

THE CHURCH

52 LESSON STUDY

COMPILED BY:
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PRIMARY SOURCES FOR RESEARCH AND COMPILATION OF THESE LESSONS ON THE CHURCH

1. WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
Leroy Brownlow
2. WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
V. E. Howard
3. NEWS TESTAMENT CHURCH (Workbook)
Roy Cogdill
4. WORSHIP – HEAVEN’S IMPERATIVE OR MANS INNOVATION
Curtis Cates
5. WORSHIP – MEANING AND MANIFESTATION
Tom Holland
6. CLASSNOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
Memphis School of Preaching
7. VARIOUS GOSPEL ADVOCATE ANNUAL LESSON
COMMENTARIES (1922-72)
8. VARIOUS “SPIRITUAL SWORD” BOOKLETS
Getwell church of Christ, Memphis, TN
9. BITS AND PIECES OF OTHER RELATED MATERIALS WERE USED – OTHER
BOOKS, BULLETIN ARTICLES, PAPER ARTICLES, ETC.

THIS MATERIAL IS FOR CLASS USE AND LESSON PREPARATION ... NOT FOR
PUBLICATION NOR SALE.

THE CHURCH

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LESSON 1

THE CHURCH – BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “Church” – is a fact, Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47.
 - 1. Used approximately 80 times in the New Testament
 - 2. “Churches” used approximately 35 times in the New Testament
- A. This lesson will show the church as a part of the “Eternal Purpose” of God, and not some “afterthought,” Eph. 3:11.
- B. This series of lessons will acquaint (or re-acquaint) us with that church.
- C. There is much “Majesty” and “Mystery” surrounding the church concept.
- D. The infinite mind of God formed and framed a “purpose” – a scheme of redemption for man – to the glory of God and for the salvation of man.

I. PREMILLENNIAL POSITION:

- A. Despite Biblical teaching to the contrary, many religious people accept some millennial scheme, some idea of a 1000 year reign of Christ on earth at some point in time.
- B. Their conclusion
 - 1. The church does not fulfill kingdom prophecy.
 - 2. The church is a “parenthesis and “afterthought” on God’s part because of the rejection of Christ by the Jews.

II. THE ETERNAL PURPOSE:

- A. Did God really have a purpose, scheme of redemption, before the foundation of the world?
- B. Acts 2:23
 - 1. God was not caught napping
 - 2. The cross was no accident, no surprise, and no afterthought.
- A. Study I Pet. 1:18-20; Eph. 1:4; Rom 8:28-30; II Thess 2:13 and II Tim 1:9 in connection with the “eternal purpose idea” in mind.
- B. Ephesians 1:3-14 is one of the greatest passage picturing the eternal purpose in all its vastness and beauty.
 - 1. God the Father is the architect and fountainhead of all spiritual blessings, vs. 3-6.
 - 2. Jesus Christ is the channel through which all of His blessings flow, vs. 7-12.
 - 3. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, vs. 13-14.
 - 4. “Purpose” is the key word.
 - a. In verse 9, it is a verb.
 - b. In verse 11 it is a noun.
 - c. Thus, we see both the divine initiative and the divine action.
- A. Note the remarkable extensive, all-encompassing scope of God’s eternal purpose.
 - 1. It embraces time and eternity.
 - 2. It includes activity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - 3. It involves the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile.
 - 4. The church is active and is engaged in conflict on earth and in heavens.
 - 5. The church had its inception in eternity past, exists through the dimension of “time” and reaches its consummation in “ages to come,” Eph. 2:7.
 - 6. Note the “past purpose,” the “present working” and “future consummation”.

- A. This does not include the deterministic, Calvinistic dogma of fixing the fate of certain individuals.
 - 1. It does include a plan, a purpose, and a scheme culminating in Christ.
 - 2. The death of Christ was according to the determinate council of God, Acts 2:23.
 - 3. The price, the Precious Blood of Christ, was foreknown before the foundation of the world, I Pet. 1:19-20.
 - 4. But man is free to choose or reject that plan, purpose, scheme.
 - 5. God desires ALL to accept it, II Pet. 3:9; I Tim 2:4 and Tit 2:11.
 - 6. But not ALL will be saved, despite God's desire, Matt 7:13-14.

III. THE CHURCH IN THE ETERNAL PURPOSE:

- A. Is the church really a part of God's purpose?
- B. Ephesians 3:8-12 expresses the ageless purpose of God.
- C. That eternal purpose included the salvation of both Jew and Gentile, Eph. 3:3-6, Col 1:25-28 and Rom 16:25-27.
- D. That purpose begins to unfold in Gen 3:15. Compare also Heb. 2:14.
- E. The "promise of salvation" follows a particular line of descent:
 - 1. Abraham – Gen 12:1-7 (involves a family of flesh and a family of faith). Note in this connection Gal 3:16.
 - 2. Confirmed to Isaac – Gen 26:1-5
 - 3. Confirmed to Jacob – Gen 28:10-14. Note Jacob's dying statement in Gen 49:10.
 - 4. Renewed in David – II Sam 7:11-14. Compare Rom 1:3.
 - 5. Fulfilled in Christ – Acts 2:29ff and Gal 3:16.

CONCLUSION:

- A. God's eternal purpose is a great present reality for man's salvation
- B. Note a key phrase in Eph. 3:20-21 – "in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages..."
 - 1. Such will not allow a "church age" followed by an "earthly kingdom" as suggested by the premillennial position.
- A. Thus, the church was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world.

LESSON 2

THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY (1)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Of the 14 writing prophets, 8 wrote of the church.
- B. This is also one of the many proofs of the inspiration of the Bible.
- C. Consider the following prophecies of the church (kingdom).

I. JOEL

- A. Joel is believed to be the earliest of the writing prophets. There is some uncertainty about Obadiah's date.
- B. Note in Joel 2:28ff the word "outpouring" which means "overwhelming".
 - 1. "All flesh" is included, meaning both Jew and Gentile alike.
 - 2. "Sons and daughters" would suggest without distinction as to sex.
 - 3. "Old and young" would suggest no distinction with regard to age.
 - 4. "Servants and handmaids" would not allow distinction with regard to social position.

II. AMOS

- A. Amos was a country prophet who prophesied against Bethel and Jeroboam.
- B. He saw the church as the restored tabernacle of David; 9:11-12
 - 1. The "tabernacle of David" is reference to the kingdom united.
 - 2. The phrase "broken down" would refer to the kingdom when it divided.
- C. Acts 15:13-18, a record of a conference in Jerusalem on circumcision, James makes the application of Amos' prophecy to the church.

III. ISAIAH & MICAH

- A. They saw the church as a house. Note Isa. 2:2-3; Mic. 4:1-2; I Tim. 3:15 and Eph. 2:20-22.
 - 1. Note the phrase "last days" in Isa. 2:1-4. A comparison of Acts 2:16-17, "this is that" and "in the last days" set the time period of Isaiah's statement. Note also Heb. 1:1-2 and I Tim. 4:1 to establish when the "last days" are.
 - 2. "Top of the mountain" (Isa. 2) would suggest the exalted position of the church above institutions on earth. Compare Eph. 1:20-23.
 - 3. "All nations flow into it" (Isa. 2) refers to a steady stream of men and women from among both Jews and Gentiles coming into the church. This would be in harmony with the Lord's commission to the church as recorded in Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15. Note the results – Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 10:34.
 - 4. "Many will go and say..." represents the evangelistic zeal of the church. Compare Acts 8:4.
 - 5. "He will teach...we will walk" suggests the dedicated program of edification in the church (Acts 4:12).
 - 6. "Law and word go forth" shows the beginning place as being Jerusalem, which occurred as recorded in Acts 2.
- A. Both Isaiah and Micah spoke of a peaceful, non-militant attitude among the members of the church. See Isa. 2:4 and Mic. 4:3.

- B. Isaiah spoke of a memorial in 56:5.
 1. That memorial is the Lord's Supper as instituted by the Lord Himself, Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25 and Lk. 22:14-20.
 2. Isaiah even saw a weekly observance (66:22-23) as suggested by the phrase "between one Sabbath and another." Compare Acts. 20:7.
- A. Isaiah spoke of an everlasting name (56:5; 62:1-2).
 1. Early in the beginning of the church, members were called "believers" and "disciples."
 2. After the conversion of Cornelius (Gentile), the disciples were called "Christians," Acts 11:26.
- A. Isaiah saw that eunuchs would be allowed to enter (56:3).
 1. The law of Moses had certain restrictions in this regard; Deut. 23:1.
 2. But now, in the church, things are different, Acts 8:26ff.
- A. Isaiah saw that all nations and tongues would enter (66:18-21).
 1. Even the priests and Levites will be taken from the Gentiles, v.21.
 2. I Pet. 2:9-10 speaks of the church being a "royal priesthood".

IV. JEREMIAH

- A. He saw the church as a new covenant.
- B. Compare Jer. 31:31-34 with Heb. 8:6-10.
- C. This presents a definite and spiritual characterization of the church – that is, an inscribing of God's covenant on the inward parts of man.

V. DANIEL

- A. He saw the church as a small stone that would grow, 2:31-35.
 1. The stone was cut without hands. Man had nothing to do with it.
 2. It grew to fill the whole earth, which is contrary to nature. It began small and now covers the whole earth.
- B. It is referred to as the kingdom, 2:44. Compare Col. 1:13.

VI. EZEKIEL

- A. He saw the church as a sheepfold with one shepherd, 34:11, 22-23.
- B. John 10:14, 16.

VII. ZECHARIAH

- A. He saw the church as a temple, 6:12-13.
 1. The "Branch" would be both priest and king, a new dimension for the temple.
 2. In Heb. 6:20 Jesus is said to be "after the order of Melchizedek" who would serve as king of Salem priest of God.
 3. Christ is to be Priest & King at the same time, Heb. 3:1 & I Tim. 6:15.
- A. He also saw the church as a fountain, 13:1.
 1. The blood of Christ would be the price for sin.
 2. It was also the purchase price for the church, Acts 20:28.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Before God made man, he made a plan for the redemption of mankind.
- B. God chose us in Christ, Eph. 1:4; 3:10-11; before the foundation of the world.
- C. Many of the prophets received visions/pronouncements relative to the church.

LESSON 3

THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY (II) – TYPES/ANTITYPES

THE ARK & THE CHURCH
I COR 10:11; ROM 15:4

ARK	CHURCH
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God gave Noah specifications; Gen 6:14 – 16, 22, Heb. 11: 7; Rom 10:17 2. Only one ark authorized – Gen 6:14 3. Specified material and measurements – Gen 6:14, 15 4. One door; Gen 6:16 5. One window; Gen 6:16 means of entrance of light. 6. Salvation within 67, 18; 7:23 7. Unity – one ark, door, window, family 	<p>Pattern given – organization, worship, work; Phil 1:1; John 4:24; Eph. 4:12</p> <p>Only one church – Matt 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 4:4</p> <p>Church made up of saved; Acts 2:47</p> <p>One door; John 10:1-18 (“door” 4 times); Matt. 7:21ff (obedience)</p> <p>Word; Psalm 119: 105, 130 light of God comes through His word. Cf. Acts 26:16-22</p> <p>Salvation in the church; Eph. 5:23; 2:18</p> <p>Family (house, household) I Tim. 3:15; Eph. 3:14-15; Eph. 2:19</p>

THE TABERNACLE & THE CHURCH
EXODUS 25:8-9; HEBREW 8:5

TABERNACLE	CHURCH
1. Worship conducted inside by priests.	I Pet. 2:5-9 – all Christians are priests
2. Altar of burnt offerings – sacrifice for the people; Lev. 9 & 16	Sacrifice of Christ; Heb. 7:25-27; 9:11-14
3. Laver – Exo. 30:18; 29:4 – priests washed and put on new garments; 29:9; 30:21	Baptism – Heb. 10:22; Rom. 6:1-6; Tit. 3:5; Acts 22:16 – now “new” garment of righteousness; Col. 3:1-2; Gal. 3:26-28
4. Altar of incense; Exo. 30:1-9; Heb. 9:1-9	Prayer – Rev. 5:8; Matt. 6:6; I Tim. 2:8; I Thess. 5:17; Phil. 4:6
5. Table of showbread – Lev. 24:5-9	Lord’s Supper – Acts. 20:7; 2:42; I Cor. 11:23-30
6. Court	World – Rom. 3:23
7. Holy Place – only one entrance	Church – Heb. 9:8; I Cor. 3:16; I Tim. 3:15
8. Golden candlestick – to burn continually	The Word – Psalm 119:105; 130; II Pet. 1:19
9. Most Holy Place – Heb. 9:1-10	Heaven – covenant with God: Heb. 8:8 Christ entered – Heb. 6:19, 20; 9:8,24
10. Some observations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. God commanded placing of furniture. b. To change meant disapproval from God. 	Some observations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Plan of salvation ordered by God. b. Plan of worship ordered by God. c. To change means disapproval.

DELIVERANCE FROM BONDAGE
I CORTH. 10:11; ROM. 15:4

EGYPTIAN BONDAGE & DELIVERANCE	BONDAGE OF SIN & DELIVERANCE
<p>1. Israel in bondage; Exo. 3:7-8</p> <p>2. Red Sea – means of escape; Ex. 14:13; 30-31 Believed – Heb. 11:29 Turned backs upon that land Passed through the sea (baptized) I Cor. 10:1-2 Couldn't be delivered from bondage by staying in the land.</p> <p>3. Deliverer – Moses – Exo. 3:10 Had to hear Moses – Acts 3:22-23</p> <p>4. Entered wilderness free from Egypt & Pharoah</p> <p>5. God supplied their needs</p> <p>6. Not all who crossed the Red Sea entered the Promised land; Heb. 3:7-19</p>	<p>Sin – Col. 1:13; Rom. 6:14 (“Dominion over”) Rom. 6:18 (“Free”); John 8:32; 17:17</p> <p>Baptism – means of escape Faith – Jno. 8:24; 20:30-31 Repent – Matt. 12:41; Lk. 13:3,5 Confess – Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37 Baptism – Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4, 17-18 Can't be saved by staying in sin</p> <p>Deliverer – Christ – Lk. 19:10 Must hear him; Acts. 3:22-23; Matt. 17:5</p> <p>Enters Christ free from sin – Rom. 6:18</p> <p>God supplies our needs – Matt. 6:33; II Pet. 1:3; Eph. 1:3</p> <p>Not all baptized will enter heaven – Heb. 4:1-10; II Pet. 2:20-22; Matt. 7:21; Gal. 5:4</p>

LESSON 4

THE CHURCH IN PROMISE

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Previous studies include the church in mind of God before the foundation of world and the church as prophesied by various Old Testament prophets.
 - B. This study will involve the church as promised by our Lord and recorded in Matthew 16:13-19.
- I. FIRST QUESTION: “WHO DO MEN SAY THAT I AM?” – V. 13
- A. The speculations of men are stated in verse 14.
 - 1. Men are always willing to give their opinions.
 - 2. In this case, they are wrong every time.
 - 3. Compare Naaman’s comment as recorded in II Kings 5:11 – “Behold I thought...”
 - B. Opinions and feelings of men in religion rather than what the Bible teaches is wrong every time. Compare Mk. 7:7-13 and Acts 26:9.
- II. SECOND QUESTION: “WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?” – V. 15
- A. Peter’s answer (v. 16) was not “one of the Christ”, “like the Christ,” but “thou art the Christ”.
 - B. Regarding the church, we are interested in identity, not similarity.
 - 1. Notice the similarities of the worship of Cain and Abel, yet different.
 - 2. Cows and horses have similarities, but differ.
 - 3. A monkey and a man have similarities, yet differ.
 - 4. Tares and wheat have similarities, yet differ (Matt. 13:24-40)
 - A. We are interested in exactness, not counterfeit.
 - B. The church of the New Testament stands in opposition to the institutions of men.
 - 1. There may be some similarities.
 - 2. Yet they differ in name, organization, worship, founder, doctrine, etc.
- III. REVEALED BY GOD – V. 17
- A. Peter’s answer was not based on the opinions of men.
 - B. The means of revelation is set for in the scriptures, Jno. 16:13; I Cor. 2:10-13; Gal. 1:11-12.
 - C. The scriptures also give warning against human doctrines, Gal. 1:6-11; Col. 2:8; Eph. 4:14; I Pet. 4:11; II Pet. 2:1-2; Rev. 22:18-19.
 - D. Today, we have the inspired record given in reputable translations.
- IV. “I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH” – V. 18
- A. The statement is “future tense”, not “rebuild”, nor “add on to”. Compare Mk. 9:1; Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8 and 2:1-4.
 - B. The determination that the “gates of hades shall not prevail against it” is stated. Note also Isa. 28:15-18
 - C. Jesus is the only one who had a right to build it.
 - 1. All authority is His, Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22-23 and I Tim. 6:15.
 - 2. He paid the price, Acts 20:28 and Eph. 5:23, 25.
 - A. Note the possessive case “my church.” Compare Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4.
 - 1. “My church” ... Christ’s.
 - 2. Not mine nor yours.

- A. He spoke of the church in the singular... “church”, not churches. This will be discussed in detail in another lesson.
- B. This promise was made 4,000 years after Adam, 1800 years after Abraham and after John the Immerser had been beheaded.

V. JESUS CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION STONE, V. 18

- A. Isa. 28:16-18; I Cor. 3:11; Rom. 1:4; I Pet. 2:6.
- B. Peter is only a witness, Jno. 15:27; Acts 1:8. He was not raised from the dead, nothing was preached in his name and people were not baptized in his name.
 - 1. “Petra” (Greek for stone) means a mass of stone.
 - 2. “Petros” (Greek for Peter) means a pebble
 - 3. Contrary to Catholicism, the church was not built on Peter (pebble), but Christ (a mass of stone – a solid foundation).
 - 4. Neither was the church built on the apostles and prophets as its foundation, as taught by the Mormons.

VI. AUTHORITY WITH REGARD TO THE CHURCH, V. 19

- A. “Keys” – means of entrance given to Peter and the apostles.
- B. God speaks through Christ, Heb. 1:1-2; Jno. 12:47-49; 17:7-8
- C. Christ governs now, not Moses and the prophets.
 - 1. Must hear Christ, Mk. 9:2-8; Acts 3:19-23.
 - 2. Must hear the word of Christ over the law, Matt. 5:21-22.
 - 3. We are now under the law to Christ, Heb. 5:9; Gal. 6:2.
- A. Christ’s authority is revealed through the apostles.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit was for the apostles, not the world, Jno. 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16:12-15
 - a. The authority to bind and loose was guided by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. What was bound then is still bound today.
 - 1. The purposes of the Holy Spirit with the apostles was to convict (Jno. 16:7-8); guide (Jno. 14:26; 15:26) and to confirm (Heb. 2:1-4).
- A. This involves a regeneration; Matt. 19:27-28; Jno. 20:21-23.
 - 1. The law of the Spirit was given through the apostles; Jno. 16:13-15; Rom. 8:2.
 - 2. The apostles were ambassadors; II Cor. 5:18-20. The word was committed to them.
 - 3. Authority was delegated; Matt. 28:18-20; Jno. 20:21-23.
 - 4. Those “of God” hear the apostles; I Jno. 4:6.
- A. The New Testament is the complete law of Christ.
 - 1. The gospel is now God’s righteousness; Psa. 119:172; Rom. 1:16-17.
 - 2. The gospel completely furnishes; II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 3:16-17.
 - 3. Must be acknowledged as from God; I Cor. 14:37; Gal. 1:11-22.
 - 4. Jude speaks of the gospel (“the faith”) being “once delivered,” “once and for all delivered”, Jude 3; Heb. 9:27 (“once”).
 - 5. We are not to go beyond that which is written, I Cor. 4:6; II Jno. 9-11.
- A. The “keys” were first used on Pentecost, Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47.

CONCLUSION:

- A. The church was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world, was prophesied to come by the prophets and is the same one Jesus promised to build.
- B. Are you a member of it? Eph. 5:23.

LESSON 5

THE CHURCH IN PREPARATION

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Matt. 3:1-6; Mk. 1:1-3; Lk. 3:3-9; Jno. 1:19-34
- B. Review previous lesson titles: “In mind of God”, “Prophecy”, “Promise”...
- C. Further emphasizes that the church is no “afterthought.”

I. THE WORK IDENTIFIED:

- A. A careful study of the Bible explains John’s work:
 - 1. Divine promise; Mal. 4:5-6
 - 2. Divine purpose of John; Matt. 11:7-15 (esp. v.10); cf. Mk. 1:1-3.
 - 3. Mk. 1:2 (Kataasknazo) “shall prepare” – one who makes anything ready for a Person or thing (Thayer).
 - a. Person – Christ; Mk. 1:7
 - b. Thing – kingdom; Matt. 3:2
 - c. John couldn’t do one without the other; Matt. 16:21; 20:28; Lk. 24:46-47 Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25-27
 - d. Jesus came to die, be raised, ascend and be glorified to est. the church
- B. Quality of John’s work states: Lk. 7:24-26, 28
 - 1. “Reed shaken”? NO – unbendingly firm
 - 2. Ambitious and self-seeking? NO – but humble in his self-estimate
 - a. Discarded all claim but of lowliest service.
 - b. Pointing to Him who is to come.
 - 3. The kingdom at hand – the King coming – prepare.

II. BASIC AREAS IN CARRYING OUT HIS WORK:

- A. Persuasive preaching of repentance, Matt. 3:2.
 - 1. Repentance necessary to be prepared for the kingdom.
 - 2. Matt. 3:8; involves both heart and life.
- A. Pervading principles of the kingdom.
 - 1. Repentance suggested lives yielding to righteousness; Tit. 2:11-12; Rom. 14:17
 - a. Not a worldly kingdom as Jews expected.
 - b. Cf. Sermon on the Mount – humility, righteousness, purity, love, faith, obedience...
 - 1. Truth exalted: Matt. 11:1-6; 14:1-12; Jno. 1:1-34
 - a. Even if life is on the line.
 - b. Many preachers fail this test with just their job on the line.
 - c. Believing a lie will cause souls to be lost.
 - d. Only truth saves, Jno. 8:32; 17:17
- A. Powerful proof of Jesus’ Sonship and Messiahship Jno. 1:29, 34

III. DUPLICATIONS OF JOHN’S PREPARATORY WORK:

- A. Church not established yet – cf. Matt. 11:11; 16:18
- B. Church/kingdom was soon to be established; Matt. 3:2, cf. Mr. 9:1
- C. Church is no accident
- D. John was successful – He was God’s choice.

LESSON 6

THE CHURCH – A REALITY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Reminder of the Eternal Purpose – Eph. 3:10:11
- B. Reminder of Prophecies – Isa. 2:2-4
- C. Reminder of the Promise – Matt. 16:18
- D. Reminder of the Preparation – Matt. 3:2
- E. Did the purpose, promise, prophecies, and preparation have desired result? INDEED!

I. THE CHURCH A REALITY: Ro. 16:16; I Cor. 1:2, II Cor. 1:1, Gal. 1:2, Col. 1:13,18 Rev. 2 & 3

- A. The mystery made known – Eph: 1:1-10; Col. 1:25-27; Eph. 3:1-6
- B. Pentecost – preaching (keys), obedience (v. 41), added (v.47); ct. Mk. 9:1
- C. In Christ is now fulfilled the eternal plans of the Father; Heb. 1:1-2; Col. 1:16-19; Eph. 1:22-23
 - A. Meets all spiritual needs – Eph. 1:3; 3:10; II Pet. 1:3
 - B. Only place to honor and serve God – Jno. 15:5; Eph. 3:21
 - C. The place of unity for which Jesus prayed – Jno. 17:20-21; Eph. 4:1-6; Acts 2:44
 - D. God’s instrument for world evangelism – I Tim. 3:15; Matt. 28:18-20

II. SUCCESSION IS IN THE SEED:

- A. Not necessary to trace line of succession.
 - 1. Book of rules for ancient...
 - 2. Plans, blueprints of ancient buildings...
 - 3. Georgia watermelons to Texas – plant a row all the way??? NO.
- A. Perpetuation in pattern, no succession; in seed.
- B. God’s law – Gen. 1:11
- C. Lk. 8:11; Matt. 13:19-23 – seed of the kingdom.
 - 1. Do we have the same seed? I Pet. 1:22-25; Heb. 4:12 – Alive!
 - 2. Do we have the same soil (human hearts)? Matt. 13:19-23
 - 3. If sown, what will be produced? Acts 2:22-47; 11:26; I Pet. 4:16... What else???
 - 4. Hence, the church comes from the seed. No seed planted, no gospel preached, no church!

CONCLUSION:

- A. The church/kingdom as purposed, prophesied, promised, and prepared became a reality.
- B. We have the “pattern”, “seed”.
- C. Wherever the pattern is followed, see planted – New Testament church.

LESSON 7

CHURCH - KINGDOM

CHURCH	IDENTIFYING MARKS	KINGDOM
Isa. 2. 2:2-4; I Tim. 3:15 Acts 2:5, 41, 47	Beginning Place & Date	Dan. 2:44; Acts 2:17; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 24:49 "Last days"
Mk. 16:15; Matt. 28:19	Territory	Dan. 2:44; Heb. 12:28
Matt. 16:18	Owner & Ruler	Jno. 18:36; Col. 1:13
Lk. 24:47; Acts 2:36-47	Governing Law	Isa. 2
Matt. 16:16	Keys Given	Matt. 16:19
Eph. 1:22-23; Gal. 3:27; I Cor. 12:13	Terms of Entrance	Jno. 3:3,5; Col. 1:2, 13
Col. 1:2	Those Holding Membership	Col. 1:13
I Cor. 11:20-27 (church is context)	Memorial supper	Matt. 26:29
I Thess. 4:16-17	Reward & Time of Deliverance	I Cor. 15:24

MANY SIMILARITIES.....NO DIFFERENCES

LESSON 8

THE CHURCH – ONLY ONE PROMISED – ONLY ONE BUILT

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Am I to believe there is but one church that pleases God?
 - B. I am to believe some things, Heb. 11:6; Jno. 8:24; Mk. 16:16
 - C. Am I to believe there is but one God?
 - 1. Was Paul right? Acts 17:22-31
 - 2. Eph. 4:6
 - A. Am I to believe there is but one Christ (Lord)?
 - 1. Some say otherwise, Matt. 24:5
 - 2. Paul says “one”, Eph. 4:5; I Cor. 8:5-6
 - A. Is it narrow-minded to believe...
 - 1. Just one God?
 - 2. Just one Christ?
 - 3. Is that egotistical? Acts 4:12
 - 4. Upon what does one base such belief?
 - 5. Am I to believe there is only one church?
 - I. IF I LOOK AT PROPHECY – YES!
 - A. Isa. 2:1ff (inspired prophet)
 - 1. “House”, not “houses”, cf. I Tim. 3:15
 - 2. Flow into “it,” not “them”.
 - A. Dan. 2:44 – “the” kingdom; “it” shall break in pieces...
 - II. IF I LISTEN TO THE LANGUAGE OF JESUS – YES!
 - A. “Church” and “kingdom” used interchangeable.
 - B. Matt. 4:17 – “repent, for the kingdom” – singular.
 - C. Matt. 16:16-18; several churches? Few churches? “My church”!
 - D. Jno. 10:16-18; “one” fold, just as “one” shepherd!
 - E. Jno. 17:11, 21-23; one, unity, singular.
 - III. IF I LEARN FROM WHAT THE CHURCH IS CALLED – YES!
 - A. Rom. 12:4-5; I cor. 12:12-13, 20; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Col. 1:18 – “body”
 - B. Gal. 6:10; I Tim 3:14-15 – “house”, “household”
 - C. Jno. 3:29; Rev. 21:2, 9 “bride” – how many?
 - D. “One” body, “one” family, “one” bride – singular
 - IV. IF I LINGER AT THE CROSS – YES!
 - A. Eph. 2:14-15; “one new man”
 - B. Eph. 5:25-27; gave Himself for “it”
 - C. Acts 20:28 – nobody that heard that statement would believe otherwise.
 - V. IF I LIMIT MYSELF TO REVELATION – YES!
 - A. Foolish to step outside revelation isn’t it?
 - B. Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19
- CONCLUSION:
- A. What would you encourage me to believe about this question?
 - B. The same as with God? Christ? Just “one”!
 - C. Choose the God & Christ of the Bible, then choose the church of my choice? NO WAY!

LESSON 9

THE CHURCH – FOUNDER AND FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Genuineness determined in part by founder, foundation, time and place of beginning.
Not interested in replica, nor similarities.
 - 1. Cf. antiques – cars, furniture, coins, etc.
- A. The church prophesied, promised, prepared that is now a reality can be identified.
- B. Next several lessons look at many identifying marks of the N.T. church.
- C. Cf. identifying a lost child – hair, eyes, scars, clothes, etc.

I. FOUNDER

- A. Many businesses have picture of founder on the wall – important to the business.
- B. Christ – not Abraham, David, John the Baptizer; Matt. 3:2; 11:11; 16:18
- C. No changing – Matt. 28:18; Heb. 13:8
- D. Man fallible, Christ infallible.
 - 1. Churches founded by men constantly changing.
 - 2. Christ’s church doesn’t change.
 - 3. Some change and leave, but Christ’s church is unchanging.
- A. Divine founder, builder and owner; Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28
- B. Psa. 127:1 “Except the Lord build the house...”
- C. Denominations are founded by men, built by men; Matt. 15:13 “Every plant...”

II. FOUNDATION

- A. Some say “Peter” (Catholicism)
 - 1. “Peter” – “Petros,” pebble, small stone, a detached stone, masculine gender.
 - 2. “Rock” – “Petra”, ledge of rock, mass of rock.
- A. Some say apostles and prophets (Mormonism)
- B. Christ’s church not build on weakness of mortal man but on divine Sonship of Christ.
 - 1. Prophets – Isa. 28:14-16
 - 2. Jesus – Matt. 21:42; 16:17-18
 - 3. Apostles – I Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33
- A. So solid a foundation that hades could not prevail against it; Isa. 28:15; Matt. 16:18b
 - 1. Dan. 2:44 – kingdom never to be destroyed.
 - 2. I Cor. 16:24 – to remain on earth until Christ comes again.
- A. Rom. 1:4 – tried, proven
- B. Matt. 7:21-27, solid, lasting foundation. Denominationalism built on sand.

CONCLUSION:

- A. All religions, churches have a founder – Christ is founder of only one – HIS!
- B. All religions, churches have a foundation – Christ is the foundation of only one – HIS!
- C. Cf. lost child again – wrong hair color = wrong child
- D. Wrong founder or foundation = wrong church!

LESSON 10

THE CHURCH – TIME AND PLACE OF BEGINNING

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Refer back briefly to lesson 7 (church = kingdom)
- B. To identify, its time and place of beginning will help to distinguish it from denominations of men.

I. PLACE OF BEGINNING

- A. Jerusalem
 - 1. Foundation to be laid – Isa. 28:16
 - 2. “My house shall be built in it” – Zech. 1:16
 - 3. Gospel to be preached there first – Acts 1:7-8; Isa. 2:2-4
 - 4. Power to come in Jerusalem – Lk. 24:49; Mk. 9:1
 - 5. “Keys” first used there – Matt. 16:19; Acts 2
- B. Can this be said of the church of which you are a member?

II. TIME OF BEGINNING

- A. “Last days” – Isa. 2:2
 - 1. “House” = church – Isa. 2:2-3; I Tim. 3:13
 - 2. Acts 2:41, 47
- B. First Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ – Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28
- C. During days of Roman kings – Dan. 2:44
- D. According to men:
 - 1. In Eden (Calvanists)
 - 2. Days of Abraham (Methodists)
 - 3. Ministry of John the Immerser (Baptists)
 - 4. By Christ, on Mountain or in Upper Room (Baptists)
- E. If before Christ died...
 - 1. No foundation – Isa. 28:16; Matt. 16:18 “rock”
 - 2. No head – Eph. 1:20-23; Matt. 16:18 “I will build my church”
 - 3. No blood – Acts 20:28
 - 4. No Spirit – Jno. 7:38-39
 - 5. No gospel – Matt. 16:20; Lk. 24:49; Acts. 2:1-4
 - 6. Note also Matt. 3:1-2; 4:17; 10:7; Lk. 10:9; 19:11; 22:18; 23:42
- F. After Pentecost...
 - 1. Souls added – Acts 2:41, 47
 - 2. Great fear on church; Acts 5:11
 - 3. Persecution of the church – Acts 8:1ff
 - 4. Tidings to the ears of the church – Acts 11:22
 - 5. Note also Acts 13:3; 14:27; Rom
- G. Acts 2:1-4
 - 1. Kingdom to come with power – Mk. 9:1
 - 2. Power to come with the Spirit – Acts 1:8
 - 3. Spirit came on Pentecost...thus power...thus kingdom (church)

LESSON 11

THE CHURCH – ITS GUIDED BOOK

INTRODUCTION:

A. Definitions explain nature of this lesson

1. Bible – II Tim. 3:15-17; II Pet. 1:19-21; II Sam. 23:2; Eph. 5:17; Heb. 4:12
2. God – Gen. 1:1, 26, 27 (Creator)
3. Man – Psa. 8 (Creature)

A. Thus, the Creator showing the Creature the right direction.

I. DIVINELY INSPIRED MESSAGE

A. II Tim. 3:16-17; God-breathed

B. II Pet. 1:19-21; Heb. 1:1-2

C. Gal. 1:10-12 (not just “red-letter” edition)

D. Claims such 3800 times

E. Plenary verbal inspiration – I Cor. 2:6-13

1. Distinction over one word – Gal. 3:16; Acts 2:38, Mt. 26:28 “EIS”; Eph. 5:19 “Psallo”
2. I Pet. 1:10-11; told then things in the future; words without thoughts.

II. A NEED FOR A GUIDE BOOK

A. Jer. 10:23; Psa. 1:1-2; Prov. 14:12

B. Eccl. 7:29; Gen. 6:5...see what happens

C. See what was lost in Eden – result of sin

1. Gen. 3:7...strange biological happen – became uncomfortable.
2. Gen. 3:8...relationship with God; cf. v. 24
3. Gen. 3:12...relationship with companion – blamed wife
4. Gen. 3:17f...relationship with environment
5. Gen. 4:9...relationship with brother
6. Gen. 6:5...relationship with society – great violence.

III. A BOOK OF DEMANDS

A. Demands that it be read; Acts 17:11; Col. 4:16

B. Demands that it be believed; Jno. 3:16; 20:30-31; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17

C. Demands it be obeyed; Matt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46

D. Demands that we reject all other teachings

1. Book of Mormon, confession of faith, denominational manuals, etc.
2. Now putting their creeds in the Bible via modern translations (faith only, salvation at the

point

of confession, hereditary total depravity, direct operation of H.S., in Christ at the point of hearing, etc.

3. Matt. 15:9; Jno. 12:48

LESSON 12

THE CHURCH – DESIGNATIONS OF OWNERSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Marks of identity are numerous.
- B. Past lessons – founder, foundation, time & place of beginning, guidebook...
- C. This lesson – designation of ownership by which the church is called (Name?)
- D. Whatever term we use, we must have authority for it.

I. CHRIST CALLED IT.....

- A. “My church” – Matt. 16:18
- B. “My kingdom” – Lk. 22:30; Jno. 18:36
- C. “The kingdom of heaven” – Matt. 16:19
- D. “The kingdom of God” – Jno. 3:5; Lk. 22:16; Matt. 6:33

II. APOSTLES CALLED IT.....

- A. “The church” – Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22; 3:10; 5:23-32
- B. “The church of God” – Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:13
- C. “Churches of Christ” – Rom. 16:16 (church in different locations)
- D. “House of God” – I Tim. 3:15
- E. “Household of God” – Eph. 2:19
- F. “Household of faith” – Gal. 6:10
- G. “Kingdom of God” – Acts 28:23, 31
- H. “Church of the firstborn” – Heb. 12:23
- I. “Kingdom of God’s dear Son” – Col. 1:13
- J. “Kingdom which cannot be shaken” – Heb. 12:28
- K. “The body” – Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18

CONCLUSION:

- A. All are phrases of ownership – no proper name.
- B. Is the church of which you are a member mentioned by the apostles?
- C. Are you a member of a religious organization not mentioned in the Bible?

LESSON 13

THE CHURCH – NAMES (DESIGNATIONS) OF MEMBERS

- I. New Name Prophesied – Isa. 56:5; 62:2; 65:15
- II. New Name Given – Acts 11:26; (Divine Call)
- III. New Name Used – Acts 26:28; I Pet. 4:16
- IV. Other designations showing relationships:
 - A. Saints – Phil. 1:1; 4:21 (Sanctified, set apart)
 - B. Disciples – Acts 20:7 (followers, learners) – interestingly not used after Acts 21:16
 - C. Brethren – Col. 1:2 (of same family)
- V. Married to Christ – Rom. 7:4 (must wear His name)
 - A. What name do you wear religiously?
 - B. By what authority do you wear it?

CONCLUSION:

- A. There is something in a name if we believe Col. 3:17.
 - 1. If not, wives start wearing the name of some other man.
 - 2. Name your daughter Jezebel!!!
- B. Use names, designations that honor Christ, not men.

LESSON 14

LESSON 14

THE CHURCH – OBEDIENCE

INTRODUCTION:

- A. God has specified means of entrance into the church.
- B. Underlying principle is “obedience”; Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:9; Lk. 6:46
- C. Must consider entrance into and remaining faithful in the church.

I. CHRISTIAN LIFE IS LIKE UNTO:

- A. War – Eph. 6:10ff; I Tim. 6:12; II Tim. 2:2-3; 4:6-8
- B. Walk – I Jno. 1:7; Eph. 4:1; II Cor. 5:7
- C. Race – I Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:1; Gal. 5:7; II Tim. 4:6-8
- D. Labor – I Cor. 15:58; Matt 20:1ff

II. OBEDIENCE IS A REQUIREMENT TO ENTER:

- A. Principle set forth – Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21; I Pet. 1:22
 - 1. Only one way
 - 2. Not my way, your way, majority rule, etc.
- B. Adam and Eve – Gen. 3
 - 1. “Not” – just one word added to what God had said.
 - 2. Man (Adam) out of place by following, not leading.
 - 3. Woman (Eve) out of place leading, not following.
 - 4. Neither followed what God had said.
- C. Nadab and Abihu – Lev. 10:1-2
 - 1. Did many things exactly right (proper time, utensils, etc.)
 - 2. Yet, “strange fire”
 - 3. Someone might say “fire is fire,” but in this case, not so.
- D. Noah – Gen. 6:22
 - 1. “All” – Jas. 2:10; Are we like this?
 - 2. No record of his questioning God, 7:5
 - 3. As God directs – II Tim. 2:15; I Jno. 5:13
- E. Moses striking the rock – Num. 20:7-12
 - 1. V. 9 – some things done right – not complete
 - 2. Our duty is to obey, not question
 - 3. “Believed not” – think of all that Moses and Aaron had seen before (Plagues, Red Sea part, etc.)
- F. Any number O.T. and N.T. stories of obedience and disobedience.
 - 1. Abraham – Gen. 12 & 22
 - 2. Saul – I Sam. 15
 - 3. Demas – II Tim. 4:10

LESSON 15

THE CHURCH – TERMS OF ENTRANCE

INTRODUCTION:

- A. One of the identifying marks of the N.T. church.
- B. Salvation was and is enjoyed in a designated place.
 - 1. Noah – Gen. 7:1, 10, 16-24; esp. 23b
 - 2. Today – in the church, the body of Christ.
 - a. Church and body the same – Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18
 - b. Christ is the Savior of the body – Eph. 5:23
 - c. Added, not join – Acts 2:41, 47
- C. What steps must be taken to enter the body of Christ, the N.T. church?
 - 1. A plan that enables sinners to reach blessing of salvation.
 - 2. A must
 - 3. Amazing what man can come up with – grace only, faith only, etc.

I. HEAR THE GOSPEL

- A. Mk. 4:23-24; 16:15a; Lk. 8:18; Acts 18:8; Rom. 10:14, 47; Rev. 22:17
- B. Rom. 10:10 – “just call on his name”????cf. Matt. 7:21; I Cor. 1:21

II. BELIEVE THE GOSPEL

- A. Rom. 10:14; Heb. 11:6; Jno. 8:24; Mk. 16:16; Acts 18:8
- B. Jno. 3:16 – “should not”
- C. Jno. 1:12 – “power to become sons”; cf. Acts 8:37

III. REPENT OF SINS COMMITTED

- A. Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38, 47; 3:19; 17:30; II Pet. 3:9
- B. Cf. Nineveh – “turn or burn”
- C. “Repenting” and “reporting” not the same – Psa. 51

IV. CONFESS FAITH IN CHRIST AS GOD’S ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

- A. Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 16:16; Acts 8:37
- B. Matt. 10:32-33; continues throughout Christian life.

V. BE IMMERSUED (BURIED) IN WATER (BAPTISM)

- A. Acts 8:36-39; 10:47, 48; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12
- B. For remission of sins – Acts 2:38; cf. Matt. 26:28 “for” same in GK & English.
- C. To wash away sins – Acts 22:16
- D. To be saved – I Pet. 3:21; Mk. 16:16
- E. To get into Christ – Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27
- F. To get into the body of Christ, the church – I Cor. 12:13
- G. To begin a new life – II Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:3-4, 17-18; Col. 3:1-2

CONCLUSION:

- A. The saved are in the church, are the church.
- B. No one step more important than others – any one left out makes an incomplete process.
Each takes its place.
- C. Matt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46
- D. Churches which offer other plans are not the N.T. church! (Mourners bench, pray through, Faith only, voted in. etc.)

LESSON 16

THE CHURCH – ORGANIZATION (GENERAL)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. One of the most distinguishing marks of identity of the N.T. church.
- B. God’s plan is that the church be guided in a specific way – a definite plan of organization was given.
- C. Denominations are ruled by their ecclesiastical forms of government.
- D. “Govern” – to direct, control, regulate, restrain, to exercise authority.
- E. Note God’s plan to accomplish this.

I. CHRIST IS THE SUPREME HEAD

- A. Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; Matt. 17:5; 28:18
- B. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the Apostles – Jno. 14:26; 16:13; 15:26-27; I Cor. 2:12-13; I Pet. 1:25; Matt. 16:19
- C. Christ’s rule is ex

II. SOME GUIDELINES FOR A “STRAIGHT COURSE SMOOTH OPERATION”

- A. Matters that affect the life and work of the church are to be rightly set in order; Tit. 1:5
- B. Fitly joined together; Eph. 4:16
- C. Maintain decency and order – I Cor. 14:40
- D. Avoid what is not reasonable – Acts 6:2
- E. Do that which allows the church to continue in the faith – Acts 14:22
- F. Hold steadfastly to the apostles’ doctrine – Acts 2:42
- G. Be established in the faith – Acts 15:5
- H. Be like-minded, glorifying God – Rom. 15:5-6
- I. To serve in various ministries – I Cor. 14:5; Rom. 12:7-8
- J. Do all to edifying – I Cor. 14:5, 6, 26

III. THE AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH

- A. Autonomy – right of self-government in local congregation.
 - 1. Christ is the head and no other government outside the local congregation.
 - 2. Jerusalem church not over other local churches.
 - 3. No larger or smaller system than the congregation.
- B. Elders – plurality
 - 1. Ordained in every church – Acts 14:23; every city – Tit. 1:5
 - 2. “Elders” – Acts 20:17; “presbuteros” – one who is older
 - 3. “Bishops” – Phil. 1:1; “Episkopos” – overseer
 - 4. “Pastors” – Acts 20:28; “Pasco” (Latin); to shepherd, to feed – “Poimen”
 - 5. Qualifications – I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9 (to be discussed later)
 - 6. Work – Acts 20:28, 35; Tit. 1:9; I Pet. 5:2-3; Jas. 5:14; Heb. 13:17 (More later)
 - 7. Congregational response to them – I Thess. 5:12-13; I Tim. 5:17-19; Heb. 13:17 (more later)
 - 8. Not “law-making” – but leading, guiding by God’s law.

- C. Deacons – Phil. 1:1
 - 1. Servant, special assignment – cf. Acts 6:1-6(?)
 - 2. Qualification – I Tim. 3:8-12 (more later)
 - 3. Work – assist elders as needed. Not as clearly laid out as that of elders.
- D. Saints – Phil. 1:1
- E. Concepts not authorized by the Bible
 - 1. Clergy-laity concept as per denominationalism; cf. I Pet. 5:3 (heritage)
 - 2. Evangelistic authority
 - 3. Deacon rule (board of deacons, etc.)
 - 4. Councils, conventions, etc. deciding the course of the church.
 - 5. One man rule – Pope, etc. head elder...

CONCLUSION:

- A. N.T. church organized by God’s plan
- B. One of the distinguishing marks of identity in contrast to other religions.

LESSON 17

THE CHURCH – QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Qualification – “any endowment or acquirement which fits a person for a place, office or employment; a requisite; an essential.
- B. Given by the Holy Spirit – thus cannot bend them to fit the man.
- C. I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-11
 - 1. “Must” – these are binding and cannot be avoided.
 - 2. “Must be” – present tense, continuous action – not “must have been” or “will be.”

I. POSITIVE QUALIFICATION OF ELDERS

- A. Desire – I Tim. 3:1 one that stretcheth out for; earnestly desire; long for whatever is involved in the work of an elder)
- B. Blameless – I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:6 (one against whom a charge cannot be sustained)
- C. Husband of one wife – I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:6 (must have one but not more than one)
- D. Having faithful children – Tit. 1:6 (children that believe, faithful, believing)
 - 1. Not accused of riot – extravagant, spendthrift, and abandoned life.
 - 2. Unruly – not obedient, not subject to control.
- E. Vigilant – I Tim. 3:2 (to be awake, cautious, keen, courageous)
- F. Sober – I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:8 (not affected by prejudice, of sound mind)
- G. Of good behavior – I Tim. 3:2 (good manners, courteous, polite)
- H. Given to hospitality – I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:8 (kindness, generosity to strangers)
- I. Apt to teach – I Tim. 3:2 (apt and skillful in teaching, impart knowledge)
- J. Patient – I Tim. 3:3 (lenient, yielding, fair, mild, gentle)
- K. Rule well his own house – I Tim. 3:4 (to be over, superintend, not just able to do it, but doing it)
- L. Of good report from without – I Tim. 3:7 (in a legal sense-vs-rumor; has respect of Christian and Non-Christian)
- M. Lover of good men – Tit. 1:8 (appreciation for all that is good, noble)
- N. Just – Tit. 1:8, 9 (rendering to each his due, fair, no respecter of persons)
- O. Holy – Tit. 1:8 (undefiled by sin, pure)
- P. Temperate – Tit. 1:8 (mastering, controlling curbing, restraining self)
- Q. Holding fast the faithful word – Tit. 1:9 (clear and sound knowledge of God’s word, stand for and demand sound doctrine)

II. NEGATIVE QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Not given to wine – I Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7 (to pay attention to)
- B. No striker – I Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7 (ready with a blow, quarrelsome)
- C. Not greedy of filthy lucre – I Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7 (not seeking gain through base or dishonorable means)
- D. Not a brawler – I Tim. 3:3 (quiet, peaceable, not constantly disagreeable)
- E. Not covetous – I Tim. 3:3 (lit – no lover of money, to lust after)
- F. Not a novice – I Tim. 3:6 (a new convert)
- G. Not self-willed – Tit. 1:7 (lit – pleasing one’s self, bull-headed)
- H. Not soon angry – Tit. 1:7 (prone to anger, easily irritated)

LESSON 18

THE CHURCH – DUTIES OF ELDERS

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Elders – an important part of God’s plan
 - 1. Jerusalem – Acts 15:6, 22, 23; 14:23
 - 2. Ephesus – Acts 20:17ff
 - 3. Thessalonica – I Thess. 5:12
 - 4. Philippi – Phil. 1:1; “in every city” – Tit. 1:5
- B. Review “elder”, “bishop”, “shepherd”, “pastor”.
- C. Qualifications plainly set forth.
- D. Great responsibility attached to the eldership in the individual qualifications.
- E. Work – not merely an official position (“office” – I Tim. 3:1 – not in original)

I. PROHIBITIONS ENJOINED UPON THEM (I Pet. 5:1-3)

- A. “Not of constraint” – not by force, but of a ready mind
- B. “Not for filthy lucre” – not just for the money that could be involved.
- C. “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage” – not labor bosses, but as loving, understanding fathers, shepherds.

II. DUTIES

- A. “Take heed to yourselves” – Acts 20:28 – (get his own house in order first)
- B. Watch-care over the congregation – Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2-3
 - 1. Compare oriental shepherd; Jno. 10:1-14; lead, companion, cf. Psa. 23
 - 2. Protection from false teachers, wolves in sheep’s clothing; Jno. 10:12-13
 - 3. Know the flock – Jno. 10:3; who, how many, where they live, spiritual condition and needs.
 - 4. Give account of souls; Heb. 13:7, 17 – slackness allows apostasy
- C. Teach the word of God
 - 1. Implied in qualification “apt to teach”
 - 2. Doesn’t mean they have to do all the teaching, nor teach all the time.
 - 3. Implies knowledge of God’s word
 - 4. To the degree of being able to exhort and convince the gainsayers; Tit. 1:9
- D. Take the oversight of the congregation; I Pet. 5:2-3
 - 1. Episkopeo – to look upon, inspect, oversee, look after
 - 2. Must be courageous and faithful in this and all aspects of their work.
- E. Watch for grievous wolves; Acts 20:29-31
 - 1. Vigilance is one of the qualifications (watchfulness)
 - 2. Must know enough to recognize false teachings.
- F. Support the weak: Acts 20:35
- G. Admonish the church: I Thess. 5:12
 - 1. Warn of a fault, reprove gently and kindly but seriously.
 - 2. No respecter of persons.
- H. Consider and decide on church problems; Acts 15:6
- I. Examples to the flock: I Pet. 5:3
- J. Take lead in exercising church discipline.

LESSON 19

THE CHURCH – DUTIES & QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

INTRODUCTION:

- A. One of the most misunderstood subjects in the church.
- B. Must know who deacons are, what their duties are, their God-given place.
- C. “Deacon” – a servant, waiter, attendant...thus, active service.

I. NEGATIVE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS:

- A. Not double-tongued (I Tim. 3:8) – not talking to suit present company
- B. Not given to much wine (I Tim. 3:8) – to hold the mind towards, pay attention to, (“much”) – cf. I Tim. 5:23
- C. No greedy of filthy lucre (I Tim. 3:8) – not seeking gain by base or dishonorable means.

II. POSITIVE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS:

- A. Grave (I Tim. 3:8) – serious, dedicated, not silly, loud, flippant in conduct.
- B. Must be proved (I Tim. 3:10) – his work in the church proves his sincerity and ability to serve prior to his being selected.
- C. Blameless (I Tim. 3:10) – not perfection, but not being able to make a charge stand against him.
- D. Husband of one wife (I Tim. 3:12) – must be married but not polygamist.
- E. Ruling their children and houses well (I Time. 3:12) – having family in subjection
- F. Hold fast the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience (I Tim. 3:9) – faithful to the truth, holding to it, not tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

III. DUTIES OF THE DEACONS:

- A. Basically doing whatever the elders need and ask them to do.
- B. No Scriptural distinction in spiritual and physical works for elders and deacons.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF WIVES OFR ELDERS/DEACONS:

- A. Grave (I Tim. 3:11) – sound in thinking and actions and faith, diligent in her duties.
- B. Not slanders
- C. Sober
- D. Faithful in all things

LESSON 20

THE CHURCH – PREACHERS, WHAT THEY ARE NOT

INTRODUCTION:

- A. I Cor. 1:21 – Must recognize importance of preaching
- B. Rom. 10:13-17 – Must recognize importance of preachers (Biblically speaking)
- C. Preaching – a part of God’s plan
- D. Yet many misconceptions as to what a preacher is and what his work is.

I. HE IS NOT “THE PASTOR”

- A. “Pastor” – Latin “Pasco”; idea of shepherd, to feed; cf. Acts 20:28
- B. May be “a pastor” (an elder) if he meets the qualifications; 1 Tim. 3 & Titus 1

II. HE IS NOT A MIRACLE WORKER

- A. He can pray for the sick, but his prayer carries no more weight with God than the prayer of any other righteous person. Jas. 5:14, 16
- B. He can give advice relative to marriage problems, but he cannot do your part in repenting and forgiving; Eph. 5:23-31
- C. He can preach and teach, but he cannot make people respond positively; Rev. 3:20.

III. HE IS NOT A GLORY SEEKER

- A. The glory goes to God; Eph. 3:21
- B. He is not in the business of winning friends and influencing enemies, except to win them to Christ.
- C. Eph. 4:15 – speak the truth in love even if it makes enemies; Gal. 4:16.

IV. HE IS NOT AN ENTERTAINER

- A. More concern for how a man speaks than for the message far too often.
- B. Telling jokes and funny stories will not save souls.
- C. Some preachers even think they have to be the center of attention and talk louder than anyone else.
- D. “I didn’t get anything out of the sermon”...What is meant by that!

V. HE IS NOT A “YES” MAN

- A. Too much emphasis on what a certain brother teaches or what a certain school teaches on some issue.
- B. Study and stay with the BOOK
- C. II Tim. 2:15; I Pet. 3:15; cf. II Sam. 12:7, 13
- D. Does not tickle ears – II Tim. 4:1ff

VI. HE IS NOT A WOMAN – I Tim. 2:8-15

LESSON 21

THE CHURCH – PREACHERS, WHAT THEY ARE

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Recognize importance of preaching; I Cor. 1:21; Rom. 10:13-17
- B. Recognize importance of preaching truth; I Pet. 4:11; Cf. Amos 3:8; Rom. 1:16
- C. Recognize the importance of preaching even when it is not wanted; II Tim. 4:1ff; Amos 7:10-13; Acts 7; Acts 5:29, 41-42.
- D. But, just what is a preacher?

I. HE IS A SERVANT OF GOD AND JESUS CHRIST

- A. Even the Apostles considered themselves as such – II Pet. 1:1; Tit. 1:1; Jam. 1:1; Jude
- B. Every Christian must have this as top priority
- C. While he does render service to men, he is first and foremost God's servant.

II. HE IS GOD'S MESSENGER

- A. Jer. 1:9 – “I have put my words in thy mouth”; cf. I Pet. 4:11
- B. Rom. 10:13-17; 1:16; God's message of salvation must be taken to the world; Matt. 28:18-20
Mk. 16:15-16
- C. Paul to Timothy – II Tim. 4:2, 5; cf. I Cor. 1:16; “woe”

III. HE IS A FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN

- A. Onesimus – “faithful and beloved brother”; Col. 4:9
- B. Tychicus – “a beloved brother and faithful minister”; Eph. 6:21
- C. Preachers:
 - 1. “Live in glass houses”; “live under a microscope”
 - 2. Judged as if there was a double standard, one for preachers and another for members...NOT SO!!!

IV. HE IS FELLOW-LABORER

- A. His work complements the work of other faithful preachers and brethren; I Cor. 3:6
- B. Tychicus – fellow servant; Col. 4:7
- C. Philemon – fellow laborer; Phile. 1
- D. Not in a popularity contest
 - 1. Preacher and assoc. preacher = trouble! Why???
 - 2. Several preachers working together...trouble. Why???

V. USE LETTERS OF THE WORD “PREACHER” TO DESCRIBE HIM & HIS WORK

P – person – with feelings, emotions, needs, desires like everyone else.

R – reaches out; to the lost, indifferent, negligent, hurting, sick, etc.

E – edifies; encourages, exhorts, builds up

A – accepts; joys, comfort, criticism, discomfort, “whatsoever state...”

C – changes; lives, habits, attitudes, goals, eternal destiny of all who will listen.

H – humble; just a servant, not “pastor”; not above everyone else.

E – enjoys; not finer things of life, but fellowship, study, work

R – rest; in heaven, tireless effort here, no retirement, no quitting, just a longing for heaven.

LESSON 22

THE CHURCH – DUTIES OF MEMBERS TO ELDERS

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Review duties of elders to members:
 - 1. Take heed to self
 - 2. Watch-care over congregation
 - 3. Teach the word of God
 - 4. Take oversight of congregation
 - 5. Watch for grievous wolves
 - 6. Support the weak
 - 7. Pray for the sick and minister to their needs
 - 8. Admonish the church
 - 9. Consider and decide on church problems
 - 10. Examples of the flock
 - 11. Take the lead in exercising church discipline
 - B. Always easier to think about what the other person owes us.
 - C. “Over you in the Lord” – spiritual rulership, not in worldly affairs.
 - D. Holy Spirit teaches elders to rule – at same time teaches congregation to submit
 - E. Must always be understanding and agreement between elders and congregation if work is to be pleasant and profitable.
 - F. Must have a willingness to be fed, overseen, directed, and led.
- I. KNOW THE ELDERS: I Thess. 5:12
- A. “Know” – to acknowledge, to respect, duly regard
 - B. (GK) to know fully; get to know them; who they are
 - C. Cannot ignore scriptural elders without going contrary to scriptures.
- II. ESTEEM THE ELDERS: I Thess. 5:13
- A. (GK) Hegeomai; Phil. 2:3; I Thess. 5:13; Heb. 11:26
 - B. Consider them; know their instructions; honor their leadership; love and respect them.
 - C. Bible deals little with mere sentiment of emotion.
 - 1. Shows itself in deeds of kindness and helpfulness in whatever the need.
 - 2. Will aid them in their work.
 - 3. Counted worthy of double honor; I Tim. 5:17 (Proper and well deserved honor, not constant hindrance)
 - D. “Esteem them highly” – lit. exceedingly high
 - E. “In love” –
 - F. “For their work’s sake” – labor, toil
 - 1. Willing to take my soul into their care – individual
 - 2. Willing to take the church into their care – collectively.
 - 3. Hours of prayer for the wayward members.
 - 4. Heartbreaking sessions to preserve families.
 - 5. Hours of talking with lost souls – wayward members.
 - 6. Hours of planning to help church be most effective.
-

- III. BE IN SUBMISSION TO AND OBEY THE ELDERS: Heb. 13:17
- A. “Submit” – to yield under, to give up, to way to, resist no longer, carries the idea retiring or withdrawing our objection before the authority of the elders.
 - B. Why” – “For they watch for your souls”
 - C. Each member has the duty to submit –
 1. Not just when you agree with their decisions.
 2. When they admonish – must hear them
 3. If they rebuke – must heed
 4. Whatever their decision (in harmony with the Bible) must be respected and followed with love.
 - D. “Obey” to listen to, obey, yield to, comply with
 - E. We live in a selfish, self-centered, rebellious, “individual rights” society.
 - F. Five expressions that point to their authority and the need to submit to them; Heb. 13:17 – “obey”, “submit”, “rule”, “watch”, “give account”
 - G. Point of emphasis – Heb. 13:17b “For that is unprofitable for **YOU,**” not unprofitable for the elders.
- IV. IMITATE THE ELDERS: Heb. 13:7
- A. Mimic, act like
 - B. Continuous action, habitual
 - C. Conditional – I Cor. 11:1
 - D. Implies their faithfulness and that will lead the flock to heaven
 - E. Love, faith, liberality, attendance, work, hospitality, etc.
- V. RECEIVE NOT ACCUSATION AGAINST ELDERS WITHOUT WITNESSES:
- A. “Receive” to receive or admit with approval; accept.
 - B. Easy to pick flaws, mote hunt; Matt. 7:1-5
 - C. Elders can and do, make mistakes; but be careful not to receive every report concerning them.
 - D. Just as wrong to make accusation them.
 - E. The law – 2 or 3 witnesses; cf. II Corth. 13:1; Deut. 17:6; Jno. 8:17, reliable and reputable witnesses.
- VI. COMMEND THE ELDERS FOR GOOD THINGS THEY DO: II. Cor. 12:11
- A. Would make the elders work much more pleasant if we would act like we expect them to act.
 - B. Text is an apostle, yet all need encouragement, commendation.
 - C. Area we as quick to *commend* as to *condemn*? Cf. I Cor. 13:5b-7
- VII. CALL FOR THE ELDERS WHEN IN NEED: Jas. 5:14
- A. Take away miraculous element.
 - B. Places responsibility on members.
 - C. Let the elders know when and why you are absent from services, sick, etc.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Congregation must function as a unit – each member working to the good of the other; Rom. 12:4-5; I Cor. 12:12-27 (body concept)
- B. Must respect the Holy Spirit’s instruction in areas of this study – as in all areas – elder qualifications, work, authority, our duties toward them.
- C. To fail or rebel against leadership is to rebel against God, not the men – cf. I Sam. 8:5-7

LESSON 23

THE CHURCH – IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “Worship” – 115 times in O.T. and 76 in N.T. (191 total) – important.
- B. Text – Gen. 4:26; Jno. 4:23-24
- C. Background – two seed lines (Cain & Seth)
 - 1. Gen. 4:16 – from the presence of the Lord (Cain)
 - 2. Gen. 4:26 – call upon the name of the Lord (Seth)
- D. Our involvement in public worship is important
 - 1. Preparation – right with God, with fellowman, right atmosphere (I Cor. 14:40)
 - 2. How much thought do we give to “going to church”?
 - 3. Why do we attend? To see? Partake of L.S. only? Cover a week of unrighteous living? Because we feel we have to?

I. INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

- A. Introduced as a protest to godless living of Cain’s descendants.
- B. Public worship has personal benefits; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 10:24-25 (songs, lessons, fellowship, etc.)
 - 1. Strength to face a godless society and world.
 - 2. Stand up and be counted; Eph. 6:10ff
 - 3. Those who have no appreciation for public worship are not going to be able to stand up against sin; Psa. 46:1
- C. Public worship is a public confession of one’s faith in God in spite of society.
 - 1. “I believe in God” – Matt. 10:32-33 (cf. Abraham’s altar, Gen. 12:7)
 - 2. What about those who forsake public worship? Heb. 10:25-31
- D. Public worship is a public condemnation of sin (songs of praise, study God’s word).
- E. Public worship is a demonstration of one’s faith and hope in God.
 - 1. There is more to life than what you see.
 - 2. Something beyond this life and that is what I’m living for; I Cor. 15:19; Heb. 6:18-19; Eph. 4:4
 - 3. To glorify, adore and praise God; I Pet. 2:5; Acts 17:22-25; Heb. 13:15

II. SETH AT THE BIRTH OF HIS SON – SOME POINT OF IMPORTANCE HERE?

- A. Responsibility of parents; Eph. 6:4 (Some only “send” their children to church).
- B. Goes even to grandparents
 - 1. How many grandparents with their grandchildren to be lost eternally?
 - 2. Example you set – Bible classes? All services? Involvement?

III. PERFORMANCE: Jno. 4:23-24

- A. Directed to God – Matt. 4:10; Acts 17:29; Col. 3:5,6
- B. In spirit – Heb. 12:28; Exo. 3:5; Eccl. 5:1-2
 - 1. Com in late, play, talk, sleep, go in and out, etc.
 - 2. How much reverence is shown?

LESSON 24

THE CHURCH – OBJECT OF WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- A. God has always expected and required worship; Gen. 4:1-8; Jno. 4:23-24.
- B. Then, as now, God's prescribed worship has been rejected.
- C. We either worship God's way or a perverted (& unacceptable) way. Cf. Lev. 10:1-2; Jer.10:23
- D. Is God really the object of our worship?
 - 1. "I didn't get anything out of worship."
 - 2. "Worship services are boring."
- E. Important questions relative to our "worship."
 - 1. Do we go to worship to be entertained?
 - 2. Do we go to worship to be spectators?
 - 3. Do we go to worship to see a performance?
 - 4. To whom are we to offer our spiritual sacrifices (Heb. 13:15)?
 - 5. To whom are we to life up our praise?
 - 6. Is our worship to be man-centered or God-centered?

I. WHAT IS WORSHIP?

- A. Old Testament
 - 1. "Worship" – originally "worthy, honorable," later attributing worth to a person or thing.
 - 2. Gen. 24:52 – a bowing down (ASV); worshipped (KJV); cf. II Chron. 7:3
- B. New Testament – "to kiss toward; indicating to do obeisance, to prostrate, to show deep respect.

II. GOD – THE OBJECT OF OUR WORSHIP

- A. Exo. 20:5; Jno. 4:23; God is a jealous God.
- B. Deut. 8:19 – How God feels about our worship of other gods.
- C. Why is God alone worthy of our worship?
 - 1. Only true God; Dan. 2:28; Exo. 20:2-3
 - a. Idols are nothing, I Cor. 10:19
 - b. God alone is Deity – Deut. 6:4; cf. Mal. 4:10; Deut. 6:13-14; Exo. 3:14.
 - 2. He is holy – Psa. 99:9; 96:4, 8-9
 - 3. He is creator – Gen. 1:1
 - a. Created man in His own image; Gen. 1:26-27
 - b. He is our Father and we His offspring; Heb. 12:9
 - c. He sustains us; Acts 17:25-29
 - d. Psa. 100:3-4; Isa. 42:5,8
 - 4. He is love.
 - a. He owns it all (Psa. 50:10-12) yet gives to us (Jas. 1:17).
 - b. Provides redemption; Gen. 3:15; Heb. 5:7-9; 12:1-2.
 - c. Jno. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; I Jno. 3:1; 4:19

CONCLUSION:

- A. God deserves our worship
- B. Psa. 95:6-8; 100:1; Jno. 4:23-24; Rev. 22:8-9

LESSON 25

THE CHURCH – PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

PSALM 50

INTRODUCTION:

- A. A Psalm that will help us understand and appreciate worship.
- B. Israel did not appreciate worship, Isa. 1:2-15; Mal. 3:8
- C. The Jews were formalistic and saw no relationship between worship and daily living.

I. INTRODUCTORY VERSES: VS. 1-14

- A. Vs. 1-4; God is going to come and judge their worship.
- B. V. 6; “Selah” – pause, give them time to think.
- C. V. 7; Why? What is wrong?
- D. V. 8; offering sacrifices continually.
- E. V. 12; “Do you think God needs to be fed by you?”
- F. V. 14; “sacrifice” – the real meaning of worship.
 - 1. Expression of gratitude, loving obedience, devotion.
 - 2. Bread & fruit of the vine – reminds me of body and blood of Christ.
 - 3. What kind of response is there from my heart?
 - 4. Think about the struggles and trails Jesus went through just for me.
- G. The following verses speak of things that affect our worship.

II. HOW DO I DEAL WITH THE WORD OF GOD? VS. 15-17

- A. Did I obey His word this past week in my life?
- B. Did I refuse to obey things I knew?
- C. Do I feel the need for His word?
- D. Do I read my Bible just to pacify God?

III. HOW HAVE I LIVED THIS WEEK? V. 18

- A. Like I committed myself to when I became a Christian?
- B. Do people see me as different in ambitions and desires from the world?
- C. Israel lived like the nations around them & their sacrifices made no difference.
- D. Will I live differently this week because I have been in the assembly?

IV. WHAT HAVE I SAID? VS. 19-20

- A. Forthright and truthful in what I have said? v. 19
- B. What have I said about my brethren this week? v. 20
- C. What has been on my tongue? Ugly? Unkind? Unfair? Critical? Then not prepared to worship!
- D. Matt. 12:34b, 37

V. SHOCK, UNLESS CHANGE TAKES PLACE! VS. 21-22

- A. Some try to make God in man’s image, v. 21
 - 1. “All-seeing eye” not just in assemblies, but every day.
 - 2. Mic. 6:6-8
- B. Unless change takes place, you are in for a shock, v. 22
 - 1. Matter of life and death, not just playing around.
 - 2. Eternal destiny involved.
 - 3. Cannot worship right and live wrong and please God.

4. Cannot worship wrong and live right and please God.

VI. WHAT IS MY ATTITUDE TOWARD WORSHIP? V. 23

- A. How thankful am I?
- B. Do I find joy in the thought of the 1st day of the week, opportunity of assembling, to express gratitude and love to God?
- C. Is there joy in our souls when we sing?
- D. Is there joy in our souls when we give?
- E. How do we respond to the word when it is preached?

CONCLUSION:

- A. Worship is what our lives are all about.
- B. Our destiny is determined on the principles of this lesson.
- C. Souls are hanging in the balance.

LESSON 26

THE CHURCH – LORD’S DAY WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Lord’s Day as a day of worship to the Lord is of N.T. origin.
- B. Under O.T. (Law of Moses), God’s people observed the “Sabbath”
- C. Continuing difficulty among some distinguishing between the Old and New Testaments.
 - 1. Problem in early church – Acts 15:5
 - 2. Some religious of today would bind the Law of Moses and insist on the Sabbath as the day of worship.
 - 3. The law has been changed – Heb. 7:1-25

I. REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS DO NOT OBSERVE THE SABBATH:

- A. The purpose of the Sabbath has been accomplished; Deut. 5:15
 - 1. The Sabbath was a sign between God and Israel concerning their deliverance from Egyptian bondage; cf. Exo. 31:13-17.
 - 2. Given after God’s deliverance of Israel; Deut. 5:3; Neh. 9:13-14; Ezek. 20:10f
 - 3. Thus, observed as a sign between God and Israel, not all nations.
- B. The law of the Sabbath has been abolished; Heb. 7:11-25
 - 1. The end of the Sabbath prophesied, Hos. 2:11 and fulfilled in Col. 2:14-17.
 - 2. Has been abolished; Eph. 2:11-17
 - 3. Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-9; Rom. 7:1-7; II Cor. 3:7-13
 - 4. “Abolish” – to reduce to inactivity
- C. Those justifying themselves in Sabbath keeping or anything else by the law are severed from Christ and fallen from grace; Gal. 5:4.
- D. Some object because of “perpetual covenant,” thus would not end – Exo. 31:16.
 - 1. Note “throughout their generations”, not all generations of the world.
 - 2. The Sabbath no more perpetual than incense and animal sacrifices; Ex. 30:8; Num. 28:1-10.
 - 3. When Israel ended as God’s chosen people, the Sabbath ended. Cf. Amos 8:2-10 & Fulfillment; Matt. 27:45-46; Lk. 23:44-45; Jno. 19:30

II. THE LORD’S DAY

- A. Its significance – important events associated with it.
 - 1. Christ raised from the dead; Lk. 24:1, 21, 46.
 - 2. Jesus met with His disciples on the first day of the week; Jno. 20:1, 19, 20
 - 3. Holy Spirit came; Acts 2:1-4
 - 4. The church began; Acts 2; cf. Lev. 23:15-16 (Pentecost).
 - 5. Gospel began to be preached on this day; Acts 2:22-36.
- B. Its observance:
 - 1. N.T. church assembled for worship; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2
 - 2. Breaking of bread on first day of week; Acts 20:7

LESSON 27

THE CHURCH – WORSHIP (PREACHING & TEACHING)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “Preach”
 - 1. “Euangelidzomai” – to bring or announce glad tidings; Rom. 1:15; I Pet. 1:25; Acts 8:4
 - 2. “Kerusso” – to be a herald, to proclaim, to preach; I Cor. 1:21-23; Acts 8:5
- B. “Teach”
 - 1. “Matheteup” – to make a disciple; Matt. 28:19; Acts 14:21; instruction that brings a bond of respect and loyalty between those taught and Christ.
 - 2. “Didasko” – to teach, to instruct; Matt. 28:20; Rom. 12:7; I Cor. 4:17
 - 3. “Paideuo” – to train, discipline, teach, instruct; Tit. 2:12; I Tim. 1:20
 - a. Suggest total development from childhood.
 - b. Used of adults – cultivation of the soul by correction of mistakes and curbing

passions.

I. MANNERS AND MOTIVES FOR PREACHING: PHIL. 1:18

- A. Not the same among all men
 - 1. “Pretense” – for a show; cf. Lk. 20:47
 - a. Not necessarily teaching error.
 - b. But putting on a show while preaching.
 - 2. “In truth” – gave attention to the message, not to the messenger; cf. Matt. 15:9
 - a. Message must be truth.
 - b. “Gospel sermon” with no scripture in it????
- B. Contention – Phil. 1:15-16
 - 1. A contentious spirit has no place in the pulpit.
 - 2. “Axe to grind” – pulpit not for personal grievances.
 - 3. Not out of love
 - 4. Has nothing to do with “contend” – Jude 3
- C. Covetous – I Thess. 2:5
 - 1. Characteristic of a false teacher; II Pet. 2:4
 - 2. But don’t have to be a false teacher to be covetous.
 - 3. Preachers have a right to be supported (I Cor. 9:7-14), and that sufficiently (Phil 4:1-18)
 - 4. Cf. Gehazi – II Kings 5:20-27
- D. Converted – II Cor. 4:5, 18
 - 1. Spiritual things of greater value than material things.
 - 2. Not promoting self, but the Saviour.
 - 3. Preaching out of humility, respect for God and His word.
 - 4. Psa. 119:161

II. WHY CHURCHES GREW IN THE EARLY CHURCH:

- A. Gal. 4:4 – “In the fullness of time, God sent His Son” – a preacher/teacher
- B. N.T. preachers were convinced that men were lost & convinced men so.
 - 1. Rom. 1:16-17 “righteousness of God”
 - 2. Rom. 3:23 – preachers were more than speech makers.
- C. N.T. preachers were convinced that Christ was man’s only hope; Jno. 6.
- D. N.T. preachers were convinced that God’s word was the only map from earth to heaven; Psa. 119; Jno. 5:39; II Tim. 2:15; II Tim. 3:16; Jno. 10:23.

- E. N.T. preachers believed that only in the process of obedience was one added to the church; Acts 2:47.
- F. N.T. preachers believed that they must oppose every false way; II Jno. 9-11; Rom. 16:17.
- G. N.T. preachers believed that salvation was only in the body of Christ; Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:21
- H. They were willing to die for the cause they loved and encouraged others to do so Jno. 10:17; Rev. 2:10b.

III. PURPOSE:

- A. Lead men to God through Christ; Rom. 1:16-17; Jno. 6:44-45
- B. Development of the Christian; II Pet. 3:18; Heb. 5:12-14.
- C. Establishment of God's principles for effective service; II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:3

LESSON 28

THE CHURCH – WORSHIP (GIVING)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Giving a Bible subject – Matt. – 33 times; Mk. -20; Lk. 53; Jno. 17 = 123 times
- B. Every New Testament book discusses it.
- C. Bible says more about giving than any other subject.
- D. New Testament church was regular in giving.
- E. Man owns nothing, God provides what we have.
- F. We, therefore, are steward of these things.
- G. Some say they won't give when preacher preaches on giving. Better not sing when he preaches on singing, etc.

I. LOVE OF MONEY – THE ROOT OF ALL KINDS OF EVIL: I TIM. 6:10

- A. Wealth can be a glory to God and a means of saving souls.
- B. Various evils resulting from love of money: Murder, fraud, deceit, selfishness
- C. A gold wedge was the sin of Achan – Josh. 7
- D. 30 pieces of silver persuaded Judas to betray our Lord, Matt. 26:15
- E. A lie about money was the first recorded public sin in the church, Acts 5.
- F. Rom. 6:23; Acts 5:1-11, esp. vs. 5 & 10

II. SECRET OF GIVING

- A. II Cor. 8:1-5; giving is a grace, yet sometimes we make donations as if the Lord should go begging. Cf. II Cor. 8:7.
- B. Church of Macedonia
 - 1. In deep poverty and affliction
 - 2. Gave richly, liberally, beyond their power, of their own accord
 - 3. First gave themselves --- the secret of giving.
- C. Some professed Christians spend more on entertainment, amusement, tobacco, chewing gum, etc., than to the Lord's work.
- D. Love to give – not because you are afraid not to. I Jno. 5:3

III. CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

- A. "Steward" – a trustee, manager, overseer.
- B. God has entrusted material blessings to us; I Pet. 4:10
- C. Requires faithfulness, I Cor. 4:2

IV. WHO GIVES?

- A. Each one of you – Christians, I Cor. 16:2
- B. Boys and girls prosper for amusement, candy, etc. why not for the Lord's work?

V. PURPOSE

- A. II Cor. 9:6, 7
- B. Those who object are the ones who are not cheerful givers and want to give as little as possible.

VI. HOW MUCH TO GIVE

- A. Some say "How much am I required to give"?

- B. I Cor. 16:2 – As God hath prospered him. Would we be willing for God to prosper us according to our giving?
- C. 10%??? Not under the law of Moses any more, and the 10% under the law as for the purpose of the up keep of the priests.
- D. Some give “According as he findeth in his pocket to give.” Need to purpose ahead of time.
- E. Will a man rob God? Mal. 3:8-9; 1:7-8
- F. Poor widow gave all she had; Lk. 21:3-4
- G. Thoughts
 1. Some members are like flint rock – strike hard to get results.
 2. Some members are like sponges – squeeze for results.
 3. Some members are like honeycomb – the sweetness of honey just drops with a tender touch.
- H. God loves a cheerful giver.

CONCLUSION: CHRISTIANS SHOULD GIVE.....

- A. Regularly – upon the first day of the week; I Cor. 16:2
- B. Personally – let each one of you; I Cor. 16:2
- C. Prudently – lay by him in store; I Cor. 16:2
- D. Proportionately – as he may prosper; I Cor. 16:2
- E. Preventively – that there be no collection; I Cor. 16:2
- F. Liberally – with liberality; I Cor. 16:3; II Cor. 8:2
- G. Cheerfully – God loveth a cheerful giver; II Cor. 9:7
- H. Purposefully – as he hath purposed in his heart; II Cor. 9:7
- I. Acts 20:35; Matt. 6:33 – Give your best to the Master.

LESSON 29

THE CHURCH – WORSHIP (PRAYER)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Prayer: plea, request, entreaty, thanksgiving.
- B. Not a stump speech to God nor a sermon to the audience.
- C. Need to realize the value of prayer in the life of a child of God.
- D. Prayer, in itself, is insufficient, yet a must and vital part of our relationship with God.

I. PROBLEM

- A. Members begin to think that God created, but is not working today.
- B. God is active, Eph. 1:15-20
- C. Often pray, but do so with a lack of faith. Cf. Jas. 1

II. HOW TO PRAY SO AS TO BE HEARD: MATT. 6:1-15

- A. Pray unto God the Father; Rom. 10:1; Eph. 3:14
 - 1. Sinners cannot say, “Our Father” - Matt. 6:9; cf. Jno. 8:44; I Jno. 3:10; Matt. 23:9
 - 2. Must become a child again, born into His family; Jno. 3:3, 5; I Pet. 1:22-23; Gal. 3:26-27
 - 3. What about songs such as “Tell It to Jesus Alone”, “Just A Little Talk With Jesus”, etc?
 - 4. He has promised to hear us. Matt. 7:7-11; Jas. 4:2, 5:16
 - 5. Prayer changes things; Matt. 24:19-21 and God is able to answer; Eph. 3:20.
- B. Pray in the name of Christ; Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:20; Jno. 16:24.
 - 1. Sometimes hear those praying say, “In thy (God) name” – incorrect.
 - 2. Christ is our High Priest – Heb. 10:21, 22; I Pet. 2:5
 - 3. Christ is our advocate – I Jno. 2:1-2; Rom. 8:34; I Tim. 2:5
- C. Pray in faith; Jas. 1:6, 7; Rom. 10:14; Heb. 11:6; Jas. 4:1-4
 - 1. If we believe, we will ask even in secret; Matt. 6:6
 - 2. Faith takes burdens to the Lord and leaves them there. “What a friend we have in Jesus.”
- D. Pray according to His will; I Jno. 5:14; Lk. 22:42; Matt. 6:10
 - 1. His will is best; He knows best; Psa. 23.
 - 2. Could get more or better than what we ask; I Kgs. 3:5-14.
 - 3. Must respect God’s laws and conditions; Prov. 28:9; Matt. 6:11.
 - 4. In an obedient spirit; Jno. 9:31; Matt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46; Psa. 66:18; I Pet. 3:12; I Jno. 3:22.
- E. Pray in forgiving spirit; Matt. 6:12-15

III. SOME THINGS FOR WHICH WE SHOULD PRAY:

- A. Civil rulers; I Tim. 2:1-2
- B. Temporal blessings; Matt. 6:11
- C. The church; Col. 1:9; Eph. 3:14-21 (that it may grow, be at peace, be pure)
- D. For preachers; Eph. 6:18-20; Acts 12:5; 13:3
- E. For more laborers; Lk. 10:2
- F. That sinners may hear and obey the gospel; Rom. 10:1; Lk. 23:34.
- G. Food, forgiveness, guidance; Matt. 6:9-13
- H. Boldness to speak; Acts 4:29
- I. For one another; Jas. 5:13-18
- J. “In everything” – Phil. 4:6

IV. SOME OCCASIONS WHEN WE NEED TO STOP PRAYING

- A. When sin is present; Josh. 7:6-15
 - 1. Achan's sin caused men to die in the battle of Ai.
 - 2. Need to cease from living in sin; Jno. 9:31; Acts 8:22, 23 (1st repent, then 2nd pray).
- B. When those for whom we pray do not comply with God's law, Num. 12:13-14
 - 1. Because of Miriam and Aaron's sin, Miriam was leprous, v. 1.
 - 2. Moses prayer, "heal her now, O Lord," v. 13
 - 3. In effect, God said, "I have a law" and he wouldn't set it aside for his own lawgiver.
- C. When something more needs to be done; cf. Acts 10 & 11; 22:16

LESSON 30

THE CHURCH – ITS MUSIC (1)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Visitors always notice the absence of instruments of music in the worship services of the church of Christ, then question, “WHY”?
- B. Another of the identifying marks of the New Testament church.

I. REASONS FOR SUCH A DISCUSSION:

- A. Another one of the foundation principles upon which we stand.
- B. It involves the distinctive position of the church of Christ.
- C. It involves the authority of Christ – more than just personal preference.
- D. Involves respect for the authority of the scriptures.
- E. No opposition to instrumental music because:
 - 1. Of dislike for music.
 - 2. Of contentious nature within us.
 - 3. Of belief that instrumental music is inherently wrong.
 - 4. Of human traditionalism (this is the insistence of the day).
 - 5. Of indifference.
- F. Oppose its use in worship to God because of the teaching of the word of God.
- G. Alarming figures (figures are several years old).
 - 1. 50% of church members do not know why we reject instrumental music in worship.
 - 2. 25% of that 50% would have no objection to its being introduced.

II. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES TO THIS PROBLEM (& OTHERS)

- A. We must have scriptural authority for what we practice.
 - 1. A few years ago that went without saying. Thus needs to be taught now for the benefit of members as well as non-members.
 - 2. I Pet. 4:11; Col. 3:17 (“name” – authority; cf. Acts 2:28; Matt. 28:19); Acts 3:22; Matt. 4:4; Isa. 8:20.
 - 3. Need to develop the attitude...”What saith the scriptures.”
- B. Must understand the nature of bible authority:
 - 1. Inference – assembly infers a place to meet for expediency.
 - 2. Generic:
 - a. “Go” - but does not specify exactly how to go.
 - b. “Sing” – but does not specify which part (bass, alto, etc.)
 - c. “First day of the week” – does not specify exact time.
 - 3. Specific:
 - a. “Gopher wood” – excludes all other kinds of wood.
 - b. “Fruit of the vine” – excludes other kinds of juice.
 - c. “Bread” – excludes vanilla wafers
 - d. “Sing” – excludes other kinds of music as instruments.
- C. Understand the nature of sin:
 - 1. I Jno. 3:4 – transgress, go beyond, cross over.
 - 2. Jas. 4:17 – omission of the law
 - 3. I Jno. 5:17 – unrighteousness, not doing right according to the standard.
 - 4. Matt. 7:21-23 – iniquity, without law, thus without authority.
- D. Must understand distinction between old and new covenants; Rom. 7:4; II Cor. 3; Col. 2:14; Eph 2:13ff; Heb. 8; Gal. 3

LESSON 31

THE CHURCH – ITS MUSIC (II)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. True and false worship – Jno. 4:23-24
- B. Vain and true worship – Matt. 15:8, 9
- C. Remember the “authority” principle as discussed in previous lesson (#30).
- D. See the application of the principles of lesson #30 in this lesson.

I. KIND OF MUSIC SPECIFIED, OR AUTHORIZED

- A. Every verse in the New Testament concerning music in worship can be read in less than 5 minutes: Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15, 26; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; Jas. 5:13.
- B. Eph. 5:17 – “Be not foolish, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”
- C. Singing authorized. and command, without exception, is to sing.
- D. Cannot alter God’s plans (II Jno. 9).
- E. Purpose of singing eliminates mechanical instruments – “teach and admonish” (Col. 3:16).

II. ORIGIN OF MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP

- A. If not in the New Testament, then where?
- B. First time into the body of any “Christians” – 670 A.D.
- C. Introduced and removed in and from the Roman Catholic Church to preserve unity. Later (800 A.D.) into Roman Catholic church without opposition.

III. ARGUMENTS USED TO TRY TO JUSTIFY THE USE OF MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS IN WORSHIP TO GOD.

- A. Used under the Law of Moses.
 - 1. So were animal sacrifices, incense, etc.
 - 2. Heb. 7:12; 8:13; 10:9-10; Col. 2:14; Rom. 7:1-7; Gal. 3; 5:4
- B. Language – “Psallo” has included in it the playing of instruments.
 - 1. Eph. 5:19 is a direct command for each individual to sing. If playing is involved, then the command is still for each individual. Everyone who sings must play if Psallo means sing and play.
 - 2. This argument is often dropped due to logical conclusion.
- C. Not expressly forbidden. Neither oak in the ark, Pepsi on the Lord’s Table according to their definition of “expressly forbidden”, cf. Lev. 10:1-2.
- D. Expedience – just an aid
 - 1. If so, it is not required, thus cannot be inherent in “psallo.”
 - 2. One arguments defeats the other.
 - 3. Note the following chard:

WOOD
gopher

AID
saw, hammer, etc.

ADDITION
oak, poplar, pine

MUSIC
sing

AID
books, notes, pitch

ADDITION
play

- E. Instruments in heaven: Phy, instruments in Spiritual heaven???

IV. OBJECTIONS TO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP:

<u>BIBLE</u>	<u>VOICE</u>	<u>INSTRUMENT</u>
Speak in song (Eph. 5:19)	can	cannot
Teach (Col. 3:16)	can	cannot
Admonish (Col. 3:16)	can	cannot
Sing with spirit (I Cor. 14:15)	can	cannot
Sing with understanding (I Cor. 14:15)	can	cannot
Praise God (Heb. 2:12)	can	cannot
Make melody in the heart (Eph. 5:19)	can	cannot

JOHN CALVIN: “Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps and the restoration of other shadows of the law (Comm. on Psa. 23).

JOHN WESLEY: “I have no objection to the organ in our chapels provided it is neither seen nor heard.

MARTIN LUTHER: Classed the organ in the worship of God as “an ensign of Baal.”

ADAM CLARKE: “I have never known instrumental music to be productive of any good in the worship of God and I have reason to believe that it has been productive of much evil. Music as a science I esteem and admire, but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music and I here register my protest against all such corruption in the worship of that Infinite Spirit who requires His followers to worship Him in spirit and in truth. (Comm. on Amos 6:5).

LESSON 32

THE CHURCH – THE LORD’S SUPPER

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The Bible – our authority in all areas of faith and practice; I Pet. 4:11; II Tim. 3:16-17; II Jno. 9-11.
- B. Lord’s Supper – one of five acts of worship
 - 1. Not everything one does in life is worship.
 - 2. Failure to distinguish between *worship* and *service* leads to wrong conclusions; cf. Gen. 22:5; Acts 8:27b.
 - 3. Christ *served* mankind, but didn’t *worship* man; Matt. 20:26-28.
- C. Lord’s Supper – distinctive feature of the Lord’s church esp. its frequency.

I. INSTITUTION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

- A. Instituted by Jesus on the night prior to his death; Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:20-25; Lk. 22:14-23; Jno. 13.
- B. During the time of the Passover.
- C. As a memorial (monument); cf. Jer. 2:32; Lk. 22:19
- D. Communion – with body and blood of Christ; I Cor. 10:16-17
- E. Time of self-examination; I Cor. 11:28
- F. No such things as “open” and “closed” communion

II. WHO IS TO COMMUNE?

- A. Citizens of God’s kingdom; Lk. 22:29-30; Matt. 26:26-29
- B. Those in Christ who have obtained forgiveness of sins; Eph. 1:7
- C. Cf. Acts 2:38, 41; Rom. 6:3-4

III. TIME OF OBSERVANCE

- A. Frequently; Acts 2:42
- B. Specifically Acts 20:7 (example under direction of an inspired writer).
- C. Cf. I Cor. 16:2 – (Gk) Every first day of the week; shows they met every first day of the week.

IV. THE LORD’S SUPPER BEARS WITNESS:

- A. To the faithfulness of God; Gen. 3:15; 12:1-4
- B. To the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, Isa. 53; 56:5
- C. To the fact that Christ died – innocent blood necessary for salvation; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 9:22
- D. To God’s and Christ’s love for man; Jno. 3:16; 15:13; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:8-9
- E. To the new covenant between God and man; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 7:11ff; 10:19ff.
- F. To the existence of the kingdom; Matt. 26:29; Acts 20:7
- G. To Christ’s life; did live; existed on earth; I Cor. 11:24.
- H. To the fact that Christ has risen; do not commune with the dead; I Cor. 10:16ff
- I. To the fact that Christ will come again; I Cor. 11:26. He is coming again...Jno. 14:1-6; Acts 1:10-11.

V. GREAT LESSONS PROCLAIMED BY PARTAKING:

- A. The unity of believers.
 - 1. “One bread --- One body” – I Cor. 10:17-18 (united with all who take a stand for Christ).

2. Denominational division makes a mockery of Lord's Supper; I Cor. 12:12f; Eph. 4:4; I Cor. 1:10-14 (destroys the very meaning of the Lord's Supper).
3. Division in the church does the same; Psa. 133:1; Eph. 4:1-3; Jas. 3:13ff.
- B. The priesthood of all believers
 1. "We bless – We break"; I Cor. 10:16
 2. Don't need priest to officiate.
 3. Matt. 23:8; I Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6
 4. Christ our Mediator; I Tim. 2:5
- C. Christianity is spiritual in nature
 1. "Communion" – I Cor. 10:16
 - a. Elements have deeper meaning
 - b. Comes from the heart; I Tim. 4:8; Rom. 1:9
 2. Christianity addressed to the soul; Rom. 8:3-5
 - a. Religion in general turned to physical, entertainment, gymnasiums, etc.
 - b. Jno. 4:24
- D. Thanksgiving
 1. "Which we bless," I Cor. 11:23; Matt. 26:26; Col. 3:15
 2. "Ingratitude" – first step away from God; Rom. 1:21
- E. Faithfulness to God
 1. "For we are all partakers – I Cor. 10:17
 2. First allegiance is where the heart it.
 3. Acts 2:42

VI. CONCLUDING PRINCIPLES

- A. Authority for its observance – Christ; I Cor. 11:23
- B. Bread and fruit of vine present; I Cor. 11:23-29
- C. Communion with Christ; I Cor. 10:16-17
- D. On first day of week; Acts 20:7
- E. Involves awareness of:
 1. The past – death of Christ; I Cor. 11:24-25
 2. The present – remembrance; I Cor. 11:24-25
 3. The future – show; I Cor. 11:26
 4. Responsibility – worthily, unworthily; I Cor. 11:27ff
 5. Deliverance, joy, confidence, because of what Christ has done, is doing and will do.

LESSON 33

THE CHURCH – WHAT ITS WORK IS NOT

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Bible students are motivated to work – want to work.
- B. Need to know what the work of the church is and is not.
- C. Work of the church s greatest work on earth – only thing we will take to judgment; Rev. 14:13

I. MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE WORK OF THE CHURCH:

- A. Not a social club to solve social ills – though social.
- B. No political, but demands morality in politics.
 - 1. Not run democratically – lead by elders.
 - 2. Not a popularity contest to see who can get the most votes.
 - 3. Not a promoter of a particular party.
 - 4. No place for “church politics” – too much of this goes on.
- C. Not entertainment club though we may be entertained.
 - 1. Some want youth director to be an entertainment director.
 - 2. Some want preacher to be an entertainer.
 - 3. Some want the programs of the church to provide entertainment.
- D. Not a toy or hobby to be taken lightly, but seriously

II. BASIC PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER:

- A. The command – Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:46-49
 - 1. Involves all Christians; Heb. 5:12-14; Acts 8:4
 - 2. The commission is plain:
 - a. By command – Matt. 28:18-20
 - b. By fact – Heb. 5:12
 - c. By example – Acts 5:42; Col. 1:23
 - d. By inference – Matt. 22:36-40; 7:14
 - 3. If your neighbor was in a burning house, would you warn him? What about his soul?
II Cor. 5:11
- B. The challenge
 - 1. A great challenge (whole world)
 - 2. Vital statistics
 - a. Compare world population with number of Christians (approx. .05%)
 - b. More people born in one week than there are members of the church.
 - c. How many will die today without Christ, without hope?
 - 3. Will never meet the challenge with the pulpit only.
 - 4. Personal evangelism will do the job.
- C. The choice must be made (obey or disobey)
 - 1. Those who obey will be blessed; Acts 8:39; II Cor. 5:11-12
 - a. Seeing people obey the gospel is a joy; Phil. 1:3-5
 - b. Will cause us to study and pray more.
 - c. Will solve many church problems; I Tim. 5:13.
 - 2. Refuse and suffer the consequences.
 - a. Guilty of the blood of men; Acts 20:26-27; Ezek. 3:17-19.
 - b. Shall receive greater condemnation; Lk. 12:47-48
 - c. No right to call Jesus your Lord; Lk. 6:46.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Should feel sorrow for neglect; Jas. 4:17; II Cor. 7:10.
- B. Song – “YOU NEVER MENTIONED HIM TO ME”

LESSON 34

THE CHURCH – ITS WORK

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The church is a divine institution with a divine mission.
- B. Spiritual in its design – not political nor social.

I. ENVAGELISM – PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS

- A. The primary work of the church.
- B. The importance of evangelism:
 - 1. See in the universal need of salvation; Rom. 3:9-10,23; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:1-5,12
 - 2. The Gospel is God's power to save; Rom. 1:16-17
 - a. I Cor. 15:1-4 – Corinthians saved by the gospel.
 - b. Acts 11:14 – words to save Cornelius
 - c. I Pet. 1:22 – begotten by the gospel
 - d. Cf. also Jno. 15:3; Lk. 8:11; II Cor. 4:3-4; Eph. 3:6; Acts 20:32; II Tim. 1:10; Rom. 16:25-27
- C. The church – God's agency in evangelism; I Tim. 3:14-15; Eph. 3:10, 21
 - 1. Churches of Macedonia – II Cor. 11:8-9
 - 2. Church at Thessalonica – I Thess. 1:2-8
 - 3. Church at Philippi – Phil. 1:3-5; 2:25-30; 4:14-20
 - 4. Church at Antioch – Acts 13:1-3; 14:27-28
 - 5. Church at Jerusalem – Acts 8:1-5

II. EDIFICATION: GROWTH, STRENGTH

- A. Areas of growth:
 - 1. In grace and knowledge; II Pet. 3:18
 - 2. In Christlikeness; Eph. 4:14
 - 3. In love, knowledge, discernment; Phil. 1:9
 - 4. In a quiet, industrious Christian character; I Thess. 4:9-12
 - 5. In adding Christian graces; II Pet. 1:1-13
 - 6. In adding Christian armor; Eph. 6:10-18
 - 7. In faith and love; II Thess. 1:3
 - 8. In ability to resist temptation; I Pet. 5:8-10
 - 9. In ability to serve and sacrifice; Rom. 12:1-2; I Pet. 2:5
- B. Things that hinder; I Pet. 2:1-2; Heb. 5:11; II Tim. 2:22; I Tim. 6:10
- C. Things that promote:
 - 1. Appetite; I Pet. 2:2
 - 2. Exercise; Heb. 5:12-14
 - 3. Heed what we hear; Heb. 2:1-3
 - 4. Diligent, active service; I Tim. 4:13-16
- D. How the church encourages this:
 - 1. Take thought one for another; Phil. 2:1-4, 19-21
 - 2. Exhort one another; Heb. 3:12-14; 10:24-25
 - 3. Watchful elders; Acts 20:28-31; Heb. 13:3, 17
 - 4. Encouraging the weak; I Thess. 5:12-14
 - 5. Worship; Heb. 10:25; Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16
 - 6. By teaching; Acts 20:28; II Tim. 2:2; Tit. 2:1-8
- E. Gyms, recreational facilities, ball teams, etc. have no place in the church.

III. BENEVOLENCE

- A. Lesson taught by Christ – Lk. 10:25-37
- B. Gal. 6:10; Jas. 1:27; Rom. 12:13; 15:25-27; Eph. 24:12
- C. Basis upon which this is done:
 - 1. Self-consecration; II Cor. 8:3-5
 - 2. Love; II Cor. 8:8, 24; I Jno. 3:17-18
 - 3. Gratitude; II Cor. 8:9
 - 4. Sympathy; Gal. 6:2; I Cor. 12:25-26
 - 5. To glorify God; II Cor. 9:12, 15

LESSON 35

THE CHURCH – ITS UNITY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Our Lord did speak of unity.
 - 1. Used “one” often – cf. Jno. 10:16
 - 2. No question in His mind.
 - 3. One shepherd, one fold – and they are tied together
- B. Since He talked it, so must we.

I. HE SPOKE OF THE POSSIBILITY

- A. Not an impossibility.
- B. Division existed in His day, yet He spoke of unity.
- C. Jno. 17:11 – as possible as unity between the Father and the Son.

II. HE SPOKE OF THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH UNITY RESTS:

- A. No accident, but proper respect for God’s word.
- B. Reference to word of God; Jno. 17:6, 8, 14, 17
- C. Proper allegiance to the word of God.
- D. Word separates us from world and keeps us together; II Cor. 6:14; 7:1; Jas. 1:18, 21; I Pet. 1:22; Rom. 1:16; Acts 20:32; Eph. 5:17; Jno. 8:32; Jno. 12:48; II Tim. 2:15; Jno. 5:39; Acts 17:11

III. HE REFERRED TO A CERTAIN KIND OF PEOPLE WHEN HE SPOKE OF UNITY:

- A. Not those who refuse to obey; Jno. 17:20-21; Matt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46
- B. But those obedient to the word.
- C. Cf. Acts 4:32 “that believed” – what??? Cf. Acts 4:4
- D. Obedient believers will be united people.

IV. HE SPOKE OF UNITY AS A VERY VALUABLE ASSET:

- A. Fact of His endorsement of unity shows its value.
- B. Psalm 133
 - 1. “Good and pleasant” – v. 1
 - 2. “Like precious ointment upon the head” – v. 2
 - 3. “Like the dew of Hermon” – v. 3
- C. Jno. 17:21
 - 1. Ever wonder why people don’t respond to the gospel?
 - 2. Religious division – only eternity will measure its cost; I Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27; Eph. 4:4

V. THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT – Eph. 4:1-6

- A. “One body” – unity of organization; Eph. 1:22-23
- B. “One Spirit” – unity of revelation; Jno. 14:26; 16:13; Gal. 1:8-9
- C. “One hope” – unity in life, desire, expectation; Heb. 6:18-19
- D. “One Lord” – unity in authority; Christ’s word is final authority – Jno. 12:48
- E. “One faith” – unity in message; Gal. 3:24ff; Jude 3
- F. “One baptism” – unity in practice
- G. “One God” – unity in worship; Jno. 4:24

VI. WHAT UNITES THE CHURCH?

- A. A Savior we can all serve; Acts 20:19
- B. A book we can all understand (alike); Isa. 35:8; Eph. 5:17; Jno. 8:32
- C. A gospel we can all obey; Acts 18:8; Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21
- D. A creed we can all believe; Matt. 16:16; Jno. 20:30-31; Jno. 8:24
- E. A race we can all run; Heb. 12:1; I Cor. 9:24-27
- F. A path we can all walk; Rom. 4:12; I Jno. 1:7; II Cor. 5:7
- G. A battle we can all win; Rom. 12:21; Eph. 6:10ff
- H. A faith we can all keep; II Tim. 4:7
- I. A work we can all do; Matt. 21:28; Jas. 2
- J. A crown we may all obtain; II Tim. 4:8; I Pet. 1:4; Rev. 2:10

LESSON 36

THE CHURCH – ITS INDESTRUCTABILITY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Satan has tried – I Pet. 5:8-9
- B. Prophecy's Promise – Dan. 2:44 "never be destroyed"
- C. Builder's Promise – "hades shall not prevail against it"
- D. Encouragement to know we are not fighting a losing battle. (Note the promises made to those who overcome in Rev. 2-3)

I. EARLY EFFORTS TO DESTROY THE CHURCH:

- A. Jews rejected the one who was to establish the church.
 - 1. Rejected Him during His earthly ministry; Jno. 1:11
 - 2. Had Him put to death
 - 3. Unsuccessful; Rom. 1:4
- B. Saul of Tarsus; Acts 7-9; unsuccessful
- C. Judaizing teachers; Gal. 1:6-9
- D. Roman government; Revelation 6 "souls slain"

II. METHODS USED TO TRY TO DESTROY THE LORD'S CHURCH

- A. False teachers and doctrines.
 - 1. Gal. 1:6-9; 5:4
 - 2. Apostasy developed; I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 4:1-4; II Pet. 2:1ff
 - 3. Biblical solution – Rom. 16:17; Tit. 3:10; II Jno. 9-11
- B. Division
 - 1. Problem in early church; I Cor. 1-4
 - 2. Modern divisions such as "Anti-ism," "liberalism" and other "isms"
 - 3. Denominationalism – creates confusion for honest seekers of truth.
 - 4. Biblical solution – Jno. 17; I Cor. 1:10; Amos 3:3
- C. Conforming to other religious standards
 - 1. Note Deut. 12:8; Judges 17:6; 21:25; I Sam. 8:1-5
 - 2. Ecumenical movements and their platform.
 - 3. Borrowing from denominations
 - a. Church growth methods
 - b. Entertainment
 - 4. Biblical solution – Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:14-7:1
- D. Materialism
 - 1. Amos 6:4-6
 - 2. II Tim. 4:10; Rev. 3:17; brethren who care more for the world, the temporal, the material will not be interested in the Lord's church.
 - 3. Biblical solution – Matt. 6:19-21, 24ff; 16:24ff
- E. Indifference – Rev. 3:16 "lukewarm" caused materialism and false sense of security.

III. KINGDOM TO BE DELIVERED UP – I Cor. 15:24

- A. At end of time
- B. Christ reigns now; Acts 2:36
- C. Kingdom exists now; Col. 1:13; Heb. 12:28; Rev. 1:9

LESSON 37

THE CHURCH – ITS DESTINY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Eternal destiny ought to be of interest to each of us.
- B. Eternal destiny of the church makes the church important.
- C. Heaven and hell both taught equally sure in the Bible.

I. WHY DO WE BELIEVE IN THE REALITY OF HEAVEN?

- A. The Patriarchs did – Heb. 11:20, 13-16
- B. David did – II Sam. 12:23; Psa. 23:6
- C. Daniel did – Dan. 12:2
- D. John the Baptizer did – Matt. 3:11-12
- E. Jesus did and knew whereof He spake – Matt. 13:41-43; 25:23, 34; Jno. 14:1-3
- F. Paul knew – II Cor. 5:1; 12:2-4

II. IS THERE A “WAY” TO TAKE US THERE? YES!

- A. Jesus – Jno. 14:6
- B. Through desire – Heb. 11:16
- C. Obedience – Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8-9
- D. Endurance – Matt. 10:22; Jas. 1:12
- E. Faithfulness – Rev. 2:10

III. ARE THERE HINDRANCES IN THE WAY? YES!

- A. The devil – I Pet. 5:8
- B. Three avenues of temptation – I Jno. 2:15-17; I Cor. 10:13

IV. ARE THERE SUFFICIENT SIGNS TO KEEP US ON THE RIGHT WAY? YES!

- A. Prayer – I Thess. 5:17; Matt. 7:7ff; Phil. 4:6
- B. Study – II Tim. 2:15; I Pet. 2:20
- C. “Abstain from all appearance of evil” – I Thess. 5:22
- D. Set affection on things above – Col. 3:2

V. WHAT KIND OF PLACE WILL IT BE?

- A. Rest – Heb. 4:9
- B. Better place – Heb. 10:34; 11:10, 16, 24-27
- C. Eternal fellowship with faithful of all ages, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; Matt. 25:46; Jno. 14:3
- D. No more afflictions – II Cor. 4:15-18
- E. No more temptation

LESSON 38

THE CHURCH – APOSTASY IN 1ST CENTURY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Apostasy – failure to stand with the truth (apo-“from” + steena-“stand”)
- B. people have always refused to stand with truth (Jer. 6:16).

I. APOSTASY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- A. Adam and Eve – Gen. 3
- B. 10 generations later (Noah’s day) – only one family faithful; Gen. 6
- C. Gen. 11 – Tower of Babel
- D. Most of the nation of Israel failed to enter Promised Land.
- E. Period of Judges
- F. Jeroboam

II. APOSTASY FORETOLD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. I Tim. 4:1ff
 - 1. Seducing spirits – false teachers
 - 2. Doctrines of demons – content of the deadly teaching of false teachers
 - 3. Forbidding to marry
 - 4. Command to abstain from meats
- B. Acts. 20:29-32
- C. II Pet. 2:1ff
- D. Jude 1ff
- E. I Jno. 4:1-6
- F. Gal. 1:6-9; 5:4
- G. II Pet. 2:20-22

III. MARKS OF APOSTASY

- A. Addition – men add what they want
- B. Subtraction – men take away what they do not want
- C. Substitution – creeds take the place of God’s word.
- D. Modification – perverted Bibles, organization, work, worship, etc.

IV. END RESULTS OF THIS APOSTASY

- A. Abandonment of truth
- B. Apathy – lukewarmness
- C. Atheism – cr. Heb. 12:2; I Jno. 2:23; Heb. 3:12
- D. False religions

LESSON 39

THE CHURCH – APOSTASY LATER

(FALLING AWAY)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. New Testament gives minute description of the church.
- B. Church remained true to the word only for a few years.
- C. Great apostasy plainly foretold in the scriptures; II Thes. 2:3; Matt. 7:15-20; Jno 17:15; Acts 20:28-32; I Tim. 4:1-3
- D. Consider some of the major departures from the truth.

I. CHANGE IN THE FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

- A. New Testament pattern – Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:5; Acts 14:23
- B. One elder chosen to preside, later felt importance called “bishop” as distinguished from “elders”.
 - 1. Prominence of “bishop” depended on prominence of the city.
 - 2. Thus, Rome had prominence
 - 3. “Pope”, “Lord God the Pope”, “Vicar of Christ”
 - 4. Thus, rise, growth and perfection of the papal hierarchy.
- C. Distinction between “clergy” and “laity”
 - 1. The people were now a distinct and inferior order.
 - 2. Such condemned – Matt. 23:8-10; I Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:5-6

II. CHANGE IN THE NAME BY WHICH THE CHURCH WAS KNOWN

- A. Names or relationships are given by God (review).
- B. “Catholic,” “Holy Catholic”, “Holy Roman Catholic Church”
- C. Paved the way for other human names used by Catholic and Protestant alike.

III. CHANGE IN THE SUBJECTS FOR BAPTISM

- A. Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16; Rom. 10:13-14
- B. No evidence in the N.T. of anyone being baptized who was too young to hear the gospel, believe in Christ as the Only Begotten Son of God, repent of sins and confess that faith, Ezek. 18:20.
- C. Change came in early 3rd century to include infants.

IV. CHANGE IN THE FORM OF BAPTISM

- A. Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12 “burial”; to dip, submerge, as the dying of a garment.
- B. Approx. 50 years after infant baptism.
- C. Novatian (251 A.D.) seriously ill, couldn’t be immersed, so sprinkled.
- D. Called “clinic baptism”

V. CHANGE IN THE CREED OF THE CHURCH

- A. Introduction of human creeds.
- B. “The Apostles Creed” (Not written by the apostles)
- C. Nicean Creed – 325 A.D. (318 bishops, deacons, & presbyters)

VI. CHANGE IN THE FORM OF WORSHIP

- A. Nothing more definitely established in N.T. than singing alone.
- B. Organ appeared over 500 years after the church was established.

- C. General attempt to use it in early 8th century.
- D. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16

VII. OTHER CHANGES

- A. Holy Water, blessed by Priests for special occasions, 100 A.D.
- B. Penance – 157 A.D.
- C. Purgatory – 593 A.D.
- D. Transubstantiation – 1000 A.D.
- E. Sprinkling – 1311 A.D.

LESSON 40

THE CHURCH – APOSTASY NOW

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Review definition of apostasy – lesson 38
- B. We have seen apostasy in both the Old and New Testaments.
- C. We have discussed apostasy in later times.
- D. But what about apostasy in our day? Specific problem areas...

I. OVER-EMPHASIS ON INTELLECTUALISM

- A. “We are more scholarly than you”
 - 1. An effort to intimidate people.
 - 2. Degrees a status symbol today.
- B. Some even demand to be called “Dr. _____” (preacher, not Med. Dr.)
- C. Causes a loss of faith in the gospel; Rom. 1:16; Jas. 1:18, 21; Acts 20:32

II. NO RESPECT FOR THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES

- A. Doesn’t say “not to.”
- B. Yet, Col. 3:16 demands authority.

III. LOOKING FOR A PERSON – NOT A PATTERN

- A. II Jno. 9-11 “teaching about Christ” according to some (more later)
- B. Preach Christ, not doctrine.

IV. “NO LAW”

- A. “Grace and law contradictory” according to some.
- B. Phil. 3:16 “rule”
- C. Jas. 1:25; 2:12; I Cor. 9:21
- D. Yet some claim both Old and New Testament still in affect – Rom. 7:1-4

V. A PLEA FOR UNION (CALLING IT UNITY)

- A. Fellowship in spite of division – “unity in diversity”
- B. Jno. 8:32; 17:17, I Cor. 1:10

VI. SALVATION BY GRACE ALONE

- A. “Salvation by grace only through faith only” upheld in area bulletin.
- B. Eph. 2:8-10; nothing “alone” will save
- C. Tit. 2:11-12

VIII. NEW IDEAS WITH REGARD TO MUSIC IN WORSHIP

- A. Use of mechanical instruments
- B. Solos, choirs, choruses, etc.
- C. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16 still say the same thing they always have.

VIII. CHURCH AND KINGDOM NOT THE SAME

- A. Matt. 16:18, 19; Col. 1:2, 13; Rev. 1:9

IX. STRANGE SOUNDS ON MARRIAGE/DIVORCE/REMARriage

- A. Matt. 19:9; 5:32

- B. Living in adultery, must get out of it (repent)
- X. “SINCERE, DEVOUT, KNOWLEDGEABLE CHRISTIANS IN ALL DENOMINATIONS”
- A. “Knowledgeable”???
 - B. Denomination = division; I Cor. 1:10; Phil. 3:16
 - C. May be erring church member, left the faith in denomination.
- XI. THEISTIC EVOLUTION – taught at Abilene Christian University
- XII. WOMEN PREACHERS AND TEACHERS IN THE PRESENCE OF MEN
- A. Nashville Jubilee (now extinct)
 - B. Claiming that we make women 2nd class citizens by refusing them the pulpit
 - C. God gave the “roles” of men and women, not the church.
 - D. Are men 2nd class citizens because they cannot bear children?
 - E. I Tim. 2:11-12
- XIII. F(f) FELLOWSHIP
- A. Though one cannot fellowship on one point, that doesn’t affect fellowship in other areas such as Inst. Music, Premillennialism, etc. – they say!!!
- XIV. A SURGE OF PENTECOSTAL DOCTRINE AMONG US
- A. Various views in this regard.
 1. “The Lord has two religious bodies & Pentecostal movement is one of them”
 2. Jno. 10:16; I Cor. 12:20, 27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6; Col. 1:18-24
 - B. Spiritual gifts still available according to some.
 - C. Shelly claimed the “unity meetings” were the result of the leading of the Holy Spirit in “ONE BODY” magazine.

LESSON 41

THE CHURCH – IS IT A DENOMINATION

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Psa. 1:1-2; 127:1; Matt. 15:13; Prov. 14:12; Jer. 10:23; Matt. 16:13-20
 - 1. A way for man that pleases God, and ways that displease Him.
 - 2. Makes a difference what a person believes, does, thinks.
 - 3. One church as good as another – false concept.
- B. What is a denomination?
- C. From whence came all the different denominations?

I. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Denomination – a class or society of individuals called by the same name; a sect (Webster)
 - 1. Acts 24:5; cf. V.14; Phil. 1:7
 - 2. Active proponent of division and opponent of the church of our Lord.
 - 3. Denominationalism and the Lord’s church incompatible.
- B. Sect – a party dissenting from an established or parent church
 - 1. One of the organized bodies of Christians, a denomination (Webster)
 - 2. Suggests fraction or a part of the whole.
 - 3. The church of Christ is the whole, the complete one body of Christ, consisting of all who have been saved by the blood of Christ.
 - 4. Christ’s church has no “Parent” church.
- C. All denominations possess and are built around certain peculiar false doctrine, commandments of men, Matt. 15:9, 13.
- D. The N.T. church existed before denominations began – I Cor. 1:1-10 (denominations in embryo stage).

II. CHURCH – BLOOD BOUGHT: Acts 20:28

- A. Christ’s church is the church of the N.T. – the only one He ever had; Matt. 16:18.
- B. Church – the “called out” but not called out from another church.
- C. The church of Jesus Christ is no fraction or part of anything.
- D. Can be saved and not be a member of a denomination.
- E. Called out of the world of sin and into God’s service – II Thess. 2:14.

III. CHRIST ADDS TO HIS CHURCH: Acts 2:36-47

- A. Acts 2:47...”added to the church” – not one of many
- B. Names are written in heaven; Heb. 12:22-23
- C. When one obeys the gospel, he is added by Christ, not voted in by men.
- D. “Join the church of your choice” not a N.T. doctrine.

IV. CHURCH – HOUSE OF GOD – FAMILY OF GOD

- A. Eph. 2:15, 19; 1:22-23; Heb. 3:6; I Tim. 3:15
- B. Which denomination will say that it constitutes all of God’s family?

V. NO DENOMINATIONAL NAME FOR THE CHURCH AS A WHOLE OR ITS MEMBERS IN PARTICULAR: Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Pet. 4:16; Acts 4:12

VI. SECTARIANISM IS SINFUL

- A. Paul condemns division of that kind: I Cor. 1:10-15
- B. I Cor. 1:13 – “Is Christ divided?” NO! How then can denominationalism, being divided, claim to be of Christ?
- C. The church of the N.T. belongs to Christ, Matt. 16:18
- D. Various denominations are identified by various names, originating with men cannot belong to God.
- E. Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 1:2; I Tim. 3:15 (church of Christ, church of God)
- F. Matt. 12:25...house divided will fall.

VII. NO DENOMINATIONAL CREED

- A. Christ has all authority (Matt. 16:18) and He gives the commands.
- B. Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 3:17 – Christ is the sole authority.
- C. Col. 2:20-22
- D. Most denominations have human creeds:
 1. Catechism – Roman Catholic Church
 2. The Confession of Faith – Presbyterian
 3. The Book of Common Prayer – Episcopal
 4. Philadelphia Confession of Faith, Baptist Manual of Hitchcock, & others – Baptist.
 5. Methodist Discipline – Methodist
 6. Book of Mormon – Mormon
 7. The Key to the Scriptures – Christian Science Church

VIII. NO DENOMINATIONAL ORGANIZATION

- A. No earthly headquarters, Eph. 1:22-23; Matt. 28:18
- B. No organization larger than the local church with elders, deacons, and members.
- C. Phil. 1:1; Tit. 1:5; Acts 14:23

IX. THE PLATFORM OF UNITY: Eph. 4:4-6

- A. One God – unity in worship
- B. One Lord – unity of authority
- C. One faith – unity of message and doctrine
- D. One baptism – unity in practice
- E. One body – unity in organization
- F. One hope – unity in plan and desire
- G. One Spirit – unity in life and revelation
- H. Note: A loyal and consistent member of any denomination cannot teach these divine principles of Christianity. Jno. 17:20-21.

CONCLUSION:

- A. The church of Jesus Christ is not a denomination but the product of the seed, Lk. 8:11

LESSON 42

THE CHURCH – FELLOWSHIP (BASIS)

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “Fellowship” – association, partnership, joint sharing, joint participation, communion.
 - 1. Key word in I John – 4 times in chapter 1
 - 2. No “F”, “f” fellowship mentioned.
- B. Fellowship understood by early Christians; Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:11
- C. Fellowship appears to be a desirable thing; I Jno. 1:3
- D. See what John has to say about it.

I. BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP – VS. 1-3

- A. Could be obtained; 1:3; but how?
- B. Teaching necessary; “declare we unto you”
 - 1. Based on faith, not the flesh – Matt. 12:46-50
 - 2. Same in Acts 2:42 – apostles teaching then fellowship
 - 3. No fellowship with apostles without knowing what apostles taught.
- C. Specific teaching necessary
 - 1. Not just any kind
 - 2. John had seen and heard
 - 3. Facts about Christ; some in John’s day taught differently.
- D. Specifics about Christ
 - 1. Eternal Christ – 1:1
 - 2. Actual Christ – 1:1 (seen, heard, touched)
- E. Basis of fellowship
 - 1. Apostles’ teaching about Christ
 - 2. Cf. 2 Jno. 9-11
 - 3. Hear or read correct doctrine; Rom. 10:17
 - 4. Believe correct teaching about Christ; Jno. 8:21, 24
 - 5. Repent correctly – change; Acts 2:38; 17:30
 - 6. Confess correctly – Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10
 - 7. Baptized correctly (correct teaching, candidate, action, purpose); I Pet. 3:21; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:27; I Cor. 12:13

II. BOUNDARY OF FELLOWSHIP: VS. 6-7

- A. Claim of fellowship; 1:6
 - 1. Expresses limits of fellowship
 - 2. To say it doesn’t make it so.
- B. Condition of fellowship; 1:7
 - 1. Difference in claim of fellowship and actual possession of it.
 - 2. Walking in the light or darkness?
 - 3. Cf. III Jno. 4; II Jno. 6; II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 10:17
 - 4. Thus, as the word directs
- C. Who sets the conditions – God (inspiration) - - to remove or change conditions?

III. BARRIERS TO FELLOWSHIP: VS. 6-10

- A. The attitude that sin doesn’t matter; 1:6; Eph. 2:2
 - 1. Same as saying sin doesn’t matter.

- 2. Doesn't see things as God does.
- B. Saying that sin doesn't exist; 1:8
- C. Seeing to redefine sin; 1:10 (calling sin something else)
- D. Cf. Lk. 15:25-32 (elder brother)
 - 1. Claimed fellowship – “served thee,” v. 29
 - 2. Claimed sinlessness – “neither transgressed,” v. 29
 - 3. Anger would be considered “righteousness indignation” by him
 - 4. But barriers to fellowship with his family.
- E. Cf. to congregational problems.

IV. BLESSINGS OF FELLOWSHIP

- A. A Father who loves us; 3:1 (no need to feel unloved nor unwanted)
- B. A Lord that leads us; 1:7; 2:6 (have His word and example)
- C. Brethren who lift us; 1:7; 2:6 (have His word and example)
 - 1. Suitable companionship, v. 23
 - 2. Sympathy and support, v. 23
 - 3. Motivates to spirituality, v. 24
 - 4. Strengthens those involved, v. 31
 - 5. Provokes service, vs. 32-37
 - 6. Promotes proper spirit, v. 32
 - 7. Solidifies those involved, vs. 23-32
- D. Again cf. prodigal's return, Lk. 15
 - 1. Love of his father
 - 2. Leadership father will provide
 - 3. Lift form those at home – except elder brother.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Fellowship not to be taken lightly.
- B. Psa. 133:1 – echoed by John.

LESSON 43

THE CHURCH – VALUE OF FELLOWSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Previous lesson: basis, boundary, barriers and blessings of fellowship.
 - B. The fact established of great value in fellowship
 - C. The fact of withdrawal shows value of fellowship or else no great loss when withdrawal takes place.
 - D. Psa. 133:1 – fellowship pictured as being worthwhile.
 - E. Note Acts 4:23-37
- I. FELLOWSHIP AFFORDS SUITABLE COMPANIONSHIP – V. 23
- A. Went to their own company – Who? Best folks in Jerusalem.
 - B. The kind of people Jesus wanted with Him in the garden:
 - 1. The called out of the Lord, followers.
 - 2. Supporters of the same things Peter and John supported.
- II. FELLOWSHIP PROVIDES SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT – V. 23
- A. These people would listen – interested in what they had to say.
 - B. Members of a family (I Tim. 3:15); household of faith (Gal. 6:10).
 - 1. Hurt child goes to family member...not a stranger.
 - 2. Cf. I Cor. 12:25-26; sympathy, support.
 - 3. Acts 12:2 – Peter, a case in point.
- III. FELLOWSHIP MOTIVATES ONE TO SPIRITUALITY – V. 24
- A. Not true of all fellowship and association.
 - B. These turned to God...not to stiff drink.
 - C. Not seeking a mob to settle the matter.
 - D. Take a look at our worship services.
 - 1. The Lord is to be the center.
 - 2. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - E. Psa. 73:17 – In the midst of prosperity, Asaph regains his balance.
- IV. FELLOWSHIP STRENGTHENS THOSE INVOLVED – V. 31
- A. Rom. 14:1; 15:1 – weak can become stronger and more mature.
 - B. Prov. 27:17; Rom. 1:11-12 – both would benefit
 - C. Eccl. 4:9-12
- V. FELLOWSHIP PROVOKES US TO SERVE – VS. 32-37
- A. Inherent in the word “fellowship.”
 - 1. Joint participation...something demanded of us because we are partners.
 - 2. Lk. 5:10 – James, John, Simon were partners...each doing his part.
 - B. Note Acts 4:32-37 – no question to them what fellowship required.
 - C. Acts 11:27-30 – fellowship demands no less than we can do.
 - D. II Cor. 8:1-5; Macedonian brethren received word that some family members needed help.
 - E. Num. 32:6 – “Shall your brethren go to war and shall you sit here?” cf. Heb. 10:24-25

VI. FELLOWSHIP PROMOTES PROPER SPIRIT – V. 32

- A. Wouldn't allow themselves to become selfish.
- B. Gen. 13:3 – Abram to Lot... "We be brethren"... "No strife"
- C. Ought to be true of brethren in same congregation as well as among sister congregations.

VII. FELLOWSHIP SOLIDIFIES THOSE INVOLVED

- A. Acts 4:23-32 shows this vividly.
- B. One heart and one soul; think alike, feel alike.
- C. I Pet. 3:8 – one mind
- D. Phil. 3:16 – Walk by the same rule.
 - 1. Not a "they" but "we" proposition.
 - 2. Cf. crowd at football game...all groan or rejoice together.

CONCLUSION:

- A. A family functioning as a unit, a body.
- B. Joint heirs with joint responsibilities and privileges.
- C. The loss of such is a disaster.

LESSON 44

THE CHURCH – LIMITS OF FELLOWSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Fellowship (Koinonia) – association, partnership, joint sharing, joint participation, a communion, contribution (14 times according to Young’s Analytical Concordance).
- B. These definitions, if applied correctly, will enable us to understand the fellowship the early Christians had.
 - 1. Early Christians – Acts 2:42
 - 2. Fellowship bond between Paul and Philippians – Phil. 1:5; 4:14-17
 - 3. Fellowship that permeates: II Cor. 8 & 9
 - 4. Cf. also I John 1
- C. However, there are some limits to fellowship.
 - 1. Limited to pure, unadulterated, unblemished, N.T. Christianity.
 - 2. Two-fold concept of fellowship; basis of this lesson.

I. CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP LIMITED TO THOSE WHO HAVE OBEYED THE GOSPEL.

- A. Christian fellowship based on faith – not flesh.
 - 1. Cf. Matt. 12:46-50; at this time his fleshly brethren denied His deity; cf. Jno. 7:5
 - 2. To do His will was and is the important thing.
 - 3. Cf. later writings of James and Jude (1/2 brothers of Jesus) – totally ignored any fleshly connection with Jesus but both emphasized their spiritual link with Him.
- B. To obey the gospel initially means to do so in a framework of truth.
 - 1. Not according to denominational dogmas
 - 2. Hear or read correct doctrine – Rom. 10:17
 - 3. Believe correct teaching about Christ’s deity – Jno. 8:21, 24; Matt. 16:16; Acts 8:37.
 - 4. Repent correctly – Acts 2:38; 17:30 (involves a change in way of life)
 - 5. Confess correctly – Matt. 10:32; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10
 - 6. Baptized correctly – Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16, Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; I Pet. 3:21.
 - a. Means correct teaching precedes – cannot be taught wrong and obey right.
 - b. Means correct candidate
 - c. Means correct action – burial, immersion
 - d. Means correct purpose motivates
 - 1) To be saved – I Pet. 3:21
 - 2) For forgiveness of sins – Acts 22:16
 - 3) Put on Christ – Gal. 3:27
 - 4) To enter the kingdom, church; I Cor. 12:13
 - 7. Those who are immersed with little or no awareness of these imperatives are not like those in N.T. times.
 - 8. No Biblical record of one being baptized to become a Christian plus something else.
- C. This is the first imperative to Christian fellowship...now consider the second.

II. CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP IS LIMITED TO THOSE WHO CONTINUE IN FAITHFULNESS

- A. That is the bottom line of I Jno. 1:7
 - 1. “Walk in the light” – doing the Father’s will.
 - 2. Faithfulness in development of personal righteousness and godliness.

3. Regularity in worship.
 4. Diligence in our work for the Lord.
 5. Proper preparation in our watching and waiting for 2nd coming.
 6. Faithfulness in our becoming carriers of redemption's story to alien sinners.
 7. Faithfulness in our efforts of reclaiming apostates; Jas. 5:19-20
- B. Not enough to say we fellowship all who have obeyed the gospel. Past obedience to truth does not always add up to present fidelity to truth.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Christian fellowship is limited to those who have obeyed the gospel and who right now are continuing to walk in the light; Eph. 5:11; II Thess. 3:6; I Cor. 5; Rom. 16:17; II Jno. 9-11
- B. Not a two-fold limitation we have imposed.
 1. The Lord imposed it
 2. We must respect it and act upon it in responsible fashion.

LESSON 45

CHRIST DISCIPLINE

Matt. 18:15-18; I Cor. 5; II Thess. 3:6-15

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “The Forgotten Commandment”
- B. Discipline needed in all areas of life – school, home, work, etc.
- C. Two kinds: (1) Instructive; Eph. 6:4; I Tim. 4:1-6
(2) Corrective; Gen. 2:15-17; Acts 5:1-11

I. WHY?

- A. God always has.
 - 1. Patriarchal age
 - a. Adam and Eve; Gen. 3:22-24
 - b. Cain; Gen. 4:9-12
 - c. People of Noah’s day; Gen. 6:5-7:22
 - d. Lot’s wife; Gen. 19:17, 26
 - 2. Mosaic age
 - a. Moses; Num. 20:12
 - b. Israel; Josh. 7:1-15
 - 3. Christian age
 - a. Ananias & Sapphira; Acts 5:1-11
- B. Commanded of us; II Thess. 3:6, 14; cf. John 14:15
- C. Mark troublemakers; Rom. 16:17
- D. Without practicing discipline, we have no right to exist!

II. PURPOSE

- A. Not to get rid of someone we don’t like; I Jno. 4:20
- B. Not to say that one cannot be saved; I Cor. 5:13
- C. To maintain the purity of the members and the church; Eph. 5:25-27; Col. 1:18; II Cor. 11:3
- D. To save the church; I Cor. 5:6, 7; cf. Rev. 2:5
- E. To shame the sinner; I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 2:2, 3, 6; cf. Jas. 5:20
- F. To teach all that Christians must live uprightly; Matt. 5:13-16; Tit. 2:11-12; I Cor. 9:27
- G. To save ourselves by doing what God says; I Tim. 4:16
- H. To make the church grow; Acts 5:14 (following the evens of vs. 1-11).

III. WHO?

- A. One who trespasses against a brother and will not repent; Matt. 18:15ff
 - 1. Not some trivial matter, but sin.
 - 2. Sin of which one will not repent will condemn the soul.
 - 3. Gift not acceptable until proper procedure is carried out.
- B. One with immoral conduct; I Cor. 5:11-13. Adultery is adultery; Matt. 5:32; 19:9
- C. One who is disorderly; II Thess. 3:6 (any violation of scriptural teaching on any subject).
- D. Busybodies; II Thess. 3:11; I Tim. 5:13; I Pet. 4:15
- E. All members insisting on living in sin; Gal. 5:19-21
- F. Those who cause division; Rom. 16:17
 - 1. “Mark” – let it be known who they are
 - 2. “Avoid” – turn away from them

- G. Those unfaithful to God.
 1. With time; Eph. 5:16; Mat. 6:33; Heb. 10:25
 2. With talents; Matt. 25:14-30; I Cor. 4:2
 3. With money; I Cor. 16:1-2; I Cor. 5:10 (covetous); Acts 5:1-11

IV. PROCEDURE:

- A. Must follow a scriptural course; II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:3-4
- B. Not with partiality; I Tim. 5:21; Rom. 2:11; Jas. 2:1ff; 3:17
- C. With Prayer; Jas. 5:16; Phil. 4:6
- D. Make *every* effort possible to restore them; Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20 (that doesn't mean petting them).
- E. Admonish them; I Thess. 5:14
- F. Steps to follow; Matt. 18:15-18; Tit. 3:10
- G. Compare Paul's procedure with the problems at Corinth:
 1. I Cor. 2:1 Came
 2. I Cor. 3:6; 4:17 Apollos and Timothy there
 3. I Cor. 5:11 Wrote
 4. I Cor. 4:21 Straightening up to do

V. OBJECTIONS

- A. Can't judge; Matt. 7:1-5, 15...study the contest
- B. Will lose members; Cf. Acts 5:11-14
- C. Lose contribution.
- D. One elder quoted Lk. 17:1-2 as objection on one occasion (pitiful).
- E. But all excuses in the world will not change God's command. Compare Jonah – God didn't change to suit Jonah, nor will He change to suit us.

CONCLUSION:

- A. The Christian life is a serious matter.
 1. Not to be taken lightly.
 2. Cost Christ His blood.
- B. The church must be kept pure. Those defiling it must be disciplined.

LESSON 46

THE CHURCH – WHAT MEMBERS OWE THE LOCAL CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “Church” used in 3 senses in the New Testament
 - 1. Universal – Matt. 16:18 Eph. 1:22-23
 - 2. Regional – Gal. 1:2
 - 3. Local – I Cor. 1:2
- B. We are concerned with the later use in this study.

I. LOCAL CONGREGATION PROVIDES ME WITH THE BLESSINGS THAT ATTEND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

- A. Blessings within:
 - 1. Fellowship – Acts 2:42; I Jno. 1:7
 - 2. Edification – Eph. 4:15-16
 - 3. Worship – Acts 20:7
 - 4. Comfort – I Thess. 4:18
- B. Unless identified with a local church, we miss these blessings. Discourages being a “floatin” member.

II. EVERY MEMBER IS IMPORTANT

- A. Body comparison – I Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:15-16; Rom. 12:3-8
- B. Compare I Cor. 16:2; II Tim. 2:19 with Acts 2:38
- C. Illustrations
 - 1. Nail and the meeting house
 - 2. Components of a kite...which is most important?

III. WE OWE SOMETHING OT THE LOCAL CHURCH

- A. This is true by virtue of the fact that...
 - 1. We are members therein – same as with family.
 - 2. We receive blessings from it.
- B. Many fail to “pay their debts.”

IV. WHAT WE OWE

- A. Concern – II Cor. 11:2, 28 “jealous,” “care”
- B. Cooperation – Acts 4:23-25; Phil. 1; Develop “we” feeling
- C. An evangelistic spirit – Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 8:4
- D. Regular attendance – Heb. 10:25
- E. Consistent and liberal contribution – I Cor. 16:1-2
- F. Love of the church. Be like Christ, Eph. 5:25
- G. Respect and cooperation with the elders – Heb. 13:7, 17; I Thess. 5:12-13
- H. Promote peace, harmony, unity, and good will – Prov. 6:19; Rom. 14:19; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18
- I. Be a good influence by right living and give the church favor with the people; Acts 2:47; Matt. 5:13-16; Tit. 2:11-12
- J. Help keep the church true to the old paths – not becoming the starting place for error – Eph. 4:14-15
- K. Qualify for position of leadership – II Pet. 3:18; Heb. 5:12; I Tim. 3

L. Welcome visitors – Heb. 13:2. We want guests to return. Treat them where they will.

CONCLUSION:

- A. A Christian cannot be out of harmony with the local church and in harmony with Christ.
- B. What about your relationship with the local congregation?

LESSON 47

THE CHURCH – NUMERICAL GROWTH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Familiar with Great Commission; Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16
- B. Often ask why we are not doing more in that area.
- C. Text – II Cor. 4:4, 5, 7-10, 13 – has the answer. Some things we must believe.

I. ALL MEN OUT OF CHRIST ARE LOST

- A. Do we see only the physical when we look at people?
- B. Soul shall never die – heaven or hell; Eccl. 12:7
- C. Jno. 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:3 – Do we really believe these verses?
- D. Newspaper headline: “Sure cure for cancer”
 - 1. Couldn’t wait to tell cancer patient
 - 2. “Sure cure for sin” and who do we tell?
- E. Do we believe # 1 enough to try to save them?

II. BIBLE TELLS US CLEARLY HOW TO GET INTO CHRIST

- A. Where else could we learn how?
- B. Rom. 10:17; Jno. 8:31, 32, 11-32; Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21ff
- C. That is what we say, but do we believe it enough?
- D. Do we believe against “faith only” enough to tell others? Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:1-4, 17-18

III. MAN HAS THE ABILITY TO CHANGE

- A. Josh. 24:15; Gen. 3:16; for good or bad
- B. Acts 7-9; Saul of Tarsus; cf. Eccl. 7:29
- C. Rev. 22:14; Jno. 3:16; yet too often we decide who will and will not change; Jno. 1:12; II Pet. 3:9
- D. Who would have tried to teach Saul of Tarsus?
- E. Do we believe #III enough to get busy fulfilling our responsibility?

CONCLUSION: Close with lesson text II Cor. 4:13

LESSON 48

THE CHURCH – SPIRITUAL GROWTH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Must be concerned about physical and spiritual growth.
 - B. God expects spiritual growth – I Pet. 2:2; II Pet. 3:18; Heb. 5:12-14; I Cor. 3:1-3
 - C. For faith to be strengthened, must study God's word; Rom. 10:17
 - D. What do we gain through a study of the word of God?
-
- I. AN INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE: Deut. 6:6-9; Matt. 4:4 "every word"
 - II. PREPARATION FOR HERE AND HEREAFTER: Matt. 16:26
 - III. INSULATION BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THE WILES OF THE DEVIL:
I Pet. 5:8; Lk. 4:13 "little season"
 - IV. INDOCTRINATION THAT WILL HELP US AGAINST FALSE DOCTRINE:
Jno. 8:32; I Pet. 3:15; II Jno. 9-11; Rom. 16:17; Tit. 3:10; Eph. 5:11
 - V. EQUIP US TO BE EVANGELISTIC: Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15
 - VI. WILL EDIFY (BUILD UP) US AND ENABLE US TO EDIFY OTHERS: Eph. 4:12
 - VII. EQUIP US FOR DAILY LIVING: Eph. 4:12 (marriage, rearing children, teaching others, in all personal relationships, dealing with jobs, etc.)
 - VII. ENABLE US TO RECEIVE AND GIVE EXHORTATION: Acts 18:27; I Tim. 4:13; Phil. 4:2

LESSON 49

THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. “Church” – the called out; I Cor. 1:2; II Thess. 2:14; Acts 2:36-37
- B. Using the term “church” in the local sense in this study.
- C. “Community” – environment in which each church or congregation is located.

I. LIMITATIONS OF THE LOCAL CONGREGATION:

- A. Not a secular club, literary club, medical clinic, headquarters for politicians, a theatrical rehearsal studio, a hamburger stand, country club or drive-in.
- B. Not a promoter of the social gospel.
 - 1. Not to reform economic or social conditions.
 - 2. Not involve din riots, demonstrations, sit-in, etc.
 - 3. Seeks to change laws by the gospel.
- C. Not an institution through which all of the hunger and nakedness of the world is to be alleviated.
 - 1. Gal. 6:10 – yet that is not the supreme task of the church.
 - 2. Feed the body to feed the soul.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE COMMUNITY

- A. Must preach the gospel: Matt. 28:19
 - 1. Lk. 8:11; I Pet. 4:11; Jno. 8:32; I Tim. 4:2-4; Rom. 1:16; Jno. 17:17
 - 2. Speak the truth in love; Eph. 4:15
- B. Continue in the Apostles doctrine; Acts 2:42; Gal. 1:6-9
- C. Exert the right influence; I Thess. 4:12; I Tim. 3:7; Matt. 5:13-16
 - 1. Must respect and obey civil law; Rom. 13:1ff.
 - 2. Must exhibit moral uprightness; Rom. 12:1-2; I Jno. 2:15-17
 - 3. Must worship regularly; Heb. 10:25; Jas. 4:17; Acts 20:7
 - 4. Must love one another; Jno. 13:34-35; I Cor. 1:10
 - 5. Must give the church a friendly image; Acts 2:47; 10:24-26
 - 6. If you think you exert no influence, think what the chigger does to you.
- D. An attractive, commodious building is a plus.
 - 1. The command to meet authorizes the congregation to provide suitable places to meet.
 - 2. Includes attractive, well-equipped classrooms with interested and learned teachers.
- E. Must have an interest in the community that causes us to leave worship with the intent to serve, to win others; Acts 8:4.
- F. Must have a good image in benevolent work; Acts 6:1-7; Gal. 6:10; Jas. 1:27

CONCLUSION:

- A. Supreme task – reaching the lost of the community.
- B. Each Christian must recognize his/her responsibility to teach both actively and through influence.

LESSON 50

THE CHURCH – FINDING MY PLACE

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Each individual should be interested in the local congregation.
 - 1. Help; it attain a greater degree of service.
 - 2. Help it attain success at its greatest goal; Eph. 3:8; Rom. 7:4
- B. Individual success necessary before collective success.
- C. For the church to be strong, I must find my place.

I. MY PLACE INVOLVES LOVING GOD MORE

- A. Matt. 22:35-38; “Which is the great commandment”? Of the 600 plus commandments of the law, this is the greatest.
- B. Means deeper devotion and more sacrificial service; Rom. 12:1
- C. Nothing of true value unless based on love; I Cor. 13:1-3

II. MY PLACE INVOLVES LOVING JESUS MORE

- A. Jno. 13-16; most dynamic sermon next to Sermon on Mt. (Thur. night of Jesus’ arrest, He gave this farewell message). 14:15, 21, 23, 24
- B. Jesus loves the church – Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28
- C. If we love Jesus more, we will love the church more and seek its spiritual growth and development.

III. MY PLACE INVOLVES LOVING THE TRUTH MORE

- A. Bible – word of God – should be so precious to us
- B. Speak the truth in love – Eph. 4:15; Prov. 23:23; II Thess. 2:10
- C. Paul refused all past accomplishments for the knowledge of Christ; Phil. 3:7-11.

IV. MY PLACE INVOLVES MORE LOVE FOR FELLOWMAN

- A. Love for one another allows us to “keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace” – Eph. 4:3
- B. Heb. 13:1 – “Let brotherly love continue”
- C. Greater love for those without means more diligent effort to win them. Matt. 22:39-40; Matt. 5:46-47; Lk. 10:30-27; Jas. 2:8
- D. Even acceptable worship means reconciliation of brethren; Matt. 5:23-24

V. MY PLACE INVOLVES PUTTING THE CHURCH FIRST IN MY LIFE

- A. Some ways we fail to put the church first:
 - 1. Too tired from work, too long of hours
 - 2. Too involved in pleasure
 - 3. No pleasure in Bible study, visiting the sick, visiting the erring, carrying the word from house to house.
- B. Native indeed if we think we are deceiving God.
- C. Real love thinks in terms of “how much can I do for Him who did so much for me”?

VI. MY PLACE INVOLVES GIVING MORE

- A. God gave His Only Begotten Son – Jno. 3:16, Impossible to separate “God loved” and “Gave.”
- B. Christ gave Himself. – Eph. 5:2, 25
- C. More in the Bible on giving than faith, repentance, confession, baptism all combined.
- D. Early Christians were genuinely generous; Acts. 11:29-30; II Cor. 8-9 (8:5 being the real secret – “gave themselves”).

VII. MY PLACE INVOLVES MORE CONSISTENT WORSHIP

- A. God has always demanded deeply meaningful worship:
 - 1. Abel’s altar – Gen. 4; Heb. 11:4
 - 2. Noah’s offerings – Gen. 8:20-22
 - 3. Abraham’s altar – Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18; 22:5, 13
 - 4. Tabernacle, permanent temple, Aaronic priesthood, numerous animal sacrifices, weekly Sabbath, feast days, etc.
- B. Psa. 122:1 “I was glad...”
- C. Christians are not excused: Jn. 4:23, 24; Matt. 4:9-10; Acts 2:42
- D. Worship not boring to early Christians – Eph. 5:19
- E. Is it too much to ask 4 hours out of 168 hours per week?
 - 1. Church attendance is the life’s blood to any congregation.
 - 2. Those who do not attend regularly are those who do not participate in other programs of the church.

VIII. MY PLACE INVOLVES MORE WORK FOR THE CHURCH

- A. Christianity involves work – Jn. 6:28-29
- B. Other passages – I Cor. 3:9; Gal. 5:6; Eph. 2:10; I Thess. 1:3; Tit. 2:14; 3:1, 8, 14
- C. There is a place for each of us because each of us has talents; Matt. 25:14ff
- D. Church (body concept) – not all can do the same things, each has his own.

CONCLUSION:

- A. In one or more of the above areas, we have a place that will promote and build up the local congregation.
- B. How many of us want to see a better congregation?
 - 1. A show of hand will not be necessary
 - 2. What we do from here on will be adequate answer!

LESSON 51

THE CHURCH – MEMBERSHIP, INVITATION TO ALL

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Bible calls attention to man's need for salvation; Rom. 3:10, 23
- B. Bible equally points out man's inability to save self; Eph. 2:8-9
- C. Man lost, cannot save self – salvation must come from heaven.
- D. Predestination – some to salvation, rest to damnation (false idea).
- E. Do we view God as one equally as determined to condemn as save?
- F. Do we think of Christ as a reluctant Savior?
- G. Is heaven a sealed vault?
- H. Bible present God as a willing benefactor, Christ as a voluntary Savior and heaven as accessible treasury of spiritual benefits; II Pet. 3:9

I. NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH

- A. To ancient Israel – Ezek. 33:11; Hos. 11:8
- B. In Noah's day – Gen. 6:5; I Pet. 3:20
- C. In Jonah's day – Jonah 3:4, 9-10

II. HEAVEN'S ANXIETY TO SAVE SEEN IN VARIOUS WAYS

- A. God has no pleasure in the death of a sinner; Ezek. 18:23; Jno. 3:16-17; Lk. 19:10
- B. Many invitations to salvation in the Bible; Matt. 11:28ff; 4:19; Rev. 22:17
- C. Encouragement to salvation; Heb. 12:25; Matt. 25: Jno. 5:28-29
- D. Jesus' death on the cross; Rom. 5:8; Gal. 1:4
- E. Delaying of final judgment; II Pet. 3:9
 - 1. Why has God not already stopped this world of wickedness?
 - 2. Just one answer...waiting...doesn't want to see men lost.
 - 3. Why should I be spared another day?
- F. Preaching of the gospel; Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 3:1-11

II. WRONG INTERPRETATION OF GOD'S LONGSUFFERING

- A. God will forbear forever; II Pet. 3:3-4; Eccl. 8:11
- B. Noah's day – 120 years
- C. God never allows sin to go unpunished; Jude 6:7
- D. Intentions of longsuffering; Rom. 2:4
- E. Use your opportunity while you have; Heb. 5:8-9; Mk. 16:16
- F. Responsibility clear, implication obvious – obey or lost; Rom. 2:5-6

CONCLUSION:

- A. Heaven's intent to save is clearly visible.
- B. All that heaven can do to bring salvation has been done.
- C. Responsibility now rest upon your shoulders.
- D. Your salvation or condemnation is in your choosing – accept or reject?

LESSON 52

THE CHURCH – GLORY TO GOD IN THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Two-fold thesis of the Ephesian letter.
 - 1. God's eternal purpose
 - 2. How that effects the life of an individual
 - B. Purpose of the letter
 - 1. Animate faith
 - 2. Elevate the concept of the church.
 - C. "In Christ" – 14 times in chapter 1 alone (approx. 30 times in entire book)
 - D. Brief outline of the book:
 - 1. "One body" – ch. 1 "Wealth of the church" – ch. 1-3
 - 2. "One man" – ch. 2
 - 3. "One family" – ch. 3
 - 4. "One building" – ch. 4 "Walk of the church" – 4:1 - 6:9
 - 5. "One marriage" – ch. 5
 - 6. "One warfare" – ch. 6 "Warfare of the church" – 6:10-24
 - E. Eph. 3:20-21 – description of the infinite God and deserved glory to Him in the church.
 - F. God to receive glory (praise, credit); cf. Matt. 6:13b; I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17
- I. OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES
- A. Moses – Num. 20:10-12
 - B. Paul – Gal. 6:14
- II. PLACE
- A. "In the church"
 - B. Not left to our own devices
 - C. Attempts to glorify God outside the church not acceptable to God.
 - D. What does that say about the importance of the church?
- III. HOW DO WE GLORIFY GOD IN THE CHURCH?
- A. Through our love for the church; Matt. 6:33
 - B. Lifting up the church before the world.
 - C. Defend and protect it from attacks without and within; Acts 28:22
 - D. Willingness to suffer and die for it; I Pet. 4:14-16; Rev. 2:10
 - E. Our life in the world; Rom. 12:1-2; I Jno. 2:15-17
 - F. Our warfare against sin; Eph. 6:10ff; I Tim. 6:12; II Tim. 4-7
 - G. Ceaseless ministries to human sorrow and need; Rom. 12:15b; Gal. 6:10
 - H. Reflect the light of God's glory (godliness)
- IV. HOW LONG?
- A. "Throughout all ages, world without end"
 - B. Psa. 45:17; 72:17; Rev. 5:13
 - C. No new method needed today, no "new age" theory
- V. WHY?
- A. He alone provides the scheme of redemption at great price; I Pet. 1:18-19
 - B. "He is able..."
 - C. For the hope we have; Heb. 6:18-19; 7:19
 - D. His omniscience; Omnipotence; Omnipresence; Holiness, Justice...etc.