intrusive. The old egotism is constantly imperiling the new brotherhood.

But brotherhood must be lived. "All ye are brethren." How constantly and pointedly the Holy Spirit keeps the obligations of brotherhood before us. How direct and withering His blows at the selfish spirit. How illuminating and inspiring His directions and exhortations to altruism.

The motive and the process of this brotherly life are alike set forth. "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another." Rom. 12:10. What an entire reversal of the old procedure; And this love is not to be cold and apathetic, a mere conventionalism.

This love is to be a flame in which all unbrotherliness will be burned out and all brotherly ministry promoted. "Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins; using hospitality one to another without murmuring; according as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." I Pet. 4:8-10.

The selfish and uncharitable judgments by which we rank our fellowmen in relation to ourselves, are all smitten by this new outlook. They are our equals, and we are all under God. "Why dost thou judge thy brother? Or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God." Rom. 14:10.

Love allows only one judgment about our brother—this: "That no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling." Rom. 14:13. And, if perchance our brother fall, love sets before us one duty: "Ye who are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself lest thou also be tempted." The brother's heavy load is our load also, because he is our brother. There is only one thing for us to do about it: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. 6:1, 2.

As has been said, this is not easy. We can scarcely say that, even as Christians, it "comes natural" to us. It is a life that must be cultivat-

ed. The "new man" is to be "put on." And if takes a good deal of "putting on" to get the life fitted to us so that we wear it naturally and easily. But it must be persisted in. There is no other way to realize brotherhood. And brotherhood must be realized.

"Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also also ye were called in one body: and be ye thankful." Col. 3:12-15.

And how that spirit of brotherliness goes out in mutual ministry to the brethren; drawing from the great fountain of spiritual refreshment and bearing it to one another in vessels of service, as God has given to each.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God." Col. 3:16.

And all this is to be done with the thought ever present of the common relationship of all, to Christ as Lord, and to God as Father, the source of all blessing. "And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Col. 3:17.

This is to be the common family life of Christians. Not a special class within the Christian community, is thus obligated. It is the family spirit, and is to be cultivated by every member. "Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humble minded; not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing." I Pet. 3:8, 9.

What marvels this new spirit effects in human society! Had the world ever witnessed anything like what transpired soon after these new relationships began to be announced and established? See that "community of goods" which spontaneously took the place of individual ownership in the Jerusalem church. What did it signify? For one thing, this: That Jews of all ranks and classes, from priesthood to proletariat, from employer and proprietor to day laborer and pauper, were fused together in a brotherhood of the Spirit, where love, not blood or racial interest, was the bond, and where there was no longer "I" as against "thou," but all were one in Him whom their hearts had accepted as Lord.

See that other phenomeon, more wonderful still, where Gentiles, out on the wide world-field, took thought of needy and suffering Jews in the little country of Judea, and gave joyfully and liberally of their substance to relieve their distress. Was there ever more

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

noble giving than that described by Paul when he tells of the Macedonian Christians? How that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality?

They gave according to their power, yea and beyond their power. They gave of their own accord. They besought Paul with much entreaty in regard to his offering, that he would take it and administer it for them. II Cor. 8:1-4. And all this for people whom they had never seen, perhaps. Not only so—for people of a race that were despised by Gentiles. There has been no race hatred sharper, or contempt more withering, in history, than that which existed in many instances between those two races at that time.

What is the secret of this? One thing: They had given their own-selves to the Lord, as disciples of Christ and children of the Father. And the logical sequence of that was that they should give themselves unto one another—"to us," Paul says, for this service to their brethren, "through the will of God." II Cor. 8:5.

Here is an unparalleled situation. Jew and Gentile, bond and free, rich and poor, in one fellowship, loving one another—brothers! There was no hate nor scorn too strong in the old life. Here there is "one spirit"; they love as brethren.

This fact, accomplished in that early day, made possible and pertinent such unprecedented announcements as that there was no longer Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but that Christ is all, and in all, and all are one in Him. Col. 3:11. It made fitting such utterances as the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians and the First Epistle of John.

And this fact, that men love one another as brethren, possible in any age, is the hope of the world. Hatred and injustice, oppression and warfare, race prejudice and class pride, will pass away, and peace and good will prevail only in the degree in which men become children of God and come into the spirit of brotherhood in Christ. There is no peace pact, save this, that will stand against the selfish instincts of men.

Answer These Questions

1. Specify the frequency of the use of the name of "brethren."
2. In what two ways are we equal as brethren?
3. If we are to call no man "father" how could we use the term in reference to our parent?
4. The Christian is on a new plane, different than either the Jewish dispensation or the world—how so?
5. In what sense are we not not to call anyone "teacher"?

6. In what sense is the term "father" used by the Roman Catholic Church? How is the use of this word justified?
7. What is the one common characteristic of "the religions of the world"?
8. What is a "hierarchy"?
9. What happens when a human head is set up?
10. In what matters are we equal before God? (State the purpose of a priest.)
11. In what sense are we all priests before God? (cf. I Pet. 2:9.)
12. What are the "high prerogatives and priceless privileges" which Christ has made free to all?
13. What is the meaning of the word "fraternity"?
14. What is the matter with "individualism"?
15. How are business, politics, and society described as they exist in the world?
16. What is the multiple problem the Christian faces with other Christians as brothers?
17. What are the motives and processes of the brotherly life?
18. What is the one judgment allowed by love? (cf. Rom. 14:13.)
20. Explain how love is "the bond of perfectness."
21. What was one of the effects of the true family spirit in the church of the first century?
22. How was the oneness of brotherhood described in this lesson?
23. What wonderful example of giving is seen in the early church? Why is it considered so wonderful?
24. What is the logical sequence of giving ourselves to the Lord?
25. What is God's "peace-pact"?

* * * * *

CHRISTIANS

It has come to pass that the name applied to Christ's followers least frequently in the New Testament, is the most popular and universal now used of them.

There are three instances of the use of the name "Christian" in the New Testament. Luke says that the name originated in Antioch in Syria, after Paul had come to help Barnabas in the work there. Sometime during that great year in the life of that young church, "the disciples were called Christians." Acts 11:26.

There is not agreement among Bible students as to the origin of the name. It is not a vital matter in the present discussion. If it was given by the apostles, it would bear the credentials of apostolic inspiration and authority. If it was given by outsiders, and adopted by the church under apostolic leadership, the adoption was an authoritative sanction of its use.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

The pertinence of the name rests not so much upon its source, as upon its fitness. The form of the name would indicate at once to the people of that day the meaning which it still bears—"followers of Christ." It is often pointed out that in its construction it represents a significant conjuncture in spiritual things. "Christ" is Greek. It is the equivalent of the Hebrew "Messiah."

The termination "ian" is Latin, signifying "followers of." The name thus represents the three great divisions of the human family, as well as the three great languages. As the superscription over the cross was written in the three languages, Hebrew, Latin and Greek, so this name represents them. The elements of cosmopolitanism are in the word "Christian."

The second instance of the New Testament use of the name is most interesting. Paul had passed through most of his great ministry as an apostle. He was just completing a two years' imprisonment in Caesarea, and was awaiting passage to Rome, to have his case heard, on appeal, before the Imperial court. Chained to a guard, he stood before King Agrippa, and, in the presence of a noted assembly, representing the height of worldly wealth and power, told the story of his conversion to Christ.

It was at a dramatic moment in that recital that King Agrippa said, perhaps in a tone of contempt: "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian."

Paul does not use the name in his reply. But he acknowledges the relation. "I would to God that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds," is a confession that he is himself what he would have these others to be—a Christian. Acts 26:28, 29.

The one other instance of the use of the name was years after this. Persecutions were arising against the followers of Jesus, and perils were thickening about the groups which here and there professed His name. Peter, the rock-man, writes to his brethren, widely scattered in the Gentile world, not to think it strange concerning the fiery trial which was among them.

Christ had suffered for them; therefore they might rejoice to be partakers of His sufferings. It is a blessed thing to be reproached in the name of Jesus. It would be a shame for any of them to suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters. But if any man suffered as a Christian—that was no shame. It was a glorious thing "to glorify God in this name." I Pet. 4:12-16.

It is evident that, at the time Peter wrote, the name had come to be worn generally by the followers of Jesus, of both Jewish and Gentile peoples, and that it was recognized by the outside world as their distinctive appellation.

What does the name "Christian" signify in the life of him who wears it?

There is, perhaps, no vantage point, from which to study this name, that is equal to that afforded by the life of Paul. He was a Christian. He evidently shared the name when it was first used. Late in his wonderful career he proudly confessed it. Can we doubt that at the end of his course he still gloried in it? Can we take him as an example, to find out its meaning?

First of all, in the life of Paul, the name, Christian, stood for a **conviction**. Paul had come to a new conviction about Jesus. Once he had repudiated Jesus. He was now convinced that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God. As such, all the hopes of Israel were fulfilled in him. Not only so, all the needs of the world were met in Him. The great facts of the gospel were involved; The death, the burial, the resurrection, of Jesus; His divine Sonship! His exaltation and Lordship; His preeminence and absoluteness.

How Paul, in his teaching, dwells on these things. How striking the terms by which he sets them forth. These are to him, the supreme facts. He contemplates Jesus on the throne. All facts of history are subordinate to that, in interest and importance. All things else are of significance only in relation to this exalted Christ.

This is evidently the faith of the early disciples. It is the burden of Peter's sermon on Pentecost, and of Stephen's momentous address. The essence of apostolic preaching was "Christ," and the things of His Kingdom. The "Word" which the disciples went everywhere preaching when persecution scattered them, was this Christhood of Jesus, this divinity and pre-eminence of their Lord. The "Way" into which men and women entered in response to that message was the way of surrender and service to the exalted Jesus.

This it was that must have struck that giddy, pleasure-loving, populace in Antioch; this presence in the preachers, and in their converts, of a new and surprising conviction—a conviction that thrilled them, that clarified their thought, and gripped their conscience, and subdued their wills, until they were moved into complete divorcement from their old life, into supreme devotion to the new.

It was an amazing thing that Jews were giving up their immemorial customs, for which they had hitherto been willing to suffer ridicule, and even death; that Gentiles were forsaking the altars of their fathers and their countrymen; and that both were meeting and being bound together in a unity of conviction.

And the obvious rallying point was Christ; Christ, whom these new preachers were heralding; Christ, whom, as Jesus of Nazareth, the Jewish people had repudiated; Christ, whom Gentiles had nailed to the cross. Now Jews and Gentiles were receiving Him; Jews as the long-looked-for Messiah; Gentiles, as the Lord and Saviour.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Jews and Gentiles, as the Son of the living God. The Christ was supreme with these people. They were Christians. The conviction of the Christ was their distinguishing characteristic.

It was so with Paul. There is no accounting for his conversion, nor for his life, except as this conviction is considered. Great lives do not grow from shallow roots. Mighty streams are not gathered from meager and spasmodic fountains. Paul was not carried, like driftwood, on the bosom of the tide.

He was rather like a mighty steamship, plowing its way straight toward its port in the teeth of the fiercest and most contrary gales. Nothing but an overwhelming conviction could have moved and sustained him. It was this conviction—the Christhood and divinity and preeminence of Jesus.

That conviction is always an essential in Christian faith. Men talk of being "Christians" without Christ. That is to say, they will deny Jesus that place and character which apostolic teaching gives Him. They will, they say, go back of the apostles to Jesus Himself, and see in Him simply the best and the greatest of men. But nothing divine about Him, save what is latent in every man, and possible to him—no miraculous birth; no significance in His death, save devotion to a great cause—one of many martyrdoms; no real and actual resurrection from the grave; no supreme exaltation as universal Lord; just **one** of the great ones—the greatest **yet**—but not exclusive, and probably not final. **This** faith men will profess, and still claim to be "Christians."

This is not a picture of the Christian of the New Testament. It is not the Christian Saul of Tarsus was. This is a spurious "Christian," who does not deserve the name.

In the second place, the name "Christian" stood, in Paul's case, for a **cause**. Paul had espoused the cause of Christ. With his whole heart he had espoused it. He will willing to live, and to die, for it. It was in pursuance of this great purpose that he came before Agrippa. He had been arrested and imprisoned as a preacher of Jesus. His appearance before Agrippa was as a prisoner of the Lord—for the gospel's sake. His whole life was given up to the one great purpose of proclaiming Christ as King, and leading men to acknowledge Him.

This is not surprising. Any real conviction must find expression. It is one of the axioms of psychology that an impulse, a conviction, an ideal, denied expression, dies out. That fact is being recognized more and more, and accounts for many significant changes in methods of education. It is this, too, which lies behind the positive requirements of revealed religion. The Old Bible writers were scientific educators, guided to this by the Spirit of God. The pilgrimages of Israel, up to Jerusalem; the great feasts; the sacrifices; the congregational rejoicing—all these were expressions of the

national emotion and conviction, and reverence for Jehovah, which otherwise would have dwindled and disappeared. These opportunities for expression stimulated and kept fresh the fires of faith and devotion. They fixed and fostered the religious spirit and consciousness, and contributed thus to the maintenance and growth of the religious life of the people.

The ordinances and institutions of the Christian religion, also, have their reason in this. Baptism gives opportunity for the conviction concerning Christ, and the impulse to receive Him, to express themselves. It is a point where the individual can, by a conscious act of obedience and self-surrender, commit himself once for all to Christ.

The assemblies of the believers, the public worship, the Lord's Supper, central in the worship as a memorial institution, serve to give an outlet and fresh stimulus to the faith of the heart and the impulse to confess and honor Christ as Lord of the life. And the continuous service to which Christ calls men is a perpetual strengthener of conviction.

This espousal of the cause of Christ is a necessary part of the content of the name "Christian." The conviction without the cause would be abortive and meaningless. Christ is not simply an idea. Christ is a person. And He is in the supreme personal relation to life. The supreme exigency of life is to get itself adjusted to Him. The supreme task of the Christian is to proclaim Christ's right to rule in life, and to secure the recognition of that right on the part of man.

The name "Christian" can never mean less than this to the true disciple of Jesus. It stands for all the enthusiasm of the recruit, for all the eagerness of the invader, for all the determination of the crusader, for all the imperial outlook and desire of the world conqueror. It can never meet its full significance in human life until Jesus Christ is acknowledged as universal sovereign.

It was a great issue that thrust itself to the front between Agrippa and Paul. Agrippa was a king, he held his kingship by appointment of the emperor of Rome. In him, as vassal, there was represented the might and the glory of the kingdoms of this world. All that the devil offered to Jesus in the wilderness was here embodied before Paul.

Paul stood for the entire reversal of all this. He was an obscure prisoner, chained by an iron chain to a creature of this mighty world-power. He was, perhaps, pale from long imprisonment, and poorly clad. He was without friends and surrounded by watchful and implacable enemies. But he stood there in the presence of royalty, and in the midst of the fashion and power of this world, and claimed the right of Jesus the Christ to be King. It was Christ a-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

gainst Agrippa—against the emperor and the empire—and Paul was His champion. Nothing more dramatic has ever occurred.

Yet, the essence of that is inherent in the person and posture of every man who, at any time, worthily wears the name "Christian." The same issue is a stake—Christ against the world. The Christian has as his supreme cause, to make Christ King.

But, finally, the name "Christian" in Paul's life meant a **character**. This is its crowning significance. Conviction and cause issue in character, as root and branches issue in fruit. This is their logical terminus, as it is also their necessary complement. It is the final term in a trinity, that completes the meaning of this new name.

This is the phase of it that is emphasized in Peter's use of the word. The antithesis there is striking—murderer, thief, evil-doer, meddler, vs. Christian. It is character that is here contrasted.

Here is where the supreme significance of Christianity was seen in the ancient world. Gentile life was largely a reign of lust, where impulse and passion were the determining factors. Even the Jew had as his motto, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

Jesus taught another doctrine. He taught purity, self-restraint, brotherliness, forgiveness, love, self-sacrifice, service for others. Matt. 5:38-42. And He lived what He taught. No man could be a true disciple of Jesus, a Christian, without attempting to make that teaching practical in his life. No man could consistently espouse and champion that teaching without an honest effort to live it himself.

And Jesus made it possible for men to live it. He took men into vital relations with Himself—made them His friends, made them sharers in His life. So there came into the lives of His followers an amazing transformation. The old man was gone, with the lusts thereof—put away—shamed out of place by this intimate fellowship with Christ. There was a new man, created of God in Christ Jesus.

The world saw the spectacle of men who had once been slaves of lust living pure lives; of men who had long been known as hateful, and hating one another, living together in love. Men who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, had been washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of God. I Cor. 6:11.

In the purlieus of Corinth and Antioch and Rome, there shone a new light. Over against the wreck and ruin which sin works, there stood a new type of character. The world had no counterpart to it. There was but one possible source to which it could be attributed—Christ. These men were "Christians."

A change as revolutionary had come upon Paul. As he looked back upon his past life he saw himself as the chief of sinners. I Tim. 1:15. His sins were not of the same type as was true of many of

whom he speaks, but they were as real, and perhaps more deadly. He was an "unbeliever," and unbelief is the all-comprehensive sin. He was a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious. I Tim. 1:13.

He had cherished threatening and slaughter in his heart, and had breathed them out against the disciples of the Lord. Acts 9:1. In potency, he was a murderer. Matt. 5:21, 22. He ravaged the church in Jerusalem, forcing his way into homes, and dragging men and women forcibly to prison. Acts 8:3. He punished the disciples repeatedly in all the synagogues. He strove to make them blaspheme. He was exceedingly mad against them—frenzied. He persecuted them even unto strange cities. Acts 26:11.

If hatred and vindictiveness and cruelty, and the murderous passion, are ruinous to character, then Paul's past had been as bad as he thought it. Beside these major passions of the natural heart, the lower lusts, though shameful and destructive, are of smaller weight.

Over against this forbidding picture we have to set that life which he lived by the faith of the Son of God. What a picture he gives us of the inner workings of his heart. What a life-story he tells. What a revelation of character, newly formed, transformed, under Christ.

Who can sum up the significance of "gaining Christ," and being "found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith:

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death, if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead." Phil. 3:9-11. Was not that a wonderful change in the man who once disbelieved in Christ, and hated Him and His people?

And what could exceed the intensity with which he devoted himself to this new life, this Christliness of conduct? It absorbed him. Like the contestant in the games, he threw his last ounce of effort into it. It was the "one thing" of his life—"forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13, 14.

What a changed attitude toward men, we see. The cruel persecutor and destroyer has become the eager and sacrificial savior. He would willingly sacrifice his own hopes, for the sake of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. Rom. 9:3. Though he was free, he brought himself under bondage to all that he might gain them. To the weak, he became weak, that he might gain the weak. He became all things to all men, that he might by all means save some. And all this he did for the gospel's sake, that he might be a joint partaker thereof. I Cor. 9:19-22.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

What does it mean when a man, so callous to others' suffering as he once was, could say: "We were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children: even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us"? I Thess. 2:7, 8. Or one so imperiously dominant of the consciences of others, saying: "Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for ever more, that I cause not my brother to stumble." I Cor. 8:13.

We are driven to the conviction that he spoke the truth when he said: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Gal. 2:20. Here is the ultimate meaning for Paul of his being a Christian.

So must it ever be—if "Christian" is to have its full significance for life. Christ's religion does not reach its logical conclusion in us until the Christ-character is reproduced. This is the Christian religion; viz., "Christ formed in you;" Gal. 4:19. "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. 1:27. This is the meaning and the use of all that goes before.

If we are in the school of Christ, shut up to Him as teacher, it is that we may learn how to come into this perfect life. If we are enlisted in the cause of Christ, and called to do battle for Him, it is that we may work that knowledge into soul-fiber in the conflict. No Christianity is complete until it issues in likeness to Christ. Then is a man a Christian in reality.

Examination Twenty

1. What are the two opinions as to the origin of the name Christian? Which is yours? Why?
2. Show how the superscription on the cross and the name "Christian" are alike.
3. In what attitude of heart did Agrippa use the name "Christian"?
4. In what sense was the term used by the apostle Peter? (cf. I Pet. 4:12-16.)
5. What was the first significance suggested as the meaning of the name Christian as it related to Paul?
6. Name two things involved in Paul's conviction concerning Jesus.
7. Acts 8:4 states that the disciples went everywhere preaching "the Word." What was the content or meaning of this message?
8. How were the will, thoughts and consciences of the Christians involved in the conviction concerning Jesus?
9. How was Christ the rallying point for both Gentiles and Jews?
10. How does the life of Paul testify or give evidence of his convictions?
11. What type of Christian is spurious and not worthy of the name?
12. What is the meaning of "espoused"? How does the word relate to Paul?
13. Show how "the old Bible writers were scientific educators."
14. How was faith or conviction maintained in the nation of Israel?
15. How do baptism, assembling and the Lord's Supper contribute to the strengthening of conviction?
16. What happens to conviction without a cause?
17. To what was the name "Christian" compared as to its demands on the disciples?
18. How was Paul before Agrippa in Caesarea, like Jesus before Satan in the wilderness? How does this relate to every Christian?
19. Why is it right to say that character is the "crowning significance" of conviction and cause?
20. How does Christ make it possible for us to live the new life?
21. What marvelous spectacle did the world behold in Paul's day?
22. Describe some of the sins from which Paul was saved.
23. Show how the sins of Paul were in reality greater than those practiced by "the lower lusts."
24. Show specific points of change in Paul's new life.
25. How do I Thessalonians 2:7, 8 and I Corinthians 8:13 show the great change in Paul? (Read these texts.)

*Lay these words upon
thy heart''*

WHAT IS THERE IN A

NAME ?

- CHURCH
- CHURCH OF GOD
- CHURCH OF THE FIRST BORN
- BODY OF CHRIST
- CHURCHES OF CHRIST



LESSON TWENTY ONE

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"We have good reason to deplore the neglect of Bible reading which is now almost universal . . . When I was examining chaplains, the ignorance of the Bible shown by many of the candidates distressed me much more than their ignorance of Greek; and I fear things are still worse now. It is said that at some of our theological colleges the Bible is very little studied.

—Dean Inge in December of 1763

Our life is made up of five entities: (1) Time. (2) Energy. (3) Talent. (4) Money. (5) Thought.

"Tell me, oh my soul, how much time, thought, energy, talent or money hast thou given this day to acquiring a personal knowledge of God's Word?" If there was a heavenly "time card" kept on the use of these items which make up our life, how "profitable" would we be to our eternal employer?

True or False

- 1. In the strictest sense of the word, there is no such thing as a "name" for the church. The designations given in the New Testament are simply designating terms.
- 2. The name "Church of Christ" is used more often than any other.
- 3. The name "Church of Christ" does nowhere appear in the New Testament.
- 4. The name "Church of Christ" is the most honorable of all names.
- 5. The name "Church of Christ" is no more right or scriptural than any other name in the New Testament.
- 6. It would be perfectly scriptural to simply call the assembly "The Church" with no qualifying designation.
- 7. The name "Christian Church" cannot be justified on any scriptural basis.
- 8. The meanings of the names in the New Testament should be of greater concern to us than whether we use this one or that one.
- 9. The "Church of God" is an unscriptural term.
- 10. The "Assembly of Christ" would be acceptable as a designating term.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

The following study is taken from a book "New Testament Names" by M. B. Ryan.

Church

Collectively, the followers of Christ are designated in the New Testament as the Church. The word occurs first in that memorable conversation of Jesus with His disciples recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew; and it is used again by the Master in a later conversation. Matt. 18:17. In both these instances, it is used in an anticipative way.

The church was not at this time in existence—save in the purpose of Jesus. This fact has a value in determining the meaning of the church. It is not simply a number of disciples of Jesus, attached to Him in a personal interest. This was already true—in the group He had gathered, and to whom He made His announcement.

The primary meaning of the word is "that which is called out." But the term, as Jesus uses it, in anticipation of His work in the world, and as it is used later of the accomplished fact, evidently involves more than the mere fact of being called forth. It is not simply a separation from the world that is involved, as ore is separated from its native bed, or timber from the forest. The term involves the assembling and uniting of the materials in a definite relationship. Jesus says, "I will **build** it."

There is the idea of construction, of fitting materials together, of creating out of their individualities a unity, so that the many become one. The church is not to be simply a crowd—a mass of detached individuals. Neither is it to be a mob, brought together and moved by a sudden and fitful impulse. There is an orderliness in this purpose of Jesus, a far-sighted, logical and stately process. He aims at a permanent result. The church is to be a stable thing, founded on a rock, indestructible.

The church is to be an organism, with collective intelligence and power of initiative and action, capable of being addressed and appealed to, and of forming decisive judgments. The disciples who heard these announcements of Jesus were to be in the church when it should be formed. They were already "called out" to His service, and so were materials, ready at hand for the building. They were to live in anticipation of being built in when the purpose of Christ should move into action.

This is the significance of those wonderful promises of Jesus recorded in several chapters of the Gospel of John. The term "church" does not recur in the Gospels. But it is in the mind of the Master; and the meaning of it, as well as the means to accomplish it, is made clear to the disciples.

The promise of the Holy Spirit to the disciples was the guarantee that the church would be built. They were naturally despondent when

Jesus announced His departure from them. His presence had been the bond that had bound them together. They felt that, with His absence, they would fall apart like a rope of sand. The Holy Spirit would prevent that. He would do more. He would unite them in a vital, organic union with each other and with Christ. He was to be the builder of the church. And He would come without fail and abide without end. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." He was not to come to the world. The world could not receive Him; "for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." He comes to a prepared people—to a people "called out," as the disciples had been by the invitation of Christ; a people anticipating, and desirous of, a growing fellowship with God. "Ye know Him; for He abideth with you and shall be in you." He is an expected guest, and enters to abide in hearts that are ready for Him.

And this coming of the Spirit was to be in reality the return of the Master to His disciples. Has He not said, "I will build my church"? So He says: "I will not leave your orphans: I come unto you. Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no more: but ye behold me: because I live, ye shall live also."

No wonder He had said: "Ye know Him." Did they not know their own Master? And when He returns in this way, these people who had already been "called out," will be built together with Him in a conscious unity. "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." John 14:16-20.

We come here to the real significance of the church. It is an organism in Christ, and in which Christ is; and in which there is the consciousness of this double relation. There is the consciousness that this interrelation with Christ insures oneness with God. "I am in the Father—ye in me—I in you." The union of the disciple, with God, through Jesus the Master is complete. The church is a conscious union of men with one another, in Christ and God.

The church therefore represents the climax of human privilege and power in spiritual things. This was what Jesus had in mind when He announced the church.

The next occurrence of the word is in the Acts, where it appears frequently. Paul uses it continuously. It occurs in everyone of his Epistles excepting Second Timothy and Titus. Peter and Jude are the only New Testament writers who do not use it in their Epistles. It is used seventeen times in the Apocalypse.

In all these later instances the church is spoken of as an existing fact. What Jesus announced, has now come to pass. The second chapter of Acts is a meeting-place of promise and performance. We see in that record the fulfillment of Jesus' promise. The coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost resulted in the church as a fact in history.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

The Spirit came to the disciples of Jesus. It was their Master, back again in spirit, making them conscious of His presence in them, of their union with Him, and of their oneness with God. All the marvels of Pentecost are easy in the light of this. There was a new thing in the world, a high thing, the highest possible to men in the body; and new phenomena accomplishment were to be expected.

The transformation of the timid, confused disciples into courageous and convincing proclaimers; the conversion of a multitude of scoffers and antagonists to a cause as yet so despised and so apparently weak; the wonderful joy and love and unity of a great company of people, hitherto, perhaps, strangers to one another; all this was because the church had come—built by Christ in Spirit.

All His own wisdom and all the mighty power of God were flowing here through this human channel—a river of life to refresh the earth. We watch this channel, as it expands and carries this tide of heaven abroad in the world. We catch glimpses of it, in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, over in Damascus, in Antioch, throughout Asia Minor, over in Macedonia and Greece and as far away as Rome.

Men of all races, of all classes, are “called out” and are builded together into a throbbing organism, instinct with a common faith and purpose. And we realize that Jesus is doing the great work which He had announced He would do; He is building His church, on a progressive and world-embracing scale.

As we follow this process, we become conscious that the church has a twofold manifestation. We see it in its local aspect—the gathering out, and building together, of all who, in any certain community, hear the call, and receive the Word of Jesus as Lord. So, Jerusalem has a “church.” Acts 5:11; 8:1-3.

But soon, Antioch also has a “church.” Acts 13:1. And, a little later, there are “churches” at various points on the heathen field, so that Paul and Silas ordained elders in “every church.” Acts 14:23. Such local “churches” multiplied, until the world was pretty thoroughly covered with them. They differed much, it cannot be doubted, in the human elements that entered into them; Jews alone, as in Jerusalem and throughout Judea; Jews and Gentiles, as in Antioch; Gentiles almost wholly, as in the Galatian and Grecian churches.

In some churches, many of the influential people of the community, as in Jerusalem, where a great company of the priests had become obedient to the faith, were members. Acts 6:7. In others, almost wholly the humbler classes, as in Corinth, where not many who were wise after the flesh, nor mighty, nor noble, were called. I Cor. 1:26.

These separated and differing groups of people would be differently affected by the different environment in which they found

themselves, as well as by their various heritages of racial and religious characteristics. From the outward aspect, one might think they had not so much in common.

But we must be conscious of another aspect of the church. The church is a unit. The "churches" are but the church in its local manifestations. Underneath all the variety is unity. There is "one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, in all." Eph. 4:4-6.

Before this essential unity, all distinctions of race and class fade away. The "called out" of whatever station or people, are built into a single structure. Through His human ministers, Christ brings them together and unites them. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, are given: "Unto the building up of the body of Christ; till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 12, 13.

It is the purpose of the great Builder that all His "called" ones "may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love." Eph. 4:15, 16.

There can be no cleavage here. In an organism so thoroughly united in Christ, there can be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female; all are one in Christ Jesus. Gal 3:28.

We are not surprised, therefore, to find the name "church" applied to the whole community of believers as though they were all really and consciously united in one organism. Saul's ravages were against the "church" (Acts 8:1-3) whether found in Jerusalem or in Damascus. When Saul was converted, "the church" throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, had peace, being edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied. Acts 9:31.

Whether having its local habitation in Judean towns or Gentile capitals; whether its members were unclutured slaves or brainy disputants; whether the local assemblies numbered thousands, or were but the members of a single household—the "church" included all, in all places, who had come out from the world at the call of Christ and had submitted themselves unto Him in the Spirit.

All these were built on the one foundation, and into the one superstructure. All had come into the consciousness of oneness with Christ, and of unity with God through Him. The church was the body, of which Jesus Christ was the head; Col. 1:18, 24, and in which, while every member had his own places and function, there could be, in the nature of the case, no schism.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

In apostolic usage, the church is variously designated. Qualifying phrases, such as "of the Gentiles" (Rom. 16:4); "of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33); "of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:33), indicate the class, or the character of the people making up the churches spoken of.

"Of Galatia," I Cor. 16:1; Gal. 1:2; "Asia," I Cor. 16:19; "Thessalonica," I Thess. 1:1; "Ephesus", Rev. 2:1, etc., and "In Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira," etc., Rev. 2:8-18, are simply place qualifications, designating locality for the churches mentioned. Aside from these, there are at least three designations, used and suggested, which demand consideration.

First—CHURCH

In the great majority of instances in which the institution is spoken of, this term, either in the singular or in the plural, is used without a qualifying phrase. The justification for this is evident. The church was a new thing in human society. It was unique. No organization among men, past or present, could be compared with it in character. Wherever it was manifested it carried its own distinction. It marked an obvious and radical cleavage in human society. Over against it was the unbelieving world, whether of Jew or of Gentile, with all the disabilities which unbelief entails. The church itself was a faith institution, with all the potencies of spiritual enrichment which faith ensures. The difference was immediately apparent.

The use of the unqualified term emphasized this essential distinction. It was a reminder to those in the church that they were out from the world and that a new life was now possible, and obligatory because possible. It was a reminder to those yet in the world that there was no hope there; that if they would be saved from sin they must escape out of sin.

The name, like the individual names of Christ's people, carried a vital significance. It was a proclamation of spiritual facts of tremendous import. It set forth the crowning fact in human history—that the power of heaven was at work among men, selecting and building them into a spiritual temple, the dwelling place on earth of the Most High.

Second—CHURCH OF CHRIST

This term is not used in the New Testament in the singular. The plural form, "churches of Christ," occurs once. Rom. 16:16.

The idea, however, pervades the whole teaching about the church in the New Testament. Jesus says: "I will build my church." Matt. 16:18. The idea of authorship and of proprietorship is involved here.

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

The church is the body of Jesus Christ. Eph. 1:22, 23. The idea of ownership is absolute here. As a man's body is his own and not another's, so the church is the church of Christ and not of another.

A still more significant figure is used. Paul said that he had espoused the Corinthians to one husband, that he might present them as a pure virgin to Christ. II Cor. 11:2. He represents the relationship of the church to Christ as that of espoused wife to her husband.

"Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present the church to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:25-27. Nothing could emphasize more strongly than these statements the right of Christ to call the church His own, and to give the church His own name.

So that, not only is the expression "churches of Christ" justified, as applied to local congregations of believers; but "church of Christ" as a designation of the whole body of His people, lies implicit in its very constitution and history. The idea of it is not only scriptural, it is inseparable from the relation of Christ to the church.

It is Christ's relationship to the church that is emphasized by the use of this qualified name. The term is a proclamation. It announces the cause, of which the church itself is the effect. The church is the "called out," but it is Christ who calls out. The church is the building, but Christ is the Builder. The church is the spiritual temple, but Christ is the Spirit which both forms it and dwells in it. The church could not be, without Christ; it lives only in Him, and by Him.

On the other hand, the significance of the church to Christ is emphasized. It is the body which He weaves about Himself, through which He does His work. It is the indispensable channel of His life as it continues to go out to the world in saving power. It is eyes and lips and ears, and hands and feet, for Him, as He pursues His ministry of salvation. It is the help-meet for Him in His work of building up a spiritual race. Gen. 2:18. It is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Eph. 1:22, 23.

Third—CHURCH OF GOD

This term is used in ten instances in the New Testament, and only by the Apostle Paul. There is a significance in the fact that he uses it so frequently in addressing Gentile Christians. Six of the instances are in the Epistles to the Corinthians.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

The Corinthian Christians were in the midst of a varied and sordid idolatry. They had themselves, in the old days, been "led away unto those dumb idols." I Cor. 12:2. The ruin of life which this practice induced is vividly portrayed. I Cor. 6:9-11. They must remember that now they belong unto God. They have been chosen of Him—foolish and weak and base and despised though they might have been.

He has created them anew, and they are "of Him in Christ Jesus." He has given them Christ, and has compensated all their poverty and nothingness by making Him unto them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. I Cor. 1:26-31. Their heritage is a rich one, but it has its source and its reason in God, and their ultimate possession is in Him.

"All things are yours." But "ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." I Cor. 3:21-23. It is the familiar thought, embodied in the promise of Christ when He assured the building of the church: "Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." John 14:20.

This gracious promise, given first to the people of Israel, is fulfilled unto poor, outcast Gentiles also. They have been built into the church, and the church is the church of God. What a sheet-anchor against the sweep of the old tides of passion and superstition which might otherwise drift them back into the degradation of the idolatrous life! The name would help mightily in keeping their faith single and their hearts pure.

The term also occurs in the epistle to the Galatians; Gal. 1:13, and with a similar pertinence. They had, in their old life, not known God, and had been in bondage to them that by nature are no gods. Gal. 4:8. They needed a powerful incentive to help them in the battle against the old lusts.

Paul uses it also in writing to the Thessalonians, who, under his preaching, had turned to God from idols, to serve a living and a true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. I Thess. 1:9, 10; 2:14.

Outside of these instances, the term occurs only in the First Epistle to Timothy. Timothy was the son of a Gentile father. While his mother was a Jewess and he was evidently taught in the faith of Israel's God, his environment in his youth had been in the midst of idolatry. He was now, also, the evangelist in Ephesus. In that city and in all its vicinity, the worship of Diana the goddess had been, for long, the dominating religion.

Her image was said to have fallen down from heaven. Her temple was one of the seven wonders of the world. Her worship was perhaps the most splendid and seductive of the pagan cults. The chief glory of the city of the Ephesians was that she was temple-keeper to the great Diana. Acts 19:35.

The most dreaded calamity was considered to be that the temple

of this noted goddess should be made of no account and that she should be deposed from her magnificence, whom all Asia and the world worshiped. The most effective appeal to popular passion was the necessity of guarding her honor. Acts 19:27.

It was of the utmost importance that this young herald of Christ, in that stronghold of superstition, should keep a clear vision and a keen consciousness of the uniqueness and aloofness of the faith which he preached; and that the church in Ephesus should appreciate its true nature and high mission. Over against this absorption of Ephesus in the cult of the goddess stood "the church of the living God." I Tim. 3:15.

There were the multitudes. Here were the few. There were the masses. Here were those who had been "called out." There was a dead idol, which could give to its worshipers no fellowship or blessing. Here was the living God, who had come to men in the person of His Son, through whom these had been built into Him and made partakers of His life and power. There was error, blinding and enslaving its devotees; and the whole splendid ritual of the worship was a promoter and intensifier of that error. Here was truth, the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and the church was its "pillar and stay" to uphold it and defend it against the dominant delusion.

It is a position of superlative honor to which God has called the church. As His, it is the channel of His revelation. It has His message. The grace is given to it, through His ministers, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hidden in Himself.

It is His purpose now to make known even unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places, His manifold wisdom. And the church is the medium of this revelation. It was the purpose of the ages that this should be so—"purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. 3:8-11.

The church is not an accident. It is not an unrelated object in God's developing plans. It is the true objective of all the lines of divine revelation. It is the crown of all institutions for the manifestation of God. It is in and through the church that all the infinite measures of divine power are seen at their maximum in human redemption. God has His true glory "in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever." Eph. 3:20, 21.

Examination Twenty One

1. Why could we not say that the Church of Christ is just a group of disciples attached to Jesus through personal interest in Him?
2. What more is involved in the word "church" as used by Jesus than just the "calling out" of a people?
3. What is meant by calling the church "an organism"?
4. What measure was taken to prevent the possible scattering of the disciples at the departure of Jesus?
5. What relation to Christ did the Holy Spirit have as far as the disciples were concerned?
6. What is meant by calling the church "an organism in Christ"?
7. Name the books of the New Testament where the word "church" does **not** appear.
8. Where is the meeting place of promise and performance?
9. What was the one great power of Pentecost that made possible the accomplishments of that day?
10. How is the figure of "the river of life" developed here?
11. What is the two-fold manifestation of the church?
12. In what ways were the various churches of the first century different from each other? Specify.
13. How did Christ unite the various elements into "one body"?
14. How does the body "build itself up"? (cf. Eph. 4:11-16.)
15. What two scripture verses show that the church was considered "one" whether in Jerusalem, Damascus or Antioch?
16. Mention two names which show the class or characters of the members.
17. What are two names that show the locality of the churches.

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

18. How is the fitness of the term "church" found in the newness of the church?
19. Of what was the term "church" a reminder? To the Christians? To the world?
20. Give three ways in which the term "Church of Christ" is appropriate and meaningful.
21. State three ways in which the relationship of Christ and the church were shown.
22. Show how the name "Church of God" was especially appropriate to the Corinthians.
23. Mention three things the Corinthians had as a possession in God.
24. How was the name "Church of God" a great help against the "old lusts"?
25. Mention two specific instances of how the name "The Church of the Living God" was especially pertinent to Timothy.
26. State two of the honors accorded the church in belonging to God.

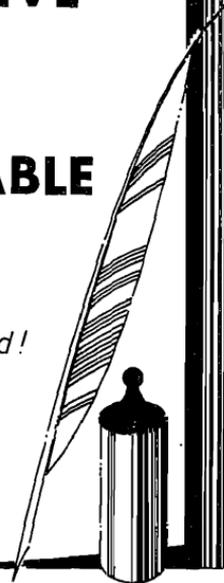
*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

CHRIST THE CREED

IS:

**DIVINE
AUTHORITATIVE
INTELLIGIBLE
UNIVERSAL
UNCHANGABLE**

We have a responsibility to this creed!



LESSON TWENTY TWO

THE CREED

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"Rader, an eminent American chemist declared that there is not one chemical error in the Bible and that was his scientific opinion after a profound study of the Bible."

Shall we let a chemist become a "profound" student of the Word while a Bible teacher makes only a superficial study of its pages?

Read these references first as a basis of this lesson:

Matt. 16:13-19; II Tim. 1:12; Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Isa. 35:8; Heb. 13:8.

1. Could a person disagree with your belief and be saved?
2. Could you honestly assert that any man could study carefully the New Testament and arrive at your belief? If not, why not?
3. Do you accept the "Apostles' Creed"? It is not enough to reject this through ignorance.
4. With what doctrine do you disagree in the Apostles' Creed? If none, why reject it? Do not stumble over the word "catholic" in the creed. It means "universal."
5. If you do not accept a statement of faith outside the New Testament, why are you now studying this material? Why do you study any material even by "our brethren"?
6. Would you say that a person who uses the mechanical instrument of music as an aid to singing does so because he has failed to study the New Testament as carefully as he should?
7. Is a person who uses tobacco violating the creed of Christ's Church?
8. What do you truly mean by saying you "have no creed but Christ"?
9. What, specifically, is an opinion?
10. Are we misleading people when we say we have no creed but Christ and then proceed to educate them in our applications of scriptural principles with the thought that these are necessary in order to be saved?
11. How do we differ from those of Matthew 15:7-9?

LESSON DISCUSSION

The word "creed" is of very ancient origin. It is from the Latin word "credo" which means "I believe." It is thought that the first use was related to the first work of the so-called Apostles' Creed

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

which begins with the words "I believe in God, the Father," etc.

According to the historian Schaff: "A creed is a form of words set off by authority, of certain beliefs that are necessary to salvation." He elaborates on this by saying: "It may merely state the essentials of belief, or the entire body of doctrine. It may be written or oral, secret or published. It must, however, be authoritative, the recognized tenets of the body from which it issues."

—*Religious Encyclopedia*

You will note the following points of import in the above statement:

A creed is:

1. **A form of words, written or unwritten.**
2. **It is set off by authority—human authority.**
3. **Its purpose is to state those beliefs that must be held in order to be saved.**

The earliest creeds were the APOSTLES' CREED and the NICENE CREED. As to their production, purpose and content, we quote the following:

"It was about three hundred years after the birth of Jesus that the Roman emperor, Constantine, permitted the Christians to preach and practice their faith openly. Constantine himself died a Christian. There had been small groups that disagreed with the main body of Christians before his reign, but it was while he was emperor that a great division occurred. There were Arians, who said that Jesus was not truly divine in the same sense as God the Father. Others said that in God there three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and all were equally divine. Finally a great council was called at Nicaea, a city in Asia Minor, in the year 325. More than three hundred bishops came to the council from many places. At this council the Arian teaching was condemned and an important **creed**, or statement of belief, was drawn up. It is called the NICENE CREED.

Another important creed is the Apostles' Creed. It came into wide use about five or six hundred years after the birth of Jesus. In many churches it is used as a statement of faith before baptism."

—*The Illustrated Home Library Encyclopedia Vol. 5, p. 1191*

The Apostles' Creed reads as follows:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;

He descended into Hell (Hades), the third day He arose again from the dead;
 He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
 From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
 I believe in the Holy Ghost.
 The holy Catholic (Universal) Church; the communion of saints;
 The forgiveness of sins;
 The resurrection of the body;
 And life everlasting. Amen.

The following group of questions and answers which appeared in the **Millennial Harbinger**, August 6, 1832, are very applicable at this time:

- Q. How many creeds are there in Christendom?
 A. One for every day in the year.
- Q. How many sects are there?
 A. As many sects as there are authoritative creeds.
- Q. What is an authoritative creed?
 A. An abstract of human opinions concerning the supposed cardinal articles of Christian faith, which summary is made a bond of union or term of communion.
- Q. Who has made these creeds?
 A. Philosophers, Conferences, Synods, or some individual leader.
- Q. But will not a creed keep one Lord's Table pure?
 A. No; not one.
- Q. Ought a man to read any human creed for the sake of assenting to it?
 A. No, unless he read them all; for how can he decide without a comparison?
- Q. But ought he not to compare every one he reads with the Bible?
 A. Yes, but this supposes him to understand the Bible as well as the creed and surely, if he can decide what is truth from the Bible, he need not trouble himself with the creed. Why impose upon himself the task of reading the creed, since he cannot receive it unless he understand the Bible before he read it? Here are several other questions and answers of our own.
- Q. Of what value is a creed if it contain less than the doctrine of the Bible?
 A. None. It is worse than useless; it is positively wrong.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Q. Of what value is a creed if it contain less than the doctrine of the Bible?

A. It, too, would be a device of Satan.

Q. Of what use is a creed that contains nothing but what is stated in the Bible?

A. None, inasmuch as it would be superfluous.

We would much prefer the inspired expressions of the Apostles to those of any man, however wise and good, and most especially where such a statement forms the basis of our hope for eternal salvation.

The hope of salvation of those of the Apostolic Church was in a **person**, not in a statement or a "form of words." It was the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord that was central in their faith.

Salvation was in "a name" and in a person. (cf. John 14:6.)

"And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

". . . for I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." II Tim. 1:12b.

The Book of Acts contains a historical account of nine cases of conversion. In none of these examples was a statement of faith demanded before the convert was accepted. The simple acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour is in direct contrast to the elaborate examinations and probations of later followers.

Suppose the acceptance of Jesus as Saviour and Lord was all that was necessary to fellowship and participation in the family of God and the body of His Son. This would presuppose certain facts:

1. That we believe the New Testament to be the inspired Word of God, for it is the only source of our knowledge of Jesus.
2. That we would gladly do whatever He asks of us as a part of our response in accepting Him as Lord. (cf. Acts 2:36-41.)
3. That we would would continue, after our initial acceptance of Him, to follow His Word as our divine, authoritative guide in faith and conduct.

A careful consideration of the phrase "**No Creed But Christ**" essentially means **No Creed But The New Testament** or **No Creed But The Bible** inasmuch as an acceptance of Christ comes only as a result of the preaching of the Word. **Notice, please, several important facts about this creed:**

1. It is **DIVINE**—which claim cannot be held for any human production. Please, please mark carefully, we **did not** say that our in-

terpretation of the New Testament was inspired as divine. Christ is divine and the Word telling of His life and church is divine. We can put our fullest confidence in this creed. Here is a divine statement of faith produced by holy men who were moved by the Holy Spirit. (cf. II Peter 1:21.)

2. It is **AUTHORITATIVE** in a way in which no human production would dare claim. When the books are opened on the morning of judgment the one Book which will stand as the word of right and wrong will be the Word our Lord. Jesus said: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12:48.

How eternally important it is for us to know His will. The judgment will be a personal matter between you and the Great Judge; so should your belief be of His Word.

3. It is **INTELLIGIBLE**—This could not be said of scores of the creeds of Christendom. A special knowledge of terminology is essential to an intelligent grasp of the various articles of many creeds. Paul expected the Christians of his day to understand by reading: "When you **read**, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." Eph. 3:4.

Consider the circumstances of the preaching of Christ to those of Lystra, Derbe, or Perga. The almost total lack of so called "formal education" such as was common among the Jews made it necessary that the message preached be so plain that "a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." (cf. Isa. 35:8b.)

4. It is **UNIVERSAL**—Who among the children of men would have the temerity to say this of any production of his own hand?

Jesus spoke to His disciples with all authority in heaven and on earth to the intent that they would carry His "good news" into **every nation**. All men in every nation can and will accept Christ as their personal Saviour. The innumerable throng from every tribe and tongue and nation were gathered before God's throne, not because they accepted an authoritative statement of man or men, but because they had accepted the King of Kings and Lord of Lords as their Saviour. The acceptance of Christ brought them together on earth and together in heaven. It is very evident that those of a good and honest heart anywhere, anytime can come to a saving faith in the Christ of God by the simple expedient of reading the New Testament in their own language.

5. It **NEEDS NO REVISION**—Such has never been true of any creed from the pen of man.

Heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle shall be

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

changed in this authoritative statement of faith. Man is constantly searching for security. Security in the realm of truth is the most important of all types of security. What a comfort for the soul to read with true understanding these inspired words: "Jesus Christ is **the same** yesterday and today, yea and forever." Hebrews 13:8. "For such a high priest became us, **holy, guileless, undefiled**, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens: who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appointeth men high priests, having infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was after the law, appointeth a Son, perfected forevermore." Heb. 7:26-28.

6. Concerning MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY to this creed.

To affirm with Peter: "I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (cf Matt. 16:18) is to presuppose a deep personal responsibility. Who is this Christ? Is He not the Saviour of the world? Is He the King of glory as well as King of your life? Is this the one who forgives and cleanses from every stain of sin? Does the authority of this one relate in any way to your life and mind? Can we accept His salvation so freely given and not wish to share it? Can we claim Him as King and offer Him no homage of lip and hand? Can we experience the exquisite joy of complete release from every sin and fail to shout for joy? If we do not preach Christ as well as confess Him, is our creed any more than a form of words set off by human authority?

Our blessed Lord has spoken to each of us in figures filled with meaning if we have it in our hearts to hear.

"Ye are the light of the world, ye are the salt of the earth." Matt. 5:13-16.

These words are for every Christian, every Bible teacher. In the world in which **you** live **you** are the light. In the world in which **I** live **I** am to be the light. Each of us touches the lives of men in a way that no one else can. The responsibility of every Christian to the creed of Christ's Church is to preach it!

In the days of those who knew Him best, the desire to speak His name was the passion of every Christian. The sequence of responsibility would follow as: belief, confession, obedience.

Read thoughtfully these references and carefully consider their major implications for your life as a Christian: Phil. 2:15b-16a; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 20:20; II Tim. 4:2; Acts 8:4; 8:12; 16:31; John 1:49; 16:31; Acts 19:18; John 14:15; 15:14; Luke 6:46; Heb. 5:9.

Examination Twenty Two

1. What is a creed?
2. What were the two earliest creeds? Do you accept them? If not why not?
3. Show how any creed but Christ is illogical.
4. Did the Apostle Paul have a creed? If so, what was it? If not, why not?
5. What is the purpose of a creed?
6. How do the nine cases of conversion in the Book of Acts relate to our creed?
7. When we say, "we have no creed but Christ," we are in essence saying, "we have no creed but the _____."
(fill in the blanks.)
8. In what way is the divine creed authoritative?
9. Why is there but one creed that is universal?
10. When we want to "know what our church teaches" have we not already accepted some creed outside the New Testament?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

**THE DAY OF
REMEMBRANCE**

- *SET APART*
- *CLAIMED*
- *OBSERVED*

Also a special study on the Sabbath day.



LESSON TWENTY THREE

THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

Dr. Christie, the geographer, declared that in the whole of the Bible, after years of study, he had not found a geographical error.

There are no errors in the Bible, geographical or otherwise. The only error associated with the Bible is our attitude toward it. If it is God's truth communicated to man, then there is nothing more important than our knowledge of its contents. Believest thou this?

A curious "outsider" asks what could be very embarrassing questions—are they such to you?

1. Why do you Christians meet on Sunday? Why not Saturday or Friday?
2. Isn't it true that "Sun-day" is dedicated to the worship of the "Sun"?
3. If Sunday is the Christians' Sabbath, why not rest on this day?
4. Isn't Saturday the Sabbath day?
5. Doesn't the Bible say that God rested on the seventh day and hallowed it? For whom was it hallowed? (cf. Gen. 2:3.)
6. Didn't Jesus keep the Sabbath? Is He your example?
7. Can't I worship God as well on Monday as on Sunday? Why keep Sunday?
8. Didn't Paul go into the synagogue on the Sabbath day? Didn't he say "Imitate me"?
9. Where is an example of Christians of the New Testament meeting on Sunday?
10. Is "the Lord's day," of Revelation 1:10, Sunday? Prove your answer.

LESSON DISCUSSION

Just what are the reasons for observing the first day of the week? Do you have **reason** or **traditions**?

— The Day Set Apart —

Pause a moment before rushing headlong into the subject—why is ANY day observed? Here is one very real reason: **Something important enough occurred on that day of contemporary significance to call for remembrance of it.** Note the parts to the reason:

1. Something important enough occurred on that day.
2. Something of contemporary significance.
3. This event calls for remembrance of the day. There are some reasons why we remember the Fourth of July:
 1. Something of importance happened on this day.
 2. It had a contemporary significance. (This day is not observed as a holiday in England.)

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

3. The event was of such importance it called for remembrance of the day.

It will be noted by those of special scrutiny that no authority outside of the importance of the event itself is given here. Withhold prejudgment, please. The day of an important event is remembered simply because of the event's importance. There are other reasons for observing a day, but this is one that cannot be set aside.

The most momentous events in all history occurred on the first day of the week. Mark them well:

1. Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week. John 20:10, 11; Matt. 28:1-10; Luke 24:1-9.
2. Christ made His appearances on earth after His resurrection on Sunday. Matt. 28:9, 10; John 20:11-18; Luke 24:13-35; John 20:19-25; 26-29.
3. The Holy Spirit made His advent on this day. Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4; Pentecost always came on the first day of the week. cf. Lev. 23:15.
4. The first persons to become Christians did so on Sunday. Acts 2:37, 38.
5. The first gospel sermon was preached on the first day of the week. Acts 2:14-36; cf. I Cor. 15:1-4.

All the import that has been attached to Pentecost relates in a definite manner to Sunday inasmuch as Pentecost fell on Sunday.

It should be noted carefully that the events here spoken of are of real **contemporary significance**. The resurrection of Christ means the most to the **Christian**. The evidences of His overcoming death, as found in His appearances, mean more to the **Christian** than anyone else. The Holy Spirit came on Sunday to **Christians**. Sunday means something very special to **Christians** since the very first Christians in all the world became such on the first day of the week. The first gospel sermon was preached for the purpose of making **Christians**.

A very important detail sometimes overlooked is that nowhere do the scriptures specify **which** first day of the week we are to remember. The record does not say "It was on the 9th of April, which was Sunday, that Christ arose from the dead." The lack of specification as to which Sunday gives support to the thought that the importance of the day is to be remembered as often as the day appears. This is the use made of the observance by those of the first century.

There is another approach to the reasons we observe Sunday.

— The Day Claimed —

We observe Sunday because John the Apostle claimed it as belonging to our Lord Christ. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Rev. 1:10. This statement would seem to assume the point to be proven. How do we know that John was referring to Sunday when he spoke of "The Lord's day"?

We here marshal out some of those who lived near enough to the time that John wrote (90-95 A.D.) to carry real meaning in their words:

1. **Ignatius**, who lived from 30-100 A.D. said: "Let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all days (of the week).
—*The Anti-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, p. 63*
2. **Irenaeus**, who lived from 135-200 wrote: "The mystery of the Lord's resurrection may not be celebrated on any other day than the Lord's day."
—*McClintock and Strong Ency. Vol. V, p. 507*
3. **Peter, bishop of Alexandria**, who lived in 300 says: "We keep the Lord's day as a day of joy because of Him who rose thereon."
—*McClintock and Strong Ency. Vol. V, p. 508*
4. To summarize the testimony of those of the first three centuries we have this statement: "The general consent both of Christian antiquity and of modern divines has referred it (the Lord's day) to the weekly festival of our Lord's resurrection and identified it with the first day of the week, on which He rose, with the patristical 'eighth day' or "day which is both the eighth and the first"—in fact . . . the 'Solis dies' on Sunday of every age of the church."
—*McClintock and Strong Ency. Vol. V, p. 505*

— The Day Observed —

The third approach to the subject is in **the example of the early Christians as described in the New Testament** as well as those of the first three centuries:

1. Acts 2:1-47. (cf. vs. 40-42.)

We have already described the wonderful incidents of this day.

We want to point out that God chose **Sunday** as the day for these eternally important happenings. The first meeting in the world of the first Christians in the world was on Sunday.

2. I Corinthians 16:1-2.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia so also do ye. **Upon the first day of the week** let each one of you lay by him in store, as He may prosper, that no collections be made when I come."

Why is the first day of the week here specified? In answering this question, remember that Paul is writing to the church at Corinth. His instructions were to the church. Could it not, then, be that he is asking each member of the church to bring with him his offering to the meeting on the first day of the week so as to make up together the total gift?

3. Acts 20:7.

"And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight."

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Note, please, that this verse does not say upon "a" first day of the week. If it did then we would conclude that it was some special first day among the fifty-one other first days in the year that was chosen for the meeting of the disciples. The use of the definite article would separate the day from others like it. Inasmuch as the indefinite article is used, it is **not** separated from any other first day. It was then a meeting that occurred **every first day**. A consideration of the circumstances of this meeting will help in our understanding of the day. Paul was hastening to be in Jerusalem on Pentecost to give the offering gathered to the poor in Jerusalem. He came to Troas on his journey with this sense of urgency upon him. We read in the record a most unusual statement:

"And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread (the days associated with the feast of the Passover; it is now about fifty days until Pentecost) and come to Troas in five days, **where we abode seven days.**"

If the party tarried in Troas seven days, it must have been Monday when they landed. If this is an accurate calculation, then **they stayed in Troas through the sabbath day until Sunday, the day when the church was of a custom to come together.**

The testimony of early Christian writers and church historians is in agreement with the above conclusions. **Barnabas**, who lived and wrote in 100 A.D. said: "We celebrate the eighth day with joy, on which, too, Jesus arose from the dead.

—*McClintock and Strong, Vol. V, p. 507*

Justin Martyr, who lived from 100-150 A.D. said: "Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly."

—*Anti-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I, p. 186*

Waddington, church historian, p. 45: "The first Christians were unanimous in setting apart the first day of the week as being that on which our Saviour rose from the dead, for the solemn celebration of public worship."

Schaff, Vol. I, pp. 477-478: "The universal and uncontradictable Sunday observance in the second century can only be explained by the fact that it had its roots in apostolic practice."

A Special Study Of The Jewish Sabbath

Question: **When was the sabbath first made know to man?**

Answer: At Mt. Sinai. Read this reference very carefully:

"Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments: And **madest known unto them thy holy sabbath**, and commandedst them commandments, and statutes, and a law, by Moses, thy servant." Neh. 9:13, 14.

Someone will immediately recall that the seventh day is mentioned in Genesis 2:1-3. Note carefully, please, that it is not referred to in Genesis 2:1-3 as "the sabbath day." The word "sabbath" means

"rest." At Sinai Moses set aside the seventh day (under God's direction) for **man's rest** because in the creation of the earth the seventh day was God's day of rest. Consider carefully the total circumstances of Genesis 2:1-3. No command is given here to man. No example is found here of the seventh day observance by man. There is one other reference to examine in this connection:

"But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah, thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: **for** in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them, is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed **the sabbath day**, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:10, 11.

It was not **the sabbath day** when God rested, but it was so called when Moses wrote this account in Exodus. The use of the word "sabbath" as found here is called a literary prolapse. To illustrate, we say that on February 22 we remember the birth of **the first president**, George Washington. In reality, on February 22, 1732, a baby named George Washington was born, but not at that time, **President George Washington**. If a historian were to describe the actual event of his birth as of 1732 he would not call him president; if the same historian were to look back on his birth from our day, he could very well call him President George Washington when speaking of his birth. Washington **became** president years after his birth. The seventh day **became** the sabbath years after God rested on that day.

In Genesis 3:20 we have an example of a literary prolapse. Note: "And the man (Adam) called his wife's name Eve; because **she was the mother of all living.**"

At the **time** that Adam called his wife Eve, she had not so much as one child, but from the **time** that Moses wrote this he could see very well how the name Eve found its fulfilment.

Question: Is there any historical or archaeological evidence that the sabbath was kept prior to Exodus?

Answer: None. No evidence has been presented that shows sabbath observance prior to Exodus 16:23.

Question: If the sabbath was made known at Mount Sinai, how is it that instructions for the use of manna for the sabbath were given before the giving of the law? (cf. Ex. 16:23.)

Answer: This must have been a preparatory measure. The nation of Israel was being prepared for the sabbath observance by this means. Without preparation there could have been a terrible destruction of sabbath breakers inasmuch as the penalty for not keeping the sabbath was death. (cf. Ex. 31:14.)

John the Baptist came preaching and practicing a baptism of repentance. John's baptism was in preparation of the baptism of our Lord (Acts 19:1-6). The baptism of Christ was so very important

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

that preparation of the minds and hearts of the people was very necessary. When Jesus commanded His apostles to "go into all the world and baptize," the apostles knew what baptism was and so did the people to whom the apostles spoke. John's baptism prepared them for the baptism of Jesus.

Just so in the wilderness, when the seventh day began to be observed by the nation of Israel in connection with the gathering of the manna, they were preparing for the giving of the law when it was going to be observed in a new fashion.

You will note some interesting features about the observance of the seventh day in Exodus 16 that are different than the later observance of the sabbath.

- (1) There was no punishment given for the violation of the day.
- (2) When it was violated there was no punishment of the violator.
- (3) No specific instructions for its observance other than the use of the manna is given.

Can we say a law has been given when no punishment has been specified for violators, If not, then no law for sabbath observance was given before the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai.

Question: If we were to observe the sabbath today as it was observed in the days of Moses or Jesus, what would be required of us?

- Answer:** (1) No cooking to be done on the sabbath. Ex. 16:23.
(2) No fires to be built. Ex. 35:3.
(3) Two lambs to be offered. Num. 28:9-11.
(4) Not to pick up sticks. Num. 15:32-36.
(5) To be kept according to Jewish time—sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.
(6) Violators put to death. Ex. 31:14.

Question: Why do you not observe the sabbath today?

Answer: There are seven very adequate reasons. Here they are:

(1) The sabbath was given to the Jews only. Read these references: "Jehovah **made not this covenant with our fathers**, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." Deut. 5:3. "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm, **therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day**. Deut. 5:15. (cf. Ex. 20:1, 2; 24:8.)

There is no example of any Gentile observing the sabbath day at any time, any where. If the covenant which contained the sabbath law was made with the Jews as a nation and we are not a part of that nation, what reason do we have for observing the sabbath day?

It might be well to explode just here the thought that "Sunday is the Christian sabbath." The word "sabbath" means "rest." Sunday, or the first day of the week, is **not** portrayed in the New Testament as a day of rest, but rather a day of worship. The sabbath has

always been on the seventh day and could not therefore fall on the first day, even in the Christian dispensation.

(2) The sabbath has no commemorative value for any other than the Jew. Deut. 15:5.

We were never in Egypt as slaves. We were never led out.

(3) Note, please, that the reference to the creation is for the purpose of showing why the seventh day was chosen as a day of rest; i.e. God rested, so you rest. The sabbath was a sign between God and Israel.

“And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily, ye shall keep my sabbaths: for it is a sign **between me and you** throughout your generations; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.” Ex. 31:12, 13a, 17. (cf. Ezek. 20:12-20.)

Let us understand again why a reference is made to the creation. The purpose is to point out **why** God chose the **seventh day** for rest. God rested on the seventh day and was refreshed, you rest and be refreshed on the seventh day.

The sabbath was a sign or seal of the covenant God had with Israel. We have no such covenant and no such sign.

(4) It is impossible to observe the sabbath universally.

In the far north or south it could not be observed. How would you observe the sabbath from sunrise to sunset in the northern part of Alaska? The same question could be asked concerning some of the extreme southern countries. Geographical conditions are such in some countries that sheep could not be raised; hence, no lambs would be available for sacrifice. This reason presupposes that the sabbath is to be observed according to the only instructions we have for the keeping of the sabbath, the Jewish law. If there are other directions for sabbath observance, we have failed to read them in the New Testament. Where are the directions for the observance of the sabbath **by Christians?**

(5) The sabbath was a part of the old covenant and was abolished with that covenant.

There are many references to which we should refer in a careful consideration of this important point. Here are some of them:

1. The sabbath was one of the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were a part of the old covenant. Ex. 24:1-8; 24:12; Deut. 4:13, 14; 9:9, 11, 15; II Chron. 6:11; Heb. 9:4; I Kings 8:9.

For sake of clarity we will reproduce two verses which speak very plainly on this point:

Speaking of the house of the Lord, Solomon says: “And there have I set the ark, **wherein is the covenant of Jehovah, which He made with the children of Israel.**” II Chron. 6:11. In I Kings we

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

have these words: **"There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone**, which Moses put there at Horeb, when Jehovah made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt." I Kings 8:9.

2. The old covenant was "abolished" and "done away" in Christ:

(1) "Abolished" Eph. 2:14, 15.

(2) "Done away" II Cor. 3:3-17.

3. We are not under this law. Gal. 3:16-25; 5:18.

4. The old covenant was cast out. Gal. 4:21; 5:1.

5. We have been discharged from the law. Rom. 7:1-7.

6. The old covenant was blotted out and taken out of the way. Col. 2:14.

7. The old covenant was "nigh unto vanishing away" almost 1900 years ago. Heb. 8:13.

The sabbath observances, as a part of the old covenant, were abolished with the old covenant. **All** of the old covenant was done away in Christ. There is no suggestion in the scriptures to the contrary. It might be pointed out here that the Ten Commandments are set aside from the rest of the law by those who wish to observe the sabbath, as the **moral law** of God in contrast to the **ceremonial laws** of the nation of Israel. This is purely an arbitrary distinction that has no warrant in fact or scripture. The following quotation explains this thought:

"The term 'Moral Law' when applied to them is a misnomer, untrue to revelation. They neither include all morality nor exclude all immorality . . . Only the last six deal with morals. The first four are ceremonial in their precept.

"The 'Ceremonial Law' as denominated by the Seventh Day advocates has far more moral precepts than the Ten Commandments.

"Every penalty for breaking the Ten Commandments is to be found only in the so-called Ceremonial Laws, which they say are done away with. A law is null and void without a penalty."

—*A Word in The Church Revealed In The Scriptures*

(6) The church has a "new" and "better" covenant.

1. Jesus became "the surety of a better covenant." Heb. 7:22.

2. We have a "new" and "faultless" covenant. Heb. 8:7-13.

3. Jesus is the "mediator of a new covenant." Heb. 9:15; 12:18-24.

4. The new covenant "surpasseth" the old covenant in glory. II Cor. 3:3-17.

5. We, who are under the new covenant, are "free," whereas those that were under the old covenant were in "bondage." Gal. 4:21; 5:1.

(7) The sabbath was not incorporated in the new covenant. **Nine** of the ten commandments are embodied in the new covenant.

THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The ten commandments of the old covenant. Ex. 20:3-17. All but the sabbath are found in the new covenant.

I—Other gods. v. 3	Acts 14:11-18; I Tim. 1:17
II—Images. vs. 4-5	Acts 15:20; I John 5:21
III—Name in vain. v. 7	James 5:12
IV—Sabbath. v. 8	Not in New Testament
V—Father and Mother. v. 12 ..	Eph. 6:1, 2; Col. 3:20
VI—Kill. v. 13	Rom. 13:9; James 2:11
VII—Adultery. v. 14	Rom. 13:9; I Cor. 6:9, 10
VIII—Steal. v. 15	Rom. 13:9; Eph. 4:28
IX—False witness. v. 16	Col. 3:9; Rev. 22:18
X—Covet. v. 17	Rom. 13:9; Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:3

Question: Why did Jesus keep the sabbath?

Answer: Jesus kept the sabbath because He was living under the old covenant of which it was a part. The old covenant lasted until the death of Christ when He nailed it to the cross and took it out of the way. Col. 2:14. The new covenant was not brought into effect until the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Christ's death.

Someone will undoubtedly want to know under what covenant or "will" man was living during the forty days after the resurrection while He made His appearances on earth before He ascended. The simple answer is that **no will is in effect until it is read**. Until Peter made known the terms of the "New Testament" or "will" on the day of Pentecost, man was yet under the former or old covenant.

Question: Why did the Apostle Paul go into the synagogues on the sabbath?

Answer: Paul was preaching Christ to the ignorant and unbelieving Jews. Acts 9:20; 13:5. They needed to know the conditions of the new covenant whereby they could receive redemption for their transgressions under the old covenant. Heb. 9:15.

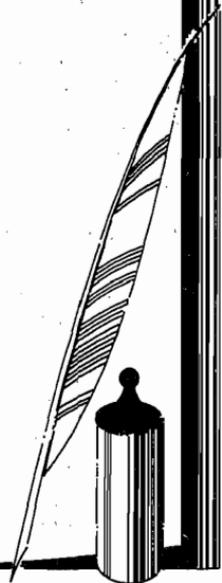
Examination Twenty Three

1. What is the reason for setting any day apart for remembrance?
2. Give three things of great importance that occurred on Sunday.
3. How is it that every Sunday recalls the resurrection when the actual day only appears once a year on the calendar?
4. How can we be sure the words "Lord's day" in Revelation 1:10 refer to Sunday?
5. How does I Corinthians 16:1, 2 prove that the apostolic church met on Sunday?
6. Show how Acts 20:7 teaches a weekly meeting on Sunday.
7. Show how Genesis 1:1-3 has nothing to do with sabbath observance by Adam and Eve.
8. How explain the use of the term sabbath in Exodus 16:23.
9. Give four reasons for not observing the sabbath today.
10. What the ceremonial law according to the Seventh Day advocates? According to the scriptures?

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

**THE TABLE OF
REMEMBRANCE**

- *ORIGIN*
- *NAMES*
- *ELEMENTS*
- *PARTICIPANTS*
- *IMPORTANCE*
- *PURPOSE*
- *SERVICE*
- *FREQUENCY*



LESSON TWENTY FOUR

THE TABLE OF REMEMBRANCE

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

Goethe, a famous German writer, once an unbeliever, wrote much to oppose the Bible. In his last days he penned the following statement: "My belief in the Bible has saved my literary and moral life."

There must have been a very vital connection between the Word of God and the life of Goethe. How close "to home" does His Word come to us?

Here are some life saving references to consider on the subject of the Lord's Supper:

Matt. 26:47-49; Mark 14:12, 17; I Cor. 11:22; Luke 22:19, 20; Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Cor. 10:16; John 6:51-65; Ex. 12:3-10; 11-28; I Cor. 5:7.

Here are some questions that could be embarrassing—or strengthening—which is it?

1. Isn't it a fact that Jesus never specified the frequency of the observance of sacrament? He simply said "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup . . ."
2. The communion served every Sunday becomes far too common and loses its meaning. Isn't this true?
3. Isn't it a fact that the early church used alcoholic wine in the Lord's Supper? Why do you fail to use it?
4. Why offer the Lord's Supper to all who want it if only those who are immersed are Christians?
5. Would it be right for a woman to pass the emblems? (The bread or the cup.)
6. Is anyone in the truest sense "worthy" to partake of the Lord's Supper?
7. Did Jesus mean that the loaf and the cup were His real body and blood when He said, "This is my body"? If not, what did He mean? Prove your answer.
8. Does John 6:50-58 have any relation to the Lord's Supper? If so, what?
9. If a person misses the Lord's Supper through sickness, should the emblems be taken to them or is the Supper confined to the assembled group?
10. Is ordinary white bread acceptable as the bread of the Supper?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

This is a subject upon which the church world is woefully divided. There is division on how often we should partake. Some feel once a quarter is enough; others, once a month; still others partake of the Lord's Supper each Sunday. Is there no form to which all can refer? There is difference as to whether the content of the cup is to be unfermented grape juice or alcoholic wine. Just what was used by our Lord?

It should be easy to observe by the attitude of some that the real meaning of this holy Supper has been lost and their taking of it is but an empty form. This is a tragic loss. Frequently the person who offers the prayer over the bread or the cup is said to be "acting as an elder" and the ones who serve it "acting as deacons."

The question has actually been asked by a brother "Will you serve as an elder today?" Meaning, "Will you pray over the cup or the bread?" In this practice a scriptural practice? Does this practice relate to the scriptures?

It is made clear in some places that only those who are members "in good standing" of that local congregation are invited to the Table. In other places the Table is open to all who feel they are children of God. All of these beliefs and practices cannot be right. What think ye? What saith the scriptures?

It will be the purpose of this lesson to carefully examine the following concerning our Lord's Supper:

1. The origin of it.
2. The names applied to it.
3. The use of the loaf and the cup.
4. Who is to participate?
5. The importance of participation.
6. The purpose of the Supper.
7. Who can preside?
8. The frequency of observance.

The Origin

The beginning of the Lord's Supper is inseparably associated with the Jewish Passover. If we do not understand the observance of the Passover we fail to have a complete perspective of the Table of the Lord. We do not here propose to give an extended discussion of the Passover feast, but we do want to outline some of the salient points of this ancient practice. It should be understood first of all that there was more on the table than the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. A whole roasted lamb was a part of the provision of the feast. The animal was slain and prepared for the feast in a most careful manner. Care was taken not to break a bone of the animal. At one time a boiled egg became part of the food. This egg was cut in half and placed in salt water. This egg, when halved, had the appearance of an eye. The salt water could well

represent the tears shed while in Egyptian bondage. A molasses-like substance into which bitter herbs were dipped was to represent the bitterness of servitude during the stay in Egypt. A cup was served before the supper and one after, as well. The unleavened bread was in the form of large loaves, flat and about the size of a dinner plate and almost as thin. It should be remembered that when our Lord said, "With desire have I desired to eat **this** passover with you before I suffer," the emphasis must have been on the word "this" inasmuch as He probably had eaten at least two other Passover feasts with them. The observance of this feast was purely Jewish and held significance for their national life. To sit down to this feast was to remember their national deliverance. The oldest member of the family acted as the host of the meal and directed the ritual. Is it not then, passing strange that when all was ready our Lord acted as host? Strange in point of age, but not in point of recognition as the "elder" of the group in point of wisdom. Not one of the apostles could have guessed what our Lord was to say at this occasion. We can be almost sure that none of them expected this wonderful "plus" factor in this national feast.

On the same night that Jesus was betrayed He introduced His Table of Remembrance to the world through His apostles. (cf. Mark 14:12, 17; I Cor. 11:22; Matt. 26:47-49.)

Our Lord made a specific request that the use He made of the bread and the cup continue in remembrance of Him. Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 11:24, 25. What a supreme expression of love and submission to the Father's will it was for Jesus to thank God for the cup and the loaf that symbolized His suffering and death, and more especially is this true when He knew only a few short hours separated Him from this terrible ordeal.

The Names Applied

THE LORD'S SUPPER. I Cor. 11:20. One of the acts that through centuries has been the symbol of unity and joint-sharing has been the common meal. To eat together is to say "we agree; we are friends." So it is that we say to all as we sit down around His Table that "we are His friends." It is a sharing with Christ around His Table—at His Supper. In another sense we recognize that the Supper is not ours, but His—we share but do not possess it.

THE BREAKING OF BREAD. Acts 2:42; 20:7. You will note as we discuss these various denotations that the thought of a meal runs throughout. The above designation sometimes is used to refer to the ordinary daily meal. Acts 20:11. Only the context can determine whether the expression refers to the Lord's Supper or the daily meal. How marvelously meaningful is the expression "breaking of bread" when we remember how His body was "broken for us." I Cor. 11:24. Some have objected to the idea of the body of Jesus being broken inasmuch as the prophet had said, "Not a bone of

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

His body would be broken;”—however, a little closer thinking will bring to mind the fact that the bread represents “His flesh” which indeed was broken for the world. John 6:54-56.

COMMUNION. I Cor. 10:16. This word is sometimes mistakenly associated with the word “conversation.” You will note the marginal reference as to the meaning of communion, “a participation in.” This gives a much deeper significance than just the thought of communication through conversation. We come to the service to participate in the blood and body of our Lord. This suggests the closeness of our Lord. We are not looking at the elements in a simple objective manner, but we are to make out of this service a subjective experience. This it can be only if we see in the bread and the cup the answer to our soul needs. We need the cleansing of His blood, here we see His blood. “He bore in His body our sins upon the tree.” I Pet. 2:24. We take in our hand the unleaven loaf and as we do we take to our heart the meaning of the broken body. Only as we discern the body and the blood in the cup and the loaf do we truly participate or commune with and in Him.

THE TABLE OF THE LORD. I Cor. 10:21. The term “Table” was far more meaningful in the apostolic age than it is today. To eat with a person indicated an acceptance of such a person as a brother. All of life was related to religion. To sit at “my table in my home” was to say to all by such actions that you accepted me into your heart and would extend to me the hospitality associated with such acceptance. What is it, then, to receive an invitation from the Lord of Glory to sit down with Him in His house around His Table? We are in His heart and share His Table. Will we be ungrateful guests at this glorious feast?

THE LOAF AND THE CUP

The Lord’s Supper grew out of the Jewish passover, also called the feast of unleavened bread. Ex. 12:3-10, 11-20, 21-28; Matt 26:17-26; I Cor. 5:7. From these and other scriptures and additional sources we learn the following regarding the loaf and the cup:

1. The loaf is unleavened bread. Ex. 12:8, 15, 20; 13:3, 6.

Bread dough baked having no yeast or leaven in it is said to be unleavened.

Leaven or yeast is that which causes the dough to sour or ferment.

Leaven is many times used as a symbol of corruption. Matt. 16:6; Luke 12:1b. Consider the following definition:

“Ferment, or yeast, is a substance in a state of putrefaction, the atoms of which are in continual motion.”

—*McClintock and Strong, Vol. V, Pg. 308, Ar. “Leaven”*

Unleavened bread is symbolical of Christ’s body. Luke 22:19. The loaf is without leaven even as Christ was without sin. Heb. 4:15; 7:26.

The loaf contains no putrefaction even as Christ's body contained no corruption though it was in the grave for three days. Acts 2:27.

The unleavened bread was made of flour and water only. Meal or flour (both coarse and fine) is the only ingredient named. Gen. 18:6; Ex. 12:39; Judges 6:19; I Sam. 28:24.

Inasmuch as liquid is necessary to make "dough" from the flour, we conclude that water (possibly milk) was used.

2. The cup contained "the fruit of the vine."

The word "wine" is not used in the scriptures in connection with the Lord's Supper. Is this by chance or is it of design? The terms "fruit of the vine" or "cup" are used in every instance. Matt. 26:27, 29; Mark 14:23, 25; Luke 22:17, 18, 20; I Cor. 11:25, 26. The general word for wine, "oinos," is not used. When grape juice ferments it is no longer "the fruit of the vine." Three of the ingredients of the grape juice are completely destroyed in the process of putrefaction and seven new substances are created which are not constituents of the grape, the fruit of the vine. Even if the word "wine" were used it would not indicate that the liquid was alcoholic.

The Hebrew word for wine, "yayin" did not necessarily indicate intoxicating drinks, but frequently denoted a drink that was non-intoxicating. Isa. 16:10; 65:8; Deut. 32:14; Jer. 48:33. Josephus, a Jewish historian, born in 37 A.D. gives in his history an example of the view of that day respecting wine: "He therefore said that in his sleep he saw three clusters of grapes hanging upon three branches of a vine, large already and ripe for gathering, and that he squeezed them into a cup, which the king held in his hand, and when he had strained the wine, he gave it to the king to drink, and he received it from him with a pleasant countenance . . . Thou sayest that thou didst squeeze this wine from three clusters of grapes with thine hands, and that the king received it; know, therefore, that this vision is for thy good, and foretells a release from thy present distress."

—*Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. II, ch. 5, sec. 2

Ancient writers speak of non-intoxicating "good wine" and give the recipe for making it. The following three passages are from a book, now out of print, by Ferrar Fenton:

1. Now, Jesus Christ described the wine that was being used at His Passover as the "fruit of the vine," e.g., the offspring of the vine, or that which is borne of the vine. Now, the vine does not bear intoxicating drink. The fruit of the vine is not intoxicating. There is no alcohol in the fruit of the vine. It is pure, good, wholesome, and health-giving, a beautiful emblem of the life and strength-giving grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Intoxicating wine is the emblem of disease, sin, and death. More-

over, just think of the condition the party keeping the Passover must have been in; for the Jewish Mishna (chap. 10) says: "A person shall not have less than four cups of wine, even if they be given to him from the fund devoted to the charitable support of the very poor. Each cup must contain the quarter of a quarter of a hin—that is three gills English measure—so that the four cups would contain twelve gills, or a bottle and a half (three pints)." So Dr. Lightfoot tells us (Vol. 9, p. 151). If the wine used was fermented grape-juice, the four cups would contain about six ounces of pure alcohol, equal to twelve ounces of proof spirit; and when we remember that each member of the family of twelve years of age and upwards had to drink four cups, twelve gills, it is certain that, if the wine was intoxicating, they must have been drunk at the end of the feast, especially the women and the boys and girls who were not accustomed to the use of intoxicating wine. How terrible to think of the mass of drunkenness in the Jewish families on the Passover night! It is perfectly revolting to think that our Lord and Saviour could countenance or sanction such a man-injuring and God-dishonoring system.

2. Jesus Christ was God's High Priest. And Almighty God had strictly forbidden the priests to use intoxicating wine when ministering before Him:

"And Jehovah spake unto Aaron, saying, Drink no wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tent of meeting, that ye die not; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations; and that ye may make a distinction between the holy and the common, and between the **unclean** and the **clean**." God had also forbidden the presence of all fermented things at the Passover Service. It was therefore impossible for His Incarnate Son to act contrary to the Father's will, for He said, "I came not to destroy, (the law), but to fulfill." Matt. 5:17.

3. According to God's command (Lev. 10:9) and the teaching of the Jewish Mishna, they were not allowed to drink intoxicating wine when serving before the Lord. How terrible it is to be taught by Christian theologians that Christ broke the divine law, and taught His infant Church to break the law He Himself had made, for He was the lawgiver with the Father and the Holy Ghost. If the wine which was used at the first institution was intoxicating, then the great body of Nazarites, Rechabites, the followers of John the Baptist, and especially the Essenes (a vast multitude of the best of the people), would be prevented from partaking, because they never used intoxicating wine of any kind. Jeremiah's description of the Nazarites might fairly be used to describe these holy people. They "were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk; they were more ruddy in body than rubies." Lam. 4:7.

These people were all abstainers from intoxicating drink, and were in much favor with the Lord. Surely it is not possible that the Lord of life would cause all these people, who were the cream of society in that day in Jerusalem, to violate their consciences by forcing upon them the intoxicating cup.

It is most trying to many communicants who are abstainers to be forced either to partake of the intoxicating wine or to pass the cup. It is especially trying for them to have to take their children to the holy Table, where they will taste intoxicating drink for the first time. And some of it is most intoxicating, having not less than from 10 to 30 per cent alcohol in it.

"The Bible and Wine" by Fenton

3. Unfermented grape juice was used at the time Christ instituted His memorial Supper. The scriptures do not authorize the use of any drink at all with the passover. Ex. 12:3-28. (When a drink was introduced, we do not know.)

There is **divine authority** which would have forbidden the use of fermented wine at the passover. God prohibited the presence of ferment or leaven during the feast of unleavened bread. Ferment was not even to be found in the houses or the land occupied by Israel. Ex. 12:15, 19; 13:7; Deut. 16:4.

At the time of our Lord it is highly improbable that any intoxicating wine could have been found that did not contain ferment or leaven.

In light of the above we see that intoxicating wine would have been banned because of the ferment it contained.

"The fruit of the vine" is symbolical of Christ's shed blood. Mark 14:23-25; Matt. 26:27-29.

"The fruit of the vine" is pure, good, wholesome and health-giving. It is a fit emblem of the life-giving blood of Jesus Christ. Alcohol is a death-producing and death-preserving agent. Any liquid containing it could not be a suitable emblem of Christ's shed blood. We give one further quotation from Ferrar Fenton: "There are **Thirteen** different words or vocables used (in the Bible); **Nine** in the Hebrew and Chaldee, and **Four** in the Greek, all of which are rendered by the European translators indiscriminately as 'Wine or Strong Drink,' although all intrinsically are solid substances, but which may be turned into intoxicants by human ingenuity. When, however, we examine the passages where those words are used, we find the sacred writers speak, in the most numerous cases, of them, not as intoxicants, but as foods, which was their ordinary form of consumption. **Where distinct reference is made to them as means after human manipulation of intoxication, drunkenness, and debauchery, their use in that form is invariably condemned and vehemently denounced by the Prophets and Moralists of the Bible as the causes of personal sin**

and national ruin. Their use in these forms of alcoholic liquors, or fermented wine, was absolutely forbidden in the religious ordinances of the Temple or Altars, and especially from the sacred rites of the Passover, and to all priests during the period of their ministrations."

Who Is To Participate In The Lord's Supper?

Whatever discussion has been raised since the time of the beginning (and we shall comment on such) we can know for a certainty that when our Lord instituted the "cup of blessing" it was given only to those who were His disciples. When the Supper was observed by the early church no one thought of including any but the Christians in the service. But then, perhaps the question is not who should partake of the Lord's Supper, for all are agreed that it is exclusively given for Christians, the question is better put, who is a Christian? Here is an intriguing quotation from Moses E. Lard:

Let us assume the following particulars:

1. That belief in Christ, a fixed purpose to forsake sin, and the immersion of the body in water, are necessary to constitute a man a Christian—always and everywhere necessary. In other words, and generally, it is here assumed that it takes two things to constitute a man a Christian; namely: 1. The right spirit or mental frame; 2. The right act or acts; and that no more can the right spirit, without the right acts, constitute him a Christian, than can the right acts, without the right spirit. This right spirit and the right acts is the spirit and acts prescribed in the New Testament. With the right spirit, without the right acts, a man may be eminently good and pious, but he is not a Christian. Though he should be in spirit only as faultless as a seraph, he is not a Christian. God may esteem him very highly, much more so than many of the immersed, and even very certainly save him; still, with becoming decency be it said, he is not a Christian. In this case God esteems him as a good man and not as a Christian; and the distinction between the two is as palpable to thought, as is the distinction to the eye, between the words good and Christian employed to denote them respectively. With the right acts, without the right spirit, a man may be pre-eminently moral, still he is no Christian; and though all the world should pronounce him one, yet is he not one in the sight of God.

2. That the Kingdom or Church is something wholly distinct from the world; that between them exists a line deep, legible, and inefaceable; that from the world into the kingdom a man cannot pass except by a birth of water and spirit, and that without this birth he is not a Christian.

3. That the institution called the Lord's Supper exists wholly within the kingdom; and in no sense nor in any part out of it.

Now, if these premises be correct, as we believe, how can a man

who is out of the kingdom participate in a rite which exists wholly in it? If the man cannot enter the kingdom without being born again, nor the rite be removed out of the kingdom into the world, then it seems to me that participation in the rite by the man is impossible. It is impossible to sit at a table in any house and partake thereof without first entering the house. Equally clear would it seem to be, that no one can partake of the Lord's Table without first entering the kingdom. May it not be, then, that in the present controversy we have been assuming as true what is, in fact, not true? We have been assuming that the unimmersed **do commune**; but may this not be false? I will not affirm that it is false; but I must deny that it is true. That the unimmersed **seem** to commune, I grant. Certain it is that they break the bread and drink the cup; but is this a genuine communion? It is what **we** call communion, I well know, but is it so viewed and so accepted by the Lord? The case resembles a vitiated immersion. A man professes to believe in his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, seems penitent and sincere; yet in fact he is not a believer. This man is immersed. Now, so far as outward appearances are concerned, so far as the audience is concerned, and so far as even the act itself is concerned, this seems a genuine immersion; yet in fact it is not so. The absence of faith has vitiated it, and it is not accepted by the Lord as the act appointed by him. Precisely so in the case of communion. A man to all human appearance communes—he certainly breaks the bread and drinks of the cup; yet this is not a real communion. The man is not in the kingdom, and this vitiates his act. It is hence not accepted of the Lord as the act appointed by Him. The act appointed by Him is appointed to be performed by none but a Christian; consequently when performed by any other, it is not the act appointed by Him; hence it is no communion. Even granting that the communicant is perfectly sincere; still this cannot alter the nature of his act, only so far, it may be, as to render it uncriminal. Mere sincerity cannot entitle a man to commune; he must be a Christian and sincere, otherwise he neither can nor does commune. If a man be out of the kingdom, neither sincerity alone, nor sincerity and piety alone, can alter his relation thereto; neither consequently can they alone entitle him to commune. When out of the kingdom, but one thing can alter his relation to it; namely, a birth of water and spirit. This alone, therefore, can entitle him to commune.

But suppose a man to be a true believer in Christ, to be truly penitent, to be sprinkled and not immersed, and sincerely thinks this to be baptism. He is a strictly moral man, and feels in his heart that he is a Christian—what then? May he not commune? The answer is yes; **provided** it can be first shown that sincerely thinking so transmutes an act of sprinkling into an act of immersion, or causes God to accept the thing He has not appointed for the

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

thing He has. Otherwise, it must be said not that the man may not commune, but that he cannot and does not commune."

—*Lard's Quarterly*

Please note very carefully Lard's last statement: "Otherwise, it must be said, **not that the man may not commune, but that he cannot and does not commune.**"

Do we have the right to refuse to pass the emblems to the unimmersed or to any other that we deem unscripturally qualified to commune? If so, where is such authority granted to us by the Word of the Lord?

"It would seem that the prudential procedure in the churches would be simply to state that the Lord's Supper is spread for obedient believers in Jesus Christ. Those who regularly attend a church where the full gospel is proclaimed will not long be under the delusion that they are Christians without being immersed whereas, to openly and arbitrarily forbid them the privilege of expressing their devotion to the Lord by their desired participation in the Lord's Supper might so incline them as to lose every opportunity to teach them 'the way of the Lord more perfectly.' The responsibility is not to forbid, but to so teach that those who have been misled by false teaching will come to the knowledge of the truth and become obedient believers in Jesus Christ, members of His kingdom, unquestionably qualified to participate in the Lord's Supper."

—*From The Lord's Supper Through The Ages, by Walter L. Spratt*

The Importance of Participation

From what has already been said it should not be necessary to lay too much stress on the importance of His Supper. Shall we talk of the importance of the nation to a patriot? Shall we tell a martyr of the importance of devotion to a cause? Shall it then be necessary to speak often to those who have been purchased by His blood of the importance of remembering His suffering and death? How could we forget Him if we truly know Him? The Lord's Supper is important because it is a test of our love. If we love Him, we will want to remember Him; and to remember Him in this, the most significant of all our recollections of Him. It is also mightily important that we thus remember Him because of the spiritual blessings therein derived, but then this thought leads us to the next question.

The Purpose of The Supper

In the long ago our blessed Lord said, "This is my body," and of the cup He said, "This is my blood." How shall we understand His words? Are we to believe that He meant that these elements were His real body and real blood? If so, our purpose in partaking would be far different than if we understood this to be only a figurative expression. How did the apostles understand such words? If the apostles **had** spoken on the subject it likely would never have grown to such proportions as it has. As it is the Twelve and Paul are

silent on the matter. This silence is adopted by both sides as an argument in their favor. "See," says each, "if it had been a question would there not have to occur some word?" Each concludes by the silence that their position was so well accepted that no one dared to question it. This argument from silence proves nothing. It is significant to note that **not until the third century** did this controversy over the literal or figurative meaning of His words "This is my body, This is my blood" make itself known.

The purpose in taking of the Lord's Supper is inseparably linked with the interpretation placed upon these words. How do you understand them? There are four beliefs held in the so-called Christian world.

(1) The Roman Catholic theory of **TRANSUBSTANTIATION**, i.e. the transfer of substance. The substance of the bread and the wine is "effectually changed into the flesh and blood of Christ. This transfer of substance is brought about when the priest pronounces the formula in Latin, "This is my body, This is my blood."

(2) The Lutheran church holds to the idea of **CONSUBSTANTIATION**. Luther did not believe there was a transfer of substance. He felt that the body and blood were **in** the elements; no transfer was necessary. Luther did not object to the doctrine of transubstantiation so much as he did to the power it gave the priests over the people.

(3) **Erasmus** probably originated the **SYMBOLIC THEORY**. Zwingli, the Swiss, reformer, made the theory popular in the Reformation. He regarded the bread and the fruit of the vine as symbols of "the grace already received rather than a means of a grace to be received." Even so, there was with Zwingli the thought that Christ was super-naturally present in the Lord's Supper. Hear him:

"We believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper; yea, that there is no communion without such presence . . . We believe that the true body of Christ is eaten in the communion, not in a gross and carnal manner, but in a sacramental and spiritual manner by the religious, believing and pious heart."

—*Schaff, Vol. VII, pages 677.*

The emphasis by Zwingli which varied from Luther was that the spiritual presence of Christ, and the benefits therefrom, we obtained in the heart through faith and not through the mouth.

(4) To **John Calvin** we can refer for a fourth concept. "Even though Calvin understood the word of institution in a figurative sense, the symbols were not empty but gave assurance of the invisible substance. As we partake of the Lord's Supper in faith, through the Holy Spirit we are fed the necessary spiritual substance . . . of Christ's body and blood. He rejected the corporeal presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, but stressed a real spiritual presence, an actual communion with the living Christ . . . Calvin stressed the

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit in consummating the communion between the believers and Christ. The Holy Spirit communicates a power to the recipient of the Lord's Supper."

—*The Lord's Supper Through The Ages* by Walter L. Spratt, page 70

In these four points of view we have a good example between theology and the plain statement of scripture. J. W. McGarvey was very wise when he said: "It is held by the advocates of the doctrine of transubstantiation that these words are to be understood literally and that the bread, therefore, was transformed into the actual body of Jesus. It is also affirmed, although it would in no means follow, that when a priest consecrates the wafer there is a similar transformation and the communicants eat not bread, but the actual body of Christ under the appearance of bread. Waiving all that may be said as to the absurdity of this doctrine, we content ourselves with the inquiry whether the words of Jesus can be thus understood, and in order to the settlement of the question we place ourselves with the apostles to whom these words were first addressed. If, as Jesus spoke the words, "This is my body," He had suddenly disappeared and the apostles had seen nothing but the bread, they would have understood that the body had been miraculously transformed into the loaf. But as His body was still there and the loaf which he held in His hands was also there; and as His body still remained there after the loaf was broken and passed around and eaten up, it is impossible that they could have intended to be so understood. This is the end of the controversy. The language declares only that the bread was a symbol of His body and it is the usual mode of expressing such an idea; e.g., "The field is the world; the good seeds are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil, etc."

—*The New Testament Commentary, Vol. I, page 227*

Who Can Preside and Serve?

Any Christian is qualified to preside at the table or serve the emblems. The only detailed example given us in the scripture is the one in which the Lord, Himself, presided and served. Matt. 26:26, 27. Beyond this the scripture gives no command or example as to who is to preside and serve. There is no scriptural authority for limiting this privilege strictly to the elders and deacons.

The Frequency of Observance

The Lord's Supper is to be observed every Lord's Day.

1. What we learn from the scripture about this:

In Acts 20:7 the expression "the first day of the week" refers to every first day of the week. The language shows that it was a custom to meet upon every first day of the week for this purpose. Compare the similar language of Exodus 20:10 regarding the sabbath and which we know refers to every "seventh day."

The language of I Corinthians 11:20 also indicates that the pur-

THE TABLE OF REMEMBRANCE

pose of the regular assembly was to observe the Lord's Supper.

2. Church historians are agreed that the Lord's Supper was observed every Sunday.

"The Lord's Supper was celebrated every Lord's Day."

—*Neander, page 103*

"The ordinary practice was for the communion to be received on Sunday of each week."

—*George P. Fisher, page 68*

3. Denominational leaders are agreed that the church should observe the Lord's Supper every first day of the week.

John Calvin, Presbyterian: "Every week at least, the tables of the Lord should have been spread for Christian assemblies."

—*Calvin's Christian Institutes, Book 6, ch. 18, sec. 46*

John Wesley, Methodist: "I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord's Day."

—*The Life of Wesley by Wm. Walker, pages 336-338*

Examination Twenty Four

1. What in your estimation is the greatest lack in partaking of the Lord's Supper?
2. How was a new significance given to an old feast?
3. Show the appropriateness of three names applied to the Lord's Supper.
4. Why is there unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper?
5. Give two reasons for saying that the cup did not hold liquid with alcoholic content.
6. Would it be right to give the Lord's Supper to a sincere un-immersed person who felt in their heart that they were a Christian? If so, why? If not, why not?
7. Is there forgiveness in partaking of the Lord's Supper? If so when and how?
8. Explain the purpose of the Supper as stated by the Roman Catholic Church.
9. Who can preside at the Table? Prove your answer.
10. Give two reasons for observing the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

THE
DISCIPLINE
OF THE CHURCH

There are two uses of the word.

1. A rule of faith and practice:
THE NEW TESTAMENT
2. Mental or moral training:
Instructive and corrective.

*Corrective discipline in the
New Testament.*

1. The need for it.
2. In personal offences.
3. Disagreement among brethren.
4. In restoring the fallen brother.
5. For those who walk disorderly.
6. As practiced in Corinth.
7. The effect of discipline.
8. Questions of procedure.



LESSON TWENTY FIVE

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"To say nothing of its holiness or authority, the Bible contains more specimens of genius and taste than any other volume in existence."

—Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864)

Precious Book, speaking the mind of God to the heart of man. When will we let Him speak to our conscience through its pages? Here are some of the specimens of divine genius. Read them carefully:

Jude 3; Matt. 15:1-9; I Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:8, 9; Heb. 8:5; Rev. 22:18, 19; Col. 2:14; Heb. 8:7-13; John 16:12-15; II Pet. 1:21; II Tim. 2:15, 16, 17; Psalms 19:7a; Luke 20:26; John 5:39; Rom. 4:3.

As you might or might not know, **not everyone** agrees that the New Testament is the only rule of faith and practice. Then there are some who agree in word but not in practice. The following questions are formed in such a manner as to endeavor to stimulate a little independent thinking:

1. The Church of Christ has much more than just the New Testament as its rule of faith and practice. This can be seen in the fact that when a question of faith or practice arises, **men are consulted instead of the New Testament!** Do you agree or disagree?
2. The idea of holding the New Testament as a rule of faith and practice is highly impractical as no two persons can understand it exactly alike. What thinkest thou?
3. The New Testament is not a book of rules but rather a book of principles that can have a wide application. Is this so?
4. We are not to judge lest we be judged. Matt. 7:1. Therefore, the widest latitude should be given in attempting to follow the New Testament in faith and practice. What does this mean to you?
5. It is actually wrong to hold simply the New Testament as the rule of faith when there are wonderful lessons to learn and follow from the Old Testament. Isn't this what you believe?
6. It is perfectly possible to be "perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" concerning the will of God as revealed in the New Testament. If so, how?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

LESSON DISCUSSION

There are two uses of the term **discipline** as it relates to the church.

(1) It can refer to the rule or system of rules affecting conduct or action; a body of laws pertaining to conduct. The New Testament holds this distinction.

(2) It can refer to mental or moral training; education; subjection to control. In this sense there are two types of discipline, instructive and corrective.

In the previous twenty-four lessons it has been emphasized again and again that we are "to make all things according to the pattern" as found in the New Testament. Because of this constant and somewhat detailed emphasis we will devote the larger portion of this lesson to the second definition of the term. Here is a short study of the first definition of discipline.

1. The need for this study.

Some churches accept oral tradition along with the Bible as their discipline. Many people accept only the written, inspired Word of God as their rule of faith and practice. Before there can ever be unity among believers there must be an agreement upon a common source of discipline.

2. What this discipline is not, and why.

1. It is not **tradition**.

The meaning of the word "tradition": It refers to those opinions, doctrines, practices, rites, and customs which have been handed down from father to son, or from ancestors to posterity by word of mouth and not by a written communication. Actually, however, it is used by those who accept it as including the spurious writings (the apocrypha, decisions of the church, sayings and writings of the church fathers, etc. What some say in favor of tradition for church discipline:

The Very Reverend J. Faa Di Bruno, D.D., in "**Catholic Belief**" says in substance the following: The holy scripture is not sufficient in itself and has always stood in need of divine tradition. The fact that the Bible is inspired can only be learned by tradition.

Cardinal James Gibbons in "**The Faith of Our Fathers**" gives two reasons why tradition is necessary. Here is the gist of his two reasons: The scriptures are not clear and intelligible; they do not contain all the truth which is required for salvation.

To summarize the above arguments in other words is to say that God is not capable of producing a book that will be an all-sufficient guide for man inasmuch as He is unable to make it complete and understandable.

Why must we reject tradition as a rule of faith and practice:

Tradition is not reliable or trustworthy. Anything passed on by word of mouth is subject to error and alteration. Man is fallible, his

memory fails him and he talks too much. Tradition often contradicts itself, history and the scriptures. Most of the tradition which we have today originated from uninspired sources. Any source this side of Christ other than the apostles or those who had received special gifts from the laying on of the apostles' hands, is an uninspired source. The use of tradition and human legislation for discipline is sinful:

We are not to teach the doctrines of men. Matt. 15:1-9.

We must not go beyond what is written. I Cor. 4:6.

We are to accept only the gospel of Christ. Gal. 1:8-9.

We must make all things according to the divine blueprint. Heb. 8:5.

We are not to subtract from or add to the Word of God. Rev. 22:18-19.

2. It is not the **Old Testament**.

The attitude of many is that we are still to be governed by a portion of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. They believe that part of the old covenant of the Old Testament was done away in Christ and that we are under the rule of that portion which was not done away. Our attitude toward the Old Testament is that it is an inspired book and one from which we can learn much but that we are not held responsible by God to keep the old covenant or any part of the old covenant.

There are three reasons why we are not under the old covenant. The agreement of the Old Testament was only with the Jews. Ex. 24:1-8. Christ fulfilled this covenant of the Old Testament and took it out of the way. Col. 2:14. There is no hint that any portion of it was not taken away. We are under a new covenant with God and this is found in the New Testament. Heb. 8:7-13.

3. What this discipline is, and why.

The discipline for the Church of Christ is the New Testament. Here are some reasons why.

The New Testament is divinely inspired and without error.

Holy men of God spoke and wrote as they were directed by the Holy Spirit. John 16:12-15; II Pet. 1:21.

The rules and laws therein are perfect. James 1:25; Psalms 19:7a.

It gives us regulations which cannot be improved.

All the essentials of faith and practice are clear and easy to be understood. Isa. 35:8; Mark 16:16; II Tim. 3:15; Psalms 19:7b. A person of normal intelligence is able to understand them.

The New Testament is complete with instructions on all matters of faith and practice. II Tim. 3:16-17.

The New Testament is accessible to any and all. It is not kept from the public and jealously guarded by a select few.

Christ and His apostles set us an example of accepting only the genuine and authentic written scriptures as authority and no other.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Luke 10:26; John 5:39; Rom. 4:3; II Tim. 3:15. They did not accept oral tradition or spurious writings.

The New Testament is the only rule of faith and practice that all could unite upon.

It is accepted by all churches.

It is the only book of discipline that could not be dispensed with.

Here is an old method of instruction dressed up in a new garb. We might as well be as practical as possible on this matter of the rule of faith and practice. Here is a chain of reasoning in fourteen propositions. Maybe you will agree with all of them; could be that you will take exception with some. All we ask is that you know **why** you agree or disagree. We believe this practical use of the terms of fellowship in applying the rule of faith and practice will go far, very far in bringing the unity for which Jesus prayed.

The following section has been prepared by Willard Vanderford.

Fourteen Propositions

1. That all penitent believers who are immersed into Christ with the manifest purpose to be governed by Him alone in all things according to His Word do thus come into fellowship with Christ and with each other as brethren.

We have agreement on this, generally speaking, but there is one point that needs emphasis. One's confession of faith in Christ accompanied by repentance and immersion is a pledge of allegiance and loyal obedience to Christ in all things according to the New Testament for as long as he shall live.

2. That it is the responsibility of each brother in this fellowship to daily grow in Christ by Bible study, prayer, a putting off of the things of the flesh and a putting on of the things of the Spirit.

Please read these references: Eph. 4:11-15; Heb. 5:11-6:2; I Cor. 3:1-3; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:12.

3. That the characteristics and quality of the fellowship of brethren in Christ should be so exceedingly blessed that each brother will **want** to stay in fellowship and sinners will **want** to enter.

Why do people slide away into the cults or back into the world after they have once come into Christ and into the church? One reason is they are deluded and discouraged by the indifference and sickened by the wrangling, bickering, gossip, etc., that they find. Why aren't the church auditoriums crowded with the unsaved every time there is a meeting? One reason is that they have trouble enough of their own without entering into more, which to them is inconsistent with the little they know of Bible Christianity. It is well to remember that Jesus did not say, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye bite and devour one another."

4. That every brother who has entered the fellowship should have a desire, a love and a passion to see others enter also and to help them come in.

Read the divinely approved examples. Acts 8:1-4; 11:19; I Thess. 1:7-8.

5. That every brother should desire to see a brother stay in fellowship equally as much as he did to see him become a brother in the first place.

This should need no proof but it does need emphasis. How inconsistent it is to speak of having a "passion" for souls and then to cut off one brother after another on the slightest provocation. If it is important to get a man saved then is it not equally important to keep him saved? The spiritual nurse department of the churches is woefully lacking in equipment and greatly overcrowded by babies who are stunted and spoiled because of a lack of proper formula, loving care and discipline.

6. That the knowledge and understanding of the Word of God and His will cannot be the same for all the brethren inasmuch as some have a greater mental ability and others have a lesser ability; others are older in the faith whereas some are babes.

Please review proposition 2.

7. That an older and more able brother's conclusions obtained by reasoning in the Word, whether regarding matters of necessary judgment, Christian growth or non-essential opinion, if fairly done, must be considered by **him** as doctrines of God's Word and as binding upon **his** conscience as an explicit statement of the Word itself.

8. That the brother of proposition seven above **should** instruct others in his reasoning concerning matters of necessary judgment and Christian growth and **may** teach also his reasoning in matters of non-essential opinion, but must not make any such reasoning a test of fellowship or "set at nought" anyone who cannot understand nor perceive the truth of conclusions so derived.

Romans 14:1-5 gives us a good example: One brother is fully assured that it is permissible with God for him to eat both herbs and meat and he is not to disfellowship the weaker brother who cannot see this; God is able to make him stand in spite of this weakness. Though one's reasoning and conclusions may be perfectly valid and true, to bind them as a test of fellowship upon a brother who cannot so understand is going too far, for his faith should stand in the power of God rather than in the wisdom of men. Is it essential that we make a test of fellowship of an issue in order to take a firm strong stand on that issue? Would it not also be Christian and according to fact for the older brother to recognize that the younger and weaker brother must not necessarily always be wrong?

9. That a younger or less able brother should not charge that to go beyond his understanding is to go beyond what is written, thus making his present grasp of the scriptures a test of fellowship and a limit to all that may be learned from the Bible. To do so would be to retard all growth and limit the knowledge of all to that of the weakest brother.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

Notice again, Romans 14:1-5. The one who cannot see the eating of "all things" is not to "set at nought" him who does eat all things. Fellowship is not on the basis of whether it is right or wrong to eat meat or not to eat meat.

Let us bring the illustration up to date and see what would happen if we went altogether by the conscience of the weaker brother. Here comes a brother who cannot see the use of uninspired literature, so we put it away. Another comes who cannot see church buildings, so since he makes it a test of fellowship, we meet outside or in the homes. Still another weaker brother insists that we must dispose of benches and hymnals since they are not authorized in the Bible, so we sit on the ground and sing without song books. Yet another and another come who cannot see shaving, cutting of the hair, present means of transportation, etc., so we yield again to their consciences and where are we? We might even imagine a still weaker brother who cannot see the need of giving more than fifty cents a week to the Lord and since we don't want to be "set at nought" by him, the giving of all in the church is thereby reduced to fifty cents a week or less.

10. That the ever present test of fellowship for a penitent immersed believer is his manifest purpose to be governed by Christ alone in all things according to the scriptures.

This is the key to the problem of fellowship. When it is plain to be seen that a brother's desire is not to explain away the scriptures, ignore or wrest them, but to be guided by them alone and to study them fairly and honestly, then he is still in fellowship and no one has the right to cut him off.

11. That when the manifest purpose of a brother to serve Christ alone in all things according to His Word becomes questionable or doubtful he should be taught, exhorted, admonished and cared for that he might be established in Christ. The brother at this stage is not to be severed from fellowship for only God knows his heart. II Tim. 2:24-26; Gal. 6:1.

Since the change of loyalty from Christ to Satan occurs in the human heart, outward manifestations cannot be depended upon to tell us exactly when this takes place; God alone knows this.

12. That when it becomes manifest that the brother's purpose is not to be governed by Christ alone in all things according to the scriptures, and that he will not be corrected in this error then he must be severed from fellowship.

This is a last drastic measure. I Cor. 5:1-13; II Thess. 3:6-16; Titus 3:10. The person who insists in going by his own "think so" and/or gullibly takes what he is taught without ever examining the scriptures to see if the things are so is following in the wisdom of men, not in the power of God and is on the backslider's path to hell.

13. That one reason of such severing of fellowship is that the brother may come to his senses and repent and pray and be restored.

Read I Corinthians 5:1-13 again with special notice of verse 5. Compare also I Timothy 1:18-20. Review proposition three in light of II Corinthians 2:5-11.

If the fellowship of the brethren was what God intended it to be then disfellowshipping would cause a sense of loss, loneliness and sorrow on the part of the one cut off. When a church wrangles and rows and finally disfellowships somebody, does that somebody have a sense of pain or of relief? He is usually glad that he escaped and the thought of returning never occurs to him.

14. That one who severs fellowship on hearsay, without adequate evidence that the brother's purpose is not to be governed by the Word of God, or without first attempting to reconcile the supposedly erring brother, and without sorrow concerning the same has manifested a carnal spirit, a violation of proposition five above, and has raised doubt as to **his error** then **he** is marked for disfellowship.

Romans 16:17-18. Is this speaking of persons teaching contrary to the doctrine or of persons making division contrary to the doctrine? Just who is to be marked? We each have some error and to the extent that we teach our errors we are all false teachers. It does not follow therefore that everyone whose life and teaching is short of perfection is a divider and to be marked. The one who makes division unauthorized by the Lord is the false teacher who must needs be marked.

Conclusion:

This has been prepared with much prayer and hope that good will be accomplished thereby. The good that is in this article please credit to the Lord. The evil charge neither to the Lord nor the writer for it was not the intention of either that it be here.

It is somewhat rigorous and severe. What chastisement must the good Lord bring upon us so that we will be jarred to our senses and serve Him and one another according to the two greatest commandments?

Is it not good to know that God has provided protection for the members of His body, the church, and that His Word, revealed to us in the New Testament, contains a practical plan for Christian unity? May God bless us all so that the answer to Jesus' prayer for oneness may soon be fully realized.

—Respectfully submitted Willard Vanderford

The larger portion of this lesson is devoted to the second meaning of the term **discipline**. We are deeply indebted to W. Carl Ketcherside for the material here given. We follow closely (with his permission) the outline of his book "A Clean Church."

New Testament Discipline

The Meaning Of It.

The word "discipline" occurs only once in the New Testament. II Tim. 1:7. "For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and DISCIPLINE." In this reference it carries the thought of self-control.

Our commonly accepted use of the word comes from Webster, where it is defined as: "mental or moral training; education; subjection to control; . . ."

There are two types of discipline: 1) Instructive and 2) Corrective.

Our use of the word in a Biblical sense has been so limited in its use to "corrective discipline" that we have come to think of correction and discipline as synonyms. This is NOT true. If we had more instructive discipline there would be less need for corrective.

The Need For It

We are going to limit our discussion to "corrective discipline."

The Need For Corrective Discipline As Pictured

In The Sin Of Achan

1. It is possible for sin to exist in the congregation of God's people without the leadership being aware thereof. Joshua did not know of the trespass of Achan. This fact does not justify toleration of sin.
2. Sin in the church often affects others than the sinner, and may even cause those who have not been guilty, to stumble and fall.
3. When sin is known to be in the congregation, it is time for action.
4. The church can only stand against her enemies when she lives up to the profession she makes.
5. God's people should not postpone action essential to purifying and cleansing the church.
6. The steps leading to sin are outlined in the confession of Achan. "I saw . . . I coveted . . . I took . . . I hid."
7. The proof of guilt should always be well established before any public action is taken.
8. The punishment was administered by the entire congregation.
9. God's wrath is kindled against His people when they knowingly tolerate sin among them.

Corrective Discipline In Personal Offences

The reasons for limiting private offences in scope, and of providing for their settlement before they reach the public notice:

1. To make for ease of adjustment of the difficulty. The more people who become entangled in an affair, the more involved it becomes.
2. To limit the influence of the trespass on the lives of weaker brethren.

3. To keep the church from being distracted from its major task of saving the lost.
4. To keep the world from blaspheming the gospel of Christ.

The Law For Personal Offences

“And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican.” Matt. 18:15-17.

Correct analysis demands that we determine: 1) the subjects, 2) the action, 3) the direction of the action, 4) the method, 5) the purpose.

All of these are set forth in the very first sentence. 1) The subjects “brethren,” they are two in number; the offender, the offended. 2) The action: “go” and “tell.” 3) The direction of the action is from the offended to the offender. 4) The method of adjustment is set forth by one word “alone.” 5) The purpose of the action: “gain thy brother.”

The second attempt

When neither explanation, repentance or restitution is forthcoming, the aggrieved must make a further attempt to keep private injury from becoming a matter of public note:

He must select witnesses and take with him for another interview. That these witnesses are not to be mere observers is evidenced by the expression, “If he shall neglect to HEAR them.” This proves that they are to admonish and intercede in the hope that their words may be effective where the intreaties of the offended party were unavailing.

When it is apparent that the witnesses selected have no means of settling the difficulty, the next instruction is to “tell it unto the church.” Does his mean that the case should be reported to the church, or should it be tried publicly before the church, with the church as such sitting in judgment. We incline to the view that the aggrieved party is to report to the elders of the church that the offense has been given.

Public Corrective Church Discipline. As It Relates To Disagreement Among Brethren.

“Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

life do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church? I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goeth to law with brother and that before unbelievers? Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you that ye have lawsuits one with another. Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? Nay, but ye yourselves do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren." I Cor. 6:1-8.

The line of thought in this section of scripture can be outlined in the following manner:

1. The carrying of lawsuits to pagan courts is unworthy of a Christian congregation.
2. Difficulties between brethren should be adjusted with the congregation.
3. The very occurrences of such difficulties disgraces a congregation.
4. All such attitudes should have disappeared when the Corinthians became Christians.

As to settling difficulties from this text we can definitely learn the following:

- 1) We should not take our disagreements to civil courts.
- 2) We should settle our own troubles as Christians.
- 3) Those who are "wise" among us should give us assistance in the matter.
- 4) The proper attitude to be maintained when offended "Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?"

It does follow from other scriptures that the "wise men" to settle the difficulty would be the elders of the local congregation. But nothing will ever come of it if instructive discipline is not exercised in teaching the elders their responsibilities and the members their responsibilities to the elders.

Public Corrective Church Discipline As It Relates To The Restoration Of A Fallen Brother. Gal. 6:1.

The ideal situation would be a congregation so perfectly taught that being governed to perfection by the law of God, no distressing or disturbing element could arise. Continual instruction is needed in Christian living.

"Offences must come, and if possible they must be healed. To cut off an offender is good; to cure him is better; but to prevent him from falling is best of all." **Alexander Campbell**. The reason many fall is well stated in the words of Ezekiel: "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost . . . Therefore . . . thus saith the Lord God,

Behold, I am against the shepherds and will require my flock at their hand." Ezek. 34:4, 9, 10.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a trespass, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thy self, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1, 2.

Analysis of Instruction

1. The subjects. The first is the brother in error; the second the one who is to assist him back to the path of virtue and rectitude. We believe that the one who is "overtaken in a trespass" as herein mentioned means one who is swept into guilt by sudden temptation or passion.
"Ye which are spiritual" places only one limitation upon those who are commanded to restore the erring. It is not a part of an official duty, but simply the obligation of all who are spiritual. See I Cor. 12:25-26.
2. The action. This is expressed by one word "restore." We should consequently approach the task in such a manner as to bring about this action, or result.
3. The attitude toward the guilty. This is specifically covered in the expression, "in the spirit of gentleness."
4. Attitude toward self. The inward look as well as the outward look must be a part of the life of all who are spiritual.
5. The purpose of this attitude. The apostle seeks to make us realize that our human infirmities are so treacherous that any may be overtaken in a fault.

Corrective Discipline As It Relates To Those Who Walk Disorderly.

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us." II Thess. 3:6.

1. Observe that this is a command, not a mere petition or expression of desire.
2. The command is delivered in the name of the one with all power and authority, the head of the church, our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. "Withdraw yourselves." This is the action necessitated in the command. It is an action made obligatory upon the church. II Thess. 1:1.
4. "From every brother." This takes in a wide scope, embracing all who fall in the realm of the disorderly; let it here be understood that the expression "every" eliminates partiality in the administration of God's law.
5. "Walketh." This term indicates a course of conduct or pro-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

cedure in life. It does not refer to a casual or isolated act, but a persistent or repeated performance in a given direction. One who walks takes more than one step.

6. "Disorderly." This is a very important word, inasmuch as upon our understanding of it depends the exercise of discipline, insofar as individuals are concerned.

The proper idea of the word in the original Greek is that of soldiers who do not keep the ranks, who break step, and get out of the line of march. The term as we use it means "not according to orders." There have been orders issued by the Captain of our salvation; those who accept and obey those orders are orderly: those who reject them and disobey are "disorderly." Thus it is obvious that the word means any course of conduct which is contrary to the rules of Christ.

Public Corrective Discipline As Practiced In Corinth.

"It is actually reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one of you hath his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened." I Cor. 5:1-7. See also 8-11.

Following is a paraphrase of the verses by James McKnight: "The messengers from Corinth, as well as the members of the family of Chloe, had informed the apostle that one of the brethren was cohabiting with his father's wife, in his father's lifetime. In this chapter, therefore, Paul reprov'd the whole Corinthian church for tolerating a species of whoredom which was abhorred even by the heathen, vs. 1. And this scandal was the greater, that they were puffed up with pride, on account of the knowledge and learning of the teacher by whose influence it was tolerated, vs. 2. But to make the Corinthians sensible, that their boasting of a teacher who had patronized such an enormity was criminal, as well as to correct the enormity itself, the apostle ordered them forthwith in a public assembly of the church called for the purpose, to deliver the offender to Satan, for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit being reformed, he might be saved in the day of the Lord, vs 3, 4, 5. He then showed them the necessity of cutting off the incestuous

person, by comparing vice unpunished to leaven, on account of its contagious nature in corrupting a whole society, vs. 6."

Here are six expressions in this chapter which denote withdrawal of fellowship. They are: 1) "Taken away from among you, vs. 2. 2) Deliver such a one unto Satan, vs 5. 3) Purge out therefore the old leaven, vs. 7. 4) Not to keep company, vs. 11. 5) No, not to eat, vs. 11. 6) Put away from among yourselves that wicked person, vs. 13."

The Effect Of Discipline

Discipline administered publicly has a three-fold aspect insofar as its effect is concerned, sustaining a relationship to the offender, the church and the world. Its prime object is to save the offender, its secondary object to purge the church, and its third object, to influence the world to a greater respect for the standard of righteousness set forth in God's Word.

Its effect on the offender:

1. It produces life, by bringing us into subjection unto the Father of spirits, "We have had fathers of the flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live." Heb. 12:9.
2. It is for our profit, that we might be partakers of God's holiness. Heb. 12:10.
3. It yields the fruit of righteousness in peace unto those who endure it. Heb. 12:11.
4. It tends to confirm one in the truth, making him sound in the faith. Titus 1:13.
5. It enforces lessons which can be derived by no other way, as for instance, in the case of blasphemy. I Tim. 1:20.
6. It produces a destruction of fleshly lust, working to the ultimate salvation of the soul. I Cor. 5:5.
7. It provides the means by which one can recover himself from the snare of the devil. II Tim. 2:25-26.
8. It produces a sense of shame, which is essential to humility, and leads one to return to the fellowship. II Thess. 3:14.

Effect on the Church

1. Discipline in ridding the congregation of evil, makes of the church a new lump, filled with sincerity and truth. I Cor. 5:7-8.
2. It is a proof of obedience in all things. II Cor. 2:9.
3. Discipline is the only method by which the church can clear itself in the sight of God, when it becomes infected with sin. II Cor. 7:11.
4. Discipline inspires Godly fear and reverence in the hearts of those who hear or see it administered. I Tim. 5:20; Acts 5:11; Deut. 19:19-20.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

5. Discipline is God's surgical scalpel for the removal of cancer from the body. II Tim. 2:17-18.
6. Discipline is the means by which the church proves her right to continue in the favor and under the protection of God's Son. Rev. 2:5.

The Effect On The World

1. We may safely affirm that discipline exercised by the church according to the divine regulations, not only will not have a bad effect upon the world, but will actually provide for the growth of the church, and it is so designed. If ever the enactment of discipline should have had the effect of driving men and women away, it was in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. But note what is said of its effect: "Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Acts 5:14.

Questions of Procedure

1. Who is responsible for the discipline of the local church? All official action in the church must be directed and handled by the elders of the congregation. Heb. 13:17. In the case where a new congregation has been started, and there are no elders as yet, the evangelist who has called the church together is to exercise the oversight, and "set in order the things that are wanting." Titus 1:5; 13 and 2:15.
2. Is it a qualification of an elder that he be a good disciplinarian? Yes. I Tim. 3:4-5.
3. What steps should be taken when a man becomes delinquent in his duties to the Lord? Fulfill Matt. 18:1-12 if necessary, or Gal. 6:1 and then II Thess. 3:6 if necessary.
4. How often must one be visited before he is excluded? There is no maximum set by the Word of God, insofar as we know. He should be admonished and exhorted to do his duty just as long as it appears there is a chance to restore him. Titus 3:10.
5. Does the law of impartiality imply that we must show the same exact degree of leniency in every case? No. We must be governed by the circumstances of the case. Jude 22-23.
6. Is there a grave danger of becoming too hasty in discipline? This danger is not a very serious threat to the churches because it has been our experience that the tendency is generally to the other extreme. Eccl. 8:11.
7. Do we have any right to say that the sin of those in the church today will hold back the church and the truth? Certainly, for that is what the New Testament teaches. Rom. 1:18; Titus 1:16; Jude 16; I Tim. 6:5.

Examination Twenty Five

1. Give the two-fold use of the term discipline.
2. What is "tradition"? How does it relate to discipline?
3. Give a Bible reason for not including the Old Testament as a part of the discipline for the church.
4. Do you agree with the fourteen propositions? If not, specify why.
5. From the Bible, how do we learn of the need for corrective discipline?
6. In the matter of personal offences, whose responsibility is it to initiate the action to obtain agreement?
7. What are the steps in settling personal offences?
8. Is it wrong to take disagreements among Christians to civil courts?
9. Explain as fully as possible Galatians 6:1.
10. Explain as fully as possible I Corinthians 5:1-7.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart”*

FINANCING

THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD

What the Bible says about giving:

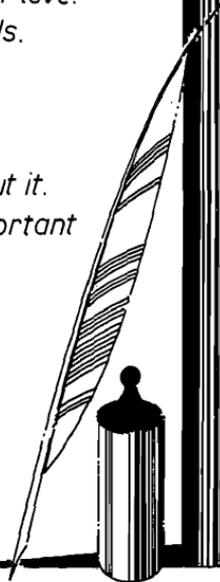
- 1. All things belong to God.*
- 2. We have nothing that belongs to us.*
- 3. Every Christian is a steward.*
- 4. Examples of giving.*

Seven considerations of tithing.

- 1. It is a good system.*
- 2. A good way to express our love.*
- 3. Jesus raised the standards.*
- 4. Tithing works.*
- 5. 1 Cor. 9:13,14. Look again!*
- 6. How to tithe.*
- 7. What the fathers said about it.*

*The manner of giving is more important
than the method.*

- 1. What Jesus said.*
- 2. The word of Paul.*
- 3. Other inspired words.*



LESSON TWENTY SIX

FINANCING THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so:"

Acts 17:11

"I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. I have only this to say, 'It is the best book that God has given to men.'"

—Abraham Lincoln

What are you doing with God's book?

Speaking To The Heart (Pocketbook)

1. "If we would all give ourselves to the Lord we would have no financial problems." Do you accept this as the solution to our money problems?
2. "If we had a more businesslike operation of the church we would not be constantly embarrassed with a shortage of money." Is this the answer?
3. "If all God's children would learn how to tithe we would never need to mention money again." So say many; how say you?
4. "The church has a good deal of money, but it is spent upon the wrong things. This is our real problem." A certain "board member" so expressed himself. Do you agree or disagree?
5. We are to give "as we are prospered." (I Cor. 16:1, 2) All of life is a stewardship. All we have belongs to the Lord. The Lord wants His children to have a good life. He does not expect us to pauperize ourselves in giving. If we have much we can give more. If we have little then we can only share a little. No one could expect a pensioner to tithe.
6. Most of our giving is done like those whom Jesus watched at the treasury. We cast in of our superfluity. We have never given like the poor widow. The church of our Lord will never move ahead until we give like she did. Is this true? To what extent?

LESSON DISCUSSION

The above questions should have stirred up your sincere mind on this most important of issues. The money problem is a heart problem. Discussions might be held endlessly over how much we should or should not give. Even if we all agreed on an amount (proportionate amount) "to will would be present, but to do that which is right would not." Our Lord put His finger on the "sore spot" when He said "Where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also."

That we might reach your heart—yea, that all our hearts might be touched—we propose to approach this lesson in a little different form. If we will not hear the Word of the Lord we would not listen

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

to any man on this heart problem of stewardship. It is a matter of **stewardship** and **not** just of money. Would you bow your head and heart with me and pray that we might receive with all meekness the implanted Word that is able to save our souls?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GIVING

1. All things belong to God.

“Behold, unto Jehovah thy God belongeth heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein. Deut. 10:14. “For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof. Psalms 50:10-12.

“Thus saith God Jehovah, He that created the heavens and stretched them forth; He that spread abroad the earth and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.” Isa. 42:5.

“The God that made the world and all things therein, He, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He served by men’s hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He Himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation.” Acts 17:24-26.

“For the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.” I Cor. 10:26.

For our own edification:

- (1) Has the time come when God has relinquished His right of ownership of this world in which we live?
- (2) If God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, does He not also own you and me—all that we have and are? Are we not His by right of creation?
- (3) How long would we live without breath? To whom are we indebted for our breath?
- (4) Can we build a house in which to confine our God? What, then, shall we say of our buildings?
- (5) Has God created the nations and the bounds of their habitations and forthwith forgotten us?

2. God’s people have nothing that belongs to them.

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them said aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” Acts 4:32. “Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy

Spirit which is in you, which you have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: Glorify God therefore in your body." I Cor. 6:19, 20.

"Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." I Pet. 18, 19. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28.

Speaking to the heart:

- (1) If those of the Jerusalem church could not claim ownership of possession, how is it that we so often disregard the true owner? Is the Jerusalem church an example or not?
- (2) How valuable man must be to God, if we are to judge by the price of our redemption. In our case, did He obtain a poor bargain?
- (3) What a joy to be released from bondage. With the joy must be mingled a deep sense of responsibility to our liberator.
- (4) Jesus indeed "took the form of man." He lived as if He owned nothing and as if all life was a stewardship. Do you suppose He did this to teach us the truth about these material things we use each day?

3. Every Christian is a steward.

"Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? Or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me." Matt. 25:34-40.

"It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house and given authority to his servants to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch." Mark 13:34 "For I say unto you, that unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him." Luke 19:26.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

The discerning mirror:

- (1) Is it possible to feed the hungry, cloth the naked, care for the sick without money? Even if we applied this passage to those in spiritual need (which application is not complete), how could any of these things be done without money? If not, then our money is a vital part of our serving Christ.
- (2) What work has He given me to do? If I should die today, what would God lose?
- (3) Can we honestly say we have increased the Master's goods? Or have we but handled the goods with no advantage to the owner?

4. Examples of giving.

"... no good thing will He withhold from them who walk uprightly." Psalms 84:11.

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." John 10:11.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich." II Cor. 8:9.

"For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph. 2:8.

"Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. I Tim. 6:17.

Receiving His Word with meekness:

- (1) Why should I fret about what I want when my Father plans to give me every good thing? That is, if I walk uprightly.
- (2) If I must live in poverty all the days of my life, should I not yet be grateful since He has saved my soul for the glories of heaven?
- (3) Was Jesus happy? Was Jesus satisfied with life? Was Jesus rich? Did Jesus have the same temptations and trials you face in the proper use of material gain? "Go thou and do likewise."
- (4) Can we not know from experience that if we were to now have the material gain we so fondly desire, we would yet not be satisfied? Possession does not give satisfaction. "A man's life (happiness) **does not** consist in the abundance of the things he possesseth."

SEVEN CONSIDERATIONS OF TITHING

1. It is a good system of financing the Lord's work.

Did the Lord leave His church on earth with no method of financing it? Can you think of a better method than each member contributing at least a tenth of his income for the advancement of Christ's kingdom? We never said anything about a law in the New Testament. From a purely pragmatic point of view can you offer a better system? Can you offer **any** system from the New Testament? Is there anyone who will deny that tithing is a wonderful place to begin in our giving to the Lord? If you were to originate a method of giving for each Christian, could you start with a better place than tithing?

2. Tithing would be a good way to express our love.

Where our pocketbook is there our heart will be also. Is the giving of one tenth of our money a fair expression of our heart condition? If we gave less than a tenth of our income, could we honestly say that we loved God through Christ as much as the Jews loved God without Christ? Is not at least a tithe a necessity in light of our love for our Lord? The business world would consider a ten percent share quite a low ratio for a partner who furnished all the property and equipment.

3. Jesus raised every standard of righteousness above that of the law of Moses. (cf. Matt. 5:21, 22; 27, 28; 33-37; 38, 39; 43, 44.)

Note in reading these verses that giving of money was a part of righteousness and an expression of worship to God. In worshipping the Lord we do not use the Old Testament for our teaching. We have "the apostles' doctrine." (cf. Acts 2:42). In remembrance we do not recall the passing over of the avenging angel but we remember our Passover, even Christ. We have something higher and better. But what do we have in the treasury of the church as compared with the treasury of the Temple or the Tabernacle? Do we have more or less money per capita? Or, perhaps we should say, "**Should** we have more or less than the treasury of the Temple or Tabernacle?" It is very evident that we should have **more**, but that can never be and will never be until **Christians give more than a tithe!** In the light of Christ's standards of righteousness, can you with a clear conscience give less of your money to God than the Jew? "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5:20.

4. Tithing works.

"It's hard to argue with a good sample."

Here is an interesting report from Benjamin Starr who conducted an experiment in tithing: "In 1920 there were 278 contributors to the village church in Homer, New York. Seventy-seven of these were tithers and two hundred and one of them were non-tithers. In one year the tithers paid in \$3,520.00 to the Lord, an average of \$45.71 per member. During the same year the non-tithers paid a total of \$2,733.00, or an average of \$13.59 per member." Could you say that this is an unusual example or would it be repeated if carried on in the congregation where you worship? Come now, let us reason together. If tithing works and you have no plan to offer that is better, why not use it? The answer is obvious. The plan is good **but** participation in the plan is the block in the way of progress. How shall we get folks to give a tenth? Ask them to read the references given in this lesson, and to make personal application and see if they could give less.

5. I Cor. 9:13, 14. Have we grasped the full significance of this text for the support of God's work today?

Read it again—think! "Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? **Even so** did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel."

What was "the portion" of the Levites? (cf. Num. 18:21-26.) The Israelites gave tithes and offerings to support the kingdom of Israel. Through or of the tithes and offerings the Levites had their living. Paul is saying that he and Barnabas are counterparts of the Levitical priesthood in the sense that they would have their living of the work in which they were engaged, i.e. preaching the gospel. Is the Christian preacher to be given less than the Hebrew priest? Are we in the kingdom of Christ responsible for less or more in giving than were those citizens of the kingdom of Israel? Does the phrase "even so" suggest that just as the Levites were supported, so the proclaimers of the good news are to be supported? If this were true, then Paul is saying tithes and offerings are the method of support for the Christian ministry. If you feel that this principle does not include such an application, how could we possibly say that our "living of the gospel" would be on less money than the portion of the Levites? Could it be that the promotion of the gospel to every nation calls for less money than the instruction of the one nation of Israel?

6. How to tithe.

In order to tithe one must give to the Lord ten percent of his net income. If one is receiving wages or a salary then his total earn-

ings are his net income. For example, a man who is receiving seventy-five dollars a week for his services should pay seven dollars and fifty cents. If one is in business, then his net income consists of his gross income minus the expenses of operating the business. Let us assume that a certain business man has an income of \$6,000.00 a year.

Total income (one year)	\$6,000.00
Less total expense of operating business	\$3,048.00
(Rent, maintenance, raw material, etc.)	
Net income	\$2,952.00
Tithe	\$ 295.20

One's living expenses should be deducted from the nine-tenths and not from the total net income. Living expenses cannot be considered as business expense and besides many people use up their entire net income for living expenses.

The Lord's share, whether money or produce, should be taken out and set aside first. When one cashes his pay check he should immediately set aside the Lord's portion to be brought into His storehouse. This is according to the examples of the Old Testament. Ex. 23:19a; Num. 18:12-17; Deut. 18:4; Prov. 3:9. This way God will always receive His share. To wait until one has paid his own bills and supplied his own needs results many times in the Lord waiting for or going without His share.

7. What the early church fathers say about tithing.

In the "Apostolic Constitution," A. D. 300 we read, "Of the first fruits and tithes and after what manner the bishop is himself to partake of them and distribute them to others. Let him use these tenths and first fruits, which are given according to the command of God, as a man of God . . . The Levites who attended upon the Tabernacle partook of those things which were offered to God by the people . . . You, therefore, O Bishops, are priests and Levites, ministering to the Church . . . For those who attend upon the Church ought to be maintained by the Church . . . Now you ought to know that, although the Lord has delivered you from the additional bonds and does not permit you to sacrifice irrational creatures for sin offerings, etc., yet He has nowhere freed you from those obligations which you owe to the priests, nor from doing good to the poor."

Jerome, A. D. 345-420, wrote to Nepotian: "I, if I am the portion of the Lord, and the line of His heritage . . . like the priests and the Levites I live on the tithe, and serving the altar, am supported by its offerings . . . What we have said of tithes and of-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

ferings which of old used to be given to priests and Levites, understands also in the case of the Church . . . If any one shall not do this he is convicted of defrauding and cheating God." **Ambrose of Milan**, A. D. 340-397, said: "God has reserved the tenth part unto Himself, and therefore it is not lawful for a man to retain what God has reserved for Himself. To thee He has given nine parts, for Himself He has reserved the tenth part; and, if thou shalt not give God the tenth part, God will take from thee the nine parts. A good Christian pays tithes."

Augustine, A. D. 345-430, said: "Our ancestors used to abound in wealth of every kind for the reason that they used to give tithes and pay the tax to Caesar . . . We have been unwilling to share the tithes with God, and now the whole is taken away. The scribes and Pharisees gave tithes, for whom Christ had not yet shed His blood . . . I cannot keep back what He who died for us said while He was alive, 'Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' They gave a tenth. How is it with you?"

THE MANNER OF GIVING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE METHOD

1. What Jesus said about this.

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before man, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee." Matt. 6:1-4.

". . . give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38.

"And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?" Luke 16:12.

"And everyone that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life." Matt. 19:29.

"Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him the Father, even God, hath sealed." John 6:27.

"But seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33.

Having ears to hear, let us hear:

- (1) Are we to understand from the words of Jesus that giving of money (alms) is a part of our acceptableness (righteousness) with God? If so, how would this relate to the amount given?
- (2) "It is more blessed to give than to receive." To this we give lip service, and perchance we believe it with our heart; but let us specify **how** this is true. Give three ways that giving is of greater advantage than getting!
- (3) Ah, somehow we need to stand all alone before our wonderful Saviour and allow Him to speak His Words just to us. "And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's (it all belongs to Him), who will give you that which is your own?" Do we claim heaven and eternal life as "ours"?
- (4) "Godliness with contentment is great gain." This can never be ours until we have our hearts set on the true riches. If God kept a "time card" on our work, how much of it would be an advantage to Him?

2. The words of Paul.

"But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." II Cor. 9:6, 7.

"For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not." II Cor. 8:12.

"Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." I Cor. 3:21-23.

". . . for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content . . . for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." I Tim. 6:7, 8; 10.

May His word "run and be glorified" in us?

- (1) Please note in II Corinthians 8 and 9 that Paul is discussing the matter of a "free will offering" for the poor saints in Jerusalem. (Read the context to confirm this) Note the attitude called for when a free will offering is being taken. Note also how the Corinthians responded. When it is not the mat-

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

ter of a special offering for a specific need, but rather the regular support of the local church where we are a member, should we respond less enthusiastically or more enthusiastically than those described in II Corinthians 8 and 9?

- (2) How rich we are as Christians! In what way can we say "All things are yours"? All of man, of life, of death, of the present, the future, all are yours. We could ask with that young man who seemed also to have all things, "What lack I yet?" Do we lack something money can buy? Then why seek money to answer the question?
- (3) Do you know someone who is infected with the terrible disease of the love of money? Define carefully his symptoms—look to thyself.

3. The words of other inspired writers.

"Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He careth for you." I Pet. 5:7.

"Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have; for Himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, the Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What shall man do unto me?" Heb. 13:6,7.

"Hearken, my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He promised to them that love Him?" James 2:5.

"If we are faithless, He abideth faithful; for He cannot deny Himself." II Tim. 2:13.

"Speak, O Lord, Thy servant heareth."

- (1) Why pray when you can worry? Is anxiety a sin? In the light I Peter 5:7, what else could we call it? (cf. Matt. 6:25-34.)
- (2) Belief in a God is not enough. We must believe in a living, loving, all wise heavenly Father to be "rich in faith." How valuable is our faith?
- (3) Could we name any Bible promise which relates to material security for the Christian? Would Matthew 6:33 relate to this? Remember we can "stand upon the promises" for He cannot deny Himself.

Examination Twenty Six

1. Give two scriptural thoughts that indicate all things belong to God.
2. Show from scriptural truth that we have nothing we can call our own.
3. Every Christian is a steward; but in what sense is this true?
4. Give two examples of giving that have been a help to your giving.
5. Give three reasons for adopting tithing as a minimum of Christian giving.
6. Read Hebrews 7:1-10 and explain the relation of tithing to Christ; also the relation of the Christian to tithing. Do **not** ask your preacher or your teacher to explain this to you; **do it for yourself**. We are accountable to God.
7. Is adopting the tithe as the minimum of Christian giving "going back under the law"? Before answering, consider Genesis 14:18-20; 28:18-22. Under what "law" were Abraham and Jacob when they paid tithes?
8. Give three essential attitudes we must have before we give anything.
9. Would you offer what you feel indicates covetousness today? cf. Lev. 12:15; Eph. 5:3; 5; Col. 3:5, 6.

*Lay these words upon
thy heart''*

THE PURPOSE

OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

We are to:

*Preach the gospel to
Make disciples of
Baptize
Teach*

**ALL
NATIONS**

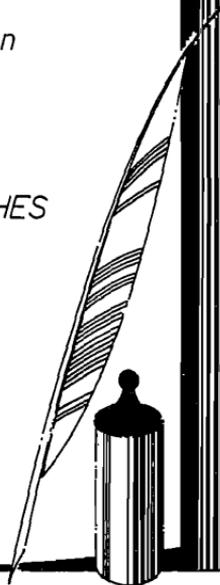
Luke 24:46,47

Commit the word to faithful men

in

*governing
SELF supporting CHURCHES
extending*

*MAKE ALL THINGS ACCORDING
TO THE PATTERN*



LESSON TWENTY SEVEN

THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

"Now these were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

"I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book."
—Coleridge

Is it not wonderful that the one who created us has also loved us and speaks to our heart needs in His Word? ". . . and the sheep follow Him: for they **know His voice**. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10:4, 5. Find me, O God, and speak to me! This He will do if we will but open His Word to our hearts.

LESSON DISCUSSION

If by some unusual means we were able to permit those persons of the first century to speak to us, what they would say of our attempts at evangelism. What would Peter say? How would Paul speak to us? What would be the comments of Barnabas or Timothy? See if you think the following questions are fairly framed to represent the mind of these men as they view the twentieth century since our Lord:

1. How do you hope for evangelism without unity? Have you not read Brother Paul's indictment against division in his letter to the church at Corinth? (cf. I Cor. 1:10-17; 3:1-9.)
2. How is it that you have not accomplished more? You have better means of communication, better means of transportation, a land of freedom. We had none of these advantages. Why have you not won more souls to Christ our Lord?
3. Why is the percentage of those who love and live and serve so low when compared to those who count themselves members of Christ's church? Have the majority not read Revelation 3:14-22 or Hebrews 2:1-4?
4. What will America do when Jesus comes again to separate the profitable from the unprofitable servants? (Matt. 25:14-30) When He comes there will be a separation among the virgins. (Matt. 25:1-13) Do you believe these things?
5. Do you have less reason than we to believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God with all authority in heaven and on earth? If not, how is it you have not taken His authority as seriously as we have?
6. Do you yet believe in a place called Hell where the fire is not quenched and where the worm dieth not? (Mark 9:43-49) Have

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

you rejected the thought that there is a "place of torment" for every single unforgiven sinner? (Luke 16:19-31) If not, what has happened to your compassion?

7. Have you forgotten our example of victory as recorded in the Book of Acts? We were men of like passions with you. Read it again.
8. How can it be that so many have neglected the power always available to them? (cf. Rom. 1:16.) We are not working alone or with our own strength. (cf. Eph. 3:14-21.)
9. Have most of you forgotten the meaning of the word ETERNITY? Are you looking at life through the eyes of God? Life here in the light of eternity is "but a vapor." Can it be that we believe we shall live eternally? Indeed, that all men are eternal beings, made in the image and likeness of the eternal God?
10. Has anyone come to realize the difference between "pleasure" and "joy"? The world with its offers in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, provides pleasures. (cf. I John 2:15-17; Heb. 11:24-29) Christ offers "joy" in service for Him. (cf. John 10:10) Since true satisfaction is found only in Christ and in what we do for Him, how is it we have, even among professing Christians, a pursuit of happiness up Satan's blind alley?

How shall we determine the purpose of the church of Christ? Please notice we said **the church**. We are not describing the officers or their duties, we want to know the responsibility of each and every member in the evangelization of the world. "To the law and to the testimony, what saith the Scriptures?" There is a church described in the New Testament. The activity of its members is evident. To many of you it is already well known that every New Testament Christian felt it a personal responsibility to speak to others about Christ. (cf. Acts 8:4; 11:19-21) It is not enough to know the pattern—a knowledge of truth does not presuppose action or response to the truth. **Why were the Christians of the Apostolic age willing to speak the gospel to every creature?** Here are some of the reasons. Consider carefully and prayerfully these reasons for they apply with equal force to every Christian.

1. The authority and command of Christ demands of every Christian that he witness for Christ (cf. Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8) How can we accept the authority of Christ and fail to heed the words of Christ?

The Great Commission is founded on absolute authority. When Jesus arose from the dead He was supreme on earth and in heaven, and He used His authority to save the world. Having fulfilled the law and the prophets and the Psalms, He supplanted the Old Testament with the New, and extended His liberty to all men. But power carries with it commensurate responsibility, which has crushed many

a man. Tyrannical rulers have used their authority to conquer and to kill, but Jesus used His to free and to save. Alexander and Caesar and Charlemagne and Napoleon sought universal domain by slaying their enemies; Jesus achieved it by allowing His enemies to slay Him. Their power, supported by force, had the seeds of death in it and spent itself in destruction; His authority based on love, is the very principle of life and grows in recognition with the enlightenment of men. Their kingdoms were of this world and were soon broken into fragments by the waves of time; His reaches unto heaven, defies disintegration and marches triumphantly through the centuries. No mere Galilean peasant with a handful of poor obscure disciples could have meditated world-wide conquest, and no mortal man ever could have claimed "all authority on earth and in heaven." Jesus is—must be—what He claimed to be; namely, the Son of God! And at the right hand of God, with the wealth of the universe available to His work, the good of earth, the redeemed of heaven and the angels subject to His command, He is Himself the guarantor of the success of His own enterprise to save the world. To this end, He educated the Twelve, called Paul, inspired them and Mark and Luke to write His Testament full and complete, abides by His Spirit in the church and co-operates with every faithful disciple.

"The Great Commission is the New Testament in essence. It promises salvation to all that believe and are baptized, and guarantees the presence of Christ with His disciples who preach the gospel to the whole creation and repentance and remission of sins in His name unto all the nations. It also enjoins that baptized believers be taught to observe all things whatsoever Jesus commanded the apostles. The Lord covenanted originally with the Twelve, because they were qualified by association with Him and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to interpret His Testament to the world; and the church was created in them. And their testimony, beginning in Jerusalem with mighty power because an accessible multitude was there (Acts 2), extended to all Judaea and Samaria, and through their record shall eventually reach the uttermost part of the earth."

—*The Glorious Gospel*, pages 172-174, by Adam Adcock

Let us think again about this One with all authority in heaven and on earth, for He said: "**Ye are the salt of the earth:** but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." Matt. 5:13.

You will note immediately that we are limiting our discussion of **purpose** to the matter of evangelism. We have the heaven-sent responsibility of living a consistent Christian life in this present evil world but our particular concern is with the part each Christian plays

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

in God's purpose to save the world through Christ. Does every Christian have a responsibility to his lost world? In regard to Matthew 5:13, do you feel that Jesus is speaking about every Christian when He says "Ye are the salt of the earth?" Does Jesus give the true use or purpose of salt in this verse?

Our purpose, then, according to Matthew 5:13, is to give savor or flavor to this life in which we live. Life could not mean very much—indeed, would be very flat—if we knew not who we were, where we are going, or why we are here. The Christian is God's means of answering these questions. Who are we? Eternal creatures created in the image of God. (Gen. 1:26-28) Where are we going? Through this life on our way to eternal existence in heaven or hell. Why are we here? To glorify God, our Creator and Father. In doing this, we will find the peace and joy we want for ourselves. Such answers when understood give real savor to life. "But if the salt has lost its savor," what then? Who is going to give the savor of life to the circle of friends in which you live? He also said: "**Ye are the light of the world.**" Matt. 5:14-16. No, no. This cannot be true! Surely this lost world deserves a better light than I can give it. Is this the thought of your heart? Perchance the expression of your lips? A light, yes, but to be **the light of the world**, this is almost too much to grasp! The point that is most troublesome is how little light there is in a large part of the world. There are about three billion people on this earth. Of the three billion, seven hundred million are Christians, i.e. of any faith including the Roman Catholic. This leaves two billion, three hundred million persons to be evangelized. Of the seven hundred million, a great part of them are living in America. How can you live in America and be a light in Asia or Africa or Europe? How does God see the proportionate spread of "the light"? If you had a house of many rooms and you asked an electrician to wire the house for light and he finished the job and wanted his pay, but had only wired one or two rooms, what would you say to him?

If you were given the task of lighting an air field for the landing of a great airship full of passengers, how much of it would you flood with light? Would you light only one corner of it to guide the pilot to a safe landing?

How much of this world has received the light of life? Do we see the world as God sees it? What was it about this one that caught the hearts of Peter and Andrew? One day Jesus spoke to them by the shores of Galilee. He said: "**Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.**" Matt. 4:19. (The following discussion is adapted from "A Soliloquy on the Art of Man Fishing, by Thomas Boston.)

Thou mayest observe, then, O my soul, **that it is the Lord Jesus Christ that makes men fishers of men.** Here I shall show
I. How Christ makes men fishers of men.

II. Why unconverted men are compared to fish in the water.

I. How does Christ make men fishers of men?

In answer to this question, consider spiritual fishing two ways.

1. As to the office and work itself; and 2. As to the success of it.

First, He makes them fishers as to their office, by His call, which is twofold, outward and inward, by setting them apart to the task of fishing for men, and it is thy business, O my soul.

Secondly, He makes them fishers as to success; that is, He makes them catch men to Himself by the power of His spirit accompanying the word they preach, and the discipline they administer. I Cor. 1:18. "The preaching of the cross—unto us which are saved, is the power of God." I Thess. 1:5, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." He it is that brings sinners into the net which ministers spread; and if He be not with them to drive the fish into the net, they may toil all the night, and day too, and catch nothing.

a. O my soul, then see that gifts will not do the business. A man may preach as an angel, and yet be useless. If it is without love, all will be to no purpose. (cf. I Cor. 13:1-3.) If the Master of the house be away, the household will loath their food, though it be dropping down about their tent doors.

b. If thou art a preacher or teacher, why shouldst thou then on the one hand, as sometimes thou art, be lifted up when thou preachest a good and solid discourse, wherein gifts do appear, and thou gettest the applause of men? Why, thou mayst do all this, and yet be no fisher of men. The fish may see the bait, and play about it as pleasant, but this is not enough to catch them. On the other hand, why shouldst thou be so much discouraged (as many times is the case) because thy gifts are so small, and thou art but a child in comparison of others? Why, if thou art willing, Christ can make thee a fisher of men, as well as the most learned rabbi in the church, Psalms 8:2. "**Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength.**" Yea, hast thou not observed how God owned a man very weak in gifts and made him more successful than others that were far beyond him in parts? Has not God put this treasure in earthen vessels, that the power might be seen to be of him? Lift up thyself then, O my soul, Christ can make thee a fisher of men, however weak thou art. Follow thou Him. My soul desires to follow hard after thee, O God!

c. What an honorable thing is it to be fishers of men! How great an honor shouldst thou esteem it, to be a catcher of souls! "**We are workers together with God,**" says the apostle. If God has ever so honored thee, O that thou knewest it, that thou mightest bless His holy name, that He ever made such a poor fool as thee to be a co-worker with Him. God has owned thee to do good to those who were

before caught. O my soul, bless thou the Lord. Lord, what am I, or what is my father's house, that thou hast brought me to this?

d. Then seest thou not here what is the reason thou toilest so long, and catchest nothing? Men are like Samuel, who, when God was calling him, thought it had been Eli. So when thou speakest many times, they do not discern God's voice, but thine; and therefore the word goes out as it comes in.

e. Then, O my soul, despair not of the conversion of any, be they ever so profligate. For it is the power of the Spirit, through the Word, that drives any person into the net; and this cannot be denied. Mockers of religion, yea, blasphemers may be brought into the net; and many times the wind of God's Spirit in the word lays the tall cedars in sin down upon the ground, when they that seem to be as low shrubs in respect of them, stand fast upon their root. Publicans and harlots shall enter the kingdom of heaven before self-righteous Pharisees.

But why are unconverted men compared to fish in the water? Among other reasons, they are so.

a. Because as the water is the natural element of fish, so sin is the proper and natural element for an unconverted soul. Take the fish out of the water, it cannot live; and take from a sinful man his idols, he is ready to say with Micah, **Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?**

b. The fish in a sunny day are seen to play themselves in the water. So the unregenerate, whatever grief they may seem to have upon their spirits, when a storm arises, either without, by outward troubles, or within by conscience-gnawing convictions, yet when these are over; and they are in a prosperous state, they play themselves in the way of sin, and take their pleasure in it, not considering what it may cost them at the last. Oh! How does prosperity in the world ruin many a soul! The prosperity of fools shall destroy them. And O how destructive would prosperity have been to thee, O my soul, if God had given it to thee many times when thou wouldst have had it! Bless the Lord that ever He was pleased to cross thee in a sinful course.

c. As the fish greedily look after and snatch at the bait, not minding the hook; even so sinful men drink in sin greedily, as the ox drinketh in the water. They look on sin as a sweet morsel; and it is to them sweet in the mouth, though bitter in the belly. They play with it, as the fish with the bait; but, oh, alas, when they take the serpent in their bosom, they mind not the sting. Prov. 9:17, 18. The devil knows well how to dress his hooks; but, alas! Men know not by nature how to discern them. Pity then, O my soul, the wicked of the world, whom thou seest greedily satisfying their lusts. Alas! They are poor blinded souls; they see the bait, but not the hook; and therefore it is that they are even seen as it were dancing about the

mouth of the pit; therefore rush they on to sin as a horse to the battle, not knowing the hazard. O pity the poor drunkard, the swearer, the unclean person, etc., that is wallowing in his sin. Bless thou the Lord also, O my soul, that when thou wast playing with the bait, and as little minding the hook as others, God opened thine eyes through the truth and let thee see thy madness and danger, that thou mightest flee from it. And O be now careful that thou snatch at none of the devil's baits, lest he catch thee with his hook; for though thou mayst be restored again by grace, yet it shall not be without a wound; as the fish sometimes slip the hook, but go away wounded; which wound may be sad to thee, and long a-healing. And this thou hast experienced.

d. As fish in the water love deep places and wells, and are most frequently found there; so wicked men have a great love to carnal security, and have no will to strive against the stream. Fish love deep places best, where there is least noise. O how careful are sinful men to keep all quiet, that there may be nothing to disturb them in their rest in sin! They love to be secure, which is their destruction. O my soul, beware of carnal security, of being secure, though plunged over head and ears in sin.

e. As fish are altogether unprofitable as long as they are in the water, so are wicked men in their natural state, they can do nothing that is really good: they are unprofitable to themselves, and unprofitable to others: what good they do to others is more **per accident** than **per se**. Rom. 3.

f. How far must they then be mistaken, who think the wicked of the world the most useful in the place where they live! They may indeed be useful for carrying on designs for Satan's interest, or their own vain glory; but really to lay out themselves for God, they cannot.

Christians are fishers by office; they are catchers of the souls of men, sent "to open the eyes of the blind, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." All preachers of the gospel are fishers, and their work and that of fishers agree in several things.

a. The design and work of fishers is to catch fish. This is the work that Christians have taken in hand, even to endeavor to bring souls to Christ. Their design in their work should be the same. Tell me, O my soul, what is thy design? For what end dost thou lay the net in the water? It is to show thy gifts, and to gain the applause of men? Oh, no! Lord, thou knowest my gifts are very small; and had I not some other things than them to lean to, I had never started. I confess, that for as small as they are, the devil and my corruptions do sometimes present them to me in a magnifying glass, and so would blow me up with wind. But, Lord, thou knowest it is my work to repel these notions.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

b. Their work is hard work; they are exposed to much cold in the water. So is our work.

c. A storm that will affright others, they will venture on, that they may not lose their fish. So should preachers of the gospel do.

d. Fishers catch fish with a net. So we have a net to catch souls with. This is the ever-lasting gospel, the word of peace and reconciliation, wherewith sinners are caught. It is compared to a net wherewith fishers catch fish,

(1) Because it is spread out, ready to catch all that will come into it. Isa. 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price." God excludes none from the benefits of the gospel that will not exclude themselves; it is free to all.

(2) Because as fish are taken unexpectedly by the net, so are sinners by the gospel. Zaccheus was little thinking on salvation from Christ when he went to the tree. Paul was not thinking on a sweet meeting with Christ, whom he persecuted, when he was going post-haste on the devil's errand; but the man is caught unexpectedly.

(3) As fish sometimes come near and touch the net, and yet draw back; so many souls are somewhat affected at the hearing of the gospel, and yet remain in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. So Herod heard John the Baptist gladly, but yet the poor man was not caught. Wonder not then, O my soul, that thou seest some affected in the time of preaching; and yet when they are away again, all is worn off.

(4) Some fish that have not been taken fast hold enough by the net, struggle and get out again. So some souls have their convictions, and may seem to be caught, but yet, alas! They stifle all their convictions, stay in the place of the breaking forth; their goodness is like the morning cloud, and as the early dew that soon passeth away. Wherefore, O my soul, if even thou be taken up with exercised consciences, have a care that thou do not apply the cure before the wound be deep enough. Take all means to understand whether the soul be content to take Christ on His own terms or not. Alas! Many this way, by having the wound scurfed over, are rather killed than cured.

(5) All that are taken in the net do make some struggling to get free. Even so every one whom the Lord deals with by His Word and Spirit, make some kind of resistance before they are thoroughly caught. And this thou also knowest, O my soul, how thou wouldst have been content to have been out of the net. Oh! The wickedness of the heart of man by nature! Opposite is it, and an enemy to all that may be for its eternal welfare.

(6) Yet this struggling will not do with those which the net has fast enough. Take heed therefore that thou teach effectively His

truth; reach the conscience and the emotions as well as the intellect.

(7) In a net are many meshes in which the fish are caught. Such are the invitations made to sinners in the gospel, the sweet promises made to them that will come to Christ; these are the meshes where-with the soul is caught. This then is gospel-preaching, thus to spread out the net of the gospel, wherein are so many meshes of various invitations and promises, to which if the fish do come, they are caught.—But yet,

(8) Lest the net be lifted up with the water, and so not fit for taking fish, and the fish slight it, and pass under it; there are some pieces of lead put to it, to hold it right in the water, that it may be before them as they come. So lest invitations and promises of the gospel be slighted, there must be used some legal terrors and law-threatenings to drive the fish into the net. Thou seest then that both aspects of the gospel are to be taught.

(9) The meshes must not be over-wide, lest the fish run through. So neither must thy doctrine be general, without particular application, lest thou be no fisher of men. Indeed men may be the better pleased, when thou preachest doctrine so as wicked men may run out-through and in-through it, than when thou makest it so as to take hold of them: but be not a servant of men.

(10) Neither must they be too neat and fine, and curiously wrought, lest they hold out the fish. So have a care, O my soul, of striving to make by wit any fine and curious discourse, which thy hearers cannot understand.

—Thomas Boston, 1699

2. The nature of the message given to all demands that all tell it. Note:

a. We have “good news” to tell.

“Where e’er men meet, they always say, What’s the news? What’s the news? Pray, what’s the order of the day? Oh, I have not good news to tell. My Saviour hath done all things well, and triumphed over death and Hell—that’s the news. The lamb was slain on Calvary—that’s the news. He died to set a world of sinners free—that’s the news. Now, whenever anyone shall say to you, “What’s the news? What’s the news?” O, tell them you’ve begun to work and pray—that’s the news. That you have joined the conquering band and now with joy at God’s command you’re leading men on to the promised land. That’s the new!!!”

Could it be true that we have good news and will not tell it? Who is it that has received this gospel? Is this gladsome tidings confined only to a special class or do all Christians have knowledge of it? Suppose you had a cure for cancer—or even thought you did. Could you keep quiet about it?

The story is told of a famous statue in the Fine Arts Gallery in Paris. It was the work of a man who, like many other geniuses, had

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

struggled with poverty. His room in a garret served for both studio and sleeping room. One midnight, when the statue was just finished, a sudden frost fell upon Paris. The sculptor lay awake in his fireless garret, and thought of the still moist clay, thought how the water in it would freeze, and the dream of his life would be destroyed in a night. So the old man rose from his cot, wrapped his bed clothes reverently about the statue, and lay down to his sleep. In the morning the neighbors found him lying dead. His life had gone out into his work.

Similar devotion on the part of every Christian would result in the salvation of many souls.

b. “. . . Contend earnestly for **the faith** which was once for all **delivered unto the saints.**” Jude 3.

What is it “the saints” have in their possession? “The faith” is synonymous with “the gospel” or “the whole counsel of God.” “The faith” contains an expression of God’s means of making man just. Someone else has called “the faith” “the scheme of redemption”—but why use the word “faith”? Because faith is the basic element in our salvation, we could say in a very real sense that repentance, confession and baptism are an expression of our faith. How is faith obtained? Rom. 10:17 gives us the answer: “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing of the Word of Christ.” How shall we contend earnestly for the faith if we do not know it or if we do not speak of it? How shall others know of it if the ones to whom it is delivered fail to communicate? Know this: **The Saints**, you and I, have in our possession God’s plan for the salvation of the world. The world is not now saved because the saints have failed in past generations to use “the faith” for the purpose God intended. Shall the world continue in ignorance while we yet hold God’s divine knowledge to ourselves? Someone has lied to you! Someone has caused you to believe that you are either too ignorant or too devoid of “talent” to use “the faith,” so you have delivered (consciously or unconsciously) “the faith” into the hands of the “intellegent, talented” brothers to defend and propagate. This is **not** God’s plan. It never has been nor will it ever be. Evangelists and elders have their work to do, but this does not minimize the responsibility of every saint of God.

The world’s great heart is aching, aching, fiercely
in the night,
And God alone can heal it, and God alone give light;
And the men to bear the message, and to preach the
living Word,
Are you and I, my brothers, and all others that have
heard.
Can we close our eyes in slumber? Can we fold our
hands at ease?

While the gates of night stand open to the pathway
of the seas?
Can we shut up our compassion? Can we leave one
prayer unsaid?
Ere the souls that sin has ruined have been wakened
from the dead?
We grovel among trifles, and our spirits fret and
toss,
While above us burns the vision of the Christ upon
the cross,
And the blood of God is dropping from His wounded
hands and side,
And the voice of God is crying, "Tell poor sinners
I have died!"

b. "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about **preaching the Word.**" Acts 8:4.

Why was our Lord referred to by John as "The Word"? We have often heard it said that "words are the vehicles of thought," and such they are. How appropriate, then, to call Jesus "The Word"—the vehicle of the thoughts of God. This, then, is our message, the thoughts of the Almighty. Can we catch something of the importance and imperative of our task? Let us be up and doing while yet 'tis day.

Examination Twenty Seven

1. Give scriptural proof that it is the responsibility of every Christian to evangelize the world.
2. What is "insubordination" and how does it apply to our carrying out the great commission?
3. How does being the salt of the earth relate to evangelism?
4. What is meant by our Lord when He refers to "light" in Matthew 5:14-16?
5. In what two particulars does Christ make us fishers of men?
6. Give five ways unconverted men are like fish.
7. What is the meaning of the term "gospel" and show how it relates to evangelism.
8. Explain Jude 3 as it applies to each Christian's responsibility to the lost world.
9. Do you believe Acts 8:4 contains an example for every Christian? If so, what is it?
10. Do you believe it is more difficult to teach and preach the gospel today than it was in the days of Paul? In what way?

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LESSONS NINETEEN THROUGH TWENTY-SEVEN OF THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

1. Give two figures of speech that show the "oneness" of the church.
2. Give two thoughts about walking worthily.
3. What is the "one body" spoken of in Ephesians 4:4?
4. What is the "one Spirit"?
5. Who is the "one Lord"? How related to the church?
6. What is the "one faith"?
7. Prove that the "one baptism" is water baptism.
8. Give book chapter and verse for the purpose of baptism.
9. Give two characteristics of the "one God."
10. What is meant by "the proof of a successful church organization?"

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ 1. Spurgeon said he hoped that one day all the world would be Baptist.
- _____ 2. Luther said he did not want his followers to call themselves after him.
- _____ 3. It is too bad that we have so many names used in the Christian world but there is really very little importance in the use of a name after all.
- _____ 4. We are followers of Alexander Campbell in the same way others are followers of John Wesley.
- _____ 5. The term "disciple" does not appear in the epistles.
- _____ 6. Jesus is the supreme teacher of God.
- _____ 7. God intended and planned that every Christian be a saint.
- _____ 8. The term "brethren" indicates that some Christians are to learn and others are to teach.
- _____ 9. The name "Christian" is the second in frequency of use in the New Testament.

- 10. Agrippa was jesting when he said: "Almost thou persuadedest me to become a Christian."

WHY Is The Following True?

1. WHY is it proper to use the term "church" without any other identifying designation?
2. WHY is the term "church" used more frequently in Acts than in the Gospels?
3. WHY is it better to refer to the church as an organism than an organization?
4. WHY is it proper to say that the church has a twofold manifestation?
5. WHY use the term "Church of Christ" since it is only used once (and that in the plural) in the New Testament?
6. WHY use the term "Church of God" when referring to Gentile Christians?
7. WHY would the name "Church of God" be a great help against the "old lusts"?
8. WHY was the name "The Church of the Living God" especially helpful to Timothy?

ONE Word Will Answer The Following

1. The word "creed" is from the Latin word "credo" and means "I"
2. The purpose of those beliefs stated in any human creed is to set out what **must** be believed in order to be
3. The earliest creed was the creed.
4. It originated in the year after the birth of Christ.
5. The Apostles' Creed came into wide use about years after Christ.
6. The hope of salvation of those of the Apostolic church was in a not in a statement or form of words.
7. When we say we have "No Creed but Christ" we actually mean we have no creed but the

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

8. There are five claims made for the creed of the New Testament Church, they are:

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- (5)

One Sentence Will Answer These Questions

1. Give three very important events that took place on the first day of the week.
2. How do we know that Revelation 1:10 refers to the first day of the week?
3. What does I Corinthians 16:1, 2 prove concerning the first day of the week?
4. Does Acts 20:7 teach anything concerning the frequency of the observance of the first day of the week?
5. When was the sabbath made known to man?
6. If the sabbath was made known at Mt. Sinai, how is it that instructions for the use of manna for the sabbath were given before the giving of the law?
7. Give three reasons for not observing the sabbath today.
8. Why did Jesus keep the sabbath?

Affirm Or Deny But Tell The Reason Why

1. All who feel they are children of God are welcome at the Lord's Table.
Affirm Deny Why?
2. The Lord's-Supper is only indirectly connected with the Pass-over Feast.
Affirm Deny Why?
3. Christ's body was not broken for the scriptures say that not a bone should be broken.
Affirm Deny Why?

4. We participate in the blood and body of Christ at the Lord's Supper.
Affirm Deny Why?
5. There is no particular significance in using unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper.
Affirm Deny Why?
6. The word wine is used only twice in connection with the Lord's Supper.
Affirm Deny Why?
7. If "the cup" in the Passover Feast contained fermented grape juice then all members of most families would have been drunk at the Passover Feast.
Affirm Deny Why?
8. Christ would have broken the law of God if He drank fermented grape juice at the Passover.
Affirm Deny Why?
9. A person who has not obeyed the gospel in Christ's plan of salvation can not actually commune at the Lord's Table.
Affirm Deny Why?
10. We come into actual contact with the blood of Jesus when we drink the cup of the Lord's Supper.
Affirm Deny Why?
11. There is surely more than a symbolic meaning to the words of Jesus, "This is my blood."
Affirm Deny Why?
12. Any Christian woman or man can preside at the Lord's Table.
Affirm Deny Why?
13. There is no scriptural reason for observing the Lord's Supper every Sunday.
Affirm Deny Why?

Answer These Questions

1. Why must we reject tradition as a rule of faith and practice?
2. Why do we say that the Old Testament is not our rule of faith and practice?
3. Give four reasons for accepting the New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE

4. What was the purpose of the Fourteen Propositions?
5. What two lessons can we learn from the sin of Achan?
6. What and where is the "law for personal offences"?
7. Is it right to take a brother to law today? Why?
8. What scripture teaches concerning the restoration of a fallen brother?
9. What is meant by the term "disorderly" and the term "tradition" in II Thessalonians 3:6. (Read it.)
10. Is there any place today for public corrective discipline? Why isn't it practiced more?
11. Give three effects of scriptural discipline.
12. Who is responsible for the discipline of the local church?

True or False

- 1. A man who does not give to the Lord of his money does not love the Lord.
- 2. God owns all things only in an indirect manner.
- 3. The Christians of the early church believed and practiced the truth that they had nothing of their own.
- 4. The church in Jerusalem is a marvelous example of giving for the cause of Christ.
- 5. When Jesus spoke of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked in Matthew 25 He was speaking of a spiritual condition.
- 6. It is not a sin to worry a little about the future.
- 7. If tithing is not the system for the support of Christ's church then there is no system.
- 8. We do not love God as much as the Jew loves Him if we do not tithe.
- 9. Jesus said except your giving exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees you shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.
- 10. I Corinthians 9:13, 14 teaches tithing.

- 11. In order to tithe one must give to the Lord ten percent of his gross income.
- 12. There is no certain word from the early church fathers concerning tithing.
- 13. The manner of giving is more important than the amount.

Multiple Choice

1. The primary purpose of the early church was to: (1) Be a sincere Christian. (2) Preach the gospel to every creature. (3) Correct false teachers.
2. The reason Christians of the first century were willing to carry the gospel to every creature was: (1) The acceptance of the authority of Christ. (2) Love for people. (3) Knowledge of the truth.
3. The New Testament in essence is found in: (1) The Sermon on the Mount. (2) I Corinthians Chapter 13. (3) The Great Commission.
4. "Ye are the salt of the earth" has reference to: (1) The Apostles. (2) Every Christian. (3) The elders of the early church.
5. "Ye are the light of the world," this has reference to: (1) Christ. (2) To each and every Christian. (3) To the apostles.
6. We are to be "fishers of men" in the sense that: (1) Men are compared to fish. (2) Life is like a voyage. (3) We are very like fish ourselves.
7. If Christ is to "make us" fishers of men, He will do it: (1) Through our willingness to obey His Word. (2) Through His Holy Spirit. (3) By our study and prayer.
8. When will the church of today fulfill the purpose of the church?: (1) When we all have a true passion for the lost. (2) When we all understand God's pattern for the Church. (3) When we know Christ and we know His Word.

Is your Church the Church in the Bible?

Special studies include:

Selection of elders and deacons, the office of evangelist, the ordination of officers, the church name and creed, finances of the church, the discipline of the church and much more.

Read and used by thousands. For years THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE has been utilized in classes, in Bible Colleges and in personal study as an in-depth study on the purpose and work of the church. Written by a teacher, here are 27 chapters complete with outlines, quizzes and review examinations. While the material is ready-made for classroom use, it can easily be adapted for preaching or for individual study.



Don DeWalt has taught forty-one years in two of our Bible Colleges: fourteen years at San Jose Bible College, San Jose, California, and twenty-seven years at Ozark Bible College, Joplin, Missouri.

He has authored ten of the BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK series. He has also written several other books published by Baker Book House and College Press.

He is, and has been for the past twenty-five years, editor of College Press, a publishing company in Joplin, Missouri. He has held scores of evangelistic meetings at home and abroad, as well as rallies and retreats.

College Press Publishing Company
P.O. Box 1132, Joplin, MO 64802