

BASIC BIBLE LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

BY:
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1. Why Have This Class?
2. The Bible.
3. Bible Study.
4. Why Believe The Bible?
5. What Is The Church?
6. The Origin Of The Church.
7. The Identity of The Church.
8. Worship Of The New Testament Church.
9. The Christian's Responsibility To His Home
Congregation.

I Peter 2:2 - "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

INTRODUCTION:

- A. We are so happy that you have become a Christian by obeying the gospel plan of salvation. CONGRATULATIONS!
- B. We welcome you to this class.
 - 1. You have something in common with all other members of the class.
 - 2. Though of different ages, you are all new members of the Lord's church.
- C. Our first consideration in this class will be to answer the question, "WHY HAVE THIS CLASS?"

DISCUSSION:

- A. Why have this class?
 - 1. Maybe you cannot see much sense in it, but there are good, specific reasons.
 - 2. It is estimated that within 18 months, 40% to 50% of the new members of the church fall away and become unfaithful.
 - a. We don't want that to happen to you.
 - b. Only the faithful receive the 'crown of life' Rev. 2:10.
- B. WE ARE HAVING THIS CLASS SO THAT YOU MIGHT GROW TO MATURITY AS A CHRISTIAN.
 - 1. Every new Christian, no matter how old, is a babe in Christ.
 - a. I Peter 2:2.
 - 2. It is tragic to see a child who is not developing correctly.
 - a. Our hearts break for that child and his parents.
 - b. It is, however, a worse tragedy to see a babe in Christ who is not developing properly.
 - 3. Paul knew some who had not matured.
 - a. I Cor. 3:1-3 (What proved they were yet babes?)
 - b. These Christians at Corinth had not grown up: They were still babes in Christ.
 - 4. Three things are important to growth.
 - a. RIGHT KIND OF FOOD.
 - (1) For Christians that food is the Word of God. I Peter 2:2
 - (2) II Tim. 2:15.
 - b. EXERCISE.
 - (1) I Tim. 4:8
 - c. FREEDOM FROM DISEASE.
 - (1) Sin is our greatest malady.
 - (2) I Thess. 5:22.
- C. WE ARE HAVING THIS CLASS SO THAT YOU MIGHT INCREASE YOUR FAITH AND ADD TO IT.
 - 1. You had enough faith to become a Christian.
 - a. You know that faith is important to pleasing God.
 - b. Heb. 11:6; Mark 16:15-16.
 - 2. Jesus charged his disciples with having "little faith."
Matt. 8:26; Matt. 6:30; Matt. 14:31; Matt. 16:8.
 - 3. Faith is increased by reading and studying the Bible. Rom. 10:17
 - 4. Some things we are to add to our faith.
 - a. II Peter 1:5-10.
 - Virtue - Moral courage and goodness
 - Knowledge - Knowing and understanding the Bible.
 - Temperance - Self-control.
 - Patience - Endurance.

Godliness - Becoming more and more
like the Divine example.
Brotherly kindness - Love and good
will toward saints.
Charity - Love (Basic element of all
others).

D. WE ARE HAVING THIS CLASS SO THAT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE AN
ANSWER FOR THE HOPE THAT IS WITHIN YOU.

1. I Peter 3:15.
2. People are not always members of the Lord's church for the
right reasons.
 - a. Some because parents or other relatives are.
 - b. Some because of convenience.
3. We must be members of the church for the right reasons, and we
must be able to give the answer to anyone who asks.
 - a. This will mean much study.
 - b. A new Christian is not expected to know everything about the
church, but he must be willing to learn.

CONCLUSION:

- A. There are three reasons for having this class.
 1. So that we might grow to maturity as Christians.
 2. So that we might increase our faith and add to it.
 3. So that we might be able to give an answer for our hope.
- B. We hope that you will attend this class faithfully. It is important
that you do.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 1.

1. About how many new Christians fall away from the church the first
few months?
2. Who receives the crown of life?
3. Give three reasons for having this class.
4. What three things are necessary to growth?
5. How do we increase our faith?
6. To whom must we give an answer for the hope that is in us?
7. List the things we must add to our faith.
8. Is it wrong for a new Christian to remain a "babe in Christ?"
9. What are some wrong reasons for being a member of the Lord's church?
10. What is the right reason?

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

#2

THE BIBLE

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The Bible is the most important book in the world for the new
Christian.
 1. It is his "guide book" and "handbook".
 2. It is light for his way. Psa. 119:105
- B. God, by His providence, has kept this great Book alive.
 1. It is a tragedy that so few people read and study it.
 2. It is a greater tragedy that some who read it fail to live by it.
- C. It shall be the purpose of this lesson to acquaint us with the
Bible.
 1. Many people fail to derive any lasting good from the Bible
simply because they have never taken time to acquaint themselves
with it.

2. Let us, therefore, see how the Bible is arranged, what it contains, and some general facts about it, so we can derive the most good from it.

DISCUSSION:

A. General, important and interesting facts about the Bible.

1. The word "Bible" comes from the Greek word "Biblos".
 - a. "Biblos" means "The Book".
 - b. When Sir Walter Scott lay dying, he asked a friend to read to him. His friend, scanning the 20,000 volumes in Scott's great library asked, "What book would you like?" Scott replied, "Need you ask? There is but one Book!"
 - c. For the New Christian, there is only one Book - the Bible!
2. About 90 hours are required for the average reader to read the Bible through.
 - a. The Bible can be read through in a year by reading about $3\frac{1}{2}$ chapters per day.
3. The Bible is more than a Book. It is a library of books.
 - a. It contains 66 books in all.
 - b. It has 39 books in the O.T. and 27 in the N.T.
4. The Bible was written in a language foreign to us.
 - a. The O.T. was written in Hebrew, which was the language of the Jews at that time.
 - b. The N.T. was written in Greek, which was the language of the world at that time.
 - c. Down through the years, the Bible has been translated into the language of the people. The most famous translation, the King James Version, was translated in 1611.
5. The Bible was not originally written in chapters and verses.
 - a. In 1250, Cardinal Hugo divided the Bible into chapters.
 - b. In 1551, the N.T. was divided into verses by Robert Stevens.
 - c. The whole Bible, divided into chapters and verses, first appeared in 1560, and was known as the "Geneva Bible".
6. The Bible is written in simple language.
 - a. The length of the average word is fewer than 5 letters.

B. Divisions of the Bible.

1. A proper division of the Bible is important to our understanding of it. II Tim. 2:15.
 - a. We have already noticed that the Bible has two main divisions.
 - b. They are O.T. and the N.T.
2. First, let's notice the O.T.
 - a. Its 39 books can be broken down into 5 classes of books.
 - b. They are:
 - Law - first 5 books (Genesis to Deuteronomy).
 - History - next 12 books (Joshua to Ester).
 - Poetry - next 5 books (Psalms to Song of Solomon).
 - Major Prophets - next 5 books (Isaiah to Daniel).
 - Minor Prophets - last 12 books (Hosea to Malachi).
 - c. The main purpose of the O.T. is to tell us about the religion and history of the Jewish nation, and to tell us how God has dealt with people in the past.
 - d. But we do not live under the O.T. today. Heb. 10:9; Col. 2:14; Gal. 3:24.
3. Second, let's notice the N.T.
 - a. Its 27 books can be broken down into 4 classes of books.
 - b. They are;

Biography - first 4 books (Matthew to John)

History - next book (Acts)

Epistles (Letters, instruction in righteousness) - next 21 books (Romans to Jude)

Prophecy - last book (Revelation).

- c. The N.T. reveals the Christian religion, the history of the Lord's church in the first century, the Gospel plan of salvation, and how we should live as Christians.

C. Writers of the Bible.

1. The Bible was written by about 40 men.
 - a. About 32 wrote the O.T., and 8 wrote the N.T.
 - b. The 8 who wrote the N.T. are: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, James and Jude.
 - c. Paul wrote the most - 14.
2. The writers were inspired by God through the Holy Spirit.
 - a. II Peter 1:21; II Tim. 3:16-17.
3. The writers were of different backgrounds and from different ages.
 - a. Some were educated, and some were not.
 - b. Among their occupations were: Shepherds, fishermen, kings, a doctor, a tax-collector, farmers, etc.
 - c. The writers were not contemporaries, but were scattered over 15 centuries.
4. With so many authors, and so great a span of years, it is amazing that the Bible is so unified and does not contain one contradiction. This shows the hand of God was in its writing.

CONCLUSION:

A. It has been our purpose to acquaint you with the Bible.

1. Acquaintance with it will help you greatly in your study.

B. We have studied three main things about the Bible. They were:

- (1) General facts, (2) Divisions, and (3) Writers.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 2.

1. Why do many people today fail to derive any lasting good from their study of the Bible?
2. In what language was the O.T. written? The N.T.?
3. When was the King James Version translated?
4. Who divided the Bible into chapters? When?
5. How important is proper division of the Bible to understanding?
6. How many divisions in the O.T.? Name them.
7. How many divisions in the N.T.? Name them.
8. How many men wrote the Bible? O.T.? N.T.?
9. Who instructed the writers of the Bible what to write?
10. What does the fact that 40 different men, over 15 centuries, wrote the Bible tell you about it?
11. What is the main purpose of the O.T.? The N.T.?

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

3

BIBLE STUDY

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Last week we noticed some interesting, informative and important facts about the Bible.

1. The purpose of that was to prepare us for effective Bible study.
2. Many people cannot get anything out of Bible study simply because they are not acquainted with the Bible and its divisions.

B. II Tim. 2:15.

1. This will be our "key" verse for this lesson. Why not memorize it?
2. According to this verse, we cannot be approved of God unless we study the Bible.

C. Let's not confuse study with Bible reading.

1. Bible reading is good, but Bible study is much better.
2. Bible study takes too much time, effort and concentration for most people.

D. In our study today we will notice:

1. Why we should study the Bible.
2. Some rules for studying the Bible.
3. Some aids for Bible study.

DISCUSSION:

A. WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?

1. Our text pointed out one very good reason - God wants us to:
 - a. God has never asked us to do anything that is not good for us.
 - b. He commands Bible study because it is good for us.
2. II TIM. 3:15-17 points out several more good reasons for Bible study.
 - a. It will make us "wise unto salvation". vs. 15.
 - b. It "is profitable for doctrine (teaching), for reproof (reproving wrong in ourselves and others), for correction (convince us of error and guide us to truth), for instruction in righteousness (guide for right living)". vs. 16.
 - c. Will "thoroughly (completely) furnish unto all good works." vs.
 - d. Notice how long Timothy had been acquainted with the Holy Scriptures--"from a child" vs. 15.
3. We should study the Bible to light our way. Psa. 119:105.
 - a. A light is always used to expel darkness.
 - b. We live in a dark world. It is dark with sin, ignorance and all manner of wrong.
 - c. Only God's word can light our way so we will not stumble and fall in the darkness.
 - d. John 8:12.
4. We should study the Bible because it is a 'mirror' to show us ourselves. James 1:22-25.
 - a. This mirror shows us how we stand spiritually.
 - b. It is the only book that tells us about our soul. It shows us the origin of the soul (Gen. 2:7), the value of the soul. (Mk. 8:36-37), And the destiny of our soul. (Eccles. 12:7).
5. We should study the Bible because it is our spiritual "sword" with which to protect ourselves from Satan. Eph. 6:17.
 - a. Satan is a dangerous arch-enemy. I Peter 5:8.
 - b. Do you want to fight him without a weapon?
6. We should study the Bible because we will be judged by it. Matt. 24:35; Rev. 20:12.

B. RULES FOR BIBLE STUDY.

1. Study regularly.
 - a. Hit or miss study will not profit, if any.
 - b. It would be wise to pick a time during the day when things are quiet. This might be early in the morning or late at night.
 - c. Whatever time you choose, make it your regular study time each day.
 - d. You will accomplish more than you think. You can read the Bible through in a year with only 15-20 minutes per day.

2. Study systematically...

- a. A verse here, a verse there, will only serve to confuse you.
- b. You might want to study a whole chapter or book at a time. You may choose a subject and study all related scriptures. You may want to study the whole Bible through, or N.T.

3. Study with the right attitude.

- a. Many feel forced.
- b. Some approach Bible study with the idea that they won't be able to understand it. They are defeated before they begin. God intends for us to understand. Eph. 3:4.
- c. Some approach the Bible with closed minds. They already "know" what they believe, and a plain Bible verse will not even change their minds.
- d. We should approach Bible study with a sincere desire to learn and profit. Prayer before, during and after will help.
- e. We should approach Bible study with the full intention of putting into force what we find. James 1:22.

4. Consider these questions when studying your Bibles.

- a. Who is speaking? Is it an inspired person? Was he speaking for God, or giving his own opinion?
- b. To whom is he speaking? Is he speaking to a particular person at a particular time? Is it applicable to us?
- c. What is the purpose of the passage? Was it prophecy? A direct command? Narrative? Literal? Figurative?

C. AIDS IN BIBLE STUDY.

1. You will need a good Bible. Invest a little money. Get one that is well bound and on good paper. Don't be afraid to mark in it. Underline key verses. Make notes and write scripture references in the margin.
2. Modern speech translations may help. They simplify the language.
3. A concordance, which lists the words of the Bible and the texts where they can be found, is helpful in finding a verse when you know only one or two words.
4. Dictionaries - a good English one and a good Bible dictionary - are also helpful.
5. A Commentary, which is one man's explanation and interpretation of the text, is also helpful. But remember, they are written by men.
6. A Bible Atlas will furnish information about Bible lands and places, and will help in your study.

CONCLUSION:

- A. God wants us to study the Bible. It is good for us.
- B. In this lesson we have noticed: (1) Why study, (2) How to study, and (3) Aids in study.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 3.

1. Quote the "key" verse for this lesson.
2. Is study the same as reading?
3. Why do we need the light of God's Word today?
4. What will God's mirror show us?
5. Why do we need a spiritual sword?
6. How long had Timothy been acquainted with the Scriptures?
7. What attitudes should we have in Bible study?
8. What 3 questions should we ask ourselves about a passage?
9. Why should we have a specific time to study?
10. Why should we study systematically?
11. What are some aids to Bible study?

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Is the Bible the word of God? Can we know for sure that it is?
 - 1. These are questions that interest us all. We, of course, claim that the answer to all of these questions is positive, but we know that many people do not agree.
 - 2. How can we strengthen our own faith, and be able to give an answer for the hope that we have within us? That is what we want to study today.
- B. I think the evidence is overwhelming.
 - 1. One writer said, "God has surrounded His Book with a wall of absolutely irresistible evidence".
 - 2. Don't be afraid to investigate the Biblical claims. The Bible invites, and even challenges, the most careful investigation.
- C. There are two kinds of evidences.
 - 1. There are internal evidences to the inspiration of the Bible. (These are evidences from the text, etc.)
 - 2. There are external evidences to the inspiration of the Bible. (These are evidences from history, science, etc.)

DISCUSSION:

- A. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE IT CLAIMS TO BE.
 - 1. From the very opening statement to the last "amen" the Scriptures claim divine authorship.
 - 2. II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21; I Cor. 2:12-13.
- B. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS MIRACULOUS PRESERVATION.
 - 1. The very fact that the Bible is here today is a mighty miracle.
 - a. This is especially true when we consider the opposition and persecution it has received through the ages.
 - b. Men and Satan hate the Book, and have tried to destroy it.
 - c. During several centuries (Dark Ages) it was a criminal offense to own, or even read, the Bible.
 - 2. Matt. 24:35.
- C. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS AMAZING UNITY.
 - 1. For one man to write a book or volume of books with a central theme would not be so unusual or amazing.
 - a. But about 40 men wrote the Bible over a period of 1600 years.
 - b. They were also from all walks of life.
 - 2. Yet, those 66 books fit together as one.
 - a. Someone has said that the Bible and its books are much like a symphony orchestra and its many instruments. Separately the instruments mean little, but together a musical master-piece unfolds.
- D. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS MANY PROPHECIES WHICH HAVE COME TRUE.
 - 1. All of the prophecies concerning Christ were fulfilled.
 - Born of a virgin. Isa. 7:14; - Micah 5:3 - Matt. 1:23
 - His birthplace. Micah 5:2 - Matt. 2:1-6
 - A prophet to be raised up. Deut. 18:15 - Acts 3:22
 - His betrayal. Psal. 41:9 - Matt. 26:15
 - Crucifixion. Isa. 53 - Matt. 8:17 - I Cor. 15:3
 - Apostasy of the church. II Thess. 2:1-7 - II Tim. 4:1-3
 - 2. The amazing thing is that many of these were made as many as 1500 years before fulfillment---most 700--800 years.

E. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY.

1. The Bible is not a science book, but when it speaks on science it is true.
2. Consider these:
 - a. The Bible teaches about an empty space in the north. (Job 26:7) Astronomers have found a space where there are no planets or stars.
 - b. Bible taught world was round, even when men thought it was flat. (Isa. 40:22; Luke 17:30-36).
 - c. Science says there was light before the sun. Gen. 1:3-19 shows this to be true.
 - d. Bible says all men are of one blood (Acts 17:26). Doctors have confirmed this.

F. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE ARCHAEOLOGY DECLARES IT TO BE.

1. The finds of Archaeology have proven the Bible time and time again.
2. Consider these:
 - a. Earth excavations have confirmed the flood---clean waterlaid clay, sea shells on mountain tops, etc.
 - b. Jericho has been excavated. All sections of the wall but one are laying flat.
 - c. An expedition was sent to Genesis' ancient Ur of Chaldea. It was found to have a high degree of culture. One of the inscriptions had the name of Abraham.
 - d. Skeptics said there were no Hittites since they were mentioned only in the Bible. But records in Egypt and Assyria show they were once a great nation.

G. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS REASONABLENESS.

1. The most reasonable thing in all the world to believe is that there is a God.
 - a. Who can survey the universe and deny that it was designed intelligently?
 - b. Who can say that we are here by mere chance?
 - c. Who can say that something came from nothing?
2. Psa. 19:1

H. I BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS INFLUENCE.

1. Where the Bible has gone civilizations have been lifted to a higher plain.
 - a. It has made better husbands, wives, children, employers and employees.
 - b. It has been the strongest influence in all history.
2. Think of all the songs, paintings, statues, and books that would not be if there were no Bible.
3. Think how we would be morally if there were no Bible. There is no greater morality than that taught in God's Word.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Time would not permit us to notice all the reasons why I believe the Bible is God's word.
- B. All proofs - internal and external - are valid.
 - a. Today we have noticed 8 of these proofs.
- C. Don't be afraid to investigate the Bible. It has stood for centuries and will stand forever.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON #4.

1. What are the two kinds of evidences that the Bible is the Word of God?

2. What verses claim that the Bible is inspired?
3. How long will God's Word stand?
4. What about its unity shows that it is the Word of God?
5. How long before Christ came were most of the prophecies concerning Him written?
6. How has science confirmed the Bible?
7. How has archaeology confirmed the Bible?
8. What did the Psalmist say showed the "glory of God"?
9. Why is it more reasonable to believe in God and the Bible than evolution?
10. Think of some paintings, songs, books, etc. that would be no more if there were no Bible.
11. Go back through the 8 proofs we mentioned in this lesson and see whether each goes under internal or external proofs.

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

#5

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

INTRODUCTION:

- A. When you were baptized into Christ, the Lord added you to the church.
 1. Acts 2:37-38-41-47
 2. According to the Scriptures, there is no such thing as "joining the church".
- B. To which church did the Lord add you?
 1. Did he add you to one, and someone else to another?
 2. He added those people on Pentecost to the only church in existence then.
 3. It was the church Christ had promised to build (Matt. 16:18), had died for and purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28), and of which he is the head (Eph. 1:22-23).
 4. This church's name (Rom. 16:16), its member's names (Acts 11:26), its worship (Acts 2:42), its rule of faith and practice (II Tim. 3:16-17) and its mission (Matt. 28:19-20) are all revealed in the New Testament.
 - a. We will study these distinctive marks of the New Testament church in later lessons.
 5. I think He still adds people to the same church today.
- C. In our lesson today we will ask the question, "What is the church?"
 1. Since we are all members of it we need to have a good understanding of what it is.
 2. Knowing what it is will also help us understand what it is not.

DISCUSSION:

- A. THE CHURCH IS THE PEOPLE.
 1. It is not the building.
 - a. This building only houses the church.
 - b. The bricks, nails, boards and windows of this building are not holy.
 2. The Greek word for church is "ecclesia".
 - a. The word is from "ek" meaning "out", and from "kaleo" meaning "call or summons".
 - b. The word, then, means "called out".
 - c. The church is people who have been "called out".
 3. When Christ came people were bound by sin.
 - a. He called them out of it.
 - b. Mankind is still bound by sin. (Romans 3:23).
 - c. And Christ still calls men out of it.
 - d. All those who answer His call become members of the church.

B. THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

1. Paul tells us that there is one body (Eph. 4:4), and that this one body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23).
2. Remember that Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - a. How many bodies can one head have?
 - b. Yet, there are 300 religious bodies today each claiming to be the body of Christ.
 - c. Isn't this accusing God's Son of being a freak?
3. As the body of Christ the church must act for Christ upon the earth.
 - a. The church, and all of its members, is all that Christ has to get His work done.

C. THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF SAVED PEOPLE.

1. Keep in mind that the saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47).
 - a. This means that every saved person is in the church.
 - b. Baptism is that final step that puts one into Christ and His body. (Gal. 3:26-27; I Cor. 12:13).
2. Christ is someday going to come back to claim His glorious church and be the Savior of it.
 - a. Eph. 5:23.
 - b. No, the church does not save, but all saved are in the church.
 - c. No matter what we may have heard, a man cannot be saved outside of the church.

D. THE CHURCH IS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST.

1. Eph. 5:23-27, 32; Romans 7:4.
2. As the bride of Christ, the church is expected to remain pure, and faithful to the husband.
3. It is also to wear His name.
 - a. The church of Christ does. It pays honor to the husband.
 - b. Denominations honor men, systems or methods with their names.

E. THE CHURCH IS A PART OF GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE.

1. Eph. 1:9-10; Eph. 3:9-11
2. This means that the church was not an accident, not an 'after--thought' on God's part.
 - a. The church has always had an important place in the scheme of redemption.
 - b. When man fell in the Garden of Eden through disobedience, God planned to save him, and the church was a part of that plan.
3. What is God's purpose for the church?
 - a. House the saved.
 - b. Be bride - "help-meet" - for Christ.
 - c. Make known the gospel of Christ to a lost world.

F. THE CHURCH IS NOT A DENOMINATION.

1. A denomination is a part of something, but the church is not a part of anything--it is the whole.
2. The church of our Lord existed hundreds of years before any denomination.
3. Every denomination could be destroyed and we would still have the N.T. church.
4. Denominations cause divisions, and Jesus said that a kingdom divided cannot stand. (Mark 3:24).
5. The N.T. church is neither catholic, protestant or Jew.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Today we have asked "What is the church?"
1. We have found what it is and is not.
 2. It is: the people, the body of Christ, the body of saved people, the bride of Christ, a part of God's eternal purpose, and not a denomination.

B. BUT IT IS IMPORTANT! Don't minimize it!

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 5.

1. Who adds people to the church? When?
2. To which church does He add them?
3. How many bodies can one head have?
4. Is the church the building?
5. What does the word "ecclesia" mean?
6. As the bride of Christ, what must the church do?
7. Was the church an "after-thought" with God?
8. What is Christ coming back to do to the church?
9. Whose name should the bride wear?
10. Is the church a denomination?

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

#6

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Last week we noticed that the church was not an "after-thought" with God, but was a part of His eternal purpose. (Eph. 1:9-10).
- B. In today's study we want to notice the origin of the church.
 1. We will notice:
 - a. The church in prophecy.
 - b. The church in preparation.
 - c. The church in reality.
 - d. How to identify the church by its origin.
 2. It is important that we know something about the origin of the New Testament church because there are so many (about 300) churches today with different marks of origination.

DISCUSSION:

A. THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY.

1. Isa. 2:2-3

- a. Notice what this O.T. prophecy tells us about the church or kingdom.
When? - "last days"
What? - "mountain of Lord's house" "house of God"
Where? - "in the top of the mountain" "zion" "Jerusalem"
Who? - "all nations"
- b. We will find out later that all of these points of prophecy are fulfilled in Acts 2.

2. Daniel 2:32-35, 44

- a. In this passage, Daniel interpreted an unusual dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian ruler.
- b. The figure the king saw in his dream represented four successive world empires - Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman.
- c. Daniel says that in "the days of these kings" (Roman) that God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed.

B. THE CHURCH IN PREPARATION.

1. John the Baptist, a cousin of Jesus' was His forerunner.
 - a. His purpose was to make things ready for the Lord. (Matt. 3:3)
 - b. His message had to do with the coming of the kingdom. He said it was "at hand". (Matt. 3:2).
2. When Jesus began his ministry, He also took up this cry. (Matt. 4:17-35).
3. When Jesus sent the apostles out to preach, He told them to preach this message also. (Matt. 10:7).
4. In Matt. 16:13-18 Jesus promised to build His church.
 - a. Notice several things from this text: (1) Had not yet come - was yet in future, (2) Would be built by Christ, (3) Was

singular - "church", (4) Would stand forever - "gates of hell shall not prevail against it".

C. THE CHURCH IN REALITY.

1. Acts 2:1-4.

a. This was on the day of Pentecost - the first one after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

b. The year was 33 A.D.

2. Actually the whole second chapter of Acts tells the story of the beginning of the church.

a. The inspired apostles began to speak in other languages.

b. Peter preached the first gospel sermon.

c. The people asked, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" vs. 37.

d. Peter told them to "Repent and be baptized." Vs. 38.

e. About 3,000 did so. Vs. 41.

f. These were added to the church by the Lord. Vs. 47.

(1) There had to be a church before those people could be added to it.

3. Let's see if the events of Acts 2 match the O.T. Prophecy.

What? - church

When? - last days. Vs. 15-20.

Where? - Jerusalem

Who? - 3,000 of all nations. Vs. 5.

4. All scriptures before Acts 2 point to the kingdom or church as yet to come, and all after point to it as already in existence

5. We have used the terms "kingdom and church" interchangeably.

A. Jesus did too. (Matt. 16:16-18).

B. He did not build one thing and give Peter the keys to something else.

D. THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH IN REGARD TO ITS ORIGIN.

1. As we look around we see about 300 churches today.

a. Which is right? Which is the New Testament church?

b. What we have learned today should help us decide.

c. We must look for one originated by Christ. We see those originated by Luther, Wesley, Calvin, etc.

d. We must look for one originated in Jerusalem. We see those originated in Providence, R.I.; London, England; L.A., Calif., etc.

e. We must look for one originated on Pentecost, 33 A.D. We see those originated as late as the 20th Century.

2. Some would claim, however, that the church was lost in the "Dark Ages" and we cannot have it today.

a. ILLUSTRATION---Suppose the entire corn crop of Kansas were destroyed one year: could there ever be another one? Yes, if someone had some seed left.

b. The seed of the kingdom is the Word of God. (Luke 8:11).

c. Whenever, and wherever, this seed is sown, we will have the church of the New Testament.

d. We do not have to trace it back through every age.

CONCLUSION:

A. we have noticed the origin of the N.T. church today.

B. We hope it will help you identify the true church of the N.T.

a. Originator - Christ

b. Place of origination - Jerusalem.

c. Time of origination - 33 A.D.

C. A church with any other originator, place or time of origination cannot be the NT. Church.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 6.

1. List four things Isaiah 2:2-3 tells us about the kingdom.

2. What does Daniel 2:44 tell us?

3. What was John's message concerning the kingdom?
4. What was Jesus' message concerning the kingdom?
5. What were the apostles to preach concerning the kingdom?
6. How many churches did Christ promise to build?
7. How long would it last?
8. What chapter tells about beginning of the church?
9. How many were "charter members?"
10. Does Acts 2 meet qualifications of O.T. prophecy?
11. Must we trace church back through ages?

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

7

THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Does the New Testament church exist today?
 1. Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail against it.
Matt. 16:18.
 2. Old Testament prophecies said it would not be destroyed. Dan. 2.
- B. Yet, there are over 300 different churches in the world today.
 1. Which one, or ones, is right?
 2. ~~Every~~ religious body bears one or more points of resemblance to the N.T. church.
 3. One point of dissimilarity, however, brands a religious body as a counterfeit.
 4. This means that we must look for a church that is IDENTICAL TO THE N.T. CHURCH in every respect.
(ILLUSTRATION) Suppose you sent me to find a car - a 1970, green, two door, hardtop Chevrolet with green interior. What if I found a 1970, green, two door, hardtop Chevrolet with black interior? Wouldn't be the one - would it?
- C. Last week we noticed some of the distinguishing marks of the N.T. church in respect to origin.
 1. We found: Originator - Christ
Place of origination - Jerusalem
Time of origination - 33 A.D.
 2. If a church is to be the N.T. church it must meet ALL of these qualifications in regard to origin.
- D. In today's study we want to notice other identifying marks. They are: (1) Rule of faith and practice, (2) Name, (3) Organization.

DISCUSSION:

- A. THE N.T. CHURCH USED THE BIBLE AS ITS ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE.
 1. The Bible is sufficient.
 - a. II Peter 1:3
 - b. II Tim. 3:16-17.
 2. Yet, nearly every church has its own creed book written by men.
 - a. Rev. 22:18-19 says not to add to or take from.
 - b. A gospel preacher, Benjamin Franklin, made this observation:
"First, any creed containing more than the Bible is objectionable, because it contains more than the Bible."
"Second, any creed containing less than the Bible is objectionable, because it contains less than the Bible."
"Third, any creed differing from the Bible is objectionable, because it differs from the Bible."
"Fourth, any creed precisely like the Bible is useless, because we already have the Bible."

3. The New Testament was enough for several centuries after the establishment of the church. Why is it not enough today?
 4. Creeds only serve to divide people.
 5. When the people of Ephesus learned the truth, they brought their books of curious arts together and burned them. (Acts 19:19).
 6. Our motto should be: "Speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent". "Give a 'thus saith the Lord' for all we believe and practice".
- B. THE N.T. CHURCH, AND ITS MEMBERS, WORE NAME ORDAINED BY GOD.
1. Some say there is nothing in a name, BUT THERE IS!
Would you name your son "Fido", or "Spot"? Would you name your daughter "Jezebel"? Why not? There is something in a name.
 2. The members of the N.T. were called simply, "CHRISTIANS".
Acts 11:26.
 - a. They had no prefix or suffix attached to that name.
 - b. People today ask, "What kind of Christians"?
 3. The N.T. church wore several descriptive names.
 - a. "churches of Christ" - Rom. 16:16.
 - b. "church of God" - Acts 20:28
 - c. "church of firstborn" - Heb. 12:23.
 4. Should the N.T. church, and its members, wear names that honor Christ or men? Why not let them wear these N.T. Names then?
- C. THE N.T. CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED ACCORDING TO GOD'S HOLY PLAN.
1. Christ was the head of the church, and there was no other head.
 - a. Eph. 1:22-23.
 - b. This would cut out the "pope" at Rome.
 - c. Since the head of the church is in heaven so are the headquarters.
 2. ELDERS WERE TO BE APPOINTED IN EVERY N.T. CHURCH.
 - a. Titus 1:5.
 - b. These men were also called "pastors" (Eph. 4:11); "bishops", (I Tim. 3:1); "shepherds", (I Peter 5:1-4).
 - c. Their qualifications are plainly given in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-10.
 - d. These men are to oversee the church, but not to be "lords".
I Peter 5:2-3; Acts 20:28.
 - e. Elders serve for only one congregation.
 - f. All members are to be obedient to their elders. Heb. 13:17.
 3. DEACONS are also to be appointed to be special servants.
 - a. Their qualifications are given in I Tim. 3:8-13.
 - b. They are to serve under the elders.
 4. There were also men in the N.T. church who preached the gospel of Christ.
 - a. They were called "preachers", (Rom. 10:14); "Ministers", (II Cor. 3:6); "Evangelists", (Acts 21:8); (II Tim. 4:5). BUT never "Reverend", "pastor", or "Father".
 - b. They were to study and faithfully preach God's Word. II TIM. 4:5.
 5. All the members were workers and teachers of God's Word.
 6. In the religious world today we see many strange things.
 - a. We see synods, popes, councils, boards, headquarters, presiding elders, etc. but all are foreign to the N.T.
 - b. We must be exactly like the early church in organization.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Yes, the N.T. church does exist today, but we must be able to identify it.
 1. We can identify it by its: (1) Origination, (2) Rule of faith and practice, (3) Name, and (4) Organization.

- B. Don't be fooled. Make sure it meets ALL qualifications. This is too serious a matter to be wrong.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 7.

1. What two verses we studied pointed out that the Bible is all sufficient?
2. Why are humanly written creeds not needed?
3. What is a good motto for us to use in respect to using the Bible as our guide?
4. What were the early disciples called?
5. What descriptive titles were used for the church?
6. Whom should we honor with our names in religion?
7. What other names were elders called?
8. What were those who preached called?
9. What were deacons to do?
10. What were the qualifications for elders? Deacons?
11. Must a church meet ALL the qualifications to be a N.T. church or will just a majority of them be all right?

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS # 8 WORSHIP OF THE N.T. CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. In this lesson we want to continue noticing the identifying marks of the N.T. church.
1. Its worship is one mark by which we can identify it.
 2. We must look for a church today that worships just like the early church did.
- B. We know that it is natural for man to worship.
1. People, however, have not always worshiped the right object in the right way.
 2. The Gentiles worshiped the creature. Rom. 1:25.
 3. The Athenians worshiped many idols. Acts 17:22-23.
- C. Today we want to examine closely the worship of the N.T. church.
1. We will ask several questions concerning the worship.
 - (1) How important is worship? (2) What should be the object of our worship? (3) What should we do in worship?
 - (4) How should we worship? (5) When should we worship?

DISCUSSION:

A. HOW IMPORTANT IS WORSHIP?

1. It is one of the first things done in the Bible.
 - a. Cain and Abel worshiped God. Gen. 4.
 - b. One's worship was pleasing and one's was not.
2. It was the first thing Noah did after leaving the ark. Gen. 8.
3. In the N.T. Jesus was worshiped by the wise men. Matt. 2:2.
4. Jesus left us the example of worship. Luke 4:16.
5. Someone has said that worship is a kind of "spiritual gas station."
6. These things, plus all other things that the Bible says about worship, should convince us that worship is very important.

B. WHAT SHOULD BE THE OBJECT OF OUR WORSHIP.

1. In the 10 Commandments the Jews were commanded to worship God. Ex. 20:1-7.
2. Jesus mentioned this in Matthew 4:10 to Satan.
3. Jesus pointed out in John 4:23-24 that we should worship God.
4. The answer to why we should worship Him is found in Rev. 4:11.

C. WHAT SHOULD WE DO IN WORSHIP?

1. Jesus said that we must worship "in truth". John 4:23-24.
 - a. John 17:17 says "thy Word is truth".
 - b. To worship "in truth" we must worship according to the Word of God.
 - c. In the N.T. there are five, and only five, avenues of worship. We must not add one or take one away!
 - d. Let's see what avenues of worship we can find scriptural authority for.
2. We can find scriptural authority for PRAYER.
 - a. Early church continued steadfast in prayer. Acts 2:42.
 - b. Prayer works. James 5:16.
 - c. Our prayers do not have to be long or fancy. They are just a simple, open-hearted talk with God.
 - d. I Cor. 14:15.
 - e. Prayer is a MUST for every Christian. He should pray much in private.
3. We can find scriptural authority for TEACHING.
 - a. Early church was steadfast in this too. Acts 2:42.
 - b. Teaching is commanded in I Tim. 4:13; I Thess. 5:27; and in Matt. 28:18-20.
 - c. The word of God must be preached simply and without addition or subtraction. II Tim. 4:1-5.
4. We can find scriptural authority for GIVING.
 - a. I Cor. 16:1-2 give us the Divine plan.
 - b. Under the O.T. people gave 10%. We are not bound by the O.T. or its tithe. We have a new law, and a better plan.
 - c. There is a secret to real Christian giving. II Cor. 8:5.
5. We can find scriptural authority for the LORD'S SUPPER.
 - a. Early church was steadfast in its observance. Acts 2:42.
 - b. Early church met on first day of week for its observance. Acts 20:7.
 - c. Jesus, himself, instituted this feast as a memorial to His death. Latt. 26:26-29.
 - d. Paul tells us several things about this feast in I Cor. 11:23-29.
6. We can find scriptural authority for SINGING.
 - a. The following verses mention the kind of music God wants! Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; Heb. 13:15; James 5:13.
 - b. These are ALL scriptures on this theme. When you read them you have read all of God's instruction to the N.T. church concerning its music.
 - c. N.T. is as silent as the tomb concerning instrumental music in worship services.
 - d. What scholars have said:
 - (1) "The general introduction of instrumental music can certainly not be assigned to a date earlier than the fifth and sixth century." (McClintock and Strongs Encyclopedia, Vol. VI, p. 759). *Singing was good enough for four or five centuries. Why is it not now?
 - (2) Luther called the organ an "ensign of Baal".
 - (3) Calvin said the instrument was no more fitting than incense and candle sticks.
 - (4) Knox called the organ a "chest of whistles".
 - (5) John Wesley said, "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen". (Clarke's Commentary, Vol. IV, P. 685.).

D. HOW SHOULD WE WORSHIP?

1. John 4:24 says "in spirit".
 - a. This means we must have the right attitude, and that our worship must be from the heart.
 - b. Much worship today is empty and meaningless.
2. Many things can take the "spirit" out of worship.
 - a. Showy ceremonies.
 - b. Going for wrong reasons - to be seen, criticize, etc.
 - c. Paying no attention.
 - d. Making disturbance.

E. WHEN SHOULD WE WORSHIP?

1. Of course, a Christian can, and should worship, every day.
2. In the N.T., however, there was one special day set aside. It was the Lord's day.
 - a. Disciples met on this day. Acts 20:7.
 - b. John was "in the spirit" on this day. Rev. 1:10.
 - c. Jesus arose from the dead on this day.
 - d. The church was established on this day. Acts 2. *Pentecost was always on the day after the seventh Sabbath.
 - e. We sin when we neglect this day. Heb. 10:25.

CONCLUSION:

- A. When we look for the N.T. church today we must look for one that worships according to God's Word.
- B. We have noticed several things about the worship of the church today
 1. HOW IMPORTANT? - Very important!
 2. OBJECT? - God!
 3. AVENUES? - Singing, Praying, Giving, Teaching, and Communing!
 4. HOW? - In Spirit!
 5. WHEN? - Especially on Lord's day!

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 8.

1. Why should we worship God, and God only?
2. How did Jesus leave us an example in worshiping God?
3. What was the first thing Noah did after leaving the ark?
4. What does it mean to say we must worship "in truth"?
5. What does it mean to say we must worship "in spirit"?
6. What did the early Christian continue steadfastly in?
7. Do we have scriptural authority for an organ?
8. What takes the "spirit" out of a worship period?
9. Do we sin when we neglect worship on the Lord's day?
10. Who were the first worshipers?
11. THOUGHT QUESTION: What would make our worship services more meaningful?

LESSONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

9

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HIS HOME CONGREGATION

INTRODUCTION:

- A. I think this is a much needed study.
 1. Many Christians feel no responsibility to their home congregation
 2. They fail to understand how important every member is to the congregation.
- B. We remember from past lessons that the Greek word for "church" is "ekklesia" which means "called out".

1. The term "church" is used in three senses in the N.T.
 - a. It is used in the GENERAL SENSE - all the saved or called out in the whole world. Eph. 1:22-23.
 - b. It is used with GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATIONS - all the saved or called out in a certain territory. Acts 9:31.
 - c. It is also used in the LOCAL SENSE - all the saved or called out which meet at a specific location. Rom. 16:3-5.
2. We can see, therefore, that it is right and scriptural to talk about the church in a local sense.
 - a. Today we will be talking about the congregation here.
 - b. We are members here, and we owe this congregation certain things.
- C. In our study for today we want to deal with two main questions.
 1. Why should we have our membership with a local congregation?
 2. What are our obligations to the local congregation?

DISCUSSION:

A. WHY SHOULD WE HAVE OUR MEMBERSHIP WITH A LOCAL CONGREGATION?

1. Because of Biblical example.
 - a. Acts 9:26.
Was Paul not already a disciple? Yes, certainly! But his usefulness was hampered until he identified himself with the local congregation.
 - b. Acts 18:27.
Was Apollos not already a member? Yes! However, a letter was sent to identify Apollos, and to commend him to the local church.
 - c. Romans 16:1-2.
Phebe was commended as a faithful servant of the Lord. This was so that she might be accepted by the church in Rome.
 - d. If membership in the local congregation was important then, don't you think it is today?
 - e. When a person is baptized at a particular congregation his membership is usually counted there. Of course, it could be transferred anywhere the person wants to worship and work regularly.
2. Because of a Biblical command to "obey them which have the rule over you". Heb. 13:17.
 - a. This verse instructs us to be in subjection to the local elders. How can we do this if we do not worship and work regularly with a specific congregation.
 - b. A Christian cannot be under subjection to several sets of elders in several congregations.
3. To work.
 - a. The Local Congregation is God's unit for work.
 - b. How could anyone do anybody any good by going from place to place and never settling down to work?
 - c. How could you do your home any good if you were always at somebody else's home?
 - d. When a person goes into the army he is a member of the United States Army, but he is put into a specific unit to work.
 - e. The person who will not identify with a local congregation simply does not want to do anything.

B. WHAT ARE OUR OBLIGATIONS TOWARD OUR HOME CONGREGATION?

1. To attend its services.
 - a. Heb. 10:25.
 - b. If a church is to carry on its work and worship there must be public gatherings, and as a part of it, you MUST be there.

- c. The very existence of the congregation depends upon the attendance of its members. How would you like it said of you that your home congregation perished because you, and others, would not attend?
2. To give liberally to support it.
 - a. The church has always needed money to carry on its work. Any organization does.
 - b. As a member of the local church, I have pledged myself to support it. This involves financial support too!
 - c. Whether I am there or not, my home congregation has bills which must be paid regularly, therefore, my contribution should go there even in my absence.
 - d. I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 9:6-7.
3. To accept responsibility in it.
 - a. The parable of the talents shows the need for individual responsibility in proportion to ability. Matt. 25:14-30.
 - b. A few cannot do all the work. We are all members of the spiritual body, therefore, we all have responsibility to that body.
 - c. We prepare ourselves for responsibility by study. II Tim. 2:15
4. To help it maintain unity.
 - a. Jesus prayed for unity. John 17:21.
 - b. I can, and should, promote it and pray for it.
 - c. The Lord's church as far too precious to be torn by strife, and trouble. Matt. 12:25.
 - d. It may mean that we will have to forgive and forget to keep down trouble, but we should be willing to do that much.
5. To pray for it.
 - a. I Thess. 5:17.
 - b. A praying church is a working, growing church. A praying member is a working, growing member.
 - c. We should pray regularly for the elders, deacons, preacher, Bible Class teachers, etc.

CONCLUSION:

- A. As a member of the local church I do have certain obligations toward it, and if I am a true, dedicated Christian I will fulfill them.
- B. I have Biblical example and command for being a member of a local congregation.

QUESTIONS OVER LESSON # 9.

1. What does the Greek word for church mean?
2. In what three senses is the word church used in the N.T.?
3. Why did people like Paul and Apollos join themselves to the local congregation?
4. How many sets of elders is a Christian to be under?
5. What is God's unit for work?
6. Why is it so important that we attend services?
7. Why is it so important that we give liberally?
8. Why should we assume responsibility in the local congregation?
9. How can we help maintain unity?
10. For whom should we pray in regard to the local church?
11. THOUGHT QUESTION: How can I do more for the church than I am doing now?

