

How To Identify the Lord's Church!

A Study Guide Prepared by Gary Calton

One of the most pressing problems in the world today is how to find the right church. There are good people (and hypocrites) in every one of them. As a result of a question to our local radio program I thought it worthwhile to look at what the Bible says about the church of our Lord. Obviously, any statement of faith that is shorter than the Scriptures is an insufficient guide. Also, any statement of faith that has something in it that is not found in the Scriptures is an addition to the word of God and cannot be tolerated. I am sure that you, like me, want to follow God's will in this matter as in all things. I want to praise you for beginning this study and pray that God's kindest blessings will be yours as you study His word. Remember to study from your Bible as well as the quotations given here. For your help in identifying the versions used the abbreviations are given at the end of each quotation. The underlining and bold lettering were done by the author to help you in answering the questions.

The Scriptures used in this study include the King James Version (KJV), the New American Standard Bible (NAS), Copyright 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1977 by the Lockman Foundation, and the New International Version (NIV), Copyright 1973, 1978, International Bible Society. Copyright MIIM, MM Living With the Master Foundation

*Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ **does not have God**; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. (II Jn 1:9 NIV)*

1. What does the Bible say about those who are not content to stay within God's revealed word?

*I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "**The righteous will live by faith.**" Rom 1:16-17 (NIV)*

2. Where do we find the righteousness of God revealed? _____

3. How are we to live? _____

We want the church Jesus said he was going to build.

As we study our question, we need to find out just how many churches Jesus said He was going to build and then see if we can find the identifying marks of that church in the one we attend. To do less is to be satisfied with a church that does not "*continue in the teaching of Christ*" and thus we will **not have God!** (II Jn 9).

*"And I also tell you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will **build My church**; and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matt 16:18 NIV)*

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4. How many churches did Jesus say He would build? _____

An interesting fact is pointed out in the margin notes of the NAS. It points out that the Greek word translated "Peter" is "Petros," meaning a small stone. The word translated "rock" is the Greek word "petra," a word meaning a large foundation stone. Greek words, unlike English, have gender associated with them. In this case, the name "Peter," given to Simon at this point, is masculine. The word for "rock" is feminine. This word play by Jesus shows us that the rock on which the church is built is not the man Peter, but on something else. When we look at the verses preceding verse 18, we can see that the confession made by Peter is indeed the bedrock on which Jesus would build His church.

*Matt 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on **this rock** I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (NIV)*

5. Upon what foundation did Jesus say He would build His church? _____

*For no one can lay any **foundation** other than the one already laid, which is **Jesus Christ**. (1 Cor 3:11 NIV)*

6. On what foundation are we to build? _____

Some people mistakenly believe that the building is the church. We want to examine this idea in the Scriptures. The Greek word translated church in the New Testament is "ekklesia". Literally it means the called out. As you answer the next few questions, think about what those who follow God have been called out of.

*7 Now to **you who believe**, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," 8 and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message-- which is also what they were destined for. 9 **But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Pet 2:7-9 NIV)***

7. Out of what have God's people been called? _____

*7 Now to **you who believe**, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone," 8 and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message-- which is also what they were destined for. 9 **But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Pet 2:7-9 NIV)***

8. What characterizes those who have been called out of darkness? _____

*Acts 19:32 The **assembly** was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. ... 39 If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal **assembly**. 40 As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today's*

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*events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it." 41 After he had said this, he dismissed the **assembly**. (NIV)*

In this passage, taken from Acts 19, I have indicated the places where the Greek word, "ekklesia", normally translated "church" in bold print. At this point the translators want to distinguish a group which was behaving in a riotous manner from the church. The Holy Spirit, however, wanted to show us that the church is a group and not a building.

*Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call." ... 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. ... 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord **added to their number daily those who were being saved**. (NIV)*

*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**. (KJV)*

9. Who does the Lord add to the church? _____

We want a church that looks to Jesus for its doctrine!

*Then **Jesus** came to them and said, "All authority **in heaven and on earth** has been given to **me**. (Matt 28:18 NIV)*

10. Who has all authority now? _____

11. Where does Jesus have this authority? _____

*They **worship me in vain**; their teachings are but rules taught by men.'" (Matt 15:9 NIV)*

12. What religious value does the observance of men's rules have? _____

*Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ **does not have God**; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who welcomes him **shares in his wicked work**. (NIV)*

13. What do those have who do not follow Jesus' doctrine? _____

There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. (John 12:48 NIV)

14. What will judge us at the last day? _____

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*But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, **will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.** (John 14:26 NIV)*

15. How do we know that we have the truth that Jesus said He spoke? _____

*John 13:1 It was just before the **Passover Feast**. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. ... 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his **disciples'** feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. (NIV)*

16. Was Jesus speaking to everyone in Jn 14:26 or just to His apostles? _____
(Hint: Jesus and his disciples were at the last supper in Jn 13 through 17.)

*Luke 9:30 Two men, **Moses and Elijah**, 31 appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. 32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. 33 As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. **Let us put up three shelters-- one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.**" (He did not know what he was saying.) 34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, "**This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.**" (NIV)*

*The **law** is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-- not the realities themselves. For this reason **it can never**, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, **make perfect those who draw near to worship.** (Heb 10:1 NIV)*

17. Are we to follow the teachings of Jesus or of Moses today? _____

*Heb 9:14 How much more, then, will the **blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! 15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance-- now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. 16 In the case of a will, **it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it**, 17 because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. (NIV)*

18. When did the Old Testament (the Law of Moses) cease to rule over men? _____

We need a church where a Bible answer is given for questions.

*2 Pet 1:2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 3 His divine power has given us **everything we need for life and godliness** through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us **his very great and precious promises**, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (NIV)*

19. Has God revealed everything we need for life and Godliness? _____

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2 Tim 3:16 All **Scripture** is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be **thoroughly equipped for every good work.** (NIV)

20. Where will we find all that we need to equip us for every good work? _____

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17 NIV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1 NIV)

21. Where do we find the truth? _____

1 Pet 1:22 Now that you have purified yourselves **by obeying the truth** so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, 25 **but the word of the Lord stands forever.**" And this is **the word that was preached to you.** (NIV)

22. What is to be preached that we might obey truth? _____

Gal 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning **to a different gospel--** 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are **trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.** 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should **preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!** 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: **If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!** (NIV)

23. What is the fate of those who pervert the gospel? _____

We want a church whose founder is Jesus Christ

And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matt 16:18 NIV)

24. Sometimes we speak of "my church" or "our church" or even of "Pastor _____'s church", but who did Jesus say would build the church? _____

1 Cor 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. 11 My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12 What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ." 13 **Is Christ divided?** Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? (NIV)

25. Sometimes we look to some man as the founder of the church. Very often we base our beliefs on some creed or book other than just the Bible. Can any man rightfully appeal to one other than Jesus Christ as the founder and sole authority for the church? _____

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For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 3:11 NIV)

26. What is the foundation upon which the church is built? _____

Review

As we review our lesson we learn that we must follow God's word as delivered to his apostles and prophets rather than the words of men if we are to be able to identify the church Jesus built. Jesus said He would build **His** church. Thus, there is only **one** true church and it consists of those who respect God's decisions. There can be no other foundation than Jesus Christ as the son of God for Christ has called us out of the world to be His church (His people). The church is simply God's people and as such it does not reside in a building but in the hearts of those who believe. The Lord adds those who are saved to His church and no other.

We must look to Jesus for authority in all things because the doctrines of men are worthless. If we do not follow Jesus' words, we will be eternally condemned in the day of judgment. Jesus revealed His will by sending the Holy Spirit to His apostles and not to every man. We must look to the inspired writings to determine what the will of God is. The Law of Moses was replaced with the Law of Liberty, the doctrine of Christ, when Jesus died on the cross and offered his blood as a sacrifice for our sin.

We will find His truth in the Scripture, the word of God. We can preach nothing less and nothing more than the doctrine of Jesus Christ if we are to be pleasing to God. Those who preach anything other than the Scriptures as well as those who follow their perverted gospel will be eternally condemned.

We must find a church whose only foundation is Jesus Christ. The church of the Lord does not belong to us or to some Pastor but to Jesus Christ who purchased it with His blood. We must take care to see that we know which of the over 1,500 denominations claiming to be "Christian" are truly that and not wolves in sheep's clothing seeking to deceive those who would follow God.

How Do I Find the Right Church?

Lesson Two

We Need a church that follows the Law of Christ

*Gal 3:17 What I mean is this: **The law**, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. 18 For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. 19 What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. 20 A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one. 21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. 22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was **promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ**, might be given to those who believe. 23 Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. 24 So **the law** was **put in charge** to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. 25 **Now that faith has come**, we are **no longer under the supervision of the law**. 26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, (NIV)*

27. Paul said the Law “has been put in _____ to lead us to Christ.”

28. Paul says that “we are no longer _____ under the _____ of the law.”

29. If the Law was in charge and we are no longer under the supervision of the law, we are no longer under the Law. Of what Law does Paul speak, the Law of Moses or the Law of Christ?

*Gal 5:3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to **obey the whole law**. 4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been **alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace**. (NIV)*

30. If one keeps one part of the Law, must he keep it all? _____

31. Can a Christian keep the Law of Moses and remain in grace? _____

*1 Cor 9:20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. **To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law)**, so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. (NIV)*

32. Was Paul under the Law when he wrote 1 Cor? _____

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*1 Cor 14:37 If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you **is the Lord's command.** (NIV)*

33. What did Paul write to the brethren at Corinth? _____

*II Jn 1:9 Anyone who runs ahead and **does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God;** whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work. (NIV)*

34. Are we to be guided by the Law of Moses (Old Testament) or the teaching of Christ today? _____

We need a church that began at the prophesied time.

Some churches say that they were started in the 1500's or even in the last century. The church of our Lord was begun at a time prophesied in the Old Testament. As we will see as we go through two prophecies in the book of Daniel, the time of the Roman empire was the time prophesied for the eternal kingdom of God to begin. There are even religious people who believe that God was prevented from founding this kingdom at the prophesied time but that would not be a prophecy of God (Deut 13:1-5).

Beginning at Dan 2:32 Daniel begins to tell the meaning of the prophecy of the statue having a head of Gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass and legs of iron and feet of mixed clay and iron.

*In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar **king of Babylon** came to Jerusalem and besieged it. (Dan 1:1 NIV)*

*Dan 2:1 In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep. ... 37 You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; 38 in your hands he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. **You are that head of gold.** (NIV)*

35. What kingdom did the head of gold represent? _____

Dan 2:39 "After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. 40 Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron-- for iron breaks and smashes everything-- and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. (NIV)

36. How many kingdoms were prophesied? _____

*Dan 5:24 Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription. 25 "This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN 26 "This is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. 27 Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. 28 Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the **Medes and Persians.**" (NIV)*

37. To whom was the kingdom of Babylon given? _____

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The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, (Dan 2:32 NIV)

38. Which of the metals would represent the kingdom of the Medes and Persians? _____

39. What is the number of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians? _____

Dan 2:39 "After you, another kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. (NIV)

40. What was the number of the kingdom that would come after the Medes and the Persians? _____

41. What was the metal which represented the third kingdom? _____

The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia. (Dan 8:20 NIV)

42. In the prophecy of Dan 8, what did the ram with two horns represent? _____

Dan 8:21 The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king. 22 The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power. (NIV)

43. What kingdom would take over from the kings of Media and Persia? _____

44. From your answers to questions 41 and 43, which of the metals would represent the kingdom of Greece?

45. What is the number of the kingdom of the Greece? _____

Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron-- for iron breaks and smashes everything-- and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. (Dan 2:40 NIV)

46. From world history, we find that the next great empire to arise was the Roman empire. What metal would represent the Roman empire? _____

"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. (Dan 2:44 NIV)

47. When would the kingdom of God be set up? _____

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to his own town to register. 4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to

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*register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, **the time came for the baby to be born,** (Luke 2:1-6 NIV)*

48. What people ruled the world when was Jesus born? _____

*Matt 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, for the **kingdom of heaven is near.**" (NIV)*

49. What did John preach? _____

*From that time on Jesus began to preach, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.**" (Matt 4:17 NIV)*

50. What did Jesus preach? _____

*And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, **some who are standing here will not taste death** before they see the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:1 NIV)*

51. When did Jesus say the kingdom would be established? _____

*Acts 2:30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he **would place one of his descendants on his throne.** 31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of **the resurrection of the Christ,** that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. 33 **Exalted to the right hand of God,** he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made **this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.**" (NIV)*

52. When did Jesus receive His throne? _____

We Need A Church That Identifies Itself with the Eternal Kingdom of God.

*He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: **Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.**" (Luke 24:44 NIV)*

53. Did Jesus claim that he fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel concerning the setting up of His kingdom with His life and death? _____

*Col 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2 To **the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse:** Grace and peace to you from God our Father. ... 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and **brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,** (NIV)*

54. Did the kingdom of Christ exist when Paul wrote the epistle to the Colossians? _____

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*Col 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2 To **the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse**: Grace and peace to you from God our Father. ... 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and **brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves**, (NIV)*

55. Who was in the kingdom into which Paul said the Colossians had been placed?

*Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the **saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus**: (NIV)*

56. Who made up the church in Ephesus? _____

*Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion, **to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God**. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 **to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven**. You have come to God, the judge of all men, **to the spirits of righteous men made perfect**, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. ... 28 Therefore, since we are receiving **a kingdom that cannot be shaken**, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, (NIV)*

57. Where do the spirits of righteous men made perfect now reside? _____

58. What else does the author of Hebrews call the kingdom? _____

*Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter replied, "**Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins**. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (NIV)*

59. Why were those present at the lesson on Pentecost baptized? _____

*Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord **added to their number (church -KJV) daily those who were being saved**. (NIV)*

60. What did the Lord do for those whose sins were forgiven? _____

*1 Cor 6:10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the **kingdom of God**. 11 And that is what some of you were. But **you were washed**, you were **sanctified**, you were **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (NIV)*

61. Who will inherit the kingdom of God? _____

Review

To be in the right church, we must be in a church that is under the law of Christ and not under the Law of Moses. Thus, we cannot belong to a church that worships on the Sabbath. The Law of Moses was given only to the Jews. If we try to live by the Law of Moses we have been severed from Christ and we have fallen from grace. The law of Christ has been given to both Jew and Gentile to reconcile us to God. The

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law leads us to Christ by showing us the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled which prove that Jesus was the Christ. We would not be in grace if we followed the law of Moses. Paul was a Jew, but he knew that he was not under the law of Moses but under the law of Christ. We cannot cling to the things of the Old Law, such as commanding tithing, the keeping of the Sabbath or musical instruments in worship (please let us know if you would like a correspondence course specifically on these subjects).

To be in the right church, we must be in a church that began during the Roman Empire. Daniel prophesied that during the time of the Roman empire, God would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed. Daniel also prophesied that the kingdoms Nebuchadnezzar saw were 1) the Babylonian empire, 2) the Medo-Persian empire and 3) the Greek empire. The world wide empire following those was the Roman empire. Only one kingdom would be set up by God and it would consume all the others. Jesus was born during the time of the Roman empire and John the Baptist said the kingdom was at hand (near). Jesus preached the same message to the Jews.

Jesus has been crowned king and now sits with His Father on that glorious throne. He had ascended to that throne on the first Pentecost after His resurrection. Those who have been baptized for the remission of their sins have been added to the church by the Lord Himself (please let us know if you would like a correspondence course specifically on this subject). Those in the church are in the kingdom because they have submitted themselves to the sovereign rule of God. However, only the faithful (righteous) will continue in that eternal kingdom and thus be saved eternally.

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How Do I Find the Right Church?

Lesson Three: A Church That Has Scriptural Worship!

We need a church that observes the Lord's Supper every Sunday!

The church Jesus established met every 1st day of the week to proclaim Lord's death I Cor 11:20, 26 I Cor 16:2

1 Cor 11:20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, (NIV)

62. Why did the Corinthians come together? _____

*1 Cor 11:20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, ... For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you **proclaim the Lord's death** until he comes. (NIV)*

63. Why should they have come together? _____

*1 Cor 16:2 **On the first day of every week**, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. (NIV)*

64. How often did the Corinthian church gather? _____

Some folks fail to realize that a collection taken up at home would still be there when Paul came. Therefore, it was necessary for them to gather it in one place before he came. He told them to do this on *the first day of every week*. Thus, they were gathered every week on Sunday. That is when they gave. If the Corinthian church gathered every Sunday and the reason they were to gather was *to eat the Lord's Supper*, they must have eaten the Lord's Supper every Sunday. This means that once a month, twice a year or at Christmas and Easter are not marks of the church of our Lord!

65. Does the church you now attend observe the Lord's Supper **every first day of the week**? _____

*Matt 15:9 They **worship me in vain**; their teachings are but rules taught by men." (NIV)*

66. If your answer to 65 was "no," how did the church you attend decide to have the Lord's Supper either more often or less often? _____

*1 Cor 11:22 **Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God** and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! (NIV)*

67. Was the church in Corinth supposed to get together to have pot-lucks on Sunday evenings (or any other time)?

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*1 Cor 11:34 If **anyone is hungry**, he should **eat at home**, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions. (NIV)*

68. What would those get who come to church for a meal to satisfy their physical hunger? _____

*John 6:24 Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but **because you ate the loaves and had your fill**. 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." (NIV)*

69. Should the church have a "fellowship meal" to get more members to come? _____

We Need to Worship at a Church Where Saints Give as They Are Prospered on the 1st Day of the Week

*1 Cor 16:2 **On the first day of every week**, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. (NIV)*

70. When did the New Testament church give? _____

71. How often did the New Testament church give? _____

*2 Cor 9:5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a **generous gift**, not as one grudgingly given. 6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever **sows generously** will also reap generously. 7 Each man should **give what he has decided in his heart to give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (NIV)*

72. How did the New Testament Christians give? _____

73. Did the New Testament church raise funds by having chicken dinners or ice cream suppers? _____

74. Did the New Testament church raise funds by having Bingo nights? _____

*Phil 3:17 Join with others in **following my example**, brothers, and take note of those who live **according to the pattern** we gave you. (NIV)*

75. Are we to follow the pattern of the New Testament church? _____

If you would like a deeper discussion of this subject ask for our course on "Tithing."

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We Need to Worship at a Church That Teaches and Admonishes in Song

*Eph 5:19 **Speak to one another** with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. **Sing and make music in your heart** to the Lord, (NIV)*

*Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you **sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs** with gratitude in your hearts to God. (NIV)*

76. What kind of music did God command in the New Testament? _____

77. Does the New Testament tell us to sing or play or sing and play? _____

*Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you **teach and admonish one another** with all wisdom, and as you **sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs** with gratitude in your hearts to God. (NIV)*

78. Can an instrument fulfill the command to teach and admonish? _____

79. If you don't know the words to a song, can it fill your heart with thankfulness? _____

(If you would like a deeper discussion of this topic, please ask for our correspondence course)

We Need to Worship at a Church Where Women do not Exercise Authority Over Men

*1 Tim 2:11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; **she must be silent.** (NIV)*

80. How is a woman to receive instruction? _____

*1 Tim 3:14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, 15 if I am delayed, you will know **how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church** of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (NIV)*

81. Is a woman to give instruction to the man in the church? _____

82. Are these verses set aside if a woman feels she has been called to preach? _____

*Matt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given **to me.**" (NIV)*

83. Are these verses set aside if some man feels that he has the right to give a woman his authority? _____

If you would like a deeper discussion of this subject ask for our course on "The Work of Women in the church of Our Lord."

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We Need a Church Where Men Lead in Prayer and Preach the Word!

*1 Tim 2:8 I want **men everywhere** to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. (NIV)*

91. Who did the Holy Spirit guide Paul to say should pray? _____

*1 Tim 3:14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, 15 if I am delayed, you will know **how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church** of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (NIV)*

92. Was Paul speaking of every place in the world or in church? _____

*1 Tim 2:11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 **I do not permit a woman to teach** or to have authority over a man; **she must be silent.** (NIV)*

93. Should these verses be set aside in the Lord's church or should they be obeyed? _____

*1 Cor 14:34 women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. 35 If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for **it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.** (NIV)*

94. What did the Holy Spirit think about women with husbands speaking in church?

95. If women speak in the church you attend, is it a church of the Lord? _____

*Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. **Paul spoke** to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. (NIV)*

96. Who preached in the church at Troas? _____

Acts 13:1 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. (NIV)

97. Were the teachers and prophets at Antioch men or women? _____

98. Were there any women teachers at Antioch? _____

*Acts 18:26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, **they invited him to their home (they took him aside - NAS)** and explained to him the way of God more adequately. (NIV)*

99. How did women teach men in the New Testament Church? _____

If you would like a detailed discussion of this point please ask for our correspondence course on the subject.

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A Church Where the Bible is Preached and not the Doctrines of Men!

*Matt 15:9 They **worship me in vain**; their teachings are but rules taught by men." (NIV)*

100. Are we to follow the rules of men or the Bible alone? _____

*2 Tim 3:16 All **Scripture** is God-breathed and is **useful for teaching**, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so **that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped** for every good work. (NIV)*

2 Tim 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (KJV)

101. Of what should our doctrine consist? _____

2 Pet 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. (NIV)

102. Is there anything that God has not given us that we need for righteous living? _____

*Eph 3:3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 **In reading this**, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. (NIV)*

103. How do we learn what God wants us to know about the mystery of Christ? _____

*2 Tim 2:15 **Do your best** to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who **correctly handles the word of truth.** (NIV)*

*2 Tim 2:15 **Study** to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.** (KJV)*

104. How do we learn to rightly divide God's word? _____

105. Do entertaining stories have any place in the building up of the church that Jesus built? _____

We need to attend a church that's called by a Biblical name!

What was the church of the Lord called in the New Testament?

*Rom 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the **churches of Christ** send greetings. (NIV)*

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*1 Cor 1:2 To the **church of God** in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-- their Lord and ours: (NIV)*

107. _____

*1 Tim 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in **God's household**, which is the **church of the living God**, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (NIV)*

108. _____ 109. _____

*II Th 1:1 Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the **church** of the Thessalonians in **God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**: (NIV)*

110. _____

*Acts 24:14 However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of **the Way**, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, (NIV)*

111. . _____

*Eph 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is **his body**, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (NIV)*

112. _____

*Rev 21:9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you **the bride, the wife of the Lamb**." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the **Holy City, Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God. (NIV)*

113. _____ 114. _____ 115. _____

*Heb 12:23 to **the church of the firstborn**, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, (NIV)*

116. _____

*Heb 12:22 But you have come to **Mount Zion**, to the **heavenly Jerusalem**, the **city of the living God**. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in **joyful assembly**, (NIV)*

117. _____ 118. _____ 119. _____

120. _____

121. What is the name of the church where you attend? _____ Is this one of the names found written in the Scriptures? _____

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If these two are different, why do you call your church something not found in the Word of God? Would a different name be based on what God or on what man says? _____

Review

The church at Corinth came together to eat the Lord's Supper which proclaims His death until He comes again. They were told to give when they were gathered every first day of the week and thus must have gathered to eat the Lord's Supper every Sunday. The example of the church doing this is in Acts 20:7. To eat more or less often would be a decision of men and God calls that "vain worship." We do not gather to have "fellowship meals" for even Christ would not have the disciples who wanted a meal. Jesus did not use meals to draw men to Him.

We need to worship with a church where Christians give as they are prospered rather than being told to tithe. The church has no right to have suppers, socials or Bingo. The members give on the first day of the week. They give liberally for the support of the preacher(s) and of those in need.

We need to worship with a church that sings praise to the Lord. We are to make music in our hearts not on an invention of man. We are to sing songs that teach and admonish one another. No instrument of man can do this. The words of the songs are to fill our hearts with thankfulness.

The men are to lead in the Lord's church and the women are to be silent. There will be no women preachers dominating the men in the Lord's church. This means that the men must prepare themselves and the women must help them.

We need a church that's going to look to the word of God for its authority and not to men. There is no place for synods or conventions in the church. The Bible is the sole authority and it has everything we need for "life and godliness." We learn what we need to know about God from reading His word. We learn how to apply God's word by study. We do not go to church to be entertained, but to worship.

We need to attend a church that's called by a Biblical name. The names of men will never replace the name of the Lord. Why would anyone want to be a member of a church named after some method of worship or some man? We need to follow God in all things.

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How Do I Find the Right Church?

Lesson Four:

We need to attend a church where a Scriptural plan of Salvation is taught.

*Rom 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" 16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17 Consequently, **faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.** (NIV)*

122. Do we receive our faith by listening to an inner voice? _____

123. Do we receive our faith by a miraculous working of the Holy Spirit? _____

124. How do we learn what we need do to be saved? _____

*Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 **Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.** (NIV)*

125. Do we have to believe that Jesus is the Christ to be saved? _____

126. If we believe, is that all we have to do? _____

*John 12:42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders **believed in him.** But because of the Pharisees they **would not confess their faith** for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for **they loved praise from men more than praise from God.** (NIV)*

127. Does belief alone save? _____

128. Will those who love the praise of men more than praise of God be saved? _____

Luke 13:5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish." (NIV)

129. Do we have to repent of our sins to be saved? _____

130. Does belief alone save? _____

Rom 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (NIV)

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131. Do we have to confess Jesus as Lord in order to be saved? _____

132. Does belief alone save? _____

*1 Pet 3:20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this water symbolizes **baptism that now saves you** also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (NIV)*

133. Does the Bible say that baptism saves you? _____

134. Is it necessary to be baptized to be saved? _____

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (NIV)

135. Have you been baptized for the forgiveness of your sins? _____

136. Does your church teach that you must be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins?

137. If you were baptized because you had been saved, did God save you in your sins?

1 Jn 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. (NIV)

138. If you are in sin can you have fellowship with God? _____

**We need to attend a church
where we are taught that we must continue to live faithfully.**

1 Cor 15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. (NIV)

Rom 6:1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? (NIV)

139. Do we have to be obedient to be saved? _____

Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. (NIV)

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140. Can we fall from grace? _____

1 Jn 1:5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. (NIV)

141. Do we have fellowship with God when we walk in sin? _____

*Acts 8:13 Simon himself **believed and was baptized**. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.* (NIV)

142. Was Simon a “born again believer”? _____

*Acts 8:20 Peter answered: "May your money **perish with you**, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! 21 You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. 22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. 23 For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."* (NIV)

143. Was Simon going to perish because of his sin? _____

We need to attend a church Where no one joins the church but the Lord adds them

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (NIV)

144. Do men have to approve of the members before they can join your church? _____

We need to attend a church whose members glorify God in the name "Christian" and no other.

*Acts 11:26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The **disciples were called Christians** first at Antioch.* (NIV)

145. Does your church have a name that allows someone to call you something other than a Christian?

1 Pet 4:16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. (NIV)

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Review

The gospel plan of salvation is simple. You must hear the word of God. You must believe the word of God. You must repent of your sins. You must confess Jesus as Lord. You must be baptized for the remission of your sins. None of these steps may be left out if you want to walk with the Lord in the light of His word. Many say that you are saved when you believe but the rulers of Jn 12:42-43 were not praised by God. The church of our Lord will teach the whole plan of salvation and not just a part!

We must not think that once we have been saved we are always saved. We can sin and be severed from Christ. The church of our Lord will not be one that teaches "once saved, always saved."

We are not voted into the church of the Lord. That is a rule made by men. It is found nowhere in the Scriptures. The church does not control who comes into it but the Lord Himself adds men to the church.

Why would you attend a church that does not wear the name of Christ? If you look at the names of the religious denominations of the world, you will understand why there is so much division. We need to return to the Scriptures and call Bible things by Bible names. Won't you join with us in that effort? If there is anyway we can help will you please let us know.

