

## **Outline – The Church**

1. The Church is a New Testament Institution
2. The Church is an Assembly
3. The Church has a “Head”
4. The Church has Officers
5. The Church makes Decisions
6. The Church is an Independent Institution
7. The Church is a Commissioned Organization
8. The Church has Ordinances
9. The Church is to be Financed
10. The Church and Me

This study looks at one of the most confusing and misunderstood doctrines of the Bible. People have all kinds of ideas as to what a church really is! Some people think it is a building (a cathedral, or some other place of worship). Others think of a church as a denomination (a human organization) and speak of the “Catholic Church”, the “Presbyterian Church”, the “Baptist Church”, etc. Many Christians conceive of the church consisting of all born-again believers in the world, a kind of “invisible, universal” church.

Our task is to put aside these notions and determine what God says a church is in His Word, the Bible.

### 1. The Church is a New Testament Institution

A. Look up: Matthew 16:18<sup>18</sup> And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Who founded (built) this first Church? Jesus

B. Look up: John 1:2<sup>42</sup> And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

The meaning of Peter’s name is stone.

C. Look up: I Peter 2:3, 4, 6-8<sup>3</sup> If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.<sup>4</sup>

[To whom coming, as unto a living stone](#), disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,<sup>5</sup> Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup> Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, [Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.](#)<sup>7</sup> Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them

which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, <sup>8</sup> And a stone of stumbling, **and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient:** whereunto also they were appointed.

Peter identifies **JESUS** as the “Rock” upon which the Church would be built.

\*\*\*\*\* Discussion of why Jesus chose rock/stone to describe Himself, His church, His people. \*\*\*\*\*

Note the Old Testament is primarily addressed to the Nation of Israel. The New Testament is mainly addressed to churches. Do not confuse the two. (I Corinthians 10:32 <sup>32</sup> Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God).

## 2. The Church is an Assembly

The word church is found 114 times in the New Testament, and is rendered from the Greek word “Ekklesia”. This word has only one meaning – a company of people called out to a specific place for a specific purpose. It has its roots in the democracies of the ancient Greek city-states where the Town Crier would call the citizens to a meeting in order to conduct a city’s business.

In Matthew 16:18 Jesus did not change the meaning of the word ekklesia, but he distinguished it from other assemblies of the day by using the personal pronoun “MY” church. Thus the New Testament church is the Lord’s Assembly. (<sup>8</sup> And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.)

### A. An assembly must be **LOCAL**:

- i) People cannot “come together” and yet be all over the world! For example an automobile is an assembly of many and various parts. How absurd to think of a car as being every where - a universal car!

- ii) In all but about 15 instances, where it is used in a generic or institutional sense (any church in general, no church in particular), the word church or churches is always used in connection with definite, geographical localities.
- iii) Look up the references below to confirm the actual cities or regions where real churches were located:
- (1) Romans 16:1 <sup>1</sup> I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant **of the church which is at Cenchrea:**
  - (2) I Corinthians 1:2 <sup>2</sup> Unto the **church of God which is at Corinth**, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:
  - (3) I Corinthians 16:1, <sup>1</sup> Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given **order to the churches of Galatia**, even so do ye.  
I Corinthians 16:19 <sup>19</sup> **The churches of Asia** salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.
  - (4) II Corinthians 8:1 <sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on **the churches of Macedonia;**
  - (5) Colossians 4:16 <sup>16</sup> And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in **the church of the Laodiceans;** and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.
  - (6) I Thessalonians 1:1 <sup>1</sup> Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto **the church of the Thessalonians** which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - (7) I Peter 5:13 <sup>13</sup> The **church that is at Babylon**, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.
  - (8) Revelation 3:1 <sup>1</sup> And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;...  
Revelation 3:7 <sup>7</sup> And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write;...
- iv) For these reasons, the Bible knows nothing of a universal (catholic), world-wide church. The New Testament mentions many churches, all of which were meeting in different localities.

**Why would God not want a “World Church” formed?**

B. An Assembly must be Visible

- i) People cannot “come together” and not be seen! Many like to talk about the “invisible church” (which allows them to move about in Christian circle) – all the churches mentioned in scripture were “see-able”.
- ii) Look up scripture to confirm this “see-ability”
  - (1) Phillipians 1:27 <sup>27</sup> Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you,
  - (2) I Thessalonians 2:17 <sup>17</sup> But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.
  - (3) I Thessaloneans 3:6 <sup>6</sup> But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

**Paul desired to come and SEE these assemblies.**

C. An Assembly Must Be Organized

- i) An assembly is not a mob. The word assembly implies organization.
  - (1) Look up: Colossians 1:18 <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

**Jesus is the HEAD.**

The human body is an assembly of many parts but these parts must be organized according to a plan! (Psalm 139:14 <sup>14</sup> I will praise thee; **for I am**

**fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works;** and that my soul knoweth right well.

- (2) Look up: I Timothy 3:15 <sup>15</sup> But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

A **house** has to be put together with a plan or blueprint:

I Corinthians 3: 9-11 <sup>9</sup> For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. <sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. <sup>11</sup> For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

<b>The Bible is replete with structure and organization.</b>
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- ii) A New Testament Baptist Church is to organized – the blueprint in found in the New Testament **[to be discussed later in this document]**.

D. An Assembly must be **CONSTITUTED**:

- i) It must be made out of the right components. A motor vehicle, for example, cannot be made out of twigs and leaves. A house cannot be made out of paper and meat. Suitable materials and plans must be used.
- ii) So too, a New Testament Church is to be made out of proper materials. These components are specified in Acts 2:41 <sup>41</sup> Then they that gladly **received** his word were **baptized**: and the same day there were **added** unto them about three thousand souls.

This verse specifies Gods qualifications and order for church membership:

- (1) Gladly **received** the Word (salvation)  
(2) Were **baptized**

- (3) Were **added** to the church (also see Acts 2:47<sup>47</sup> Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.)
- (4) This is the only scriptural way people can become members of a Baptist church – salvation first then baptism.

A New Testament Baptist Church is an organized assembly of Baptized believers.

\*\*\*\*\* **2nd week!** \*\*\*\*\*

### 3. The Church has a “Head”

Man-made religions have their heads – presidents, popes, moderators, superintendents, etc. Each New Testament Baptist Church has a Head – but One Who is vastly different from any of the above.

- Colossians 1:18<sup>18</sup> And **he is the head of the body, the church**: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.
- Ephesians 5:23, 24<sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife, even as **Christ is the head of the church**: and he is the saviour of the body.<sup>24</sup> Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

A. Jesus Christ is the head of Each New Testament Baptist Church.

B. Each church is to be **subject** to its Head.

C. In what way is a church subject to its Head? Look up:

- i) Galatians 3:1<sup>1</sup> O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

- ii) Galatians 5:7 <sup>7</sup> Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

No church has the right to make laws – it may only obey the laws already given by the Head through His Word.

Jesus Christ is not a “figure-head.” Any “church” which is not subject to Him and His laws is out of control.

#### 4. The Church has Officers

A. Look up Philippians 1:1 <sup>1</sup> Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the **bishops** and **deacons**: Terms bishop, elder, pastor are used interchangeably in the New Testament. We use the term pastor (which means Shepard) because others have unBiblical ecclesiastical connotations over time.

B. To find **qualifications for these two offices**, look up:

- i) I Timothy 3:1-13 <sup>1</sup> This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. <sup>2</sup> A bishop then must be **blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach**; <sup>3</sup> Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; <sup>4</sup> One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; <sup>5</sup> (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) <sup>6</sup> Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. <sup>8</sup> Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; <sup>9</sup> Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. <sup>11</sup> Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. <sup>13</sup> For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- ii) Titus 1:6-9 <sup>6</sup> If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. <sup>7</sup> For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not



selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; <sup>8</sup> But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; <sup>9</sup> Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

### C. My Pastor

- i) The Chief Pastor or Shepard of my church is Christ. Look up
  - I Peter 2:25 <sup>25</sup> For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.
  - I Peter 5:4 <sup>4</sup> And when the **chief** Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
- ii) A church is referred to as a **flock**: Look up
  - I Peter 5:2 <sup>2</sup> Feed the **flock** of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
  - Acts 20:28 <sup>28</sup> Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the **flock**, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
- iii) Chief duty of a pastor is to **feed the flock**.  
I Peter 5:2 <sup>2</sup> Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
- iv) The Lord has given my Church a pastor for the reasons below:
  - Ephesians 4:12-14 <sup>12</sup> For the **perfecting** of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the **edifying** of the body of Christ: <sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: <sup>14</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
- v) My pastor will **protect** me
  - Acts 28-31 <sup>28</sup> Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the

church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.<sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.<sup>30</sup> Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.<sup>31</sup> Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

vi) I am to **remember** my pastors and **follow** them according to

- Hebrew 13:7<sup>7</sup> Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

vii) I am to **obey** my pastor and **submit** myself to their leadership according to

- Hebrews 13:17<sup>17</sup> Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

viii) I am to **esteem** those over me in the Lord very highly because of their work's sake according to:

- I Thessalonians 5:12, 13<sup>12</sup> And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;<sup>13</sup> And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

How to address my pastor: There is no God given title for a pastor. But, it is not right to refer to him as Reverend or Father. See:

- Psalm 111:9<sup>9</sup> He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.
- Matthew 23:9<sup>9</sup> And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

On the other hand, respect is required to the men God puts over us in our Church. The Bible says we should not despise dignities

- Jude 8<sup>8</sup> Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.
- II Peter 2:10<sup>10</sup> But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

**Give your pastor your confidence, love, encouragement, and constant prayer.** Be his co-worker. Go to him with your difficulties and struggles. Do not idol him but neither harshly criticize him. Or, be a party in scheming against his leadership.

Read:

- I Thessalonians 5:12 (**already quoted**)<sup>12</sup> And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;<sup>13</sup> And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.
- I Timothy 5:17-19<sup>17</sup> Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.<sup>18</sup> For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.<sup>19</sup> Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

\*\*\*\*\* 3rd week! \*\*\*\*\*

## 5. The Church makes Decisions

A true New Testament Baptist Church never makes laws – it simply follows the Lord's commands as set forth in His Word. In a practical sense, a church often needs to make decisions in keeping with this principle. UNLIKE the hierarchical systems of many religious bodies, Bible-believing Baptist churches practice what is known as a congregational form of church government where the congregation under pastoral leadership decides how to implement God's will.

### A. Choosing church leaders was done by the **congregation**, look up: Acts 6:1-5 <sup>1</sup>

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. <sup>2</sup> Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Wherefore, brethren, look ye out **among you** seven men of honest report, full of the **Holy Ghost** and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. <sup>4</sup> But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. <sup>5</sup> And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and **they chose** Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

### B. Prayer preceded electing church leaders, look up: Acts 1:22-26 <sup>22</sup> Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. <sup>23</sup> And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. <sup>24</sup> **And they prayed**, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, <sup>25</sup> That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. <sup>26</sup> And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

### C. The highest decision making body in spiritual affairs is the church, look up: Matthew 18:17 <sup>17</sup> And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but

if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

- D. [The decisions of a church congregation are ratified in heaven](#), look up: Matthew 18:18 <sup>18</sup> Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

## 6. The Church is an Independent Institution

### A. Each New Testament Baptist Church is **INDEPENDENT**.

In Acts 15, the men from the church at Antioch came to the church at Jerusalem to address a matter of extreme doctrinal importance. After they determined the teaching of God's Word in the matter (verses 15-18), the issue was resolved. Even then, the church at Jerusalem HAD NO AUTHORITY over the church at Antioch. Their sentence was that "...we trouble not them ...", and they simply wrote a letter making a request for deference in the matter

deference (1: a courteous expression (by word or deed) of esteem or regard; "his deference to her wishes was very flattering"; "be sure to give my respects to the dean" [syn: [respect](#)] 2: courteous regard for people's feelings; "in deference to your wishes"; "out of respect for his privacy" [syn: [respect](#), [respectfulness](#)] 3: a disposition or tendency to yield to the will of others [syn: [complaisance](#), [compliance](#), [compliance](#), [obligingness](#)]).

Read Acts 15:<sup>1</sup> And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. <sup>2</sup> When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. <sup>3</sup> And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. <sup>4</sup> And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. <sup>5</sup> But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. <sup>6</sup> And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. <sup>7</sup> And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. <sup>8</sup> And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he

did unto us; <sup>9</sup> And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? <sup>11</sup> But we believe that through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. <sup>12</sup> Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. <sup>13</sup> And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: <sup>14</sup> Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. <sup>15</sup> And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, <sup>16</sup> After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: <sup>17</sup> That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. <sup>18</sup> Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. <sup>19</sup> Wherefore my sentence is, **that we trouble not them**, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: <sup>20</sup> But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. <sup>21</sup> For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

## B. Churches are separate from governments

- i) The word of God teaches **COMPLETE** division between spiritual and secular authority. See Matthew 22:21b <sup>21</sup> ... Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

(1) Christians are to be law abiding citizens, Romans 13:1-7 <sup>1</sup> Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. <sup>2</sup> Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: <sup>4</sup> For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. <sup>5</sup> Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. <sup>6</sup> For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually

upon this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

(2) Christians may disobey a civil law only in the case where they are compelled to disobey God's law. Acts 5:29 <sup>29</sup> Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

ii) Governments should not involve themselves with the establishment or support of any particular religious group, yet must offer security and protection to all as it would for its citizens in general. **(NO SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE... but this concept is in keeping with the nature of man's free will. Only a person can choose to be saved or not. A man must willingly accept Jesus Christ to be saved.)**

C. Churches may cooperate with other churches. Independence does not mean isolation. Baptist churches may work together in certain areas with other Baptist churches of like faith and order – provided such cooperation is voluntary, and does not violate the sovereignty, independence, and autonomy of each church.

i) New Testament churches worked together to support evangelism:

(1) I Corinthians 16:1-3 <sup>1</sup> Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. <sup>2</sup> Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. <sup>3</sup> And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

(2) Acts 11:22-26 <sup>22</sup> Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. <sup>23</sup> Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. <sup>24</sup> For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. <sup>25</sup> Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: <sup>26</sup> And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled

themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

- (3) II Corinthians 8:19 <sup>19</sup> And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:

ii) New Testament churches worked together to provide social relief gifts, not loans:

- (1) Acts 11:27-30 <sup>27</sup> And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. <sup>28</sup> And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. <sup>29</sup> Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: <sup>30</sup> Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.
- (2) Romans 15:25, 26 <sup>25</sup> But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. <sup>26</sup> For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

iii) New Testament churches were obviously involved in regional fellowship:

- (1) Galatians 1:2 <sup>2</sup> And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia:
- (2) I Corinthians 16:19 <sup>19</sup> The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.
- (3) Galatians 1:22 <sup>22</sup> And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:



## 7. The Church is a Commissioned Organization

A. The Lord Jesus established His churches to continue His work here on Earth.

This is not a social ministry, but a spiritual one. Just before the Lord returned to heaven, He left His Church with what is known as the “**Great Commission.**”

Look up Matthew 28:19-20 <sup>19</sup> **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**

### Note the action verbs:

- *Go* ye
- *teach* all nations,
- *baptizing* them
- *Teaching* them to observe

B. This Great Commission is repeated in each of the Gospels and in the Book of Acts. Read them and see exactly what the mission of a Baptist church is:

- Mark 16:15 (after Jesus had risen) <sup>15</sup> **And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**
- John 20:21 (after Jesus had risen) <sup>21</sup> Then said Jesus to them again, **Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.**
- Luke 24:46 <sup>46</sup> And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: <sup>47</sup> And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- Acts 1:8 (after Jesus had risen) <sup>8</sup> **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

- I Corinthians 15:58 (words of encouragement) <sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.
- Revelation 22:17 (words of encouragement) <sup>17</sup> And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

## 8. The Church has Ordinances

There are TWO ordinances each New Testament Baptist Church is to keep (“guard” and observe).

Read I Corinthians 11:2 <sup>2</sup> Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

- A. Baptism (Study 9)
- B. The Lord’s Supper (Study 12)

## 9. The Church is to be Financed

Christ has given His churches a plan to finance the work of the Lord  
Tithing and Stewardship will be taught in Study 20.

## 10. The Church and Me

Having learned all these things about a New Testament Baptist Church, how should they be applied? Here are some suggestions:

- A. **Join It** – It’s God’s will for every born-again believer to be a member of a sound, Bible believing, New Testament Baptist church.
  - i) Look up: Acts 2:47 <sup>47</sup> Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And **the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.**
  - ii) I Corinthians 12:18 <sup>18</sup> But now hath **God set the members** every one of them **in the body**, as it hath pleased him.

B. **Love It** - A Christian ought to love the things his Lord loves: Look up: Ephesians 5:25 <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, **even as Christ also loved the church**, and gave himself for it;

C. **Support It**

i) Your church is the place where you will grow, find comfort, and fellowship, and serve the Lord.

Look up Hebrews 10:25 <sup>25</sup> Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

ii) Plan to attend as many of the services and meetings of your church as you can. Decide in your heart never to miss a service unless providentially (Happening as if through divine intervention) hindered.

D. **Value It**

Look up: Acts 2:41-42 <sup>41</sup> Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup> And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

i) They **continued** steadfastly in the apostle's **doctrine**. Also read:

(1) Ephesians 4:11-15

(2) I Timothy 4:6,7

(3) II Peter 3:2

(4) Jude 17

ii) They **continued in fellowship**. Also read: I John 1:3

iii) They **continued in the breaking of bread** (eating). Acts 2:46 <sup>46</sup> And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

iv) They **continued in prayers**. Also read; Acts 4:23-32 and Acts 12:12

**Reading Assignment: I Timothy 3:**

<sup>1</sup> This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. <sup>2</sup> A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; <sup>3</sup> Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; <sup>4</sup> One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; <sup>5</sup> (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) <sup>6</sup> Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. <sup>8</sup> Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; <sup>9</sup> Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. <sup>11</sup> Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. <sup>13</sup> For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup> These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: <sup>15</sup> But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. <sup>16</sup> And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.