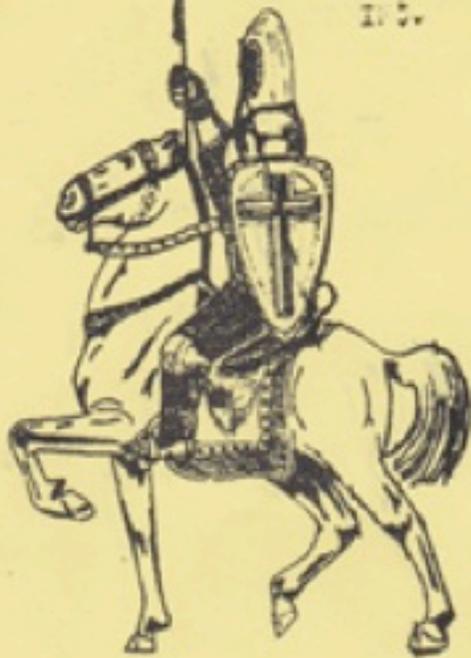


Christian Training Center



**CHRISTIAN TRAINING CENTER, INC.  
THE CHARISMATIC BIBLE INSTITUTE**

**Principal: Dr. Albert Grimes  
Sec. Treas.: Edith R. Grimes**

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**SPECIALIZED TRAINING IN GIFTS AND MINISTRIES**

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**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 1: The Church**  
**Matthew 16:18**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

In the beginning of our study on the Church, it would be very beneficial if we were to draw some comparisons between Israel and the Church, the Church and the Kingdom, the Church and Christendom, and many other things in which the Church in our day seems to be involved with. It would do away with much confusion. Then we would be able to really see the Church as it should be.

**THE CHURCH AND ISRAEL**

The Church is not Judaism, improved and continued. This is not the teaching brought out in Romans 11:17, that reads, “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree.”

It is true that because Israel fell out of favour with God because of their rejection of the Kingdom, that the Church Age came in, and because Israel as branches were cut off, that the Gentiles, or the Church was grafted in.

But we must understand that the firstfruits, and the root spoken of in Romans 11:16, “For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy...”, refer to the Patriarchs, or singly to Abraham. It was into these that the Gentiles or the Church were grafted and not into Israel the nation, as branches were cut off.

So the Church has no connection with Judaism, or its religion, for all these were done away with in Christ. This is suggested by the Lord Himself in John 10:16, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”

It is to be noticed that the other sheep referred to were the Gentiles or the Church, and Jesus said that they did not belong to the fold of Judaism and that in the future there would be one fold, and one shepherd. This one fold spoken of is the Church. This brings us to our next thought.

**THE CHURCH AND ISRAEL TODAY**

The statement that Jesus made in John 10:16, “...and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd”, refers to the revelation which was given to Paul in Ephesians 2:12-15, “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”

We must understand, that in the Church Age, Israel although they have their own state and government, for the most part, they are still scattered in amongst the nations in unbelief.

Romans 11:25 states, “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

The fullness of the Gentiles refers to the Church. So while the Church is being built, as the Lord said in Matthew 16:18, “...I will build my church...”, the Lord is bringing both Jews and Gentiles into the Church as one in Christ.

So from both Jew and Gentile, God is making one Church as stated in Colossians 3:11, “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.”

We make a great mistake when we call people Christian Jews. A Christian is not a Jew or a Gentile. His nationality is not considered. He is a Christian. Thus this union of Jew and Gentile will go on until the Church is

completed or, "The fullness of the Gentiles be come in".

## THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM

The Church is in the Kingdom but yet the Church is absolutely different from the Kingdom.

The Church had its beginning before the foundation of the world, according to Ephesians 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

The Kingdom had its beginning from the foundation of the world as stated in Matthew 25:34, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

The Kingdom refers to the Millennial Kingdom yet to come, spoken of in Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

This Kingdom was announced by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:1-2, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Jesus also preached about this kingdom in Matthew 4:23, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom..."

After this kingdom had been witnessed to, Christ presented Himself to Israel as their king in order that this kingdom could be set up as John 12:12-15 relates, "On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt."

The nation of Israel rejected the King, and the kingdom, and crucified their own king. And what Pilate wrote upon the cross proved what Israel as a nation had done. John 19:19 states, "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews."

It was after this rejection that God in 70 A.D. scattered them in the midst of the nations (Romans 11:25), and the Church Age came in.

Although in the Dispensation of Grace the Church is God's main purpose, yet in its mystery form, the Kingdom is still being added to, or being prepared, for it is referred to in the parables of Matthew 13. This mystery of the Kingdom is referred to in Matthew 13:11, "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."

In the Church Age men are being born into the kingdom as well as being added to the Church as stated in John 3:3, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then in verse 5, "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Then the Church was added to in Acts 2:47, "...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Although the Kingdom has been rejected by the nation of Israel, it is still being enlarged, as men are being born into it, even in the Dispensation of Grace. Yet it is a mystery hidden in the background, and Christ as its king is reigning in the hearts of those who belong to the Kingdom, as stated in Luke 17:20,21, "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

But this kingdom, which is in its mystery form, will be set up when the Lord returns in the Revelations to the earth.

The Church, which is a separate thing in the plan of God from the Kingdom, will be complete in the Rapture. However, the Church will become part of this same Kingdom, as it rules with Christ in the Kingdom. We will deal further with this in this same study.

## **THE CHURCH AND CHRISTENDOM**

The term Christendom refers to those parts of the world, where most of the inhabitants profess the Christian faith. And so we are to understand that the word Christendom then means the professing Church, as man sees it composed of all sects and cults that profess to be Christian.

It refers to the outward display of religion which the world has come to know as the Church, but it is a confused mass of all kinds of beliefs, and practices, and in most cases, for the most part does not accept the Word of God. And in most cases its members only profess Christianity.

The true Church is only composed of all those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. They are not professors, but they through faith in Christ, and a personal acceptance of him are Born Again by the Spirit of God. They are children of God. They have received Him, therefore, they are the Sons of God as in John 1:12, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

And it is those who are Sons of God, whose names are written in the Book of Life. These only belong to the True Church, as Philippians 4:3 relates, "...with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."

## **THE CHURCH AND DENOMINATIONALISM**

We often speak of the various Denominations as churches, for instance, The Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Reform Church, and the Roman Catholic Church.

Let us understand that the use of this term "Church" does not occur in the Scriptures. Some of these same denominations even claim to be the only True Church.

These so called Churches are nothing more than denominations and as denominations are sects that have to be joined. Believers are added to the Church as soon as they are saved, Acts 2:47, and set in it, 1 Corinthians 12:18.

Webster defines the term "denomination" as follows: "a class, or society of individuals called by the same name; a sect, as a denomination of Christians".

These humanistic systems have been responsible for the dividing of the Universal Church into sects, that only seek to propagate their own type of teaching, and enlarge their own borders. There are 250 different groups in the United States alone.

The Church is one Universal Church functioning and fellowshiping as one, not many churches.

## **THE CHURCH AND THE CLAIMS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH SYSTEM**

This system of Religion misinterprets the scriptures, and tries to prove that the Roman Church, as being the only True Church, was built upon Saint Peter, who was the first pope, and that every successive pope is a direct line from Peter.

According to this Church, Peter was the rock on which the Church was to be built and as Christ promised to Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, that therefore, the Pope and his successors can unlock, the gates of purgatory. The scriptures used to prove this are found in Matthew 16:18,19, "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. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

This statement of Jesus concerning Peter is the answer to a statement that Peter made by the Holy Spirit in Matthew 16:16, "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

It was upon this rock, "Christ the Son of the Living God", that the Church was to be built. When Jesus said, "thou art Peter", the Greek word "petros" is used. This is describing Peter. It means "a stone", "a small fragment of a rock". While the word "petra" means "a rock", or "a large mass of stone". So Jesus is saying, thou

art Peter or “petros” the small fragment of a rock (Matthew 16:18), but upon this rock “petra”, a large mass of stone representing Christ Himself, I will build my Church.

Then it must also be understood that the Keys of the Kingdom with the power of binding and loosing was not only given to Peter, but to all the Church, as seen from Matthew 18:17-18, “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. 18 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.”

Then it must be understood that Peter never was given the keys of death and hell allowing him or anyone succeeding him to unlock the gates of hell or death. The keys of hell and death are in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as stated in Revelation 1:17-18, “...Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

So the claims of the Roman Church are without any scriptural foundation and must be considered as false.

Even Peter himself is careful to point out that Christ was the Rock upon which the Church was built as in Acts 4:10-11, “Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.” Then a study of 1 Peter 2:3-8, proves the same fact, that Christ is the Rock. 1 Corinthians 3:11, “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

## **THE CHURCH AND THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES**

We must understand that the Church was a New Testament revelation, and that the word “Church” is not found in the Old Testament because of the fact that the Church did not then exist, and being a mystery or sacred secret of the New Testament it is not even a subject of Old Testament prophecy.

The fact that it is only a New Testament revelation is pointed out in Ephesians 3:5-6, “Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”

Then it is to be noticed that the word “Church” is used but twice in the four gospels. Once, of a local church in Matthew 18:17, “...tell it unto the church...”, and once in a prophetic sense of the true Church which was yet to be formed, Matthew 16:18, “...I will build my church...”

The true Church could not exist until Christ died, for the Church must be redeemed by His blood, as stated in Ephesians 5:25-27:

1. Ephesians 5:25, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”
2. Ephesians 5:26, “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”
3. Ephesians 5:27, “That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

The true Church could not have existed until Christ’s resurrection for it partakes of His resurrection life, and the Church is the harvest of which Christ in His resurrection is the firstfruits. This is pointed out in 1 Corinthians 15:22-23, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.” The Church came into existence after the firstfruits.

Then the Church could not exist until after his resurrection, and ascension, for he himself must first be exalted to become the Head over all things to the Church as stated in Ephesians 1:20-22, “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.” This is who is head of the Church.

Then the Church could not be empowered until Christ was exalted to the right hand of God as pointed

out in Acts 2:33, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” This scripture relates to the outflowing of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, we must turn to the Epistles for the unfolding of the doctrines of the Church. If we could understand it, and abide by it, it would save much trouble and confusion, because of so-called revelations of Church truth taught from the Old Testament.

## **WHAT IS THE CHURCH?**

As we have already brought out that it is exclusively from the New Testament that the real meaning, and idea of the Church is derived.

In the defining of the Church, two Greek words are of special importance in this connection. The first word is “ecclesia”, from two Greek words meaning “to call out from”. This word is used about one hundred and eleven times in the New Testament.

The principal idea is that the saints are called out ones, as stated in Acts 15:14, “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.”

A further statement in relationship to this same idea is to be found in Romans 8:30, “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called...” Then also in 1 Corinthians 1:2, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...”

This calling out from and become separate from is further brought out in 2 Corinthians 6:17, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.” So the Church is made up of those who have been called out, and separated from the world.

The other word is “kuriakon”, and it means “that which belongs to the Lord”. This word is found in five New Testament scriptures, and it relates to that which the Lord had dominion, and authority over.

As we use these two words together, in their relationship to the Church, we have this thought: The church is composed of the body of believers who are called out from this world, and who are under the dominion and authority of Jesus Christ.

## **THE SYMBOLISM OF THE CHURCH**

The relationship existing between Christ and the Church is set forth in a variety of symbols, each one bringing forth a prominent truth regarding the Church. These symbols should be studied very carefully.

### **THE CHURCH IS SPOKEN OF AS THE NEW MAN**

This symbol is brought out in Ephesians 2:15, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”

The truth of this symbolism, reveals the fact that the old distinction between Jew and Gentiles has been absolutely put away in the Church for the bringing together of Jew and Gentile, has produced a third order of man, “The Christian Man”.

So in the Church composed of both Jew and Gentile, God has produced a new immortal, divine race of men, which is the answer to God’s plan in Genesis 1:26, “And God said, Let us make man in our image...” The word “man” in Ephesians 2:15 is speaking of an individual, a new creation made up of male and female, the mystical Body of Christ.

### **THE CHURCH IS SPOKEN OF AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Two principal truths are taught in this symbol. First, as the Body of Christ, the Church has a relationship to Christ, who is Head of the Church as stated in Ephesians 1:22, “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.”

Then also in Colossians 1:18, “And he is the head of the body, the church...” Also, Colossians 2:19, “And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”

The Church in this sense is not an organization, but an organism, and there is a vital relationship between Christ as the Head of the Church, and the Church as his body. It is two fold. The Head is in heaven but filling the body in the Holy Spirit on earth. Both partake of the same life, just as there is between the physical head, and the body. As the Head of the Church, Christ is the director, controller, and protector and guardian. This is the thought in Ephesians 5:23,24, “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. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ...”

Christ is also the source of its life, filling it with His fullness as Ephesians 1:23 states, “Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

The Church is also a habitations of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit as stated in Ephesians 2:22, “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Not only has the Church a relationship to Christ as its Head, but secondly the Church has an internal relationship of one member to another. For after being baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body, this oneness of relationship is brought about by the one Holy Spirit. For all believers are all irrigated by the one Holy Spirit. This is the thought in 1 Corinthians 12:13, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

So every believer in the Body of Christ is empowered and moved upon and has the life of the Holy Spirit.

As feet and hands, and eyes are placed into the human body for a special function, so these same members are also placed into a special place into the Body of Christ.

Adding and giving to the Body of Christ what the Lord and the Holy Spirit has spiritually equipped them with in ministries and spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 12:14-18, “For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him,” a perfect coordination of members.

The fact of believers all having a function in the body is further brought out in Romans 12:4-8, “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.” So we being many in different functions are one body in Christ.

We as members one of another in the Body, are to walk worthy of the vocation into which we are called as stated in Ephesians 4:1, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.”

How we are to walk is also brought out and the purpose of our ministry is to bring the unity of the Spirit as stated in Ephesians 4:2-3, “With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

We as members of the one body can bring to pass what is desired of us, by the Lord because of the grace that is given to us.

Ephesians 4:7, “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”

Beside the ministries, which every member has to function in the body, there are four Building and Instructive ministries which are purposely put into the Body to minister and throughout the universal Body of Christ. These ministries are not just local but universal, ministering through the entire length, and breadth of the Body of Christ. These are as stated in Ephesians 4:11, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

In their ministry to the whole Body of Christ, they should bring three special things to pass in relationship to the other members of the Body. These are mentioned in Ephesians 4:12, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

The word "perfecting" means "to complete thoroughly", "to adjust, repair, to join together".

The word "ministry" refers to the ministry of the believer, his own ministry. He is to be taught to minister.

The word "edifying" speaks of the building of a structure, "the making of a family", "a home", "a household".

Their work in the Body of Christ is evident, as they minister together in their separate functions throughout the whole Body of Christ. They complete thoroughly the saints. They bring the saints into the knowledge of their own ministry, and build the saints of God into the household of God, working mature members in the Body of Christ. All ministry is to be judged on this basis. Are we building for Christ?

It must be understood that all these ministries are to work together for the one great purpose of building the Church of God as Ephesians 4:16 states, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

### **THE CHURCH IS SPOKEN OF AS THE TEMPLE OF GOD**

The Church as the Temple of God is a building of which Christ is the chief cornerstone, and the apostles and prophets are its foundations, as stated in Ephesians 2:20-22, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

It is evident that the Church in this sense is God's dwelling place, and He fills it with His presence and life and power.

Then another fact that all should understand that the ministries of Ephesians 4:11, plus all the other ministries that are local and not universal, build upon the foundation which the apostles and prophets have laid, and that all will be rewarded according to the work done.

For we read in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, "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. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Some men's works will be works of their own choosing, and not what God intended them to do. Thus they will suffer loss when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Each believer is a stone which builds up this spiritual temple in which spiritual sacrifices are offered up to God as pointed out in 1 Peter 2:5, "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."

Christ is the foundation of this building which is the Church as stated in 1 Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The other passages referring to the apostles and prophets being the foundation point to the fact of their foundational position in the church. But we must understand that Christ, Himself, is both corner stone, and foundation as in Matthew 16:18, "...and upon this rock I will build my church..."

### **THE CHURCH IS SPOKEN OF AS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST**

The Church in its present position is espoused to Christ. The marriage is to take place in the heavens, just before the return of the Lord, to the earth, as stated in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

This marriage takes place in heaven just before the Lord returns to set up His Kingdom as Revelation 19:7-9 reveals, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb..."

Some have advanced the teaching that there is a difference between the Bride and the Church, and that only a certain group of overcomers are in this Bride group, not all the Church. But the scriptures point out to us, that all the Church is the Bride of Christ as Ephesians 5:24,25, states, "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

Paul draws a striking comparison between the relationship that exists between man and wife, and Christ and the Church, but quite clearly and emphatically insists that the Church of God, the whole called out and redeemed body, is the Bride of Christ.

This is not only true according to the scriptures, but a study of the symbols relating to the Church prove this to be true, for the symbolism reveals a "New Man", the "Body of Christ", the "Temple of God", the "Bride of Christ", a conclusive oneness.

## **THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH**

It is taught by many that the Church came into existence on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles and others were baptized into the Body of Christ by the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. That every believer since that first experience has been also baptized into the Body of Christ through this same experience. The scripture used to prove this is 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

This kind of teaching does much harm and brings much confusion in relation to the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

If the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is to be made the experience that baptizes me into the Body of Christ, then thousands of born again believers are not in the Church. For they have not received this experience, for the experience is definitely connected with the evidence of tongues in all scriptures where the experience is received.

Peter explains the receiving of the Holy Spirit as something which could be seen, and heard as Acts 2:33 relates, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

How did the apostles know that the household of Cornelius had received this same experience as they had? This is explained in Acts 10:45-47, "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

So it must be understood that being Baptized in the Holy Spirit is an experience which does not refer to what is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12:13.

A clear understanding of the Doctrine of Baptisms as referred to in Hebrews 6:2, "Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment", will give us an understanding of what is being taught in 1 Corinthians 12:13. According to the doctrine, we are first Baptized into Jesus Christ, or we are identified with Him in his death. After which we are baptized, or submerged into a oneness into the Body of Christ, all drinking of the one Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), baptized in water (Acts 2:38), then baptized in the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4, with Matthew 3:11), and baptized into his suffering (Matthew 20:21-23).

We are added to the Church after we are saved as in Acts 2:47, "...And the Lord added to the church

daily such as should be saved.”

As well as being added to the Church we are also according to 1 Corinthians 12:13, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit”, baptized or submerged into oneness. This happens when we are added according to Acts 2:47.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit has to do with our being sealed unto the day of redemption as in Ephesians 1:13,14, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” Then Ephesians 4:30 states, “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

Then it has also to do with power for service as in Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...”

Then to complete our ministry we are further Baptized in suffering as in Matthew 20:22-23, “But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with....” All these Baptisms complete the doctrine of Baptisms.

The Church began after the resurrection of Christ, when He breathed upon his disciples. It was at that time when they were regenerated, or born of the Spirit as John 20:22 reveals, “And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”

After this experience, the Church received its first members who were at once instructed to bring others into the same church as Verse 23 states, “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

This Church increased until the number was about one hundred and twenty as in Acts 1:15, “And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty).”

In order to complete the number of apostles in this new Church, one was chosen to take the place of Judas as stated in Acts 1:26, “And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

So the Church began after Christ’s resurrection, with about 120 members and twelve apostles.

## **THE EMPOWERING OF THE CHURCH**

It is clearly seen that the Church did not begin at Pentecost, but that it was empowered at Pentecost. The Holy Ghost came upon an already waiting Church as stated in Acts 2:1, “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”

The promise of power had already been given to the Church in Luke 24:49, “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

As a Church Christ opened up their understanding in order that they might understand the Scriptures that they might be able to carry the great commission, Luke 24:45, “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.”

The Church was commissioned by Christ before they received the promised power of the Holy Ghost as Matthew 28:18-20 reveals, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 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.”

Then further instructions in regard to what would take place in the ministries of those who believed is revealed in Mark 16:15-18, “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new

tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

After Christ had given the commission to the Church, he left them and returned to heaven as Mark 16:19 states, “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”

After which he sent forth the Holy Spirit upon the already commissioned church in Acts 2:33, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”

So at Pentecost the Church, already instructed, having about 120 members and twelve apostles was empowered. In Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, from this event on, has had an individual experience, apart from regeneration, which is always accompanied by the evidence of speaking in tongues. So it is not scriptural to teach that all believers are baptized into the Body of Christ by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and that all who are regenerated have the Baptism of the Spirit.

## **THE TWO ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH**

The Church in its first sense is Universal, taking to itself every born again believer in the world. So the Universal Church, the Body of Christ, is represented by all believers, worldwide.

These believers are set in this Church after the Lord adds them to the Church as stated in Acts 2:47, “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

This setting of the believer relates to their ministry, 1 Corinthians 12:18, “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.”

To understand the terms “added” and “set”, brings out the fact that believers do not join this Church. They are added by the Lord into it as soon as they accept Christ, after which God gives them a particular place in the Body.

Not only are we to teach regarding the Universal Church on earth, but we are to also see it as it is in heaven.

So the Church is composed on earth of all those whose names are written in the Book of Life as stated in Luke 10:20, “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” These we would call, “those who are alive and remain”, as stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Then there are those who have departed this life and are in the presence of God. These are spoken of in Hebrews 12:23, “...and to the spirits of just men made perfect.” These would possibly make up about 75% of the Body of Christ.

So it must be understood that there is a church in heaven, just as there a church upon the earth. The only time in which the whole church will be upon the earth will be at the time of the Rapture of the Church. This takes place as revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, when the dead in Christ will come back to this earth in order to receive their glorified bodies. And, we which are alive and remain for a few moments, both will be together on this earth. Then we will all be caught up to meet Christ in the air.

## **THE CHURCH LOCAL**

The Universal Church, because of locality is divided into smaller units called Local Churches. This is pointed out in Acts 8:1, “...the church which was at Jerusalem...”, and in Acts 13:1, “...the church that was at Antioch...”

These local churches were not called after some Denomination, but they were named according to the city or town, or village in which they existed, as in 1 Corinthians 1:2, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth...”

It was the saints of God that made the church in these different localities, not a building, as in 1 Corinthians 1:2, “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 theirs and ours.” The saints in Corinth were vitally connected with all the saints who were in every place, universal, yet every local church was sovereign in itself, carrying on its own work without any interference from other local churches, but having fellowship with them.

## **THE MINISTRIES IN THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH**

There are three different kinds of ministries set in the Universal Church by God as stated in 1 Corinthians 12:18, “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” And every member that is set is also added to the church as stated in Acts 2:47, “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Then all have a ministry in one of these three groups, as stated in Romans 12:4, “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office (or ministry).” And these three groups are:

1. The Building and Instructive Ministries. These are spoken of in Ephesians 4:11, “...apostles...prophets...evangelists...pastors and teachers.” Their work of building and instructing the Body of Christ is described in Ephesians 4:12-16. They are to bring the Body to maturity.
2. The Sign Gift Ministries. 1 Corinthians 12:28. Gifts that have become outstanding in the ministries, for the purpose of winning many souls to the Church, through the operation of miracles, gifts of healings, and diversities of tongues.
3. The Support Ministries. Romans 12:8, Exhortation, Giving, and Shewing Mercy. These ministries are to be found throughout the Universal Church, and also in the Local Church.

## **THE PROGRESSION OF LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION**

In order to understand church organization, we must study throughout the whole of the Book of Acts to the Book of Revelation. And in doing so, we will find that church government in the local church was progressive. It developed in stages. The first principle of organization is to be found in the church at Jerusalem. This church was a school, and a church combined, and its government consisted of Apostles and Elders, as is stated in Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23, “The Apostles and elders”.

From this school where the apostles taught, as is stated in Acts 6:4, “But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word”, trained workers were sent, trained in their ministries, from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth, Acts 1:8.

This church was so well trained by the apostles, that when it scattered, they went every where preaching the Word as stated in Acts 8:4, “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”

It was from this school that Philip, a trained Evangelist, went to Samaria, Acts 8:5, and many were saved and healed. Then Peter and John who were apostles were sent to help them as in Acts 8:15.

Then also those of the church that were scattered, went as far as Antioch, Acts 11:19, and another work was established there, after which Barnabas, another trained worker, was sent there to establish the work.

Barnabas then brought Saul there to teach, for a whole year, Acts 11:22-26. This was the first type of organization set forth in the church, and according to history this same principle was carried on in the larger cities.

After the church at Jerusalem came into existence and ministry went forth, that church and other churches came into existence. Acts 13:1, “...the church that was at Antioch...”

These local churches were named according to the locality in which they existed as in 1 Corinthians 1:2, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth...”

Now in these local churches the principle of collective eldership came forth, as stated in Acts 14:23, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church..." This type of collective eldership was related to again in Titus 1:5, "...and ordain elders in every city..."

Now we should understand that these believers in every local church with the elders were vitally connected with all the saints who were in every place universal, as stated in 1 Corinthians 1:2, "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 theirs and ours."

Yet every local church was sovereign in itself, carrying on its own work without any interference from other local churches, but having fellowship with them. All these local churches with a local government of collective eldership, were kept in fellowship by the Body Ministries of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Teachers, which travelled throughout these churches.

It must be understood that these travelling ministries had no ruling authority over any local church. They only ministered by invitation, and this relates even to Apostles, once the church had been turned over to the local elders.

Now we must understand that collective eldership was just another process in the progressive growth of church government. As we have stated in the early part of the church, we find the orders of Apostles and Elders in Acts 15:2, and later the two offices of Presbyters and Deacons in Philippians 1:1, "...the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."

Now to go further into our study, the history of the church leaves no room for doubt that on the death of the foundational Apostles, a new order came into the local churches. It states that one among the Presbyters of each church was selected to preside over the rest and to him was applied the title of Bishop, or Overseer, or Pastor. The early church historians relate that the Apostle John, the last of the twelve, established overseers as Presidents of the Presbytery. This form of government was more perfect and practical and soon spread over the Christian world. This statement comes forth from "The Life and Epistles of Paul", Conybeare and Howson, page 340.

Now as we closely study the scriptures we find this same principle of governments, of Pastors and Elders related to in Revelation 2 and 3, regarding the seven messages to the churches.

Seven times we have the words "To the angel of the church write". These messages were written to one who was in charge of the church. They were symbols of authority. The word "angel" means "messenger" but in Revelation 1:20, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches".

They were the rulers or teachers of the congregation. These are compared as such in Daniel 12:3, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Then the word "angel" or "messenger" in Malachi 3:1, "Behold, I will send my messenger (angel)..." Then in Malachi 2:7, "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger (angel) of the Lord of hosts." Thus the word is used of the teaching priest and the prophet.

The angels related to in Revelation 2 and 3, and the stars of Revelation 1:20 must be considered as forming the transition from the Presbyters of the Apostolic age to the Bishop or Pastor of the second century. This final form of local church government we consider to be the completed form with Pastor, Elders, and Deacons.

This order of the local church was much like the order which prevailed in the Jewish synagogues. There was a college of elders as in Luke 7:3, "...the elders of the Jews...", and these elders were presided over by one who was the chief of the synagogue as in Luke 8:41,49, "And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue...49 ...there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house..." The ruler acted as the delegate of the congregation and was the chief reader of the law and the prayers in their name.

Then there was the minister of the synagogue in Luke 4:20, "And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister..." This minister had duties of a lower kind, resembling to those of the local church deacon. He was to open the building for the service and prepare it. Thus the final form of local church government followed the principles of the governments of the Jewish synagogues with a Pastor, Elders, and Deacons.

Groups of believers should be careful that they do not come under the unscriptural pattern of collective eldership, and an Apostolic hierarchy. We knew one so-called Apostle who started local churches and ordained elders in them.

From each church was going to him over one hundred dollars a month. There are others in this movement in our day who have the same thing in mind. All over the country they are having Shepherd Conferences trying to organize groups of believers and churches. These kinds of teachers bring nothing else but bondage into the churches.

If any groups are to organize themselves into scriptural local churches, the order of Pastor, Elders, and Deacons is the scriptural form and all other outside ministries only come into the local church by invitation only, and they have no ruling authority whatsoever in any local church.

The Elders were to carry on their own work, among those portions of the flock given to their charge. They could also find help among the members of their own groups. These members, other than Elders, Exhorters, and Shewers of Mercy with healing gifts, could assist the Elders in regards to their own groups even to visitation and praying for the sick and those under evil spirit control and those who need counseling.

If problems arise which cannot be overcome by the Elders in charge, he is free to bring other Elders to help with the problems. If the problems cannot be overcome even by Elders then they are to come to the Pastor and together these problems can be dealt with.

There must be stated times when the Elders will come together with the Pastor and problems of ministry can be discussed and principles of doctrine, methods of ministering and the general things that relate to the Assembly life and practice can be freely discussed among themselves. In this way the Pastor is informed of all that is going on in the assembly and he will be able to give advice and counsel accordingly.

The Deacons relate to another office in the church. These are mentioned in Philippians 1:1, "...with the bishops and deacons." Then in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, in the original meaning of the word it implied a helper, an assistant. Special directions as to qualifications for the duties of deacons is to be found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Their work relates to preparing the rooms for meetings, the distributing of alms, looking after the order at the meetings, baptizing new converts, distributing the elements at the Lord's supper.

The Deaconess is mentioned in Romans 16:1, and in 1 Timothy 3:11, and Titus 2:3, and they are identified with the widows of 1 Timothy 5:3-10. The office seems to have been confined mainly to widows, though virgins were not absolutely excluded. Their duties were to take care of the sick and poor, to instruct in catechisms, to assist in baptism of women and to exercise a general supervision over female church members. They would be subject to the elders in charge and work with them in the portions of the membership under each one's charge, and be subject to the Pastor, as all Elders and Deacons are. The deacons and deaconesses will also meet with the Pastor at stated times to also receive counsel in regards to their problems or needs. In this way the Pastor would be kept in touch with the areas relating to the deacons and deaconesses.

Now interrelated with the working through these offices are the other members of the church who have confirmed ministries and gifts. The Pastor and Elders are responsible for the Spiritual operation and growth of the church and every member, office holder or not, must be operative in gifts and ministry, and the needs inside and outside of the church will provide opportunity. Elders can teach in homes spreading the influence of the church into the community helped by trained ministries. The church must become a center of instruction where ministries can be trained, and sent out to spread the influence of the local church, and schools of instruction for the children where they can be indoctrinated in the Word of God, as children should. The younger men and women taught in their own ministries should also become operative. In this sense only, can we be called a Charismatic or New Testament Church.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 1**

1. Explain why the church has no connections with Israel.
2. In what way do the Jews belong to the church body?
3. Explain the difference between the church and the kingdom?
4. What is the difference between the church and Christendom?
5. Explain the difference between Denominations and the Church.
6. What proof do we have that the claims of the Roman Catholic Church are wrong?
7. Give scripture to prove that the church was not a subject of Old Testament teaching.
8. What is the Church?
9. In how many symbols is the church set forth? Name them.
10. Does being Baptized in the Holy Spirit place me in the Church? Explain.
11. When was the Church empowered?
12. Explain the two aspects of the Church.
13. Into what is the Universal Church divided?
14. Explain the ministries in the Universal Church.
15. Explain in short form the progression of Local Church Government.

**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 2: The Pastor and Teacher**  
**Ephesians 4:11**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

In our study in regards to the Pastor-Teacher we must understand that we are dealing with a Ministry just as much as we are dealing with a ministry when we speak of Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists. These are not just Elders. They are ministries.

“Ministries” are individuals. They are professions relating to our place in the Body of Christ, called “administrations” in 1 Corinthians 12:5, and “office or profession” in Romans 12:4. Being an Elder or Bishop, or a presbyter only relates to an office in the church, not a ministry. 1 Timothy 3:1, “...if a man desire the office of a bishop...” The same is stated of deacons in 1 Timothy 3:13, “...used the office of a deacon...” The word office does not relate to ministries. Because a man has the office of an elder in a local church does not give him the ministry of a Pastor-Teacher.

Nor does it prove that he is a Pastor-Teacher because he is made an overseer, same as elder or bishop, and that is the Greek meaning of the word. It means “feed” or “pastor”. Even this cannot be made to mean that elders are all Pastor-Teachers. Pastor-Teachers just as Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists are gifted men given to the church, Ephesians 4:8.

Then again we must understand that all of the ministries of Ephesians 4:11 are elders, as is stated in 1 Peter 5:1, “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder...” 2 John 1:1, “The elder unto the elect lady and her children...” Both Peter and John were Apostles by ministry but elders in office in the church. They were not Pastor-Teachers because they were elders. In ministry they were Apostles.

This is the problem with collective eldership. Men are made elders without their ministries being even understood and as far as they understand they are all Pastor-Teachers and this is a scriptural impossibility. For we are in the ministry that God has given us. We have been confirming ministries since 1934 and we know according to experience that Pastor-Teachers are not that plentiful. The whole problem is a matter of understanding terms. These relate to the fact that a Pastor-Teacher relates to a Ministry and an elder relates to an Office. The fact remains that putting a person into an office does not make him a ministry.

Another wrong principle is that a man must be an elder in a church before he can have any kind of ministry afterwards. As soon as a person is saved, he is set in the Body of Christ, and being set relates to his ministry for his individuality makes the ministry. While he is in a local church he is first an Apostle, or Prophet, or Evangelist, or Pastor-Teacher in training. Second, he is an elder because of the ministry which he has.

A Pastor-Teacher is a ministry just the same as the Apostle, Prophet, or Evangelist, and as the two words relate as we are taught, to one and the same person, so we are taught that a Pastor-Teacher is one ministry. Yet in 1 Corinthians 12:28, we have a statement, “...thirdly teachers...” Then also in Acts 13:1, “...prophets and teachers...” Then in 1 Corinthians 12:29, “...are all teachers...”, Hebrews 5:12, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers...” The word means “an instructor”.

We have found by actual experience that these two words Pastor-Teacher cannot relate to the one person, for the same men are Pastors, or Shepherds, and some are as the above scriptures confirm “teachers”. The Greek word “didaskalos” for teacher is different from the Greek word “poimen” for a Pastor. These are two different ministries in the church. So the Pastor is a shepherd of the flock by ministry and an elder as regards office. Because he is a Pastor by ministry that makes him the head elder or the Pastor.

There is a two fold area that the Pastor works in. In the first sense he is connected with the Building and Instructive ministries of Ephesians 4:11, “Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists”. What the Apostle plants, 1 Corinthians 3:6, “I have planted...”, the Prophet confirms and exhorts, Acts 15:32, “And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.” Then what the Teacher waters, 1 Corinthians 3:6, “...Apollos watered...”, and the Evangelist adds to the church, Acts 8:12, “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”

The Pastor has to mold into a working church the local church and as we have said this does not make him just a local elder. He belongs to the body ministries like the Apostles and Prophets in Ephesians 4:11. This enables him to have a larger sphere of service. He has both a Body ministry like the Apostle, Prophet, and Evangelist, and a local church ministry. This is why we have to be careful of our treatment of this ministry. If we place him as just one of the Elders of the local church, he loses his function in regards to the Body, and this cuts off the local church from any body function.

If we place him as he should be placed, as a Pastor, the overseer, the head elder of the church, with local elders to work with him and support his ministry, the Pastor is the Shepherd of the local church, and all of the church's life, practice, doctrine, and operation come under his direction. This is an impossible task for one man alone, but with the ordaining of elders to work with the Pastor, then this responsibility is divided.

They are the under-shepherds of the flock and it is divided amongst the Elders. This is brought out in 1 Peter 5:2,3, "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; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock." The word "heritage" is the translation of a word meaning "a lot" as is the words "gave forth their lots" in Acts 1:26. In 1 Peter 5:3 it relates to the lots or charge given the Elders. "The portions entrusted to you" could be the translation. Instead of lording it over those portions of the flock assigned to them these under shepherds were exhorted to be examples to the entire flock. Thus these elders were overseers over portions of the flock. Each Elder was responsible for so many members. They were to "feed" which means to teach, shepherd, guide, and guard the flock.

When we understand that in the early church and for three hundred years of church history that no church buildings were used and the church met in the homes of believers, because of this it was necessary to have Elders in charge of these house churches or meeting houses as stated in Acts 2:46, "...from house to house..." Then in Romans 16:5, "Likewise greet the church that is in their house." They were under the Pastor's guidance to rule over the flock as stated in Romans 12:8, "...he that ruleth, with diligence..." speaking of an elder. Then in 1 Timothy 5:17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."

Because of the fact that the Elders shepherd part of the flock and are to be able to teach, this allows the Pastor to give his whole time to teaching and directing the work of the church in the same principle way in which the early apostles were released by the ordaining of those to look after the widows in Acts 6:1-6. The widows were neglected in the daily ministrations, Acts 6:2, "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. 3 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."

It is not a scriptural principle to have a Pastor, who is just like the captain of a ship doing things that other crew members can do. Like the Apostles he is to give himself continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word and directing the church.

The church member is to remember them, that is the Elders that have the rule over them, as in Hebrews 13:7, "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." We are to remember with a view to observing their admonitions. Then we are to know them who labour among us as in 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."

The Elders were to carry on their own work, among those portions of the flock given to their charge. They could also find help among the members of their own groups. These members, other than Elders, Exhorters and Shewers of Mercy with healing and deliverance gifts, could assist the Elders in regards to their own groups even to visitation and praying for the sick and those under evil spirit control and those who need counseling.

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There must be stated times when the Elders will come together with the Pastor and problems of ministry can be discussed, and principles of doctrine, methods of ministering, and the general things that relate to the Assembly Life and practice can be freely discussed among themselves. In this way the Pastor is informed of all that is going on in the assembly and he will be able to give advice and counsel accordingly.

The Deacons relate to another office in the church. These are mentioned in Philippians 1:1, "...with the bishops and deacons", Then in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In the original meaning of the word it implied a helper, an assistant. Special directions as to qualifications for the duties of deacons is to be found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Their work relates to preparing the rooms for meetings, the distributing of alms, looking after the order at the meetings, baptizing new converts, distributing the elements of the Lord's supper.

The Deaconess is mentioned in Romans 16:1 and in 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3, and they are identified with the widows of 1 Timothy 5:3-10. The office seems to have been confined mainly to widows though virgins were not absolutely excluded. Their duties were to take care of the sick and poor, to instruct in catechisms, to assist in baptism of women and to exercise a general supervision over female church members. They would be subject to the elders in charge and work with them in the portions of the membership under each one's charge, and be subject to the Pastor, as all Elders and Deacons are. The deacons and deaconesses will also meet with the Pastor as stated times to also receive counsel in regards to their problems or needs. In this way the Pastor would be kept in touch with the areas relating to the deacons and deaconesses.

Now interrelated with the working through these offices are the other members of the church who have confirmed ministries and gifts. The Pastor and Elders are responsible for the Spiritual operation and growth of the church and every member, office holder or not, must be operative in gifts and ministry and the needs inside and outside of the church will provide opportunity. Elders can teach in homes spreading the influence of the church into the community helped by trained ministries. The church must become a center of instruction where ministries can be trained, and sent out to spread the influence of the local church, and Schools of instruction for the children where they can be indoctrinated in the Word of God, as children should. The younger men and women, taught in their own ministries, should also become operative. In this sense only, can we be called a Charismatic or a New Testament Church.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 2**

1. When we deal with the Pastor-Teacher, what are we actually dealing with?
2. What are ministries?
3. What are the ministries of Ephesians 4:11, also in the Church?
4. What is the problem of collective Eldership?
5. Do the terms Pastor-Teacher relate to one person? Explain.
6. What twofold area does the Pastor relate to?
7. Explain the work of the Deacons.
8. Explain what the Elders are.
9. How do the Elders work in the Church?
10. What is the Pastor and the Elder responsible for?

## Book 14: The Church

# Lesson 3: The Qualifications of an Elder or Bishop, the Elders, Deacons and Women

Ephesians 4:11

By Dr. Albert Grimes

These qualifications were set down by Paul as he is advising Timothy as he is setting in order the government of the Ephesus Church. In 1 Timothy 3:2 we read, “A bishop then must be blameless...” The word “blameless” means that a bishop must be of such a spotless character that no one can lay hold upon anything in his life which would be of such a nature as to cast reproach upon the cause of the Lord Jesus.

“The husband of one wife”. The bishop should be a man, who loves only one woman as his wife. What is here forbidden is bigamy under any circumstances.

”Vigilant”, which means to be calm, dispassionate, and circumspect or must use wise caution.

“Sober”, or sober minded, serious, earnest, dignified.

“...given to hospitality”, meaning one who is fond of offering hospitality. The hospitality spoken of here found its occasion in the fact that in the days of the great Roman persecutions, Christians were banished and persecuted and rendered homeless. Or in the case of travelling preachers, and teachers, ministering from Church to Church, these servants of God were to be received, and cared for by the bishop. Or because in the early centuries the Local Church had no Church edifice in which to worship. The Church met in the homes of an individual. The bishop should be glad to thus open his home for this purpose.

“Apt to teach”. Not merely given to teaching, but able and skilled in it. Then in verse 3, “not given to wine”. The meaning is that the bishop in partaking of wine which in the first century was a common beverage not having the associations with which it is identified today, must not drink it so freely that he becomes intoxicated and hence quarrelsome.

“No striker”. A bruiser, one who is ready with a blow, a pugnacious contentious, quarrelsome person.

“Not greedy of filthy lucre”. Or not in it for the money he can get out of it. “But patient”. Mildness, gentleness, fairness, sweet reasonableness.

“Not a brawler”. Not a person who goes about with a chip on his shoulder.

“Not covetous”. Not to be fond of silver. The love of money is in view here.

1 Timothy 3:4 states, “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.” This relates to the bishop’s own house in contrast to the household of God. His own household must be subject and in obedience with reverent respect, without which it is impossible for him to look after the Church of God.

Then in 1 Timothy 3:6, we read, “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” The word “novice” refers to a newly planted tree, a new convert. It was pride that made Satan fall and a new convert could fall in the same sense if made a bishop.

Then verse 7, “Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without...” The word “report”, means an “excellent testimony”. This verse reveals the fact that sometimes it is necessary to listen to what the world has to say in regards to a man’s character. So a bishop must have a good report of them, or the world, or the not-Christian world in which we live.

These elders or bishops then look after the spiritual life of the Local Church, and in every case it is necessary to maintain as near as possible these standards of qualifications.

## THE DEACONS

A deacon is a servant, a helper. It is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28, “helps”. The same word is used in Romans 16:1, “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea.”

Deacons do not have ruling authority, as do the elders. They are put in charge of certain portions of the material work of the Church, and are given authority for the discharge of it. 1 Timothy 3:8, “Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued...” The word “grave” speaks of dignity, those inviting reverence. They are

not to be doubletongued, or “saying one thing and meaning another, and making different representations to different people about the same thing”.

“Not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre.” The word “given” means to hold towards, to apply one’s self to, to attach one’s self to, referring to wine. He is not to be greedy of gain.

It is evident that the special work of the deacon was Church Finance, and no doubt they had to support themselves by engaging in some secular occupation. Thus they would be exposed to temptations to misappropriate church funds, or to adopt a questionable means of making a living, thus the warning.

In 1 Timothy 3:9 we read, “Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.” The mystery referred to is the truth that was revealed by revelation to the apostles, then given to the Church, the faith. This revelation can only be given forth as it is held by a pure conscience, and a frank acceptance of the duties they are to perform, puts them in the best attitude of attaining whatever solution is possible.

1 Timothy 3:10 reads, “And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.” The words, “these also” imply clearly that the bishops, or elders, must be proved before being appointed as well as the deacons.

The word “proved” means to put to the test for the purpose of approving and, having met the test, to be approved. This testing does not refer to an examination, but to the general judgment of the whole local Church as to whether they fulfill the specifications set down in verse 8, “blameless”, or “unaccused”, or in other words, find nothing in their life that would hinder them for the office.

1 Timothy 3:11, “Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.” The Greek word here used and translated wives is “gune” which means “a woman”, and does not refer at all to the wives of the deacons. Another fact relating to the same thought is to be found in the words “even so”. These two words are a translation of the Greek word “hosantos”, which is used to introduce a second or third in a series.

The series here is of church officials, 1 Timothy 3:2, Bishops, 1 Timothy 3:8, Deacons, 1 Timothy 3:11, “even so”, or third in the series of officials is the Deaconesses.

The reference here is to women who hold the office of deaconess as stated in Romans 16:1, “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea.” The word “servant” is “diakonos”. Our words, “deacon” and “deaconess” are derived from it. The office seems to have been confined mainly to widows, 1 Timothy 5:9-14, who were being supported by the Church. Though virgins were not absolutely excluded, their duties were to care for the sick and poor, 1 Timothy 5:16, Acts 6:1-3, to minister to martyrs who were in prison, to instruct catechisms, to assist at the baptism of women and to exercise a general supervision over female church members.

## **THE MINISTRY OF THE WOMEN IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**

There are some groups that do not allow a woman to minister at all in the church. It must be understood that all that is taught in regards to ministry relates to the woman.

There are two sections of scripture used in regards to silencing of women in the church, and as we study them we will find them wrongly translated. The first one is found in 1 Corinthians 14:34,35, “Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. 35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.”

Let us understand the problem. While the meeting was in progress, these women were interrupting the meeting by asking questions. Thus they were disrupting the meeting. It was this condition that Paul was correcting. And he was teaching them, that instead of interrupting the meeting, it would be better if they remained silent, and if there were any questions they wanted answered, they could wait till the meeting was over, and ask their own husbands at home. In no way does it teach that women are altogether unable to minister in the church.

The other scripture used is to be found in 1 Timothy 2:11-15, “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection...” Now this statement relates to the scripture just dealt with. 1 Timothy 2:12-14, “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was first formed, then

Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” Paul is here referring to the fact that Eve took a wrong position and made a decision that she had no authority to make. In this sense she exercised authority over the man and she sinned.

Now Paul is relating to this same principle of a woman taking authority over a man, when she takes the place of a Teacher, and begins to formulate the doctrine for the church.

What Paul means then is this, “I do not permit a woman to be a teacher”. Using the Greek word “didaskain”, the context of the word has to do with church order, or doctrine. And the kind of teacher Paul has in mind is pointed out in Acts 13:1, “Prophets and teachers”, 1 Corinthians 12:28, “thirdly teachers”. Those having authority in matters of doctrine, and interpretation of the same. A woman does not have the ministry of formulating doctrine for the church. This is the ministry of the teacher. So a woman usurps authority when she rises up and formulates doctrine. She has no authority in the sphere of doctrinal disputes, or questions of interpretation. Where any authoritative pronouncements are to be made, the woman is to be silent.

But she can teach the doctrine that others have formulated, and in this sense another Greek word relates to her kind of teaching, “didaxai”, “to teach”. She can and should be allowed as a prophetess to teach doctrine which the Teachers have formulated for the church. Teaching classes of women, and teenagers and children, she is in no way usurping authority when she ministers in this way. This should be understood.

And every woman in the church should be allowed to operate the ministry and gifts which she has been endowed with. She can pray and prophesy in the church as stated in 1 Corinthians 11:5, “But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth...” in the church.

It is possible for them in this church period to have the ministry of the Prophetess, as they did in Old Testament times, Exodus 15:20, “And Miriam the prophetess...”, Judges 4:4, “And Deborah, a prophetess...”, 2 Kings 22:14, “...Huldah the prophetess...”, Luke 2:36, “And there was one Anna, a prophetess...” All prophets are inspirational speakers, and there are prophetic teachers including women.

Wherever possible they are to minister with their husbands in the things of God, as Priscilla and Aquila helped Paul in Romans 16:3. They had a church in their home, Romans 16:5, “Likewise greet the church that is in their house...”

### **THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE TRAVELLING APOSTLES, PROPHETS, AND EVANGELISTS AND TEACHERS IN THEIR OWN LOCAL CHURCHS**

These ministries in their own Local Churches could be Elders in office. This is the reason why they called themselves Elders in 1 Peter 5:1, “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder...” Thus Peter calls himself an elder, and in the same sense John the Apostle does also in 3 John 1:1, “The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius...”

When they travel out from their own churches, they take their place in the Universal Church according to their ministry.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 3**

1. Explain in short form the qualifications of Elders and the Deacons.
2. Explain the two sections of scripture, misinterpreted by many in regards to women's ministry in the church.
3. How do Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists and Teachers, that travel in the Body, relate to the Local Church?

## Book 14: The Church

# Lesson 4: The Purpose of the Different Kinds of Gatherings in the Early Church

By Dr. Albert Grimes

Spirit-filled saints can no longer hold on to the traditional methods relating to the different forms of gathering in the churches in which they have come out of, for those methods will never allow them to fully express themselves as they should in their ministry and gifts.

The only method we can now follow as Spirit-filled believers are the scriptural methods laid down for us in the Word of God.

A careful study of the different kinds of gatherings is very needful, and we must also understand that those who are coming into this charismatic revival, will have to be spiritually trained in order that they might be able to participate in these scriptural gatherings. These different kinds of gatherings or meetings came into form progressively, beginning with the simple meetings in the homes of different believers as is stated in Acts 2:42, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Verse 46-47, "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, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Church history teaches us that the church held to this principle of gatherings in the homes, for about three hundred years, and house churches were spoken of in scripture. Acts 5:42, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Then in Acts 20:20, "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house."

1 Corinthians 16:19, "The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."

Romans 16:23, "Gaius mine host, and of the whole church..." Colossians 4:15, "Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house." Philemon 2, "And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house."

From scripture also we can put together the different kinds of services which they held, and perhaps the form of service. It must be understood that the present form of service which we see in the different Denominational churches is in most cases far from the type of services held in the early churches.

Practically all denominations came into existence after the Reformation, when all true doctrine, and the type of services which existed in the early church was lost in a maze of traditional doctrine and practice. And the priestly system of the Roman Catholic Church dominated for hundreds of years. Some groups are not all together free from the Roman system. It is necessary therefore to study once again the principles relating to early church methods.

So as we put together scripture we find that prayer, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs were part of the early church service as in Ephesians 5:19, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..." And in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 it states "...supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority..." Men were exhorted to lift up their hands in prayer, 1 Timothy 2:8, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands..."

There was reading and exhortation and doctrine in the services, 1 Timothy 4:13, and preaching, reproving, rebuking, with all longsuffering as in 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." All these were part of the gatherings, as much as we have today, but the principles regarding early church meetings in most cases, have disappeared from our midst. And as we have stated, the only type of service or meeting that will satisfy the Spirit-filled believer is what is taught in scripture.

## THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF GATHERINGS RELATED TO IN SCRIPTURE

These gatherings were attended by saints in most cases, who were trained in regards to spiritual operation and ministry.

There are very few saints today who could enter into the different kinds of meetings described.

## **THE WHOLE CHURCH COMING TOGETHER**

1 Corinthians 14:23-25, “If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?...”

This relates to an uncontrollable, unintelligent utterance in tongues, that no one would understand.

We must understand that when outsiders come into a service that all utterances have to be made intelligent in order that people can understand, in order that they may receive what God has intended for them. It’s the Holy Spirit who brings people to church and He wants them spoken to. This can only come through trained believers.

So all spiritual operation in the open meetings must be made intelligent. Notice the reaction to all speaking in tongues, “ye are mad”, and perhaps they will be turned off, in regards to the moving of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 14:24, “But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all.”

The “all prophesying” relates to an orderly prophesying as moved by the Spirit. This type of prophecy has in it revelation, judging the persons condition.

Thus when this kind of prophecy goes forth it reveals to those present their conditions, and they know that the Spirit of God is speaking to them. It is possible in this type of prophecy, for more than one believer to prophesy in regards to a person’s condition. And other prophecies will deal with others in the same sense. And as the scripture states, the person being spoken to will be brought under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and in most cases get right with God as stated in 1 Corinthians 14:25, “And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.”

After thus type of service is ended, those who have been spoken to can be offered an opportunity to come and be counseled or prayed for, for whatever their need is. This will give opportunity for those who have trained ministries to work.

## **THE BELIEVERS MEETING**

1 Corinthians 14:26-33, “How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying...” In this meeting the unlearned or unbelievers are not mentioned. And the fact that this type of meeting is different is proven by the fact that the believers are all exercising different gifts and ministries.

Then the principle of order in regards to tongues, and interpretation, and the order relating to Prophets, 1 Corinthians 14:27, “If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.”

It relates to the fact that only two or three messages in tongues, should be brought forth. The term “and that by course” relates to the principle that each message should itself be broken into sections for better understanding.

1 Corinthians 14:28, “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.” This verse explains itself, but however we can also, as Paul teaches, interpret our own tongue, as in 1 Corinthians 14:13, “Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret.”

Then we have instructions to the Prophets, 1 Corinthians 14:29, “Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.” The word “speak” is relating to an inspired speaking that would be given the Prophet. Not an operation of the Gift of Prophecy that all can do, but a teaching, exhortation, relating to the needs of the group or church. This is the reason why only two or three could speak, because of the element of time.

The purpose of judging must be understood. Prophets are inspirational speakers, and these types of speakers can be influenced by the revelation of the immediate needs in people or groups through the Holy

Spirit, or even a hurt or bitter soul, or even a wrongly instructed intellect, or in extreme cases an evil spirit.

Then we should understand that when a prophet, begins to speak in this way he will bring other prophets under inspiration, as stated in scripture, 1 Corinthians 14:30, "If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. 31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted."

When the lead prophet brings another under inspiration he must allow the second prophet to bring forth what he has. What the second prophet receives may add to what has already been said by the first prophet. Then the third prophet must be allowed to speak likewise.

Then the instruction to the Prophets themselves, 1 Corinthians 14:32, "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." The Prophet must be in control of his own spirit, not allowing it to be moved by emotion or emotional disturbances of hurt or bitterness, or any emotional problem.

He must never allow his spirit to be moved by his own intellect, apart from Holy Spirit revelation. 1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." The purpose of this meeting is to teach the saints how to correctly operate ministries and gifts.

## **THE PRAYER MEETING**

Acts 12:12, "...he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying." This meeting as the others mentioned, has a supernatural element in it. And it is for the personal building up of believers.

Most Spirit-filled believers do not avail themselves of the operation of tongues in private devotion. This meeting supplies that need, of personally speaking to God as in 1 Corinthians 14:2,14-15, and Romans 8:26,27.

In the first stages of this kind of meeting as saints gather together for prayer, some principles should be understood.

The first few weeks will relate to personal deliverance in regards to the saint himself. Prayer brings a deliverance, and the personal problem in the life of the saints.

Then the Holy Spirit will deal with the lives of others in the group or church, not connected with the prayer group, and those he desires to reach to bring into the group, after which he will begin to deal with those who bring pressure and persecution, breaking the Satanic pressures and then the saints will begin to move in victory.

People will be saved, healed and delivered. The prayer meetings will become more victorious, filled with song and praise. And the personal ministry of those who pray will become stronger spiritually and the presence of God will become more prominent, even the presence of angels, as they move in with the praying saints.

Some instruction should be given in regards to these types of prayer meetings. The prayer should begin as soon as a few believers are gathered. Others as they come in too will begin to pray. There is to be no ministering one to another, no prophecies or messages in tongues. It is for prayer.

After people are finished praying they should never sit around and talk. They should go home. Never discuss with others what God is doing in the midst of the saints in the prayer meetings. Never try to record, on tape or otherwise any prayer meeting for others to listen to.

In exceptional cases an evil spirit may manifest itself, and will have to be dealt with. Instruct the saints in regards to these principles and keep a strong control upon people who invite themselves to these prayer meetings.

Instruct the saints not to try and set the order of the Spirit. Some try to persistently sing in tongues when the burden of the Holy Spirit is that of prayer. Only when all have the burden of song shall all sing. And there will be those who will have no gift, for prolonged praying in tongues. They can sit quiet or praise, but never should they be allowed to interfere with those who are free to speak in tongues in prayer. This meeting, if properly conducted will become the power of the church.

## **MEETINGS RELATING TO THE BURDENS OF OPEN DOORS**

Acts 13:1-3. This meeting relates to trained confirmed ministries, who could be ministering in other places. And it is a meeting where these ministries wait before the Lord, for direction in regards to what ministry was to be sent into the open door, Acts 13:1-3, “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them...” There has been controversy in regards to whether this came through prophecy, or was it a general revelation that was revealed to all. The latter is accepted.

Now we can understand that to try and produce this type of meeting and wait for a prophecy would be disastrous, and has proven to be disastrous in the past. The Apostolic Church of Wales is an example.

Where set prophets direct and determine the order of the church, it is to be noticed just how these men proved the revelation that came forth. Acts 13:3 “And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”

Further fasting and prayer proved the revelation. It was confirmed amongst them. It is possible the open door existed into the Gentiles, but the question was, who shall we send into this open door. The Lord settled the question by giving a general revelation to all.

This type of meeting would depend upon a high Spiritual condition in the church, in order first for revelation of this type to come forth. Then it would take an equal high spiritual discernment, to determine whether it was the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Nevertheless, it is there as a possibility, but the question is, “are we able?” Every open door should be moved into, and trained ministries should be placed into these doors.

## **THE EVANGELISTIC MEETING**

Evangelism is not a church trained in reaching souls. This we will deal with, but Evangelism is a work that in the true sense of the word, is performed by a ministry, and that ministry is the Evangelist.

It is he that is the ordained reaper in the Body of Christ. Philip was such, as is stated in Acts 21:8, “...we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist...” He is a type of a scriptural Evangelist, and his work is described in Acts 8:5-8, “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. 6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. 8 And there was great joy in that city.”

The scriptural Evangelist then is one who preaches Christ, bringing healing and deliverance. We may never have this type of ministry in our groups, but every believer should be taught the methods of personal work and each believer should be responsible to evangelize if possible the area in which they live, leading souls to Christ, and praying for them for the Baptism of the Spirit.

It is the sheep that bears lambs, not the shepherds. Members should be constantly seeking open homes in new areas, where teachers can hold meetings for teaching doctrine, charismatic truth, and evangelism.

The church, or building should never altogether become the center of all operation. Ministries must be taught in the training center, but house meetings can be a place where these trained ministries can minister. And these out stations can themselves become training centers and churches. In this way a type of Evangelism can be carried on.

## **THE CHURCH GATHERS TOGETHER TO HEAR REPORTS OF GOD’S WORK**

Acts 14:27, “And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.” This relates to the missionary work of Barnabas and Paul when they returned to Antioch and they told of all that God had done.

How refreshing it would be if at certain times the church would gather together to review what God had done amongst them in regards to those saved, healed, and delivered. A general review, and time of testimonial, a report of all that God had done from the people themselves, what a time of relaxation and blessing.

## **THE BAPTISMAL SERVICE**

Acts 2:41, “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” It is always a happy time when souls are baptized in water. It is the outward witness of an inward work of grace.

### **The Method**

These things should never be left up to traditional doctrines. This ordinance of water baptism is performed by the one being baptized going down into the water, and being covered over completely, or baptized in water.

The word “baptized”, “baptism”, means submerged or fully wet. This was the reason why John baptized in the river Jordan, Matthew 3:6, “And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” Jesus was baptized in this manner, Matthew 3:16, “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water...”

The Elder or Pastor must receive from each candidate a confession of their faith, Acts 8:36-38, “...I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”

### **WHAT NAME ARE WE TO BAPTIZE BELIEVERS IN?**

There is much controversy, and some have started denominations over this. Jesus only, Acts 2:38, “...in the name of Jesus Christ...”, Acts 8:12, “...the name of Jesus Christ...”, Acts 10:48, “And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...”, Acts 19:5, “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

What Jesus said, Matthew 28:19, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

The apostles were doing this.

The name of the triune God is Jehovah, Exodus 6:3, “...but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.” In Matthew 1:21, “...his name Jesus...”, which is the Greek of Hebrew Jehoshua, meaning “Jehovah is salvation”.

The full name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, is Jehovah the Master, the name of the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### **THE LORD’S SUPPER**

Commanded by Christ to be observed by the church, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”

It is a reminder of the Lord’s sufferings for us, looking back to the cross, and forward to his coming.

### **HOW PERFORMED**

Scriptures should be read, 1 Corinthians 11:23-32, by the one in charge. The saints should then be instructed in regards to what it means. Then time should be given the believers to examine themselves according to 1 Corinthians 11:28, “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that (in order that they come not under judgment) bread, and drink of that cup.” Then prayer should be offered for the elements as they

are given to the Elders in charge and then to the congregation.

Time should be given after partaking, to thank the Lord.

### **THE MEETING FOR CONFIRMATION**

It is possible that this could be done in the meetings, or the classes, like a graduation service, 1 Timothy 4:14, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

This must be performed by the elders, and those in charge. Never allow individuals to confirm gifts and ministries in extreme conditions. Only confirm those who have taken the training from the classes.

### **MEETINGS WHERE APOSTLES AND ELDERS COME TOGETHER TO CORRECT ERROR IN MINISTRIES**

Acts 15:24, "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment."

When any worker goes from the church, and causes trouble in other churches or groups, they must be dealt with in the church in which they belong, and a meeting must be called to deal with the problem.

### **MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF BRINGING DISCIPLINE UPON OFFENDERS**

1 Corinthians 5:1, "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife."

The whole doctrine of discipline should be studied in order to understand, but certain kinds of discipline as in this case, involves the whole church, as stated in 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

When the member, having been brought before the church, is unrepentant, then the prayer of turning over to Satan is prayed, and the person is turned out of the church.

This man evidently repented as is stated in 2 Corinthians 2:6-11. This same principle is related to in Matthew 18:15-18, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 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. 18 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."

The church that is trained and moves in all the order of these meetings will never become static.

The reason churches become static is because that is what they are trained to do. They do not know anything else other than what they are doing.

The question facing charismatic believers is, "Are you willing to be trained, and become operative in all these areas described? Will you be able to submit to the principles involved?" Then the charismatic churches will come forth.

Let us remember we cannot enter into all these types of gatherings without being trained. Be patient and learn.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 4**

1. The student in regards to this lesson is to write out in short form, explaining the different kinds of meetings in the early church.

**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 5: Discipline and Church Order**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

Church discipline is a divine method used to bring spiritually sick, disobedient, and members living in sin back to God.

The following scriptures give light on the truth. We are to withdraw from those who walk disorderly as 2 Thessalonians 3:6, “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”

We are not to keep company with those who don’t obey the Word of God as in 2 Thessalonians 3:14, “And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.”

A man who is an heretic, speaking of a person who refuses to accept true doctrine, as it is revealed in the Bible, and prefers to choose for himself what he is going to believe, this type of person, after being admonished the second time, and still will not change, must be rejected as stated in Titus 3:10,11, “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.”

Then the brother who sins against another brother as stated in Matthew 18:15-18, “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 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. 18 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.”

Also the person who commits fornication has to be dealt with in another way as pointed out in 1 Corinthians 5:1,5, “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife... 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

## **THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

### **ADMONISHMENT**

It means “to caution”, or “reprove gently”, “warn”. It relates to those who walk disorderly, and also to those who obey not the Word, as in 2 Thessalonians 3:6, “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.” The thought in this verse refers to the fact, that when they withdraw themselves they also admonish the person.

The same thought is brought out in regards to those who obey not the Word as in 2 Thessalonians 3:14,15, “And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”

### **EXCLUSION OR EXCOMMUNICATION**

In this we must never have respect of persons. Wicked persons must be put away. 1 Corinthians 5:13, “But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”

The sins that are the grounds for putting one out of the Church are listed in the following scriptures. In 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, “I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be

a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”

Can an excommunicated person be taken back into the Church? The scripture points out that those who are turned out of the Church, after repenting, must be taken back into fellowship, and we must understand that the example which we are to use relates to the person in 1 Corinthians 5:5, and Paul’s words are there in 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, “But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. 6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. 7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. 9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. 10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; 11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

It has been suggested by one in authority that those who were put out of the Church, for sin, as in 1 Corinthians 5:5, that after finding themselves out of fellowship, have repented and were returned to the Church better Christians than they had ever been before.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 5**

1. What is the purpose of Church discipline?
2. Give scriptures relating to the principle of discipline.
3. Explain the two different kinds of discipline.

**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 6: The Ordinances of the Church**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

The word, ordinances, comes from two Latin words, which in their final meaning are, “that which is ordered, or commanded”. This term has been used to describe the two institutions, baptism in water, and the Lord’s Supper, which Christ left the churches for their observance.

**WATER BAPTISM**

The Apostles were to teach all who came to Christ through their ministry. They were to be taught to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them.

Water baptism was commanded by Christ in Mark 16:15,16, “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...”

It was practiced by the early church according to Acts 2:41-42, “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized...”

Now there are some who teach that being baptized in water brings them into a full membership into their church. Others believe that without water baptism a person is not saved. It is “believe and be baptized”.

Others teach that it is through water baptism that one becomes a member of the true church. Thus he becomes a child of God. We must understand that these three kinds of teachings are all unscriptural. As an ordinance there is no saving principle in it.

If water baptism was a means of salvation, what does Paul mean in the statements which he made regarding it in 1 Corinthians 1:14-17, “I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel...”, relating to the fact that it is the gospel that brings men to Christ, not baptism. In the household of Cornelius, they were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit and spake in tongues before they were baptized in water, as stated in Acts 10:47,48, “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...”

These scripture prove the fact that there is no saving element in water baptism. This ordinance of water baptism is performed by the one being baptized going down into the water, and being covered over completely, or baptized in water. The words “baptized”, “baptism”, means “submerged” or “fully wet”.

This was the reason why John the Baptist baptized in the river Jordan as in Matthew 3:6, “And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” Jesus was baptized in this manner, Matthew 3:16, “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water...”

The Elder or Pastor baptizing saints, must receive from each candidate a confession of their faith in Christ as stated in Acts 8:36-39, “And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water...”

**WHAT NAME ARE WE TO BAPTIZE BELIEVERS IN?**

There is much controversy in regards to the name we are to be baptized in. There are some who have formed their own denominational groups and baptized only in the name of Jesus, relating their claims to the scriptures in Acts 2:38, “...in the name of Jesus Christ...”, Acts 8:12, “...the name of Jesus Christ...”, Acts 10:48, “And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...”, Acts 19:5, “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” They disregard the statement of Jesus in Matthew 28:19,

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

The apostles were doing as Jesus taught them, as they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The name of God, that is the triune God is Jehovah, Exodus 6:3, “...but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.” In Matthew 1:21, “...and thou shalt call his name Jesus,,,” which is the Greek of Hebrew “Jehoshua”, meaning “Jehovah is salvation”.

The full name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, is Jehovah the Master. Therefore the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the one Godhead is Jehovah.

If in baptizing believers in water, I say, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”, I am doing the same, as if I baptized them in the name of the Lord, because Jesus of the New Testament is the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

We suggest that these ordinances symbolize Christian truths, and water baptism sets forth in visible symbol, Christ’s death, and burial, and resurrection, and also our death to the old life of sin, our burial in the likeness of his death, and our resurrection to walk with him in a new life as taught in Romans 6:3-5.

The act of being baptized in water does not eliminate the old nature. This is a progressive work of sanctification. Then it is an outward witness of the fact that I have accepted Christ as Saviour.

## **THE LORD’S SUPPER**

This ordinance was also commanded by Christ to be observed by the church, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” It was observed by the early church, Acts 2:42, “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

The communion of the Lord’s Supper was intended to be a reminder of the Lord’s suffering for us. It is a celebration of his death. The Saviour knew how short human memory is, and out of consideration of our weakness and aptness to forget, he established this simple memorial supper in which we taste of broken bread, symbolizing His body, which was broken for us, and we sip the crushed fruit of the vine, which was a symbol of His blood poured out for our sins. It is a reminder of the Lord’s suffering that brings Calvary and its cross very vividly before us. But the supper looks forward as well as backward. It is both a commemoration and a prophecy. It sheds forth the Lord’s death, “till He come”.

## **HOW PERFORMED IN THE CHURCH**

The scriptures of 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 should be read by the one in charge. The elements of bread and wine can be prepared. Time should be given the saints to examine themselves, and do whatever is necessary in order to get right with God and one another. Then prayer is offered in regards to the bread which is broken, and given by the elders to the saints.

After this, prayer for the wine is also offered and given by the elders to the saints. A period of worship then takes place. How often this takes place must be determined by the church.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 6**

1. Explain what the word ordinance means.
2. Explain the principle of water baptism.
3. Does this ordinance relate in any way to salvation? Explain.
4. What name are believers to be baptized in? Explain.
5. How is the ordinance performed?
6. Explain the principles of the Lord's Supper.
7. How are the believers to prepare themselves for this ordinance?
8. What could happen if they come and partake unworthily?
9. How is it performed in the church?

**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 7: The Church and the World – Its Purpose and Future**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

The scripture declares that the Church is a body of believers called out from this world. God in His sovereign grace has chosen us as stated in Ephesians 1:4, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...” Because we are chosen we are called of God as Romans 8:30 states, “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called...” Called out of the world as pointed out in Acts 15:14, “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.”

We are redeemed by the blood of Christ from every kindred, tongue, and peoples and nations as stated in Revelation 5:9, “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

Because of this fact, being taken out from the peoples of the world, we are then separated from unbelievers as declared in 2 Corinthians 6:14, 17-18, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?...17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

These verses refer mostly to the religious practices of the unbelievers as suggested in 2 Corinthians 6:15,16, “And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Through identification with Christ the Church has been crucified to the world as stated in Galatians 6:14, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

The children of God who belong to the church, should have nothing to do with the religious practices of this world, because they are actually dead to them as pointed out in Colossians 2:20,21, “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 Touch not; taste not; handle not.”

The believers in the church are not to love the world. We should be careful here. The created world, the birds, beasts, and creeping things can be enjoyed, but the world’s system, religious and otherwise, is what is in question as in 1 John 2:15-17, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him...”

The purpose of this world’s system is described to us in the following verse, 1 John 2:16, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

And what is to happen to this system is further pointed out in verse 17, 1 John 2:17, “And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

The church being then separate from the world, yet is to go forth unto all the world, and teach all nations as pointed out in Matthew 28:19-20, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 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.”

**THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH**

The purpose of the church has not been understood, and for this reason, much unnecessary work has been accomplished by its members.

The work of the church is not to try and better the economical or the social or the political conditions of this world. Its work is to complete itself.

This is God's purpose in regards to the church as pointed out in John 10:16, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

This completing of the church shall be brought about by the ministries which Christ has set in the church as pointed out in Ephesians 4:11-16, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers..."

The purpose of these ministries is further pointed out in verse 12, Ephesians 4:12, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

When this is being accomplished by these ministries other things will result as in verse 13, Ephesians 4:13, "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."

This condition will protect them against the false religious systems of the world as pointed out in verse 14, Ephesians 4:14, "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."

Having been saved and delivered from the world's system of false religious practices, they will continue to grow in the things of God as pointed out in verse 15, Ephesians 4:15, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

After this kind of growth and working in their own ministry, the church will be brought to completeness as in Ephesians 4:16, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

When the church is completed the Lord will present it to Himself as the scripture states in Ephesians 5:27, "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

## **THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH**

The church when completed on this earth will be raptured out from the peoples of the world. This event is spoken of in 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

After being raptured out of this world the church will stand before the judgment seat of Christ in order to receive rewards for service as stated in 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

After going before Christ's judgment Seat the church will be married to Christ as in Revelation 19:7-9, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

After the marriage is completed the church which now will be the Body of Christ will descend down to the earth with Christ in order to set up the Kingdom as in 1 Thessalonians 3:13, "...at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." And also in Jude 1:14, "...Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints."

These saints shall then reign in the Kingdom as is stated in Revelation 20:4, "...and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Then in verse 6, Revelation 20:6, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

When the Kingdom ends and the New Heaven and Earth begins, or the eternal ages begin, the church will be the Bride of Christ forever, still reigning with Him, dwelling with Him in the Holy City which will then

be upon the New Earth. This is pointed out in Revelation 21:2, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

That the Bride of Christ is in this city is also pointed out in Revelation 21:9,10, “And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

Reigning and married to Christ the church will still have a purpose in the eternal ages to come glorifying God.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 7**

1. Explain what the church is called out from.
2. In what sense is the church to separate itself from the world?
3. Explain the purpose of the church.
4. Explain the future of the church.

**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 8: The Kingdom and the Church**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

There is much confusion in regards to the Kingdom of Heaven, and the church. Many do not understand that these are two very distinct programs in the Plan and Purpose of God.

In this study we will try to point out the difference in order that we may be able to understand what God's program regarding the Kingdom and the Church is.

**THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN  
IN ITS FIRST STAGE**

When we study the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, we are made to understand just what is meant by the term "Kingdom of Heaven", Matthew 6:9-13, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven..." This is a kingdom prayer. It relates to the rule of the heavens over the inhabitants of the earth.

All through the entire Bible we can trace the beginnings of this kingdom, but time after time its principles have been destroyed by some form of rebellion.

God set an angelic prince over the planet earth after he created it. Lucifer was his name, Isaiah 14:12, "...O Lucifer, son of the morning!..." This description of this being is revealed in Ezekiel 28:13-15, "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering (referring to the priestly garments which he wore), the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. 14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

On the first earth of Genesis 1:1, he dwelt in the garden of God, Ezekiel 28:13. He was clothed as a priest of God, Ezekiel 28:13. He was set by God as the anointed cherub, Ezekiel 28:14. He was perfect in all his ways, Ezekiel 28:15. He was a king Isaiah 14:13. That he dwelt upon this earth is without question, as pointed out in Isaiah 14:13,14, "...I will ascend into heaven...I will ascend about the heights of the clouds...". Ascending into heaven, above the clouds, places him upon this earth. As a priest and king he had the responsibility of ruling over and directing the earth's inhabitants in their worship of God.

A pre-Adamic race is a logical necessity when we regard Lucifer as priest and king.

Sin entered his heart when he declared it his purpose to exalt his throne which God had given him upon the earth, above God's, and take the place of God in the worship of the pre-Adamic race.

His rebellion is described in Isaiah 14:13,14, "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

The earth creatures to whom he ministered followed him into his sin. The judgment of God fell in the form of banishment from the earth, and an everlasting prison house was prepared for Satan and his hosts as in Matthew 25:41, "...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels".

The earth also, over which he ruled, came under the judgment of God, and its planetary heavens became a chaos, as recorded in Genesis 1:2, "And the earth was (became) without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Thus the kingdom of heaven or God's rulership over the earth, through representation came to an end.

**THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN ITS SECOND STAGE**

We have no idea how long the earth was left in its ruined condition, but we are taught that the ruined earth was reconditioned in the six days of Genesis 1:3-25.

In the creation of man and woman, God moved again to set up the Kingdom, giving man rulership as in Genesis 1:26, “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

It was God’s intended plan to now populate the earth with a race of human beings in the place of the beings who were ruled over by Lucifer, and had now become the wicked spirits of Ephesians 6:12.

But Satan caused a rebellion in Adam and Eve and again the Kingdom, and its principles were destroyed.

### **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN ITS THIRD STAGE**

God in moving the third time, to establish His kingdom upon the earth, through human representation, first prepared the nations as in Genesis 10:31,32, “These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations. 32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.”

The Lord scattered them abroad upon the face of the earth as in Genesis 11:7-9, and there confounded their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth. And God in setting forth the nations, has determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation as stated in Acts 17:26, “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”

After the nations had been appointed according to language, in their respective parts of the earth, God began to prepare a nation in order to bring in the Kingdom once again upon the earth, by calling out Abram, as in Genesis 12:2-3, “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

Israel was to be ruled over by God, and become a kingdom of priests and witness the kingdom amongst the nations of the earth as stated in Exodus 19:5-6, “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation...”

Their growth and preparation and deliverance from Egypt, and their entering into Canaan, is Bible History.

But Israel rejected the kingdom principles, and they rejected God’s rulership over them as stated in 1 Samuel 8:7, “And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.”

They rejected the kingdom, and became as other nations, with a king to rule over them instead of God, as stated in 1 Samuel 8:5, “And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.” Their captivity, because of disobedience and become like the nations of the world is also history, and also the restoration of their own land again. But once again the journey was delayed.

### **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN ITS FOURTH STAGE**

Throughout the gospel, the theme is “The Kingdom is at hand”. Then in Luke 1:32,33, “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Then the King is born, and the kingdom principles once again are set forth, and the kingdom is announced as being at hand, by John as in Matthew 3:1-2, “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Then in Matthew 4:17, “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Jesus, in His teaching, began to lay down the principles of kingdom teaching, even having his disciples pray in regards to the kingdom in Matthew 6:9-13, “...After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art

in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven...”

The teaching from the gospels has a strong kingdom flavor, and does not relate to the church, for the church is only a predicted thing in the gospels, as in Matthew 16:18, “...I will build my church...”

The suffering Messiah is mentioned, but not to the same degree as the kingdom. And one should understand that the teaching concerning the Second Coming of Christ only relates to Christ’s Coming to set up his kingdom, and does not in any sense refer to the Rapture, for that event was only revealed in the Epistles to Paul.

Jesus’ twelve disciples were only to go to Israel, and not the Gentiles, with the message of the kingdom, as stated in Matthew 10:5-6, “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

After the principles of the kingdom had been taught in the midst of Israel as a nation, Jesus then presented himself as their king in John 12:12-15, “On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.”

The King and the kingdom was rejected by the nation of Israel, and they crucified their own king as in John 19:18-19, “Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. 19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews.”

The parable of the householder relates to this rejection of the kingdom by Israel in Matthew 21:33-43, the vineyard let out to the husbandman, Israel. God sent his servants to receive the fruit, but they were killed. Then he sent his son, whom they also killed. Then God destroyed them, or put them to one side, and turned the vineyard over to other husbandmen. This parable relates to Jesus’ rejection as is further point out in Matthew 21:42,43, “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? 43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” This is speaking in regards to the church.

## **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN ITS FIFTH STAGE**

The principles of the kingdom are now being carried out in the church and witnessed to through the church as in 1 Peter 2:9, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” Colossians 1:13, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”

But we should never lose sight of the fact that in the Dispensation of Grace, two principle things are being brought to pass, the church and the kingdom, and one must never take the precedence over the other.

We are born into the kingdom, as in John 3:5, “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

Then we are as born ones, added to the church as in Acts 2:47, “...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

We are members of His Body, the church, as in 1 Corinthians 12:12, and at the same time we are children of the kingdom. The church is to be completed in this Dispensation, and is in this dispensation the main part of God’s plan. The completing of the church is our main task.

But the full completion of Kingdom principles are still a future, eternal thing in God’s program, as is stated in Luke 1:33, “And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

The church is not the kingdom, but the church is in the kingdom. The church will reign in the kingdom forever, and will forever maintain its identity as the Bride of Christ.

## **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN ITS SIXTH STAGE**

Christ shall set up the kingdom of heaven upon this earth, for one thousand years, and will reign as king of that kingdom as stated in Revelation 20:4-7, "...and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. 7 And when the thousand years are expired..."

The fact that this same kingdom goes beyond the thousand years, into eternity, is stated in Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

## **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN ITS SEVENTH STAGE**

After the completion of the Dispensations, in regards to this earth, the eternal aspect of the Kingdom will begin as stated in Ephesians 1:10, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."

The earth and heavens shall be renewed as in 2 Peter 3:10-13, and the new heaven and earth of Revelation 21:1, shall begin, and the Holy City shall descend from heaven as stated in Revelation 21:10, "...and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

And the eternal ages shall begin and it is to be noticed that the saved nations will walk in the Holy City as stated in Revelation 21:24,26, "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it...26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."

God has never put to one side the plan which originated with Adam and Eve as in Genesis 1:28, "...multiply, and replenish the earth..." or in other words to populate the earth with a race of human beings.

This is what is spoken of in Revelation 21:24,26. These nations which are not the church, have been taken from the Millennial Kingdom, and transported unto the New Earth of Revelation 21:1. The nations are kept in an eternal state just the same as Adam and Eve were kept from the tree of life in the midst of the garden in Genesis 2:9. Also Revelation 22:2, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

The glorified beings belong to the church, and those from the Old Testament will need not to eat of the tree of life, but these nations will need to eat in order to perpetuate their eternal state. Nothing is said of the eternal state of the kingdom, but for eternity we will dwell with God in a New heaven and earth, possibly travelling out into God's universe, seeing that which we have never dreamed of before.

## **THE CHURCH, THE BRIDE OF CHRIST**

It was predicted by Jesus himself in Matthew 16:18, "...I will build my church..." We must understand that the church is different from the kingdom. The kingdom involves the heavens, or God's kingdom in the heavens, ruling over the earth, and in its eternal aspect it will be universal in its rulership.

We have studied how God has from the beginning sought to set up this kingdom upon the earth. Yet time and time again it has been set aside because of the rebellion of men, and now it finally will be set up in the earth for one thousand years with Christ ruling, after which it will go on into an eternal stage.

The church however, is a Body of Believers, called out from the earth, or from the Gentile nations as is pointed out in Acts 15:14, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name."

The church is also described in the term "fulness of the Gentiles", as in Romans 11:25, "...that

blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

The church had its beginning before the foundation of the world as stated in Ephesians 1:4, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...”

Although the church was chosen before the world’s foundation, and belonged to God in past election, as is stated in John 10:16, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” Yet all through the Old Testament ages it was not even mentioned in scripture, but was hidden as is pointed out in Ephesians 3:9, “And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 3:5-6, “Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”

Then also in Colossians 1:26, “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.”

So the church was a mystery only revealed in the Dispensation of Grace. The revelation of which was revealed to Paul as is stated in Ephesians 3:3, “How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words.”

So lets repeat our findings in relationship to the church. It began in the counsel of God, before the foundation of the earth, yet was hidden from the Old Testament ages, only to be revealed in the Dispensation of Grace. Yet in the face of such scriptural facts, teachers still teach church truth, constantly spiritualized from the Old Testament. Then we should also understand that the church was not directly revealed, or taught in the gospels, only predicted, as in Matthew 16:18, “...and upon this rock I will build my church...”

That the church and the kingdom are different parts of the purpose of God is evident from scripture. In Acts 1:6-7, “When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?...” They were looking for a restoration of the kingdom. Acts 1:7, “And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.” After this statement the disciples were instructed to go into all the world, and preach the gospel, in order that the church may come into existence.

Two principles are to be noticed in the Dispensation of Grace. First the church is being formed, as is stated in Acts 2:47, “...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

So the main principle objective in the Dispensation of Grace is the church. But we should understand that while we as children of God are being added to the church, that we are also being born of God in order to enter the kingdom as stated in John 3:5, “...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

So the church will be completed in the Dispensation of Grace as stated in Romans 11:25, “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

It is to be noticed here that after the completing of the church, God again will deal with Israel, and the time will come at the Second Coming of Christ as pointed out in Revelation 1:7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.” And at this time shall God pour out upon Israel the Spirit of Grace and supplication and they shall realize that Christ is their Messiah as in Zechariah 12:10, “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

Then the fulfillment of Romans 11:26, “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” Then shall come to pass the fulfillment of Joel 2:28,29, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.”

So what began in Acts 2:4, was the early rain of the Holy Spirit, but what will be poured out on Israel will be the latter rain as stated in James 5:7, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”

The question asked by many in our day, “When will the church be completed?” There are evident signs that believers can look for, that will indicate the completion of the church as in Ephesians 4:11-14, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers...” We can look for a restoration of all the above ministries, and these ministries will not be so much concerned about building their own project, but they will be more concerned with the Universal Church and the following work, Ephesians 4:12, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

After this type of Body ministry, there will come a maturing of believers as is stated in Ephesians 4:13, “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.”

The above ministries of Ephesians 4:11, will only minister in the Body of Christ, until these things are fulfilled as is stated in Ephesians 4:13, “Till we all come...” The church then will be Raptured out of this world as is stated in Acts 15:14, “...to take out of them a people for his name.” And in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, “...caught up...”, 2 Thessalonians 2:1, “...and by our gathering together unto him.” Brought before the judgment seat of Christ to be rewarded for works done in the Body as in 2 Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” After which the marriage of the church will take place as in Revelation 19:7-9, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...”

In the Millennial reign of Christ on this earth, the church will reign with Christ as in Revelation 2:26,27, “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.”

The church in the eternal ages will be holy and without blame before Him in love, as in Ephesians 1:4, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” Further contrast between the kingdom and the church is brought out in the seven parables of Matthew 13, and the messages to the churches in Revelation 2 and 3.

The seven parables in Matthew 13 have reference to the age between the two advents of Christ, His first coming, to his second coming, as He comes to set up His kingdom.

They refer to the sowing of the seed, relating to the Gospel of the kingdom, because the teaching of these parables was referred to as the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 13:11, “He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.”

The seed is the preaching of the kingdom, which is sown in the field or the world, as stated in Matthew 13:38, “The field is the world...”

### **THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER MATTHEW 13:3-8**

The interpretation of verses 18-23. There are four kinds of listeners:

1. The listener who does not understand the Word. Satan takes away the Word.
2. The listener who does not count the cost. When tribulation or persecution comes, he is offended.
3. The listener who loves the things of this world, and the Word is choked out.
4. The listener who has counted the cost, and cares not for the things of the world. This fourth listener who brings forth fruit will enter the kingdom.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND TARES MATTHEW 13:24-30**

1. The true sowing mentioned in the first parable is imitated by a false sowing.
2. There is to be a side by side development of that which is good, with that which is evil, and as the result of these two sowing, there will be wheat and tares. Tares, while they grow with the wheat, they cannot be detected. Only when they ripen can they be distinguished from the wheat.
3. There will be a judgment at the end of the age, to separate the good from the evil. The good will be received into the kingdom.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED MATTHEW 13:31-32**

1. Speaks of the abnormal external growth of the kingdom. That which was to be a herb, has become a tree. This growth is spoken of in Matthew 11:12, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."
2. Because of this abnormal external growth it became the resting place for birds. In the first parable the birds represented those who are antagonistic to the program of the kingdom. We must interpret them as such in this parable also. Here the Lord is teaching that the opposition is now within the kingdom.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN HIDDEN IN THE MEAL MATTHEW 13:33**

1. The progress of the kingdom is to be further hindered by the rising of false religious systems which will claim to be the kingdom of heaven. Jesus warned his disciples of this very thing in Matthew 24:5, "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

### **THE PARABLE OF THE HID TREASURE MATTHEW 13:44**

In this parable we see that in the kingdom of heaven there is a special connection with the nation of Israel as the treasure, as stated in Exodus 19:5, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." The Lord purchased the field, or the world in which this treasure was hidden as stated in Romans 11:25, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." And when the Lord comes in His Revelation they will be unearthed and Israel's blindness will be over.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL MATTHEW 13:45,46**

That both Israel and the church are in the kingdom is evident, for we find in the midst of the kingdom, teaching in the Book of Matthew in Matthew 16:18, "...I will build my church..." So in this kingdom parable the pearl refers to the church, which the merchantman purchased who is Christ. The church is in the kingdom, and it's to the church that the kingdom has been given to, while the Nobleman is about.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET MATTHEW 13:47-50**

This parable indicates that the age relating to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, that at its close there is to be a judgment. The bad fish will be excluded from the kingdom.

These seven parables picture to us the conditions relating to the kingdom of heaven, from the time that it was announced until Christ returns to set up His kingdom on the earth.

Now the course of this present age from the beginning of the church until the church is taken out of the world is presented in a second major passage found in Revelation, chapter 2 and 3.

And as we have stated, whereas Matthew 13 surveyed the period related to the kingdom program, Revelation 2 and 3 outlines the present age in reference to the program of the church.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 8**

1. Explain what the kingdom of heaven is.
2. Explain in short form the seven stages of this kingdom.
3. What period of time do the seven parables of Matthew 13 relate?

**Book 14: The Church**  
**Lesson 9: The Seven Messages to the Churches**  
**By Dr. Albert Grimes**

The purpose of these messages is threefold:

1. These messages were written to seven local churches to meet the needs that existed in each church. Each one of these particular needs had an historical application relating to the future.
2. These messages also reveal the various kinds of individuals, and churches throughout the age, seven types of believers, both true and false. Every professor of Christianity is either an Ephesian, or a Smyrnite, or a Pergamite, a Thyatiran, a Sardian, a Philadelphian, or a Laodicean. It is of these seven sorts that the whole church is made up. And every local assembly has some of all the varied classes. Their messages give a direct application to every believer, and to professors of every age.
3. There is also a prophetic revelation as to the course of the age in these letters. They predict the successive stages through which the church will pass. From the time John saw the vision until the Lord would come. These seven churches, which were chosen out of many, were chosen first because of a particular condition existing within the church itself, and also because of the names relating not only to the church's locality, but because each name related also to the condition existing at that time.

The meaning of the names of each church: Ephesus means "beloved", or "relaxation". Smyrna means "myrrh" or "bitterness", Pergamos means "high tower", or "thoroughly married", Thyatira means "perpetual", or "sacrifice", or "continual offering", Sardis means "those escaping", or "renovation", Philadelphia means "brotherly love", Laodicea means "the people ruling".

**THE OUTLINE OF CHURCH HISTORY**

**Ephesus Period**

Revelation 2:1-7. In this period (78 years after Acts 2:4), there already was a departing from their first love, as in verse 4, "because thou hast left thy first love". This is revealed in the name Ephesus, meaning "relaxation".

Also in this message is mentioned, in verse 6, the Nicolaitans. These followers of Nicolas held the doctrine that it was lawful to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication.

They also mingled themselves in the orgies of idolatrous feasts. They brought the impurities of these feasts into the meetings of the Christian Church. This was not simply indulgence in the flesh. It was a system of worship supported by doctrine.

It is to be noticed that the Ephesus Church hated this doctrine, as also did the Lord. Now it is also taught by some that the name Nicolaitans also means "rulers over the people", and that it also represented a priestly system which sought to bring the church under a priestly rulership. This is the beginning of the Papal system.

**Smyrna Period**

Revelation 2:8-11. The relaxing church we find in the Ephesus period, now comes under persecution from the Roman Empire. The Lord was not to save them, but they were to be faithful unto death as in verse 10, "...cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days (referring to ten persecutions): be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Thus the meaning of Smyrna, meaning myrrh which comes from a plant, when crushed produces a fragrant smell, in type referring to those who were to suffer in these persecutions.

**Pergamos Period**

Revelation 2:12-17. It was in this period of church history when the persecutions against the church ended, and Constantine became the first so-called Christian Emperor, and Christianity was made a State religion.

This opened the door of the church to the world, and becoming a Christian became the popular thing. This did not help the spirituality of the church, and as the name Pergamos means “high tower”, the church was exalted and as it also means “thoroughly married”, the church of this period became married to the State or world.

Not only had these things taken place, but the high priestly system had been driven out of Babylon, and had settled in Pergamos the city where the church existed. The Babylonian cults have been the foundation of all Satanic operation. Thus the meaning of the name, Babylon, means “confusion”.

Through this priestly system Satan was able to set his throne in the church as is stated in verse 13, “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat (or throne in the Greek) is...”

Then we also notice that now the doctrine of the Nicolaitans was in the church, verse 15, “So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.”

Thus in this period of church history the church was married to the world, the Babylonian cults existed in the church referred to as Satan’s throne, and the licentious priestly system was being accepted.

### **Thyatira Period**

Revelation 2:18-29. In this period of church history we find in this church, a woman who is Jezebel. The woman is symbolic of a religious system, and she is the same as the Jezebel of 1 Kings 21, the daughter of King of Sidonians, who brought idol worship into Israel.

At her table were 450 prophets of Baal and 400 of Astarte heathen gods, 1 Kings 16:31-32 through 18:19. She slew all the prophets of God, 1 Kings 18:13, 2 Kings 9:7.

This false religious system was the Papal system, Satan’s master piece on earth. In this period of church history, the Papal system completely controlled the church and its evil reign covers, what we know as “the dark ages”, when all doctrine was lost in a maze of tradition.

Thus the meaning of the name Thyatira, meaning “perpetual sacrifice” or “continual offering”, referring to the Roman Maze where Christ is continually offered for sin.

### **Sardis Period**

Revelation 3:1-6. As the name Sardis implies “those escaping”, or “renovation”, or “renewal”, this period of church history refers to the Reformation. This was God’s intervention in grace and power to cripple Papal authority, and introduce into the world the light which for three hundred years has been burning more and more in our day.

But the reformation did not restore all that was lost by the early church, but slowly the principle of early church faith was revealed through the Holy Spirit. But with it came the denominational divisions and deadness showing clearly enough how far short the church was from God’s ideal of true Christianity.

### **Philadelphia Period**

Revelation 3:7-13. This period of church history is the period in which we now live. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, we have been added to the church. Now it would seem as if we are in the last great outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

An outline of the message will relate to us what we can expect in this period of church history, verse 7-8, an opening of God’s treasure, the key of David, relates to the scriptures in Isaiah 22:22, “And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open“, speaking of the authority that will be given to Christ as he sets up his kingdom. This same power will be brought forth in the Philadelphia period to open and to shut, and to set forth an open door that no man shall shut.

The open door is all that God has for the church restoration, verse 9, many Jews will find Christ and come into the church, verse 10, the promise of being kept from the tribulation period, verse 11, the promise of Christ coming in this period of church history. This is the period of, according to the meaning of Philadelphia, “brotherly love”.

### **Laodicean Period**

Revelation 3:14-21. In the days in which we live although we are now in the Philadelphia Period, we see an overlapping of these two periods. The Laodicea period, then can be seen beginning in our day. There is a falling away in the denominational systems and as is described in this message, verse 16, lukewarmness, verse 17, rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. In this period of church history denominational systems will be deceived into thinking that material wealth means spiritual power.

Their real spiritual condition is described in verse 17,18, “...wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked...” They had the wrong kind of power. All they had was material power, not the spiritual power that would make them rich in the things of God.

They had no righteous standing before God, and spiritual insight into the things of God. Christ was outside of this church. So the Laodicean period is a period when all these conditions will exist. This will be the church that will be left after the Philadelphia age is over and the Lord has come. This church shall become the Bride of the Antichrist. One outstanding thing relating to this period relates to the name Laodicean, which means the people rule. This is made clear even in our day, as church members hire and fire those who minister the things of God. So-called “pulpit committees”, they try ministers and these same ministers have to be qualified and tested and chosen according to standards which church members set for them. In other words, the whole principle of church government is to be broken down in this period of church history and the people rule in the churches.

### **THE OVERCOMERS COMPOSE THE TRUE CHURCH**

It is to be noticed that in all of the seven messages to these churches, the statement is made in regards to those who overcome. Eight times in the Book of Revelation, we have promises to the overcomers.

These overcomers are the true believers who compose the church. They come out of every age of the church, and the eight promises given to them comprise all that God has promised for them.

Now in the face of so many different kinds of teaching it is necessary that we qualify just what an overcomer is. This is described to us in 1 John 5:4-5, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world (flesh, devil), even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

An overcomer is one that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God. So then it’s these believers, out of every age of the church, that compose the whole church.

### **THE PROMISES TO THOSE WHO ARE OVERCOMERS**

1. Revelation 2:7, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”
2. Revelation 2:11, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” The second death is the last form of death, which will take place when the wicked dead are judged at the White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20:11-15, and all are cast into the lake of fire, Revelation 20:14. Eternally separated from God, this is the second death. The believer will not be hurt in that sense, but will be eternally with God, Revelation 21:8.
3. Revelation 2:17, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” As Israel in the wilderness was fed with manna from heaven, so the believer will be fed by the life giving Christ. The stone refers to the

stone of acquittal which those who are being judged are given by the judge. We are acquitted before God, and stand in the righteousness of Christ as though we had never sinned. Abram (father of a family, Abraham, father of nations) received a new name. Jacob received a new name, relating to what they were before God. So the believer will receive a new name which will reveal what he is before God.

4. Revelation 2:26-28, “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star...” Power over the nations may refer to the thousand years reign when the saints reign with Christ as in Revelation 20:6, or it may also refer to the eternal ages to come. In the early part of the Bible ages, the actual signs and wonders, caused people to believe. Then we receive a more sure word of prophecy, the Word of God. Now we shall have, as glorified believers, a deeper revelation of truth that shall shine as the morning star that will be Christ Himself.
5. Revelation 3:5, “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” There are some who would infer that it may be possible for Christ to blot out our name if we do not do this or that. They produce some form of legalism that classified overcomers, to be people who do not do this or do that. But this scripture produces evidence of security for the believer, for it states that those who believed that Jesus is the Son of God, shall never have their name blotted out of the book of life and his name shall be confessed, as being one that belongs to God.
6. Revelation 3:12, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” The believers shall have an eternal position in God’s presence, serving God with a complete obedience and he shall never go out of the presence or will of God. He will be like a pillar in the temple. The writing of these names can only mean complete identification with God. I belong to the New Jerusalem. I have its name. I have a personal identification with my God. I have a new name which will identify me for what I am for all eternity.
7. Revelation 3:21, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” The setting of the believer in the throne of Christ, can only mean the absolute complete authority of the believer. How this authority will be exercised is not altogether revealed, whether it relates to the thousand years reign, or the eternal ages.
8. Revelation 21:7, “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” Who can fully understand all that is implied in these terms, “I will be his God”, “and he shall be my Son”.

## **THE END OF THE CHURCH AGE**

The seven messages end the church age or the Dispensation of Grace with the true church taken out of the world, and all related to in the seven messages as not overcomers, or not saved, are not the church. The Raptured Church is clearly identified in heaven as the twenty-four elders. Elders represent the churches in which they serve as in Acts 20:17, “And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.” Paul wanted to talk with the whole church of Ephesus, and he did it by talking to the Elders.

So the Elders of Revelation, chapters 4 and 5, represent the church in heaven. Their position, Revelation 4:4, “And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.” They represent the church, co-authority with Christ as in Revelation 3:21, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne...”

Twenty-four is the number of the choruses into which the Levitical priesthood was derived, 1 Chronicles 24:1-19, and of all the groups of the redeemed only the church is a priesthood as in 1 Peter 2:5, “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.” Revelation 1:6, “And hath made us kings and priests...” These Elders as they sing the new

song, are redeemed from all over the nations as in Revelation 5:9,10, “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”

The church is redeemed from every kindred and tongue and people and nation and it is the church, that shall reign upon the earth, as stated in Revelation 2:26,27, “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron...”

After these seven messages to the churches, which completes the church age, the church then represented by the twenty-four elders is seen in heaven, with the Lord, and is no more spoken of in the Revelation until just before the Lord comes down to the earth to set up His Kingdom. The church as the Bride of Christ is seen married to the Lord in heaven, Revelation 19:7-9.

Then in the same chapter 19:11-22, the church will come back to the earth with Christ, and rule in the kingdom, after which the church will be forever with the Lord.

**THE CHURCH**  
**Book 14**  
**QUESTIONS ON LESSON 9**

1. Why were these seven messages written?
2. Explain the meaning of the names of these churches.
3. Give in short form the history of the church from these messages.
4. Who are the overcomers spoken of in these messages?
5. What promises are given to these overcomers?
6. How is the Raptured church identified in Revelation 4?
7. What will the church do when Christ comes in His Revelation to set up the Kingdom?