

The Church



(Is this the Church?)

A study by
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T h e C h u r c h

a study by Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk

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PART ONE

The Church

What is it?



Introduction

The doctrine of the Church is probably one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented doctrines historically and even more so today. Many confuse it with “The Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven,” and others confuse it with the term, “Christendom.” So much is made of the larger terms, The Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven, and Christendom, that the world tends to make correspondingly little of the Church. So much is being made today of (so-called) Christianity that churchism, as those things pertaining to the Church is called, is put down as a consequence.

Religion and Church-

Today it is very common to hear, among the heathen and the Christian alike, “I don’t believe in organized religion.” The problem is, most people use this phrase as a synonym for, “I don’t believe in church.” Religion and Church are not synonymous terms in the Bible.

Religion- According to the Bible, religion is the outward trappings of our service to God.

**Jas 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this,
To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction,
[and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.**

“*religion*” - , *thrace-ki-ah*, religious worship, esp. external, that which consists of ceremonies, religious discipline, religion

“*church*” - , *ek-la-see-ah*, a called out, baptized, body of believers.
(We will go more into this word a little later.)

**It’s obvious that these two words, religion
and church, are not synonymous as some think.**

To keep in mind the proper place of the Church, as compared to the seemingly loftier and larger Christendom and The Kingdoms, we must bear several facts in mind:

1. Jesus Christ positively identifies himself with the Church and not with Christendom. **(Acts 9:1-5)**
2. He gave up His life to found the Church. **(Eph 5:24-25)**
3. God, in the person of Christ, shed His own blood for the Church.
Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
4. Paul gave his life in service to build up the Church not Christendom.
(II Tim 2:10; II Cor 11:2, 23-28)
5. Paul speaks of his greatest sin as concerning his persecuting the Church of God.
(I Cor 15:9)
6. The supreme business of God in this age is the gathering of a people for Himself.
(Acts 15:13-17)
7. When the Church is finally complete, which will exist corporately only in Heaven **(Heb 12:22-23)**, then this age will be over and the Tribulation will begin.
(Jn 14:3; I Thess chs. 4 & 5; I Cor 15:35-54; et al)
8. The Holy Spirit working in the Church is what prevents evil from taking over.
(II Thess 2:6-7)

From these examples it is easy to see that God places the Church in a lofty position indeed. This then gives us pause to examine the common beliefs about the Kingdom and Christendom.

We must ask ourselves this question: During this age, are The Kingdom and Christendom in ascendance or is the Church in ascendance? To decide this we must first define the terms, Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven, and Christendom.

Christendom- This term is a secular term, not a biblical term; and it means those countries or those parts of the world professing Christianity. Thus in Christendom are many professors of Christ, but, no one knows how many are possessors of Christ.

The Kingdom of God- This kingdom was announced at Christ's first coming and will be set up at His return. It includes all things, visible and invisible.

(Ps 47:7; Ps 104; Mk 1:15)

- Believers are born into it at their new birth. **(Jn 3:3-7)**
- Believers are to be worthy of it. **(II Thess 1:4-5)**
- The unsaved cannot see (perceive) it. **(Jn 3:3-5)**
- Angels are part of it. **(Ps 103-20-22)**
- Satan and demons are answerable to it. **(Is 24:21; Rev 20:1-3)**
- Men are to seek it. **(Mt 6:33)**
- It is never identified with the Church in scripture.
- Nowhere in scripture are men told to build this Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Heaven- The term is found only in the book of Matthew, where it appears some 30 times. The Kingdom of God is also mentioned in Matthew, but only 5 times.

- Similarities between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God.

Kingdom of Heaven	Similarities between the two	Kingdom of God
<p>Mt 3:2 Mt 13:11 Mt 13:33</p>	<p>Both will be established on earth. Mysteries are associated with both. Christ associated the parable of the leaven with both of them.</p>	<p>Mk 1:15 Lk 8:10 Lk 13:21</p>

- We cannot, however, consider them to be the same kingdom because of certain striking differences between them.

Kingdom of God	Differences between the two	Kingdom of Heaven
<p>Jn 3:3, 5 Dan 4:2, 3; Heb 1:8 Jn 3:3, 5 Jn 5:24; 10:28-29</p>	<p>KOG is entered only by the new birth. KOH is not. KOG is eternal. KOH is not. Only the saved are in the KOG. Unsaved are found in the KOH. The saved are safe in the KOG. Unsaved will be cast out of the KOH.</p>	<p>Mt 5:20; 7:21 I Cor 15:24; Rev 20:6 Mt 13:47 Mt 13:41-43; 47-51</p>

We must consider the **Kingdom of Heaven** to be the rule of heaven over earth by Christ when He establishes His Kingdom on earth. **The Kingdom of God** is His sovereign rule in the universe, in both the spiritual and physical realms, and in the hearts of His people. (Ps 103:19)

The Church is different than both of these. **It is a called-out, baptized body of believers.** This distinguishes it from both Kingdoms. It is part of both, true, but it is not wholly either.

The definition of what the church is, the definition of the word itself, the Church's place, its institution, its membership, its ordinances, its vocation, its purpose, various other facts about it, and its eventual destiny, are the subjects grouped under the heading, "Ecclesiology." In short, "Ecclesiology," is simply the study of the Church.

PART ONE

T H E I D E A O F T H E C H U R C H

I. Definitions.

A. Old Testament use of the term.

1. Assembly. (Called- assemble together. **Lev 4:13**)
2. Israel. (Church in the wilderness. **Acts 7:38**)

B. New Testament use of the term.

NOTE: The Church is a New Testament institution.

There are two words used to denote the New Testament Church:

- *ec-le-see-ah* - to call out from. Translated Church(es) - 114 times.
The saints are the called out ones.
(**Mt 16:18, 18:17; I Cor 1:2; Eph 5:25, 27; Ro 8:30; I Cor 1:2 II Cor 6:17**)
- *kuri-akon'* - That which belongs to the Lord. (**I Cor 11:20; Rev 1:10**)
This term is used concerning the Church as in, "the Lord's supper." And also in connection with the Church's day of worship, "the Lord's day."

II. The Idea Of the Church.

A. The fundamental idea of the New Testament Church is plainly brought out in the Greek verb *kalein*, from the root word *ka-lay-o*, signifying to call, with its derivatives and compounds. When this is combined with the Gk word *ek*, which means, from or out of, then we derive the word, *ecclesia* (church) with the meaning of called out.

Derivatives and compounds of the verb *kalien*:

1. *kalein*. This Greek word, which means "to call" denotes the first act of Christ in point of time in connection with the Church.
(**Ro 8:30; I Cor 1:9; II Thess 2:14; I Pet 2:9**)
2. *kletoi*: This word, which means "the called," or "the invited," designates the members of the Church. (**Ro 1:6, 7; 8:28; I Cor 1:1-2; Jude :1**)
3. *klesis*. This word, which means "calling," denotes the peculiar vocation of the Church. (**Ro 11:29; I Cor 1:26; Eph 4:1, 4**)
4. *parakletos*. This word, which is commonly translated "comforter," designates the indwelling and informing Spirit in the *kletoi* (the called).
(**John 14:16, 17; Ro 8:9, 11; I Cor 3:16; Eph 2:22**)
5. *epi-kalein*. This word points out the distinct and distinguishing act of the *kletoi* - to call on Christ, i.e., to invoke Him in prayer.
(**I Cor 1:1, 2; Ro 10:9, 13; Acts 7:58, 59; 9:14, 21; 22:16**)
6. *para-kalein*. This word points out the act of the *kletoi* toward one another. Which is to call to, exhort, or strengthen in the faith.
(**Heb 3:13; 10:25; I Thess 3:2**)

7. *ec-le-see-ah*. This word designates the company, body, or organism of the *kletoi*, i.e. the Church. (Mt 16:18; 18:17)

B. One other word we need to understand, and the scriptures where it is used as concerning the Church, is the word, “baptize.”

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.

“baptized” - *e-bap-tidz-eth-san*, from *baptidzo*, meaning to immerse, to dip, in water.

C. The body of Christ.

In **I Cor 12:12-27** we are told that the local church, in this passage specifically the local church at Corinth, is the “**body of Christ.**”

D. When we combine the meanings of *kalein*, and its derivatives, with the scripture in Acts concerning baptism, then we come up with a definition for the word church, *ecclesia*:

1. The Church is a company of called out, baptized believers, which is the body of Christ. Or: “A called out, baptized, body of believers.”
2. They are called out from the world, indwelt by the Spirit, and have the special and peculiar ministry toward God of prayer and corporate worship, and toward one another of exhortation and consolation, and toward the world of being the vessel of the Gospel and the practitioner of authoritative baptism to those who receive the Word and are saved.^(16d)

III. The Two-fold Meaning of “The Church.”

There are two distinct usages of the Greek noun *ec-le-see-ah*, or Church, in the New Testament.

A. The Church Universal.

This is a Spiritual Body, composed of all believers of all ages who are united to God by faith in Jesus Christ. (**Eph 3:21; Heb 12:23**)

This church exists only in Heaven; and it will **not** exist on the earth until Christ brings it with Him when the Holy City, New Jerusalem descends from Heaven.

(**Heb 12:23; Rev ch. 21**)

B. The Church Local.

This is the physical manifestation of the Church. It is a visible body of baptized believers united to God by faith in Jesus Christ.

1. It is used of a small company in a house. (**Ro 16:5; Phi :2**)
2. It is used of the Christian congregation of a town or city. (**I Cor 1:2; I Thess 1:1**)
3. It is used of a group of churches in a country or nation. (**Gal 1:2**)

C. Christ spoke of the Church in its two-fold meaning; both the visible, physical manifestation of it, and the invisible, spiritual Church.

1. The spiritual, Universal Church. (**Mt 16:18**)
2. The visible, physical manifestation, known as the Local Church. (**Mt 18:17**)

D. It is important to remember that the invisible, spiritual, **Universal Church**, exists **only in Heaven** at this time. We believers will never see it on earth during this age; and neither will the unbelievers. We and they will, however, see it when it comes to earth- after the Tribulation time. And at that time, we believers will all come back with it, along with the redeemed of all ages who are all part of it.

IV. Clarification of the Word *Ekklisea*.

- A.** General meaning- an assembly. (**Acts 19:32, 39, 41**)
- B.** Specific meaning (most usage- 114 times)- Church.

V. The Members of the Church.

A. Must be saved. (**Acts 2:47, et al**)

Acts 2:47 “... **And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.**”

B. Must be scripturally baptized. (**Acts 2:41, et al**)

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.**”

C. They are added specifically, by God, to a certain local Church.

1. The members of each local Church are the visible body of Christ in their area.

I Cor 12:27 “... **ye (the local Church at Corinth) are the body of Christ**”

2. The members are there because GOD has placed them there.

I Cor 12:18 “**But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.**”

3. Since God places them in that local Church, then they are to remain in that local Church until God moves them out.

D. “Should I leave my Church?”

1. Your Church is the body of Christ and you are a necessary member.

I Cor 12:20-27 “**But now [are they] many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those [members] of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely [parts] have more abundant comeliness. For our comely [parts] have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that [part] which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but [that] the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.**

a. The body needs **every** member; i.e., every member needs every other member in order to function properly. (**:21**)

b. The so-called “least” of the members are explicitly “**necessary**” to the wholeness of the body. (**:22**)

God has put the weaker (feeble) members in with the strong ones so that they can be cared for by the stronger members. (**I Cor 12:23-25**)

- c. We are to put the Church before ourselves and our petty disputings one with another. As a group we are to suffer when one suffers and we are to rejoice when one rejoices. Our personal petty differences, envy, and lusts, are to be put aside for the good of the whole. (:26)

Gal 5:25 - 6:2 “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

Gal 6:1-2 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

If a member of our Local Church has a problem, then we aren't supposed to run them off, amputate a limb so to speak, but lift them up- EVEN IF THEIR PROBLEM IS WITH US- i.e., it doesn't matter if they have a problem with someone else or if it is with US- we are to LIFT THEM UP NOT BEAT THEM DOWN!!

Mt 18:21-22 “Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times ? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven .”

- You don't immediately amputate an infected limb, you try to doctor it back to health. And if it has gone too far and has ganggreen, then it's not up to you to amputate it- it is something that affects the whole body so the whole body has to make that decision- and that is what is called Church discipline (**I Cor 5:4-5**); but it is not up to any one member. On an individual basis- you are to try to NURSE THAT SICK MEMBER BACK TO HEALTH- NOT TRY TO REMOVE IT FROM THE BODY!

REMEMBER - You may be the one with the sin infection next time and you're sure going to want someone to try to nurse you back to health instead of amputating you from the body!

- d. If we suffer with those who suffer, then we are to expect them to suffer with us when we suffer; and when we rejoice with those who rejoice then we will not only feel better in spite of our own less than desirable circumstances but we will also help keep them up so that when we feel down, they will be better able to help us up instead of making us feel lower because we have already brought them down.

Remember - “**ACTIONS PRECEDE FEELINGS.**”

Therefore, if we rejoice with them when we are actually down, then we WILL feel at least some better for the rejoicing.

Remember one more old adage - “**IT IS DIFFICULT TO SOAR LIKE AN EAGLE WHEN ONE IS SURROUNDED BY TURKEYS!**”

So if all the members are like eagles then the church won't seem like a flock of turkeys to the world that is watching us. And besides that, we'll all help keep one another up and soaring with the eagles - that's called “**edification**” which simply means building one another up instead of bringing each other down.

2. Then the answer to the question “should I leave my church” has to be “**no**,” not as long as your church is fundamentally sound in doctrine.
- a. When you leave a church, except through a sovereign act of God, then you cripple the church and you are out of the will of God. It is like amputating a part of the body.
Eph 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.”
 All of the parts are “**fitly joined together**” by God and when they all are involved in the “**effectual working in the measure of every part**” then to remove a part cripples the body of Christ and works toward its destruction.
- b. The local Church is the Temple of God and when you leave without being moved by God, who will always replace you with another part to make the temple/body whole, then are you not defiling the Temple of God by leaving it without a necessary part?
I Cor 3:16-17 “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and [that] the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are.”
- c. The local Church is also portrayed in the New Testament as a family and a family has loyalty one member to another. We should exercise the same kind of loyalty to the local Church, which is our spiritual family into which the Lord has placed us, as we exercise toward our earthly family.
- i. Every member of a family is necessary for the family to properly grow, work, and help one another.
 Without the father and the mother, there is no leadership, nurture, and protection. Without the children, there is no future. Every member is important and necessary for the family to function to the fullest.
- ii. When one member leaves or dies, the family is never the same. In fact they have to suffer and seek until the family once again reaches some measure of stability; but, it will never be the same and will always suffer at the loss of any one member.
- iii. Without every member doing their part in an earthly family, then the family is dysfunctional. In a Church family, it is exactly the same.
- iv. As a part of that spiritual family, the local Church, the members are to remain loyal to that Church until the Lord moves them.
- Many, even those who have been loyal in the past, leave the Church when some kind of adversity comes into their lives. A job falls through, their company wants to move them to another town at higher wages or because they are no longer needed in their present position, trouble may come from other members of the Church, or in their neighborhood, the cost of living raises to high and it would be cheaper to live somewhere else, on and on without end. At the first sign of trouble- they bolt and run without ever really seeking God’s face in the matter.
 - Yet God promised to meet all of our needs. That is one of the great assurances of the Christian life- God’s provision- and yet Christians bolt and run whenever troubles come. No loyalty to the Church in which God had placed them and for which God

had shed His own blood. No loyalty - only fear and panic! And disloyalty to your Local Church is disloyalty to Christ- because it is His body.

- God promised to meet our needs, so we need to trust God and remain right where we are until God, in His sovereign will, moves us somewhere else. Is God in control or is your boss, or your family, or your bank, or the government that taxes you so high you feel you can't live right where you are?

- Make sure it is God that is moving you - or else just stay put and depend on His provision in your life.

When you are tried and tempted in your life- go to God with it, don't just cut and run.

I Pet 4:12 “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:”

I Cor 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God [is] faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear [it].”

Put the things of God first in your life- nothing else can be first- only God and His things and His Will. Serve God today and leave the future to Him. Do what you can to provide for yourself and your family, it is scriptural to do so, but DON'T WORRY yourself SICK about tomorrow! God is in control and when He puts you someplace, and that includes making you part of a local Church (which is His body and your Church family) then show some loyalty to God and His Church and stick it out when trials come! God WILL PROVIDE if you are in His Will. And loyalty to His Local Church where He has placed you is being in His Will for your life. God will provide!

Mt 6:24-34 “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, [shall he] not much more [clothe] you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;

and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day [is] the evil thereof.”

Phil 4:19 “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

- d. Many Christians have gotten themselves into such an expensive lifestyle that they become slaves to their lifestyle, and the money that it takes to maintain it, and cannot be faithful to God and His Church but have to move to higher paying positions, even if it keeps them out of Church or necessitates moving to another location for higher pay and abandoning the Church into which God had placed them.

Christ spoke of being enslaved to money and/or power and the things of this world rather than being a servant to God. (Mt 6:24; Lk 16:13)

Lk 16:13 “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon .”

SUMMARY -

- ▶ The local Church is the only kind of Church on this earth since the Universal Church exists only in Heaven and won't ever gather on this earth until Christ brings it back with Him.
- ▶ Christ puts us in a Local Church body as it pleases Him- and when we leave that body- except for the reason of fundamental doctrinal errors, then we are thwarting His pleasure; i.e., we are displeasing to Him. Unless we KNOW that He is moving us- then we are to stay put NO MATTER WHAT!
- ▶ The Local Church is Christ's body; and when we remove part of His body, us, then we cripple His body. If He moves us then He will replace that part so that the body won't be crippled- but if we just rip ourselves out of the body, then we are crippling His body.
- ▶ Since the Local church is His body, then when we are disloyal to it we are disloyal to him.
 - When we harm any part of His body- then we are harming Him.
 - When we malign any part of His body- then we are maligning Him.
- ▶ God is to be first and we are not to put anything above pleasing Him- not our job, riches, position, family, self, comfort, NOTHING is to be above God. And when He puts us in a Local Church body “**as it hath pleased Him**” then we are to be pleasing to God and trust Him to supply our needs RIGHT THERE and stay right there NO MATTER WHAT COMES until we KNOW that God is not just MOVING us but is REPLACING us because He needs us in a different body- a different Local Church!
- ▶ If each member stays in the body and each member of the body fulfills their function in the body, and even the lowest part of the body has a function if God put them there, then that body will succeed against the powers of darkness and every member will be properly nourished, protected, and fulfilled and functioning. And then will come to pass what Jesus promised:
- ▶ **“And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Mt 16:18)**

Class Instruction

Please return to the class page and take the test for Section One.



PART TWO

The Church

How & When

It Was Established

THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

I. How Was the Church Founded.

There are several views held as to when and how the Church was founded.

1. By Christ during His ministry. (The true view.)
2. At Pentecost. (The false view.)

This confusion can be easily cleared up when one examines **Acts 1:8**.

Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...”

Speaking to the church (“ye”) Christ promised that they would receive power from the Holy Ghost, which they did as He promised they would, on the day of Pentecost. Therefore, the day of Pentecost was not the birthday of the Church, as many claim, but the day of **Pentecost** was the day of the **empowering** of the already existent Church.

3. Clarification.

- ▶ You can’t put power into something unless that something already exists. And the power can’t flow unless the power supply is already there and is hooked up.
- ▶ Example: In order for an automobile to receive power three things are necessary.
 - a. The car must already exist.
 - b. A battery needs to be available and in the vehicle.
 - c. The battery needs to be hooked up to the car’s electrical system.
- ▶ Applied to the Local Church.
 - a. In order for the Church to have received power, as God promised they would when the day of Pentecost was come, the church must have already existed.
 - b. In order for the Church to receive power as promised, the battery must have already been available in the Church.
 - c. In order for the Church to receive power from the battery, as promised, the battery needed to be “hooked up.”

4. The process concerning the Local Church.

- a. To receive “power” the Church must have already been in existence. (We will address when and how that happened in the next section.)
- b. To receive “power” there must have already been a power source (battery) installed in the Church.
 - ▶ The Church is the people- so the power supply must have already been installed in the people. This happened prior to Pentecost and is recorded for us in the Bible.

John 20:19-22 “Then the same day at evening, being the first [day] of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace [be] unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them [his] hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace [be] unto you: as [my] Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on [them], and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:”

- ▶ It is made plain in **Jn 20:22** that the people, the Church, already had the indwelling

of the Holy spirit from the day of Jesus' resurrection; i.e., from the evening of Jesus' resurrection, the "battery," the power supply, the Holy Ghost, was available to the Church.

- c. Summary: On the day of Pentecost, the Church, which had to have already existed, had the "battery cables" hooked up providing power from the Holy Ghost, the battery, which had already indwelt the members from the day of Christ's resurrection.

Therefore, Pentecost was not the birthday of the Church but the day of empowering of the Church. And that is exactly what Christ promised.

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..."

They had received the Holy Ghost the evening of the day of His resurrection; and then at Pentecost, the power of God's Holy Spirit within them came upon them, i.e., it was released to enable them to carry out God's work.

To put it simply, the cables were hooked up to the Holy Spirit within them so the power could start to flow in the Church. The individual believers already had the Holy Spirit within them, and at Pentecost the Church, corporately, was empowered.

II. When Was the Church Founded and Who Founded It?

A. Who founded the Church?

Jesus claimed the Church was His- therefore, He was the founder of it.

Mt 16:18 "... I will build MY church..."

B. When was it founded?

1. Many believe the foundation of the church was somewhere between **Mt 16 & Mt 18**.

- a. He gave a prophecy and promise of it in **Mt 16:16-18**.

Mt 16:18 "... I will build my church..."

- ▶ He told them in that passage that He would build His Church- i.e., He told them that He would be going through the process of building, which is an ongoing process, His Church.
- ▶ Remember, however, that this also could easily be a promise of the ongoing construction (building) of something that was already previously started.

- b. Recognition of the church visible (discipline) was given in **Mt 18:15-20**.

It would not be possible to take an erring brother or sister to a gathering of some "Universal" Church because it would be impossible for all believers of all places and all times to gather in one place to carry out discipline, such as is the case here, or any other corporate matter. Therefore, Christ must have been talking about a local assembly- a Local Church.

- c. The giving of the Holy Spirit to the believers. (**Jn 20:22**)

- d. The filling of the Church corporately, with the Holy Spirit and power. (**Acts ch. 2**)

- e. This possibility, that Christ established the Church somewhere between **Mt chs. 16-18** is a good possibility but not necessarily the best possibility because of several scriptures that will be discussed in the next section.

2. Many believe that the Church was started when Christ called His first disciples/apostles. (Because we have already discussed the receiving of the Holy Ghost and the later empowering of the Church at Pentecost, then we need not discuss them again in this segment.)
- a. Christ called His first disciples at the beginning of His ministry.
Mt 4:17-22 “**From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left [their] nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James [the son] of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.**”
 (Also see John 1:29 - 51)
- b. Speaking to the Church, Christ said that where two or three are gathered, there He would be in the midst of them. (**Mt 18:17-20**)
- c. Therefore, it is quite logical to believe that His Church started when He called His first disciples with Himself physically in the midst of them as they assembled.
3. Summary.
- ▶ If one chooses to believe that the Church that was started by Christ actually started somewhere between **Mt ch. 16** and **Mt ch. 18**, that would be quite acceptable and in accord with the scriptural evidence.
 - ▶ Also, if one chooses to believe that Christ started His Church when He called His first disciples, then that would also be acceptable and in accord with the scriptures.
 - ▶ However, to believe that it started at Pentecost is contrary to the evidence.
 - ▶ Suffice it to say that it is scripturally necessary to believe that it was Jesus that started His Church and He did so while He was still here on the earth.

NOTE:

- A. Jesus Christ went to John the Baptist for Baptism.**
- B. His original church members also had the Baptism of John the Baptist.**
- C. Therefore, when they baptized new members into the Church, they passed on the baptism of John to the new members.**
- D. You become a Baptist by being baptized by a Baptist. (A church is a called out, baptized body of believers.)**
- E. Then the Church that was founded by Jesus Christ was a Baptist Church.**

Jesus founded the first Baptist Church at Jerusalem.

NOTE: There are those that claim that the phrase “John the Baptist” should be rendered “John the baptizer.” Even if that was true, and it is not necessarily so, it would not change a thing. Those who baptize with the baptism that God gave to John are true, biblical, Baptists. That scriptural authority has been handed down to that group today known as “Baptists.” Many have erred from the scriptural traditions but that does not negate those traditions. Therefore, those of us who are scriptural “baptizers” are the true “Baptists” because we pass on and practice the baptism of John, as approved by the Lord Jesus Christ. Had there been denominationalism in the days of Jesus, which there wasn’t because there was only one Church, the one Jesus started, then Jesus’ group, His assembly of baptized believers (His Church), would have been called Baptists because they were baptizers with the authoritative baptism that God gave to John and which was subsequently passed on to them. Baptist is not just what we are- it is what we do.

In a later segment, the one on Church History, we will discuss where the name, Baptist, came from as well as when it was applied to us and by whom.

Class Instruction

Please return to the class page and take the test for Section Two.

P A R T T H R E E



One of the biggest, if not the biggest, problems we have in the U.S. today is an abhorrence of and a disrespect for authority. This began in the 60's and gained tremendous strides during the 70's and 80's. By the 90's it was totally out of control. "Self-esteem," as taught in our public schools, has put the icing on the cake by teaching our children that they are number one in everything. The failure of that teaching was made apparent last year (2003) when a study was done on drug use and it was found out that the students with the most self-esteem were the ones that were most likely to use drugs. Another indicator of it's failure is the rise in crime in our public schools and among teenagers and younger children on the streets of any city in America. Also it is apparent if one simply visits any public school or the average home today, that the average young person today, whether as a student in school or a child at home, has no respect for authority nor, in most cases, for themselves or for anyone else other than (maybe) a close-knit circle of friends. And really they have no respect for those close friends which is easily seen by the way they encourage one another in sinful behavior, or if you will, illegal behavior, but rather simply try not to hurt them overtly. Above everything else, one will observe that other than in a minority of the young people today, respect for authority is totally lacking and it is easy to see that authority is, in fact, viewed with animosity. Anyone who tries to tell them what to do is resisted and viewed as somehow being the enemy.

On the other hand, we who are of the previous 2 generations are just as guilty as they are. In fact, they learned their animosity to authority from our two generations' slide into worldliness and our "me first" attitude which we passed on to them. The hippie generation of the late 60's through the late 70's rebelled against authority and those same folks are now running our country in our name. And those of us who were never involved with the hippies have still allowed their rebellion and lack of morality and respect to infiltrate our society and even to take root, in a larger or smaller amount, in our own hearts and effect our core values which are needed to have any kind of a decent and peaceful society. And we let them do it! In fact, our generation has encouraged the propagation of general rebellion against authority by both our actions and our inaction.

This rebellion against authority that is so widespread in our society has insidiously infiltrated our churches- even our Independent Baptist Churches! And when we adults act in rebellion against authority, then we are teaching our children to do the same. Roast preacher, roast deacon, roast member, is served up on a plate to the children, and new members for that matter, and then we wonder why those who have been so taught grow up to do the same things to others. And it seems that the higher up the biblical rung of loving authority God places one in the church, that the more the heat is turned up by the cooks, reinforcing to the church members what is taught as the norm in our society today- rebellion against authority!

With that said and the stage of societal rebellion set, we will now narrow our study down to the Local Church and biblical authority; and, why we are to yield to, yea help enforce, and follow the authority that God has set over us.

I. The Church's Authority.

To begin with, we must ask ourselves three questions: (1) what authority does the church have; (2) how did it get that authority; (3) how is that authority enforced.

A. What authority is given to the Local Church.

Remember, along with privilege always goes responsibility; and authority is a privilege conferred upon one by the giver of it. And some privileges, such as becoming the sons of God, being saved, are conferred upon us out of love and not because we deserve them. And other privileges must be earned before they are conferred upon one by the giver. This would include a place of loving authority in the Local Church which is earned by faithfulness to the giver and by proper preparation to carry out the responsibilities that go with it. However you may believe that one is given authority, I think we can all agree that it is always a privilege conferred; and, since privilege carries responsibility, then we can also say that along with authority goes responsibility. Responsibility to be faithful to exercise the authority given to you, i.e., you are responsible to the boss to do your job; and, responsibility to be fair and effective in exercising the authority given to you.

With that said, what authority has been conferred upon the Local Church.

1. The authority and responsibility to evangelize, baptize, and teach.

a. The authority and responsibility to spread the gospel.

Speaking to His church, He gave us this authority.

Mt 28:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..."

Mk 16:15 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

b. The authority and responsibility to baptize.

Mt 28:19b "... baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

c. The authority and responsibility to teach those saved how to live godly lives.

Mt 28:20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:"

d. Where did this authority come from?

Mk 16:15 "And he (Jesus) said unto them, Go ye..."

Mt 28:20b "... and, lo, I (Jesus) am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen."

e. How is that authority enforced?

By the power of God Himself!

Jn 20:21 "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace [be] unto you: as [my] Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

Mt 28:18 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"

:19 “Go ye, therefore...”

**:20b “... and, lo, I am with you alway, [even]
unto the end of the world. Amen.”**

- f. When we, as a church, obey God and spread the gospel - and baptize - and teach them to obey and do the things that God has taught us, then the very power of God is with us and will empower us as we lovingly carry out the responsibilities that He has given us as His Local Church.
2. The authoritative responsibility to judge and carry out discipline upon errant members who refuse to repent and be restored to godly living so that they don't infect the body with their unrepentant sin.
- a. The authority, as a church, to judge the actions of the members.

I Cor 6:5 “I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?”

- ▶ But what about:

Mt 7:1 “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” (Also Lk 6:37)

- ▶ In context, that is not saying that the Church is not to judge but that individuals are not to judge!

Jas 4:11-12 “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of [his] brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another.”

- ▶ Rather, it is up to individuals to try to restore the erring one.

Gal 6:1-2 “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

- ▶ We are to judge whether their actions are biblical or not and that is all we can do.
If we let them be judged by the Word of God then we are asking God to judge us in the same way.

Mt 7:2 “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

If we let the Word of God judge them and then we show mercy and seek to restore them, then we can expect God to judge our actions according to His Word and to likewise show us mercy and restoration.

- ▶ The Local Church is to carry out judgement upon the unrepentant sinning member.
- The Local Church is the body of Christ; and Christ is the judge of the world.

Jn 5:22 “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:”

- And the Church is to let God's Word judge the erring brother or sister.

And God's Word tells us we are to turn the unrepentant sinner over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh that the erring brother or sister might be freed.

Mt 18:15-17 “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. 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. 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.”

I Cor 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, 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.”

b. Where does that authority and responsibility to judge come from?

According to **I Cor 5:4** (quoted above), that authority is “**In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ... and my spirit.**”

c. How is that authoritative responsibility enforced?

Again in **I Cor:5:4** “**with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ**”; therefore, it is enforced with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, the Local New Testament Church is the body of Christ and as His body they are empowered with His power.

3. The authoritative responsibility to propagate the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mt 16:19 “**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.**”

a. If we do not carry out this authoritative responsibility, then we are binding the Kingdom of Heaven; i.e., we are locking, or at least not opening, the door to the Kingdom of Heaven for the lost.

Contrariwise, if we do carry out this responsibility, then we are opening or, if you will, “loosing” the door of the Kingdom of Heaven to the lost.

b. Where does this authority derive from?

In **Mt 16:19** we find that it is from the Lord Jesus Christ.

“**... I will give unto thee...**”

c. How is it enforced?

Since it is delegated to us from the Lord Jesus Christ, then it is His power that enforces that authority.

4. Summary.

a. The Local New Testament Church has been given the authoritative responsibility to Evangelize, baptize, and teach new members to obey God and do the things He commands. They are also given the authoritative responsibility to judge and carry out discipline upon errant members who refuse to repent and be restored to godly living. It also has the authoritative responsibility to bind or loose the Kingdom of Heaven.

b. Those authoritative responsibilities are delegated to the Church, which is His body, by the Lord Jesus Christ.

c. And the power by which the Church’s authority is enforced is the power of the giver of that authoritative responsibility- Jesus Christ Himself.

II. Authority in the Church.

There is an old saying that an organization, be it a family, a business, or a society, is chaotic or has or is about to fail because “There are too many chiefs and not enough Indians.” The New Testament Church is both an organism, the body of Christ (see the earlier segment on What Is the Church), as well as an organization. I say this because an organism without organization will die. Each part of the organism has to fulfill its proper function in order for the organism to live and to properly function.

In this segment we will concentrate on the organization of the organism and the delegation of authority in that organization called the Local New Testament Church.

A. Certain terms are used in the Bible to denote those in authority and those in servitude in the Local New Testament Church.

Now I understand that all Christians are servants of Christ. That is a biblical fact that is stated over and over in the Bible. However, there are certain terms that are used to delineate certain groups and individual members of the Local New Testament Church that are specifically designated as rulers (those in authority) and those who specifically serve under that authority in the local Church.

1. Bishops & Deacons. (Phil 1:1)

- ▶ “Bishop” Gk *ep-is’-ko-pon*, an overseer

The qualifications for bishops & their wives are found in **I Tim ch. 3** and **Ti ch. 1**

- ▶ “Deacons” Gk *di-ak-an-os’* and its derivatives: a servant

The qualifications for deacons & their wives, are also found in **I Tim ch. 3**.

2. Elders. (Acts 20:17)

- ▶ Another name for a bishop showing that bishops must be chosen from among the mature members of the Church.

Titus 1:5-7 “... For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be...”

“Elder” Gk *pres-boo-ter’-os*, the older members of the church

- ▶ It is obvious that “bishops” (overseers) must be chosen out of this “elder” group of mature Christians.

I Tim 3:6 “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”

3. Presbyter.

Another name for an elder or a bishop. Actually translated from the exact same Greek word as elder.

I Tim 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.”

”Presbytery” Gk *pres-boo-ter’-i-ou* from *pres-boo-ter’-os*, (see “Elders” above) the older members of the church

And, according to **Ti 1:5-7**, this group, the presbytery or elders, is the one from which the rulers (bishops/overseers) of the church are to be chosen.

4. Pastors (including one of their main jobs, teaching).

Eph 4:11 “... pastors and teachers;”

- a. “Pastors” **Gk** μ , *poi-mane-as*, a herdsman, esp. a shepherd; the presiding officer, manager, director, of any assembly: so of Christ the Head of the church, a pastor- the overseers of the Christian assemblies

The tasks of a Near Eastern shepherd were:

- to watch for enemies trying to attack the sheep
- to defend the sheep from attackers
- to heal the wounded and sick sheep
- to find and save lost or trapped sheep
- to love them, sharing their lives and so earning their trust

- b. “Teachers” **Gk** , *did-as-kal-os*, one who teaches

- c. The pastor in the New Testament Church is the one who, as the undershepherd under Christ, has the authoritative responsibility to lead and care for the Church. He is also authoritatively responsible for the teaching, or overseeing the teaching, of the precepts of God, from the Word of God, to the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

5. Summary.

The terms bishop and pastor are terms used to delineate the one who has been given the authoritative responsibility to lead the local New Testament Church. And that benevolent ruler, under Christ and by His power, is to be chosen from among the elders (presbytery) of that local Church body.

Also, the deacons are those faithful men who are chosen specifically to be menial servants, under the pastor, to serve in the Local New Testament Church.

B. The delegation and exercise of authority in the Local New Testament Baptist Church.

The delegation of authority to the pastor/bishop/ presbyter who oversees, guides, and protects the Local New Testament organization which is the organism known as the body of Christ.

Warning- This authoritative leadership in the Local New Testament Church is not to be one of dictatorial power to suppress the members of the body and force them into a direction conceived solely in the mind of one man or group of men; but rather it is to be the benevolently exercised authority of one who seeks only the good, the edification, the protection, and the direction of the church as it is conceived solely in the mind of God and revealed by Him through His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

This can be summed up in a warning: Pastoral authority is not to be exercised as a dictatorial authority but rather a benevolent one derived from God and exercised solely in the way He dictates in His Word, to bring about His will in the Local Church organization; and it is to be exercised solely for the purpose of facilitating the health and proper functioning of the organism known as the Local New Testament Church which is Christ’s body.

1. The delegation of authoritative responsibility to lead the Local New Testament Baptist Church.

- a. The delegation of authority to the pastor.

It is to the pastor who is known by two terms- pastor and bishop.

- ▶ As pastor we have seen that he is the leader who is authoritatively responsible to protect and nurture the Church, out of love for them, as he shares their lives—including their perils and failures as well as their successes and blessings. And who, in addition, is authoritatively responsible to teach them or to see to the teaching of them by others, in the way that God would have them to go..
 - ▶ As bishop we have seen that he is the leader who is authoritatively responsible to oversee the Church in all aspects.
- b. The statement of the authority of the pastor and the responsibility of all members of the Local New Testament Church to follow him as he benevolently rules the organization that facilitates the proper life and functioning of the organism known as the body of Christ.

I Tim 5:17 “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”

Heb 13:17 “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you.”

Heb 13:24 “Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints.”

I Tim 3:4-5 “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

- c. A warning to the pastors that rule not well but rather exercise their authority as a dictator and destroy the Local New Testament Church.

- ▶ In the Old Testament, God set down the rules for the pastors.
 - They are to feed the people with knowledge and understanding.

Jer 3:15 “And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.”

- ▶ And in the New Testament He set down the rules and qualifications for the pastors in the New Testament Local Church. (**I Tim ch. 3** and **Titus ch. 1**)
- ▶ And throughout the Bible He gave them warnings of what will happen if they do not rule the way He wants them to rule and lead in the direction He wants them to lead.
 - They are to be diligent in carrying out their authoritative responsibilities as overseers and watch out that heretics don’t get into the Church and rend and tear it like wolves in the sheepfold. And in addition they are to watch out for heretics that will rise up from within the Church itself.

Acts 20:28-32 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (bishops), to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and

to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified

- They are to seek to lead in the ways of the Lord, else they will come to nought and so will the people they lead.

Jer 10:21 “For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.”

- Those who turn from leading in the way of the Lord shall be blown into the wind.
Jer 22:22 “The wind shall eat up all thy pastors...”

- Those who destroy and scatter the sheep, them shall God destroy!

Jer 23:1-2 “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.”

- That includes the pastors and anyone else who tries to destroy or defile the people of God or, in the case of the New Testament Church, the temple of God- the Local New Testament Church.

I Cor 3:16-17 “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and [that] the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are.”

d. Summary.

The pastor, who is also known as bishop, who is chosen out from among the elders (the older more mature members of the Church, the presbytery), is commanded and delegated by God to be the authority, under Christ, and has been given the responsibility to lead the Local New Testament Church according to the way that Christ wants it to go.

2. The responsibility of the members toward the pastor.

And I am speaking of the pastor who leads the Church as God’s delegated authority in the organization that facilitates the life and health and proper functioning of the organism known as the Local New Testament Baptist Church, which is the body of Christ.

Remember, to disobey those who rule with the delegated authority of Christ and according to the way that Christ commands them to rule in His Word, lovingly and tenderly caring for the flock and leading them in the ways of God, to disobey that one is to disobey the one under whom they rule the flock with delegated authority. To put it another way, to disobey the foreman who is following the rules of the boss, is the same as disobeying the boss Himself. Then to be blunt I would say, to disobey and be disloyal to a godly faithful pastor is the same as disobeying and being disloyal to God Himself who delegated authority to that pastor- just as being disloyal to the Church, the body of Christ, is the same as being disloyal to Christ Himself.

- a. The members are to submit to and obey the pastor as they lead the Church..

Heb 13:17 “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you.”

- b. The Church is to take care of the needs of the pastor.

I Tim 5:17-18 “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer [is] worthy of his reward.”

I Cor 9:11 “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, [is it] a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?”

I Cor 9:13-14 “Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live [of the things] of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”

- c. The members are not to receive slanderous accusations against the pastor; nor against any of the elders of the Church for that matter.

I Tim 5:19 “Against an elder (from whom the pastor was chosen) receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.”

What if he gets off into heresy or sin? Then separate yourself from them and let God deal with them. God will judge them. If there are two or three witnesses of their sin, then the Church can take action just like it can with any erring and unrepentant sinning member. Remember, however, we learned in an earlier section that it is not the job of any individual to straighten out anyone in the Church. It is the job of the Church to judge and execute discipline or, in the case we are currently considering, that of a pastor, to exercise discipline and maybe dismissal. As individuals our job is to restore such an one. And the only way a Church can dismiss a pastor is if he disqualifies himself by sinful actions or by teaching of heresy. (See the qualifications for a pastor in **I Tim and Titus**.)

- ▶ Concerning individuals judging anyone, including the pastor-

Ro 14:4 “Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”

Jas 4:12 “There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?”

- ▶ Concerning the Church handling the situation, we have already studied that under Church discipline in **I Corinthians** and what goes for any erring member also goes for the pastor.
- ▶ Also, concerning the Church taking action against a pastor, the Bible gives a strong warning. Therefore, extreme caution is necessary when handling such dangerous matters.

NOTE: Remember, a prophet is defined as one who speaks for another; and the

NT pastor and other preachers are the ones who speak the Word of God today.

I Chr 16:22 “[Saying], Touch not mine anointed, (meaning the people of God) **and do my prophets no harm.”**

And God declares woe and destruction, condemnation and desolation, on those who unrighteously harm the prophets of the Old and New Testaments- and the pastor and other preachers are the prophets of today who speak the word of God. (See **Mt 23:29-38**)

Therefore, the discipline and dismissal of the pastor, God’s delegated authority in the New Testament Church, is a serious matter that should only be undertaken with much prayer and trepidation. Restoration would be a much better course, but if that is not possible, then discipline is a necessary course but it is one fraught with extreme danger.

III. Summary.

- A.** The Local New Testament Baptist Church is the delegated authority of God on earth today.
- ▶ They have the delegated authoritative responsibility to spread the Gospel, baptize, and then teach the new converts in the ways of the Lord according to the Word of God.
 - ▶ They also have the delegated responsibility to exercise discipline upon erring members who refuse to repent and be reconciled to God.
 - ▶ They also have the delegated authoritative responsibility of holding and using the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Binding and loosing both on earth and in Heaven.
 - ▶ And to be disloyal to or rebellious against the authority of the Local New Testament Church that is following God and not into heretical doctrines, is to commit such actions against God Himself because the Local Church is the body of Christ.
- B.** The pastor, also known as bishop, who is chosen out of the elders of the congregation, is God’s delegated representative who has been given the authoritative responsibility to lead, protect, nurture, and teach the congregation and to oversee the Church in all matters.
- ▶ And the members are to willingly obey him as leader and submit to him as he submits to and follows Christ.
 - ▶ And to be disloyal to him and to be in rebellion against him is to be disloyal to and to be in rebellion against the one who delegated authority to him- and that is, of course, God Himself.

There was an old English law from the early part of the 2nd millennium that is a good example of this principle.

“An attack on the King’s soldiers is the same as an attack on the King himself.” This same principle applies to rebellion against God’s delegated authority in the New Testament Church- the pastor. An attack on the pastor is the same as an attack on the King Himself.

Class Instruction

Please return to the class page and take the test for Section Three.

LINEAGE OF THE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCHES

(Current example- Bible Baptist Church of Salt Lake City)

- LINK 1 - John was with Jesus Christ in the Church that Jesus started. ----- A.D. 27-33
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- LINK 7 - Archer Flavin came from the Daretheo Church organized by Adromicus. ----- A.D. 671

P A R T F O U R

LIN 38

LIN 12

LIN 40

LIN 87

CHURCH HISTORY

- LINK 16 - From the first Baptist churches that were organized in Texas, church planters were sent into the counties, towns, and villages- including Tarrant county. -----
- LINK 17 - First Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, TX, Tarrant county, came out of this church planting effort. -----
- LINK 18 - Denton Baptist Temple of Denton, Texas, came from First Baptist, Fort Worth.
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to the
Present Day

Up through 2007
Into the future - till the Lord returns!

INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest problems in teaching biblical truth about the Church is the orchestrated heresy that teaches there are only two groups of Christians, Catholics and Protestants. This particular piece of misinformation has been orchestrated by the devil and propagated by both the Catholics and the Protestants down through the centuries. This particular error has been one of the main reasons why the average Christian in the average church does not understand what the Church really is, how and when it was established, and the biblical authority of and in the Local Church. Those three have already been addressed in the first three parts of this study. Now we will go on to attack and destroy this root that is feeding poison to and destroying the churches today.

To offset the error of the two-groups-only heresy, it is necessary that we trace the history of the church (the Local New Testament Church) from its inception by Jesus on down to the present day.

Since the only type of church that is taught in the Bible is the Local New Testament Church, then we will trace the history of this particular church, Bible Baptist Church of Taylorsville, Utah. We will show its direct descent from that first Church that Jesus established in Israel sometime between 27 and 30 AD while He walked upon this earth.

We will briefly touch upon some of the main Independent Church “movements” and the Independent Christian men around whom people rallied to raise up the name of Christ and propagate the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Most of those leaders and a large percentage of their followers were killed for their unabashed stand upon God’s Word and all were persecuted for it. Such groups as the Montanists, Novations, Paulicans, AnaBaptists, etc., and a whole slew of other groups ring out as clear bells amongst a cacophony of noise down through the years. Many times the clear tones of the Independents proclaiming the Word of God were almost drowned out by the noise of the heretical Catholic and, later, Protestant noise which sounded on down through history with bone-jarring and blood-spilling force. But by the power of God and according to His promise, the clear tones of Godly preaching and teaching could always be heard cutting through the noise, if one would but pause and listen for it.

Mt 16:18 “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.”

Because of that promise and because God ALWAYS keeps His word, this Independent Baptist Church is here today. Still lifting up Christ and not some religion, still unashamedly standing on the Word of God, still earnestly contending for the faith, this Local Independent Baptist Church is here because of God’s promise and as PROOF that God has kept His word.

On with our study.

SECTION ONE

General History of the Baptists and Others

The lineage of the churches today, including those called Baptists, can be found in the insert in the back of the “Trail of Blood booklet.”

I. Catholic and all Protestant Churches.

A. The beginnings of the Catholic Church can be traced directly to Emperor Constantine who declared the Catholic Church to be the official state church of the Roman Empire.

1. Official recognition of Christianity as a legal religion in AD 313 by Constantine brought to an end the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. At least for a time.

2. Then, in 325, he summoned the First Council of Nicea.

3. From that time on the Catholic Church began to gain secular power and to claim ecclesiastical supremacy.

4. The Great Schism between the Western, Roman Catholic Church, and the Eastern, Orthodox, Catholic Church, began in 589 and finally came to a head in 876. From that time on, the Catholic Church became a two-headed monster with one head centered in Rome and the other head growing from Constantinople. The final break came in 1054 with the excommunication of the Eastern patriarch at Constantinople by a papal legate.

5. With the ascendance to secular power, the ecclesiastical power of the Catholic Church began to be severely enforced, up to and including death for heresy. The power of the Catholic Church wed to the power of the Roman Empire was officially consummated by Emperor Theodosius in 380 when he declared that all of his subjects adopt Christianity- and by that he meant the heretical brand of Christianity espoused by the Catholic Church.

6. Then, in 1534-35, King Henry VIII. made himself the head of the Church of England marking the schism between the brand of Catholicism practiced by those called Roman Catholics and those in England that made up the Catholic Church there who, from King Henry and his proclamation onward, became known as the Church of England. Descended from that child of the Catholic Church are the Catholic grandchildren called the Anglican Churches.

B. In 1530, with the “Diet of Augsburg,” the creed of the Lutheran Church was drawn up marking the official beginning of what is known as the Protestant Reformation.



From this “Reformation” of the Catholic church came all of the Protestant denominations. Therefore, all Protestant denominations are simply reformed versions of the heretical Catholic Church and all have brought some of the Catholic heresies with them and because of that are heretical in themselves. If the mother is a dog, then the offspring is a dog. If the mother is a cat, then the offspring is a cat. If a mother church is a heretical faith, then the offspring is a heretical faith.



The way I look at is this: all Protestant churches, because they are simply reformed Catholic Churches, are simply “closet Catholics.” They one day will reunite with their mother, The Catholic Church, and that process has actually been underway for several decades.

II. The Baptists.

True Baptists, and many who call themselves Baptist today are not true Baptists, have never been a part of Catholicism east or west, just as there were groups that called themselves Christian churches in the first century after Christ started His church that were not regular Christian Churches. These would have been such groups as the gnostics and others that are not so well know that claimed to be Christians but were not.

A. Originally we were called Christians.

Acts 11:26 “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”

B. Then we were called anabaptists- first by the Catholics.

1. We were recognized by the Catholic Cardinal Hosius, Pres. Council of Trent, in 1554 during the time of the Reformation, as being a separate group from the Reformers.

“Were it not, that the Baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife, during the past twelve hundred years, they would swarm in even greater numbers than all of the reformers.”

2. We were obviously a separate group from both the Catholic and the Protestant groups since both groups slaughtered us by the millions.

a. Read Foxe’s Book of Martyrs and The Trail of Blood by Carroll.

Carroll - **“Both the Lutheran Church and the Presbyterian Church were soon in the persecuting business, falling little, if any, short of their Catholic mother.”**

b. Nicholas Eymeric, appointed Inquisitor of the Kingdom of Aragon in 1356, wrote the systematic textbook of procedures for Inquisitors, the **Directorium Inquisitorium**” in 1376. In it he lumped magicians, diviners, and Anabaptists all into one group and stated the position that we were subject to the Inquisition.

“Some others, however, are magicians and diviners who are not pure chiro-mantics, but are contracted to heretics as are those who show the honor of *latria* (supreme worship lawfully given only to God) or *dulia* (veneration or homage paid to the saints) to the demons, who rebaptize children and do other similar things... These people are guilty of manifest heresy. And such magicians and diviners do not evade the judgment of the Inquisitor, but are punished according to the laws pertaining to heretics.”

c. Luther, the father of the Reformation, thought we were bewitched of the devil and the Lutheran Church soon joined in with the others in the slaughter of the Anabaptists.

“For by this spiritual witchcraft that old serpent bewitcheth not men’s senses, but their minds with false and wicked opinions: which opinions, they that are so bewitched, do take to be true and godly... even those also which are professors of true Christianity, and well affected in religion,, we also at this day labour by the word of God against those fantastical opinions of the Anabaptists, that we may set at liberty those that are entangled therewith,, they abuse and corrupt the

scripture... [Teaching] clean contrary to the Scripture; which is a manifest sign that they are bewitched of the devil.”

And soon after followed the Presbyterians, the Church of England, and other groups in slaughtering the Anabaptists, wherever they were to be found.

It is easy to see that the Baptists, known as Anabaptists and by other names, were never part of either the Catholic Church nor the Protestant Churches. We were slaughtered by all and received protection from none.

NOTE: There is a group today that call themselves “Anabaptist-Mennonites.” These are not true Baptists of Anabaptist descent but are simply another Protestant group that came out of the Catholic Church. This group started with the Reformation and should not be confused with the historical Anabaptists that were given that name in antiquity.

The founder of this late group that called themselves Anabaptists in the early 1500's was a man by the name of Thomas Muntzer who died at the end of the rebellion known as the Peasant's Revolt in Germany with the full approval of Luther, whom Muntzer once followed but whom Muntzer had viewed as going soft. Luther called for the nobles to rise up and destroy the rebellion of which Muntzer was the head.

Luther - “Whip, strangle and kill these murderers and robbers like mad dogs.”

Tried and executed on May 27, 1525 Muntzer died reconciled to the Catholic Church.

Remember, these Anabaptist Mennonites are a relatively recent group that at the time of the Reformation split off from the Catholic Church and simply adopted a name that had already been around for centuries. They are not true Anabaptists at all.

SUMMARY

The first Church was the one that Jesus started. In about the 4th century a group of irregular churches that had been around since about the 2nd or 3rd century banded together in a heretical group called the Catholic Church. That group then fragmented several times and from them came all of the Protestant and Catholic groups in existence today.

At the same time, the churches that had been following the biblical faith that was once delivered unto the saints continued separate from the Catholic movement. This concurrent existence existed from that time down to the present time.

This separate group, called at various times and in various places, Paulicans, Albigenses, Waldenses, as well as many other names, came to be known, eventually, as Anabaptists and, later, Baptists.

There are basically only three groups in the world today: Catholics (both east and west); Protestants of all kinds, of the various denominations; and Baptists, which are also known as Independent Churches if they are true Baptists. And these Baptist Churches, that are totally non-denominational, follow the fundamentals of the faith that almost all Protestant churches claimed to believe until the 20th century, but which they have not followed, and have now finally denied.

Now we will go on to specific Baptist Church History.

You will find a lineage chart on the next page and the detailed explanation of that chart on the pages following.

LINEAGE OF THE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCHES

(Current example- Bible Baptist Church of Salt Lake City)

LINK 1 - John was with Jesus Christ in the Church that Jesus started. -----	A.D. 27-33
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LINK 6 - Adromicus came from Pontifossi, at the foot of the Alps in France. -----	
LINK 7 - Archer Flavin came from the Daretheo Church organized by Adromicus. -----	A.D. 671
LINK 8 - Timto Church was organized by Archer Flavin. -----	A.D. 738
LINK 9 - Balcolao came from the church at Timto, Asia Minor. -----	
LINK 10 - Lima Piedmont Church was organized by Balcolao. -----	A.D. 812
LINK 11 - Lima Piedmont Church ordained Aaron Arlington. -----	A.D. 940
LINK 12 - Hillcliff Church, Wales, England, was organized by Aaron Arlington. -----	A.D. 987
LINK 13 - H. Roller came to the Philadelphia Association from the Hillcliff Church. -----	
LINK 14 - The Baptist Church at Dyer, Tennessee, was organized by J. W. Jetter, who came from the Philadelphia Association. -----	
LINK 15 - The Tennessee Baptist Church sponsored the first missionaries to Texas. -----	
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LINK 20 and following - The many Churches started out of Bible Baptist Church of Salt Lake County, Utah. These links are in Utah, the surrounding states, across the U.S. and around the world, and many of them have started the next generation of churches. ---	Into the future - until the Lord Returns!

I. The First Link- the First Church, started A.D. 27 - 30.

A. It was founded by Christ somewhere between 27 and 30 AD, during His ministry here on the earth.

We don't need to go over this again. It was covered in Section Two of this study- "How And When The Church Was Established."

B. That Church was then carried on by the apostles and propagated throughout the known world.

1. They met in appointed places, the upper room, the Temple, in homes, in synagogues; and, they met at appointed times for communal worship, such as: daily, on the Lord's Day (Sunday), and at regular hours of prayer.

(Acts 1:13; 12:5, 12; 2:46; ch. 13; 2:46; 20:7; 3:1; 10:9)

2. They, and all of the mission churches started by them, had church officers- pastor/bishops and deacons. (These were studied in an earlier section.)

3. They sent representatives (missionaries) out to start other churches.

▶ These stories can be found throughout the book of Acts.

▶ They suffered persecution. (Also found throughout the book of Acts.)

4. These missionaries carried the authority and the baptism that was resident in that first Church that Jesus started at Jerusalem.

5. The growth and spread of that first Church can be studied in the book of Acts.

C. The Apostle John was a member of that Church and was sent out by Jesus personally.

Mk 3:13 "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth [unto him] whom he would: and they came unto him."

:14 "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,"

:15 "And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:"

:16-17 And Simon he surnamed Peter; And James the [son] of Zebedee, and John the brother of James..."

Also see: Mt 4:21-22; Mk 1:19-20; Lk 6:12-14; et al.

II. The Second Link - John baptized Polycarp on the 25th of December, A.D. 95.

(Neander's Church History, p. 285.)

III. The Third Link - Tertullan was a member of the Partus church at the foot of the Tiber that was organized by Polycarp. A.D. 150. (Cyrus' Commentary of Antiquity, p. 924)**IV. The Fourth Link - Turan Church was organized by Tertullan from Bing Joy, Africa. A.D. 237.** (Armitage's Church History, p.182)**V. The Fifth Link - Pontifossi Church was organized by Tellestman from Turan, Italy. A.D. 398.** (Nowlin's Church History, Vol. 2, p. 319)**VI. The Sixth Link - Adromicus came from Pontifossi, at the foot of the Alps in France.**

(Lambert's Church History, p. 47)

- VII. The Seventh Link - Archer Flavin came from the Daretheo Church organized by Adromicus. A.D. 671.** (Lambert's Church History, p. 47)
- VIII. The Eighth Link - Timto Church was organized by Archer Flavin. A.D. 738**
(Mosheim's History, Vol 1, p. 394)
- IX. The Ninth Link - Balcolao came from the church at Timto, Asia Minor.**
(Neander's Church History, Vol. 2, p. 320)
- X. The Tenth Link - Lima Piedmont Church was organized by Balcolao. A.D. 812**
(Neander's Church History, Vol. 2, p. 320)
- XI. The Eleventh Link - Lima Piedmont Church ordained Aaron Arlington. A.D. 940**
(Jones' Church History, p. 324)
- XII. The Twelfth Link - Hillcliff Church, Wales, England, was organized by Aaron Arlington. A.D. 987** (Alex Munston's "Israel of the Alps," p. 39)
- XIII. The Thirteenth Link - H. Roller came to the Philadelphia Association from the Hillcliff Church.** (Minutes of Philadelphia Association, book 3, item 1)
- XIV. The Fourteenth Link - The Baptist Church at Dyer, Tennessee, was organized by J. W. Jetter, who came from the Philadelphia Association.**
- XV. The Fifteenth Link- The Tennessee Baptist Church sponsored the first missionaries to Texas.**
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- XX. The Twentieth Link and following - The many Churches started out of Bible Baptist Church of Salt Lake County, Utah. These links are in Utah, the surrounding states, across the U.S. and around the world, and many of them have already started the next generation of churches. Timeframe - From now until the Lord returns.**

SUMMARY

From that first Church started by Jesus Christ until the present time, there is an unbroken trail of Independent Churches leading to the Bible Baptist Church of Taylorsville, Utah; and from that church to many other churches started out of Bible Baptist. The same can be said of any true, Independent Baptist Church.

This unbroken historical trail can be followed down through the years to the other Independent Baptist Churches that have been started in the same traditional, and biblical, manner. That manner being of one Independent Baptist Church sending out a representative with the authority of that existent Baptist Church descended from Christ's Church, to start a new Church and to baptize with the authority of the Baptism of John the Baptist which was given approval by Christ himself and which was propagated through that Church that Jesus start, down through the centuries, church to church directly, until the present. Those Independent Baptist Church of today that were scripturally started can trace their lineage through 19 centuries of fire and blood in which multiplied millions of Christians were martyred for the faith. They alone can claim direct descent from the Church that Jesus started and they alone can claim the biblical authority of a true New Testament Church. And they alone are held responsible by Christ to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition, they alone are empowered by Christ to carry out that mandate to win, baptize, and teach to observe, and can claim the promise given by Him in the Great Commission that He would be with them while they carry out the work the He gave them. **(Mt 28:18-20)**

No Catholic Church can claim this lineage because they left the scriptural faith in the 3rd - 4th centuries and started on a heretical path of dominance over other churches as well as dominance over the secular institutions and kingdoms from that time on, for the next 1700 years. They have lost much of their secular power today but the Holy Roman Empire, centered around the Catholic Church, still holds at least some sway over many of the governments of the world and still practices the heresy of dominance over many churches in defiance of God's plan of independent churches answerable only to Christ. In addition, they still propagate the heresy of the papacy which places the pope in the place of being the final authority over all of the churches under the umbrella of the Roman Catholic Church rather than the scriptural teaching that the local pastor/bishop is the one to whom God has given the authoritative responsibility to lovingly lead the Local Church free from any interference outside of that local body of Christ. The Catholic Church, and the Protestant churches descended from it, defy the biblical precept that the local church body is to have no ecclesiastical authority higher than itself and that it is to follow Christ alone as the head of that church and submit to God's authority within that local church, the pastor who loves it and who nurtures and protects and teaches it the Word of God.

No Protestant Church of any kind can claim this lineage because they came out of the Catholic Church. And since the Catholic Church left the faith and jumped wholeheartedly into heresy, then those Protestant churches, and the churches that then descended from them, had their lineage broken through the mother, the Catholic Church, that spawned them. If the root be rotten, then so are the branches.

I pray this study has helped you understand exactly what the church is, local and visible and independent, and how and when it was established, by Christ during His ministry here on earth. I also pray that it has helped you to understand the God-commanded authority of the Church and the God-given authoritative responsibility of the local Baptist pastor to lovingly lead that Local Church with no other ecclesiastical authority than Christ, as He teaches us in His Word, and the responsibility of that pastor to teach His Word to the members of that Local Church Body.

Finally I pray that this study has helped you to understand that only those non-Protestant, non-Catholic, Baptist Churches, such as this Independent Baptist Church, are descended directly from the first Church that was started by Jesus Christ. They alone carry the baptism of John that Jesus chose and authorized personally and they alone have the authority to administer that baptism upon all who have believe in Christ and accept him and who wish to follow the command and leading of God and submit to scriptural baptism at the hands of His authorized baptizers- this Local Independent Baptist Church.

Thank you and may God bless you as you serve Him better because of this better biblical understanding of the Church started by Him and a better understanding of the place, the authority, and the authoritative responsibility of this Local Independent Baptist Church that is directly descended from His first Church at Jerusalem.

The very existence of this church in direct descent from His original Church proves the truth of what He promised nearly two thousand years ago:

Matthew 16:18
I will build my church;
and the gates of hell
shall not prevail against it.

Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk - Taylorsville, UT - updated, August 17, 2007

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Class Instruction

Please return to the class page and take the test for Section Four.
When you have passed that test, then retrieve the PASSWORD
and take the FINAL TEST.