

Jesus: Lord of Our Lives

**Book 3:
Lessons 9-12**

Bible Study Center, Box 189, 6000 Cebu City
Tel# 414-6311 Cell # 0927-482-6921
Email: Info@biblestudycenter.net

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NOT FOR SALE

Bible Study Center

“Jesus: Lord of Our Lives”

Book 3 - Lessons 9-12

Welcome Back!

We have graded and returned your **Book 2** Answer Sheet. Please take some time to review any mistakes and comments made by your teacher. If you have any questions please feel free to contact your teacher personally.

We sincerely hope that you have enjoyed your study so far. Now that you have completed **Book 2**, you are ready to proceed to the third and final book in this course. This set of lessons will continue looking into the fifth instruction, **ENDURING TO THE END!** We still need to study several areas and some important questions remain unanswered.

Once again, we want to stress how important it is always to place each passage into its proper **context**. Use your notebook to record your findings for each and every verse you study. If at any time you do not understand the instructions simply contact our office and we will assist you. If you apply the Bible study skills you have learned you should have no trouble finding the answers to the test questions here in **Book 3**. The procedure for **Book 3** is the same as before. You will study through each lesson and then proceed to the test questions.

We know that you have already learned many new things from this study. We believe that most of your questions that remain unanswered at this point will be answered in these final lessons. Any questions that remain unanswered after you complete these last lessons can be addressed personally to your teacher.

Why don't you consider enrolling in the classroom version of this course here at the **Bible Study Center**? This will give you a chance to restudy things and have discussions with an instructor and fellow students. We will be sending you more information about this when we launch our next enrollment. Like this self-study course, all of our classroom courses are **FREE** of cost and obligation. We try to make things convenient for our students and so we schedule classes in the early evenings. However, special time schedules are okay with us and so please be thinking about this as a possibility.

As always, if at any time in the study you have questions about the material or the procedures, please feel free to contact us. There is space on the back of the “Answer Sheet” for you to use. We will do our very best to help you find the answers you seek. Please do not forget to recommend us to your friends and family members. We will be happy to send get them started with the **FREE** course **Jesus: Man of the Bible!**

Enjoy your study! We feel quite certain that you will find this material challenging and rewarding.

-- The Bible Study Center Staff

LESSON NINE

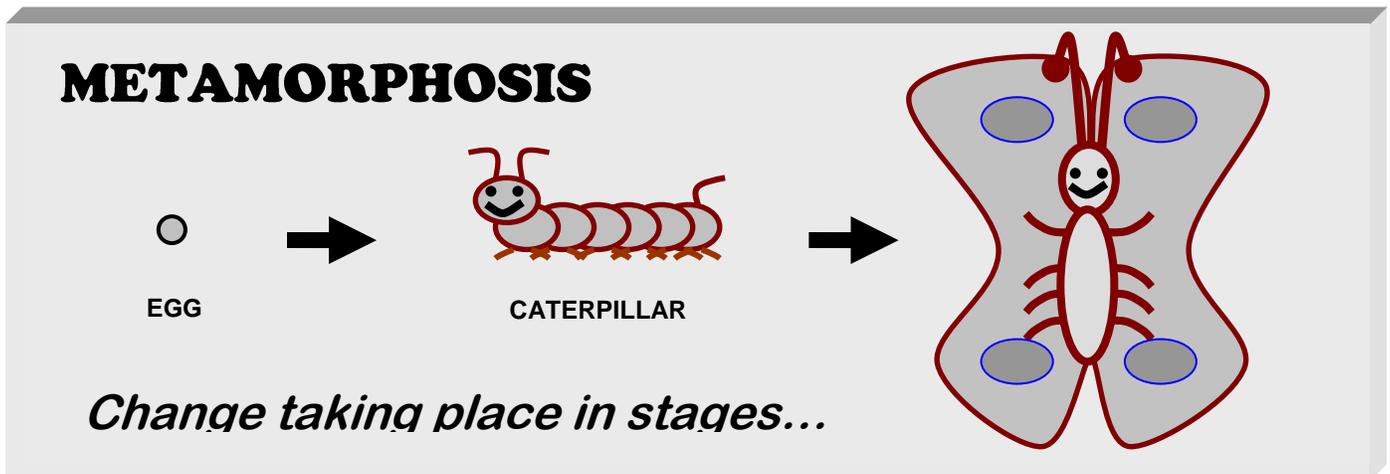
The Rest Of Your Life (Part 2)

In our previous lesson, we began a search of the material contained within the New Testament that speaks about the topic of **REMAINING FAITHFUL TO THE END**. In that study, we focused our attention upon on the **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY** of being a citizen of the Kingdom of God. We discovered the serious reality of God's expectations in the areas of **FAITHFULNESS**, and **LOYALTY**. It is important to remember that these expectations are not more than we can accomplish because God knows our limitation and he is careful to protect us from being forced to do things against our will. **WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE** and so living faithfully to God involves making good and careful choices!

In this lesson, we will continue our study by looking at **WHAT** God expects from us if we join the **NEW AGREEMENT**, and **HOW** we can accomplish those things!

IF You Are Not GROWING Then You Are DYING!

Please read **1 Peter 1:22-2:3** and record the main points on your paper. We know that Peter is speaking to people who are already Christians because he refers to them as people who **had their souls purified**, which can only mean Christians! How did these people get their souls purified? They did so **by obeying the truth!** Can this possibly mean anything other than **following the instructions we discovered in Lessons 6 and 7?** No! His next point is that they must fulfill their commitment to change, by putting away all the things in their lives that God does not like, and **GROW!** He tells them that they **must become like newborn babies!** Newborn babies **CRAVE**¹ milk so that they can survive and so, in the same way, we learn that we must also crave milk if **WE** want to survive and grow! However, context tells us that this milk is not the kind that a person drinks; **it is the message of the Bible!** We are told to **CRAVE THIS MESSAGE** so that we can **GROW UP!** If growing requires us to **FEED on God's message** then Bible study becomes the key to growth, and if we do not study then we will not grow! That is a simple idea that we can understand but **what are we supposed to grow up to be?**



Back in **Jesus: Man Of The Bible**, we saw the answer to this when we studied about the word **METAMORPHOSIS**, commonly used in Biology to represent the life cycles of certain animals and insects. It represents the idea of **change that takes place in stages** and to illustrate the point we used the example of the life cycle of a **BUTTERFLY!** As the diagram at the right shows, a butterfly starts its life as an **egg**. When it hatches out of the egg, does it come out as a butterfly? No, it comes out as a **caterpillar**. This small worm crawls around eating leaves and growing until it gets big, then it goes to sleep in a special house until it comes out as a **beautiful butterfly!** As a butterfly, it no longer eats leaves, but instead drinks sweet juices inside flowers. It no longer crawls from place to place, but flies! Its form and abilities as an adult are very different from what it was just after it hatched from its egg. It experiences major changes

¹ The word **crave** means to want something very much.

as it goes through each of the stages until it reaches the final result, which is nothing like the way it was when it started. This is how growing as a member of the **NEW AGREEMENT** will be!

If you will remember that study of metamorphosis, we looked at **TWO passages** in the New Testament that use this word. One was **2 Corinthians 3:18**, where we found that the **TARGET** of our growth is **NOT** being a butterfly, but becoming like Jesus! The point is simple. **IF** we study about him a little each day, and we copy what we find into our lives, **THEN** we will slowly change to become like Jesus – “from one degree of glory to another!” The second passage we looked at was **Romans 12:1-2**, where we learned more details about the change God is expecting from us. He expects us to **change the way we think**. Back in Lesson 3 of this course, we discussed this matter when we were trying to understand how God could **write the laws of the NEW AGREEMENT on the hearts of people!** We concluded that this means God emphasizes **changing the thoughts**² of people because changing the way people think will bring about a sincere change in their actions.

However, no one can deny that **there MUST be a change of action** in the life of a person in the **NEW AGREEMENT**. Please turn to **Colossians 3:9-11**, and record the main points. Paul writes to people who are already Christians and tells them of the need to **change THEIR ACTIONS**. This fits together with all that we learned about **FAITH**, **REPENTANCE**, and **BEING FAITHFUL TO THE END**. Unless we **CHANGE OUR ACTIONS**, then **WE HAVE NO METAMORPHOSIS** and we are **NOT BECOMING LIKE JESUS!** However, changing our thoughts and attitudes is a necessary **starting point** if we ever hope to change our actions!

Change taking place in stages is the LIVING SACRIFICE we must offer to God and it is LOGICAL for God to expect it!

You Cannot Stay In ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Forever!

One of the most interesting and important passages about **GROWTH** is **Hebrews 5:11-6:2**. Please read this passage and record the main points. It is interesting because of the background of the passage. Not only was this written to people, who were already Christians, but they also had been Christians for some time and the writer is upset because they **had not grown**. Notice how he says that “by this time” they should have become teachers, but instead they needed to go back and start over. Then he goes into a discussion about **MILK** and **SOLID FOOD**. Notice how each of these refers to a kind of teaching. **Milk** refers to **BASIC TEACHINGS** and **solid food** refers to **ADVANCED TEACHINGS**. He closes by encouraging the readers to go on to **more advanced teachings** leaving behind the “**elementary doctrines**” as some Bibles say. Then he gives a list of these basic teachings and please notice how all of the things we have been studying in this course are included in his list. This means that even though we have studied some great things and learned so much, these things are **ONLY THE BEGINNING OF WHAT God wants us to learn!**

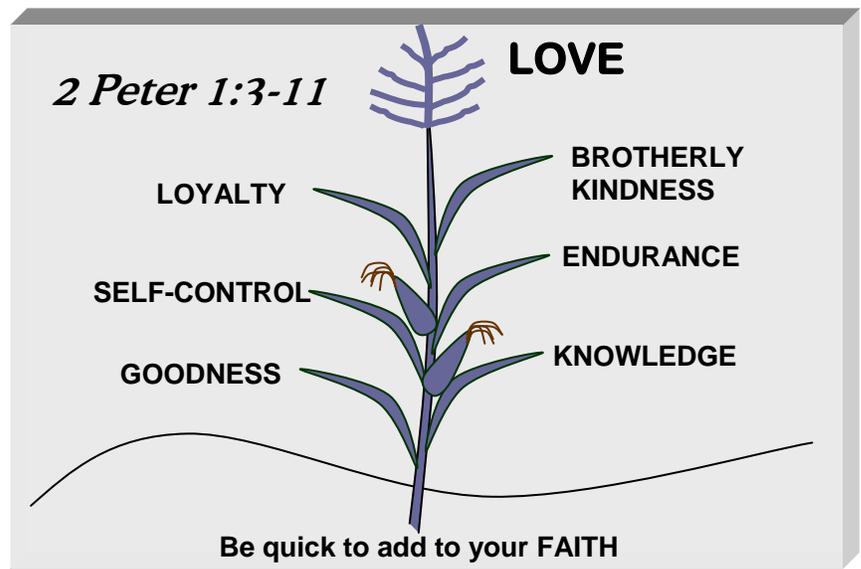
What was the problem with these Christians and why did they fail to grow? Look at what the writer says in verse 11. While the wording may sound strange in your Bible, the original language is very clear. He tells them there is much they need to learn, but at some time in the past **they became “lazy to listen” and they are still that way now!** We can understand their problem and the lesson for us is very simple. **IF** Bible study is the key to growth and we become **LAZY** to study the Bible **THEN** we will not grow! Let us never forget that once we enter into the **NEW AGREEMENT** we are under obligation to fulfill our responsibility!

We can easily understand what the writer is saying if we use the example of the difference between **elementary school** and **high school**. Elementary school is the place where we learn the most basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. In high school, we learn the advanced skills that prepare us for surviving in the world. **We cannot stay in ELEMENTARY SCHOOL if we want to get a good job to support ourselves in the world!** This is what the writer means when he speaks about leaving behind the “elementary doctrines”, so **what are the advanced subjects we must learn?**

² Review your notes on **Matthew 5:27-28** and **Romans 8:5-8**.

Please read **2 Peter 1:3-11** and record the main details. Peter starts by saying that everything God has done for us in his PLAN was done so that we might **SHARE HIS NATURE**. This sounds very much like those places in the Bible where God tells his people that they need to be **LIKE HIM** – “You will be holy because I am holy!” Because of this, Peter tells his readers to **make every effort**³ to **ADD** to their **FAITH, GOODNESS, ENDURANCE, LOYALTY, SELF-CONTROL, ENDURANCE, LOYALTY, BROTHERLY KINDNESS, and LOVE!** He continues saying that **IF** these things are present, and **IF** they are increasing, **THEN THEY** will not let any person become **USELESS** or **UNFRUITFUL TO GOD!** However, he also says that **IF** these things are lacking, **THEN** that person has not understood God’s **PLAN** and has forgotten that he or she **accepted the terms of being in the NEW AGREEMENT!**⁴

His description is similar to the growth of a corn plant, like the one in the diagram on the right. When a corn seed germinates, a single leaf comes out of the ground and then slowly, other leaves are added as the plant grows taller.



When the corn plant is fully-grown, a tassel appears at the top of the corn plant and baby ears of corn develop on the stalk below. The pollen from the tassel fertilizes the baby ears of corn and they grow and mature until they are ready to be harvested! We might say that the corn seed is like our **FAITH**. Peter tells us that once that seed germinates we need to **ADD** the characteristics he mentioned in his list. Therefore, the first leaf that comes out is **GOODNESS**, followed by **KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONTROL, ENDURANCE, LOYALTY, and BROTHERLY KINDNESS**. Once all the leaves are there, the only thing lacking in our corn plant is the tassel and that tassel is **LOVE!** This **LOVE** fertilizes the plant so that it produces fruit! There can be no corn without the whole plant reaching maturity. In the same way, if we do not put these things in our lives, we will never be useful to the Lord!

OVERCOMING The Obstacles

We know that **CHANGE** is not easy and earlier in our study we discovered that obstacles are certain to come, and so **HOW** are we supposed to overcome them? Do you remember what we learned from **Matthew 10:34-39**? The first Christians suffered in so many ways. They experienced abuse from family members, from the government, and many faced prison and even death, **just because they decided to accept the terms of the NEW AGREEMENT!** Even though their situation was difficult, we learned that they were told to reject wrong teachings be **FAITHFUL UNTIL DEATH!** Was God requiring too much from them? Of course not, because **faithfulness has ALWAYS been the most basic requirement of any relationship.** The fact that being faithful might require a person to leave behind family, or even die, does not excuse unfaithfulness! Did **ALL** the ones who were baptized remain faithful to their commitment? No! Throughout the history of the Bible, has God ever relaxed his requirement of faithfulness? **NEVER!** If this is what God expected from the people living in the Bible, **he expects that same thing from us!**

HOW then, were the people of the New Testament able to remain faithful in the face of such difficulties? How were they able to die rather than deny Jesus? How were they able to leave behind husbands, wives, children, and go to their deaths when all they would have to do to live was deny Christ when the police asked if they were Christians? Please read **2 Corinthians 5:14-17** and record the main points. Paul speaks of **being CONTROLLED by the love that Christ had for us.** He speaks of **being CONVINCED** that Jesus forgot about his own needs and **helped us,** and now **WE** should think just as Jesus did! **REMEMBERING CHRIST’S LOVE MOTIVATED THOSE PEOPLE TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO GOD!**

³ The meaning of the original word here includes the idea of **doing everything you can AND doing it as quickly as you can.**

⁴ We cannot forget that the source of our growth is the Bible message. Do not forget **2 Timothy 3:16-17!**

Please read **Matthew 10:28** and record the main points. This is an amazing passage because of the context and because of what it says! Jesus is speaking about dealing with things and people that oppose a person's effort to follow God and to make his point very clear, Jesus states that a person who wants to follow him should never be afraid of anyone who might say or do bad things to him or her. Instead, he says that we should be afraid of the one who can kill us and then throw us into **HELL!** Who is this that Jesus tells us to be afraid of? **It is HIS FATHER!** The early Christians were **CONVINCED** who God was and that he punishes unfaithfulness! **THIS helped them have the courage** to do what had to be done to remain faithful!

However, the **REASON FOR THEIR SUCCESS** was something that we learned at the beginning of this course. Please read **Romans 5:3-11** and record the main points. We **KNOW** that temptation will come into our lives but we **ALSO KNOW** that God will never allow us to be tempted more than we can bear. Paul tells the readers that when they are tempted they need to think very carefully about their choices and realize that **IF** they endure **THEN** they will grow stronger and this strength will help prepare them for future temptations! However, please do not be confused. This strength only comes if a person does not sin!

Without a doubt, it is important for each individual Christian is **TO SERVE AND OBEY GOD** and **there is NO EXCUSE** for giving up no matter what happens! God's expectation will never change, but **we KNOW** that he is not asking too much because we read in the Bible about many people who had faith, trusted God, and did whatever he told them to without hesitation and without concern for consequences!

Perhaps more than anything else, the fact that God promises we will never receive a challenge to our commitment that we cannot overcome is the greatest reason why **any person who wants to CAN BE FAITHFUL!** However, aside from **1 Corinthians 10:13**, does God offer any other assistance? **YES, there is MUCH more!**

God Gives Us A FAMILY!

If we look back into the various teachings of Jesus we find that **God's PLAN** contains other details that are meant to help us succeed in being members of the **NEW AGREEMENT**. Please turn to and read **Mark 10:28-31**, get your paper, and record the main points. Notice how Jesus describes the difficulties we discussed in our previous lesson. The reality of **LOSS** is something each person must struggle with throughout their life, however, notice also, what Jesus says a disciple that experiences loss can **receive** in return for their continued commitment. It is very remarkable! He promises that anyone that experiences losses for keeping their faith, **will receive back 100 times what they lost in this life and, after this life is over, HEAVEN!**

Those are comforting words, and most people understand that things will be **MUCH BETTER IN HEAVEN**, but what does Jesus mean when he speaks about **receiving 100 times back IN THIS LIFE?**

The answer can be seen by making a historical study of the **book of Acts**. We begin by looking at **Acts 2:37-47**. Please read this passage and record the main points. This passage provides us with a description of what life was like for the first Christians. The first portion of the passage tells about how the crowds of people listening to Peter were "convicted" in their hearts and how they were instructed to become Christians by **REPENTING** and **BEING BAPTIZED**. The passage also says that **on that one day, about 3,000 people** responded to the message, were baptized, and **were "added" into God's group of believers⁵**.

Beginning with verse 42, there is a description of how these people related to one another and notice what a **close relationship** these first Christians had. **They became A FAMILY!** They spent time with one another and they were

HOW THEY ENDURED:

- They understood the demands of the contract!
- They were controlled by Christ's love!
- They remembered God's promise regarding temptation
- They knew it was suicide to go against God!

⁵ This "group of believers" is what other passages in the New Testament refer to as "the church".

very eager to share what they had with those in need, even though they were “strangers” to one another before they became Christians!

The needs of these people were not necessarily easy ones to fill, and as time passed, and Christianity spread, these needs became greater and more difficult to fulfill. Because of persecution, many people lost their homes and their way of making a living. At first, persecution came from the Jews, who considered Jesus as a fraud and anyone who followed him as a traitor to God! Many Christians were disowned by their families just because they believed in Jesus! This happened just as Jesus said that it would!⁶

How were these new Christians to survive? They survived because in his **PLAN**, God instructed his children to take care of any of their Christian brothers and sisters who might have a need! This shows that each individual Christian, combined together with every other Christian, is used by God as a tool to fulfill his promise of assistance to those who suffer loss because of their commitment to Christ. The church is the fulfillment of what Jesus meant when he spoke about disciples who experience loss **gaining HUNDREDS of mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers!**

As the church began to spread outward from Jerusalem, the idea of the church being a “family” spread with it. Please read **Acts 4:32-37**, get your paper and record the main points. We see the same thing happening here that we found in Acts chapter 2. Once the church expanded outside of the city of Jerusalem the practice of Christians helping one another also spread. When the church spread to new countries, it always carried the **same FAMILY attitude!**

Several years later, the persecution in Jerusalem became so great that the church there could not satisfy all of the needs of the Christians living there. When we read **1 Corinthians 16:1-4** we discover that an appeal was sent to the Christians living in other countries to help the church in Jerusalem provide assistance for the needs of these Christians. The main point seems to be that **whenever and wherever a Christian has a need, the other Christians are called upon to do whatever is necessary to meet that need!** In every generation, from that time onward, this is a very important part of being a member of the **NEW AGREEMENT** because when Christians join together to help other Christians, they are helping God fulfill the promise he made through Jesus in **Mark 10:28-31!**

SUMMARY For This Lesson

A very good summary passage for all we have seen so far is **Hebrews 10:19-31**. Please read this and record the main points. It tells us that since God has done so much for us, **we must hold on to our faith, we must find ways to help one another continue loving and working for God, and we must NOT SIN DELIBERATELY** because if we do then we will lose everything and “fall into the hands” of the living God, which is a phrase often used in the Bible to refer to someone receiving a fair punishment for bad things they did.

We can understand what the writer means when he says that we should be very afraid to be punished by God because **we KNOW** what he will do to those people he punishes! Therefore, we must be careful in the decisions we make. We must be active in our faith! **We must GROW!** More than anything else, **we must be LOYAL** to God, to the promise we made when we stood in the water of our baptism.

ENDURING TO THE END

requires:

- **CHANGE** of mind!
- **CHANGE** of action!
- **GROWTH** through study!
- **RELYING** upon “**FAMILY**”!

⁶ Matthew 10:35-39

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 9:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

- According to **1 Peter 1:22-2:3**, how did the people get their souls purified?
 - By saying a prayer to receive Jesus.
 - By obeying the truth.
 - By praying to the Saints.
 - All of the above.
- TRUE or FALSE: The word **crave** means to want something very much..
 - True.
 - False.
- TRUE or FALSE: Peter's point is that Christians do not have to want to grow because it happens automatically.
 - True.
 - False.
- The word **metamorphosis** means
 - Change that happens all at once.
 - A disease of the brain.
 - Changing into a butterfly.
 - Change taking place in stages.
- TRUE or FALSE: The **goal** of metamorphosis is for us to become like Jesus.
 - True.
 - False.
- The **two** passage that tells us about metamorphosis are
 - John 3:16 and Acts 2:38.
 - Romans 12:1-2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.
 - James 2:14 and Hebrews 11:1-2.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13 and 1 John 3:4.
- The main point of **Colossians 3:9-11** is
 - We must stop doing bad things and start doing good things.
 - No human can live a sinless life.
 - God will forgive our mistakes because we are only human.
 - Salvation is a free gift.
- TRUE or FALSE: The **proof that metamorphosis has happened** in our lives is our good intentions to do good.
 - True.
 - False.
- TRUE or FALSE: The problem of the people mentioned in **Hebrews 5:11-6:2** is that they did not grow!
 - True.
 - False.
- The people of **Hebrews 5:11-6:2** did not grow because
 - They were lazy to listen.
 - They did not go on to advanced topics.
 - BOTH A and B.
 - None of the above.
- TRUE or FALSE: In the lesson material, **elementary school** represents the basic teachings and **high school** represents more advanced teachings.
 - True.
 - False.
- TRUE or FALSE: God gives us his grace so that we will **become like him!**
 - True.
 - False.
- The passage that tells us about the "**rules**" temptation is
 - John 3:16.
 - Hebrews 11:1-2.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13.
 - 1 John 3:4.
- TRUE or FALSE: God **automatically ADDS** goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, loyalty, brotherly kindness, and love to our faith.
 - True.
 - False.
- Christians in the New Testament **stayed faithful** because
 - They were controlled by the love Jesus had for them.
 - They were convinced that going against God was suicide!
 - They remembered God's promise regarding temptation.
 - All of the above.

16. TRUE or FALSE: God **does not** expect the same loyalty from us that he did the first Christians in the New Testament.
- True.
 - False.
17. TRUE or FALSE: God's promise regarding temptation is the **only help** he gives us for being faithful to him.
- True.
 - False.
18. The main point of Jesus in **Mark 10:28-31** is
- Anyone who loses something as a result of being faithful will receive back more than what they lost.
 - Even the demons believe in God, but they are wrong because they do not obey!
 - Abraham was made right with God because he obeyed God and not just because he believed.
 - All of the above.
19. TRUE or FALSE: The people in **Acts 2** who became Christians received Jesus **by saying a prayer**.
- True.
 - False.
20. The book of Acts records **that in the New Testament time God's church**
- Was just like a family.
 - Took care of each other.
 - Spent a lot of time together.
 - All of the above.
21. TRUE or FALSE: Many of the early Christians lost their homes **because they could not make payments to the bank**.
- True.
 - False.
22. The **PLAN** that God made to take care of his children that would suffer losses states that
- Other Christians should take care of those with needs.
 - They should go begging on the streets.
 - They should collect assistance from the government.
 - None of the above.
23. TRUE or FALSE: According to God's PLAN, Christians are **only** responsible for taking care of other Christians **living in their own town**.
- True.
 - False.
24. God's **group of believers** is also called
- The Roman government.
 - The Jews.
 - The church
 - The Pharisees
25. If we read about the church in the early chapters of the book of Acts, one of the **most noticeable things** we find is that
- They were all Jews.
 - They spent a lot of time together.
 - They were not very kind to each other.
 - They never met on the Sabbath

LESSON TEN

The Rest Of Your Life (Part 3)

In our research into the **FIFTH instruction** for receiving God's grace, **ENDURING TO THE END**, we have found that we must **GROW**, and that this growth happens **IN STAGES** as we try to become more like Jesus every day. We learned that the changes God wants must begin with our **WAY OF THINKING**, but that it must also show itself in a **CHANGE OF ACTION!** The Bible is our resource for change because it contains all of the instructions for the **NEW AGREEMENT**. We discovered that keeping our commitment of loyalty will not be easy and that people who are close to us now may one day become enemies because of Christ. However, God has not left us to bear these burdens alone because he has provided us with a family to take care of us if we need it. **This family is Christ's BODY – his CHURCH – and God joined us in that FAMILY when we were baptized!**

In our third part of this series of lessons, we will look deeper into what the CHURCH is and see what we can find as far as descriptions of teachings and practices.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Almost everyone has heard of THE CHURCH. We began our journey talking about the fact that there are **more than 38,000 CHURCHES in the world today!** If you ask, most people will say that **the CHURCH is the PLACE people go to worship or pray.** Many will also say that **the CHURCH is the PLACE where God's presence lives on the earth.** Are these things taught in the Bible? Are they **TRUE?**

If we study about **the CHURCH** the first and most important thing we will discover is that **the CHURCH IS NOT a PLACE!** You will not read any Bible passage in the **NEW AGREEMENT** saying that **“going to church” meant going TO A BUILDING!** You will also not find any passages saying that the first Christians were **“going to church” in order TO WORSHIP!** Finally, there are no passages saying that **the CHURCH is the place where God lives!** All of these beliefs were started **BY MEN** who, whether sincere or not, **ADDED these teachings into original Christianity!**

If we look deeper into this matter, we **DO** find a very interesting passage. Please read **Acts 17:24-25** and record the main points. The context is very important. Paul is in Athens, Greece and is speaking to the people. They were very religious, but believed in many false gods. They had constructed many temples and altars for their gods to live in. Paul found one altar that was made “For The Unknown God.” He told the people that **THIS was his GOD** and then he revealed **TWO very important facts about his GOD** to the people. First, he told them that **his GOD does not live in buildings made with human hands!** (verse 24) Second, he told them that **his GOD does not need any help from men!** (verse 25)

The modern idea that **the church is “God's house”** comes from human reasoning. It **seems NATURAL** for men to think that **GOD needs a PLACE to live.** We see evidence all over the world in every generation and in almost every religion that when man thinks he has found a god, he must make a place for him to live. Otherwise, the god might become angry and do bad things to people. However, the idea that the God of the Bible lives in a house could also be an attempt to bring forward from the **OLD AGREEMENT** things we find concerning God and the way he related to his people. After all, **WE KNOW** that in the Old Testament God commanded the people to make for him a special tent, which Solomon later changed to a marvelous temple. **We also KNOW** that God's presence stayed in that house and the people went there to pray and to “worship”. People today could easily reason that **IF** this was how God did things in the **OLD AGREEMENT, THEN it SURELY MUST BE** how he will do things again in the **NEW AGREEMENT!** Unfortunately, **WE ALSO KNOW VERY WELL** that we cannot reason things according to **what SEEMS RIGHT TO US!**⁷ We do not have the **AUTHORITY** to make assumptions and so **we must study God's NEW AGREEMENT and see what we find.** It may be the same as in the **OLD AGREEMENT** or it may be different!

God's EKKLESIA

Every time we have encountered a topic, we have found answers by going back to the original language and looking at the meanings of words. We need to do the same for this study.

When you hear someone say the word **CHURCH**, you immediately think of religion because this word is only used to refer to a religious place or group. When you see the word **CHURCH** in your Bible, the Greek word that is in the original text is **EKKLESIA.**⁸ It was used every day in the life of ordinary people and meant, “a group of people called together from their homes for a purpose”, or “an assembly”. Like all the previous Greek words we have studied, this word **WAS NOT** a religious word during the time of the New Testament. The truth of this can be seen in **Acts 19:23-41.** Please read this carefully and record the main points. We find what looks like a town riot that was caused by statements made by Paul regarding the town's idolatry. Verses 32, 39, and 41 use the word **EKKLESIA**, but we certainly cannot call this a church, in the modern religious way we usually think of the word. These people were not **IN A BUILDING**, and they were **DEFINITELY NOT DOING ANYTHING FOR GOD!** They were people who had gathered out of their homes and their purpose was to decide what to do about a “troublemaker” who had come to their town. From the passage, we can easily see that the word **CHURCH means PEOPLE.** It means **A GATHERING OF PEOPLE** or **AN ASSEMBLY OF PEOPLE!**

In the New Testament, we discover that part of God's **NEW AGREEMENT** involves a **CHURCH!** Jesus spoke about it first in **Matthew 16:18.** Please read this passage carefully. Jesus spoke of **building HIS CHURCH** on the rock that

⁷ Do not forget what we learned in the beginning of our studies from **Proverbs 14:12!**

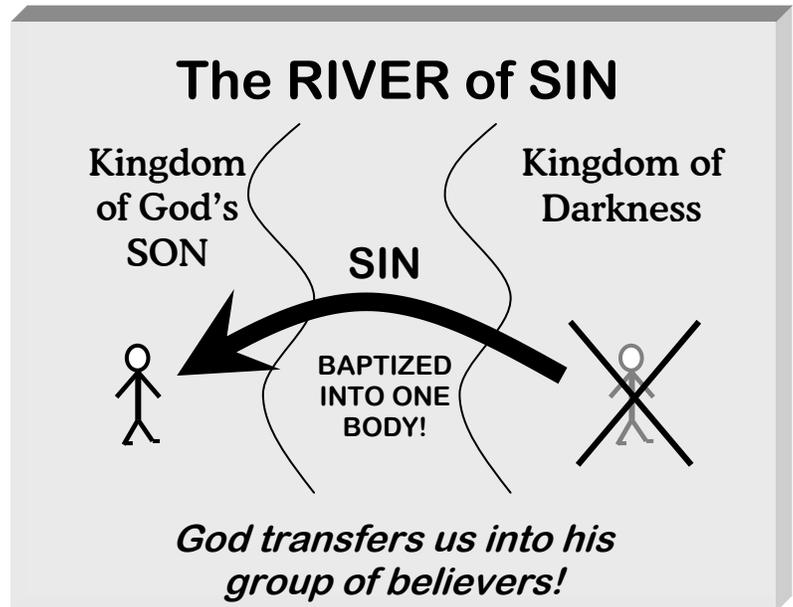
⁸ **EKKLESIA** is pronounced **ĕk-lā-sē'-ă**

was the faith Peter had just shown in his confession.⁹ Jesus was not speaking about a **church BUILDING**. If we apply the definition of **EKKLESIA**, then Jesus was saying that he would build his **GROUP OF BELIEVERS!** It is important to remember that the word **EKKLESIA** in the New Testament means an assembly of people, never a building.¹⁰

We next encounter the church in **Acts 2:47**, where we discover that the 3,000 people who were first to be baptized, and all the others after them were **ADDED BY GOD DAY AFTER DAY TO THE GROUP OF BELIEVERS!**

Aside from the word **CHURCH** – or **GROUP OF BELIEVERS** – there are several other words and phrases used in the New Testament. Please read **Colossians 1:13-14** and record the main points. Paul speaks of God **transferring us out of the KINGDOM OF DARKNESS into the KINGDOM OF THE SON THAT HE LOVES.**

Several passages speak of the church as **the kingdom**. Please read **1 Corinthians 12:13** and record the main points. This passage is speaking about unity. Paul mentions baptism and says that when a person is baptized, in addition to their being joined with Jesus' death, they are also baptized **INTO ONE BODY**. Paul uses the word **BODY** to refer to **Christ's CHURCH**. He uses the idea of a human body to represent the church, where Jesus is the head and Christians are the rest of the body parts!¹¹ The interesting thing we discover in this passage is **the time and place where "God ADDS" people to his church**. God does this when a person is baptized!



BAPTISM not only puts us in contact with Christ's blood, but it also is the place and time that God puts us in his church!

A Family SPENDS TIME TOGETHER!

Most passages in the New Testament refer to the church as being **GOD'S FAMILY**, and as God's family, Christians are supposed to live, work, and serve the Father of this family **together!** **PARTNERSHIP** is an important part of the Christian life. As we already know, **A CLOSE FAMILY** is a successful and happy one. Unity among his followers was a great concern of Jesus and, without a doubt; **the closer Christians are the more unified they will be!**

If we survey all the passages that speak about the early church, one thing we see repeatedly is the fact that **they spent MUCH time together**. Please read **Acts 2:41-47** and record the main points. We learn that the practice of spending time together was something that these first Christians were taught **by the apostles**. In this early stage of development, the Christians **met every day** in the Jerusalem temple and in their homes, where **they shared each other's food and hospitality**. Notice how the passage mentions that these first Christians **DEVOTED THEMSELVES to certain things that the apostles taught**. As long as every member of the church submitted themselves to these things there would be unity, harmony, togetherness, and a caring, sharing attitude - just as God had planned. This spending time together seemed to strengthen their relationship and it motivated them to make personal sacrifices in order to care for the needs of their brothers and sisters.

⁹ Some people mistakenly teach that Peter was the rock that Jesus built his church upon, but this is not very likely because of the wording of the original language in the verse. Besides that, all other passages in the New Testament that speak about the foundation of the church mention Jesus as the only head or chief!

¹⁰ The New Testament has a word for "meeting place". The Greek word is **SUNAGOGE** and is pronounced **sūn-ă-gō-gă'**. Even though the word has a simple meaning, it is **transliterated** (see footnote #45) in our Bibles as **synagogue!** This word usually refers to the Jewish meeting places in the New Testament, but in **James 2:2** the word is used to refer to a Christian meeting place. A **SUNAGOGE** is a place where an **EKKLESIA** could gather.

¹¹ You can see this in **Ephesians 1:22**.

As the church expanded outside of Jerusalem, **IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ALL Christians to continue meeting daily in Jerusalem.** Although we do not have much information about the meeting practices after the church spread out from Jerusalem, we do have several passages that need examination.

Please read **Acts 20:7**. Here we encounter a situation where the wording and context show that the Christians in that place were **in the HABIT of meeting on the first day of the week – or SUNDAY**. Paul was traveling and decided to meet these people **in their assembly** and he spoke to them because he was planning to leave the following day. Evidently, Paul took advantage of what seems to have been a **habitual meeting time** to speak to these Christians. This is evidence that the Christians set aside Sunday as a special day for Christians to assemble together.

Please read **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**. This is another passage that mentions Christians **assembling together on Sunday**. We find a situation where **new instructions** were being given to the Christians living in the town of Corinth, and that Paul also gave these same new instructions to the Christians living in Galatia.¹² The new instructions were concerning a special collection of money that was being organized to help struggling Christians back in the city of Jerusalem. If we look carefully at these instructions, we find that it was very logical to suggest that they take up their collection of money **EVERY first day of the week IF they were already meeting**

together on THAT day! The fact Paul mentions “**EVERY** first day of the week” is evidence that it was their habit to meet together on Sunday. The fact that Paul gave the **SAME INSTRUCTIONS to the Christians LIVING IN GALATIA** would **ALMOST CERTAINLY** have to mean that they were **ALSO** meeting **EVERY** first day of the week.

From these two passages, we have good evidence that there **WAS a habitual meeting of Christians** in each place and that **this meeting took place on the first day of the week – or SUNDAY!** There are no passages in the New Testament that mention any other day of the week when Christians habitually gathered together. Therefore, even though the evidence is small, it is easy to understand and this explains why almost every “Christian” group today has a weekly assembly on Sunday.

The Lord’s Supper

In order to learn more about these Sunday gatherings, we will look for information about what activities the early Christians did when in their Sunday meetings. While it is not so clear how consistent certain practices were, one practice they had stands out and was referred to as “**The Lord’s Supper**”. Please read **1 Corinthians 11:17-32** and record the pain points. Paul **first** speaks about his readers “meeting together as a church”—which context indicates was most likely a reference to the Sunday assembly. Careful analysis shows that he found two problems in their meetings. The first was a problem with **unity**. The second, which Paul goes into more detail about, has to do with this activity known as “**the Lord’s Supper**” and in dealing with this issue he brings out several points that teach us about the Lord’s Supper. We learn that the Lord’s Supper is an activity where Christians assemble as a group and individually eat small portions of unleavened bread, which **symbolize Christ’s body** that was sacrificed for sins, and then they drink small quantities of wine, which **symbolize Christ’s blood** that was shed for sins.

Paul continues saying that the Lord’s Supper is a way for Christians to **REMEMBER the death of Jesus**, to proclaim that death to the world, and to make a self-examination to see how each person is doing in their commitment. **The Lord’s Supper is a TOOL that God has given to help keep both the individual Christian and the whole church going forward in the right direction.** From what Paul says, we learn that it is not an ordinary meal, that it is important for everyone to eat it together at the same time, and - if abused – it is something that will make God very upset.

God’s CHURCH

- **HIS GROUP OF BELIEVERS!**
- **“APOSTLES’ TEACHINGS”**
- **SPENT TIME TOGETHER!**
- **CARED FOR EACH OTHER!**
- **SUNDAY ASSEMBLY!**

¹² Please remember that **Galatia** was a geographical region that contained several towns that evidently had churches in them.

The roots of the Lord's Supper can be traced back to **Matthew 26:26-29**, where we read about what many people know as the "Last Supper". This event was actually a record of Jesus and his disciples celebrating the Jewish **Feast of the Unleavened Bread**, which was part of the annual **Passover Celebration**. The purpose of this festival was to remember what happened in the time of Moses when God freed Israel from Egypt through the 10 plagues. The participants ate a special meal together of bread that was made without any yeast. This is why it was called the "feast of the **UNLEAVENED** bread"!

The Lord's Supper was a part of the early Christian assemblies and, when practiced correctly, served as a unifying point based upon a common knowledge (of Christ as Lord), a common experience (baptism into the death of Christ), and a common struggle!

Lord's Supper

- **REMEMBRANCE!**
- **PROCLAMATION!**
- **EXAMINATION!**

"Do this to remember me!"

Collecting Money

A very common practice in religion today is the collection of money during the Sunday assembly. Many religious groups even impose the Old Testament practice of **TITHING**¹³ upon their members. The first thing you need to know is that **there IS NO passage** commanding members of the **NEW AGREEMENT** to **TITHE!** As we discovered earlier in our studies, God wants Christians to take care of each another and if that requires money then they should collect money and use it to help those with needs.¹⁴ The main instructions that people today say speak about collecting money in the **NEW AGREEMENT**, are found in Paul's letters to the Corinthians. However the Corinthian people received these instructions several years **after** they became Christians and since the Christians at Corinth were taught the same things as the new Christians in other places, and since we have seen that taking care of the needs of fellow Christians in one's place was part of the earliest teachings of the apostles, then it would be difficult to imagine that the Corinthians were not **ALREADY** taking care of any needs that the Christians **IN CORINTH** might have. All other Christians in all other places were doing this according to what we read in the book of Acts.

In **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**, Paul gives instructions concerning collecting and storing up money for helping needy Christians **living in Jerusalem**, which was very far away from Corinth. We looked at this passage earlier and found that these instructions were the same ones that he gave to the churches that were in Galatia. A logical reason why he might have told them to do this collection on Sunday was that **they were already in the habit of meeting on Sunday!** It was therefore reasonable to suggest that each family bring their contribution with them to the assembly, **collect it there AT the assembly**, and hold it in one place so that when Paul arrived he would not have to go from house to house all over town collecting each family's contribution. He could simply go to one place, get the money, and then be on his way.

Collecting Money

- **NEED BASIS!**
- **WHENEVER NEEDED!**
- **NOT FORCED!**

"God loves a person that is happy when they give!" 2 Corinthians 9:7

Evidently, the Corinthians made a commitment to help but did not keep it because in **2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9** Paul is disappointed that they had not done what they said they would do. He encouraged them to complete what they said they would do. In neither letter does Paul specify any amount or percentage, but simply tells people to do **WHAT THEY HAD DECIDED IN THEIR HEARTS** and that **giving IS NOT FORCED**, and **SHOULD NOT BE DONE WITH PAIN IN THE HEART**, because God loves a person that is **GLAD** when they give!¹⁵

¹³ This was a practice that God gave to Israel as part of their **AGREEMENT**. They were to give 10% - a tithe - of everything they had. These tithes were collected by the Levites and used to support their people because the Levites had no way to make a living for their tribe because God gave them no land! Their job was to serve God and so **HE supported them** through the collection of the tithes from their countrymen.

¹⁴ Remember what we learned from **Mark 10:28-31**.

¹⁵ See **2 Corinthians 9:7**.

Giving money is necessary **WHENEVER THERE IS A NEED** for money to help others! It is NOT a command that we give something every Sunday just to have a collection! The instructions of **1 Corinthians 16:1-2** were **NEW** because they related to something these Christians had never encountered before, helping with a **FOREIGN** need that was to be shared by **ALL** Christians living in **ALL** countries, through a **SPECIAL COLLECTION** that would be picked up by Paul and taken as quickly as possible back to the ones who needed it so badly.

In all the passages where giving takes place in the **NEW AGREEMENT**, there is **NEVER** a set amount, or percentage, demanded nor is there an “authorized time” for the giving to take place! It is regulated only **BY THE HEART** of the giver and **THE TIME OF THE NEED** and God expected the giver to give only what he or she committed to give and to give it when they committed to give it! Do not forget that God uses these commitments of giving to fulfill his promise¹⁶ of support for his children who suffer loss because of keeping their commitment of loyalty to him! This is what collecting money is supposed to be about!

Encouraging One Another

One of the main purposes for the Sunday assembly is for Christians to strengthen and encourage one another. **1 Corinthians 14:26-40** gives us a picture of the activities those people did during their assemblies. Please read this, get your paper and record the main points. From what Paul says, we know that when these people came together in their assembly they sang songs, listened to people teach lessons, and people who had special gifts from the Holy Spirit did miraculous things. Notice that Paul did not command the people to do any of these activities, but instead told them that whatever they did **1)** should be for the purpose of building people up, **verse 26**, **2)** should be done by the men, **verse 34**, and **3)** should be done in an orderly way, instead of everyone doing whatever they wanted all together at the same time, **verse 40!** These three guidelines **should help US** determine what activities should be done in our assemblies today.

Another passage that helps us understand the purpose of the Sunday assembly is **Hebrews 10:23-25**. Please read this passage and record the main points. One of the main points here is that people were encouraged **not to miss attending the assembly**. The reasons mentioned indicate that the assembly is to be a time when

Christians meet together **TO ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER** in their struggles. The original language here is interesting because it speaks of “stirring one another up” to love and good works. The phrase “stirring up” is actually based on a Greek word that means, “to agitate someone”, or “try to start a fight with someone”. This was very necessary during that period of history because without the continual encouragement from others, individuals who faced hardships would most likely give up. This same need for encouragement exists today and will remain because as long as time continues then problems and temptations will also continue - until the Lord returns to put them away for the last time!

SUMMARY:

It is not easy to keep the commitment of the **NEW AGREEMENT**. However, God has given several things to help us achieve success. Aside from his promise about limiting temptation, he also gave us **HIS CHURCH**, which is **NOT a BUILDING, but A WORLD-WIDE FAMILY!** In addition, he gave us the Sunday assembly and the Lord’s Supper to help keep us going onward to the goal of faithfulness and **IF** we all will use these **TOOLS** in the way God intended, there is no reason for any Christian to be lost! However, we must remember that **it IS possible to DO things in a wrong way** and end up causing more harm than good, as we saw in the case of the Corinthians. In the end, **we will be accountable for our participation in the CHURCH** just as we are in everything else!

Assembly Activities

- **SHOULD BUILD UP!**
- **SHOULD BE LEAD BY MEN!**
- **SHOULD BE ORDERLY!**

“We should not quit meeting together, that’s what some people are doing...”

¹⁶ Remember **Mark 10:28-31**.

This concludes our study of the instruction, **REMAINING FAITHFUL TO THE END**. There is more that we could study and need to study about these matters, but this is all we need to study at this time in order to see the main point, which is that being faithful involves not only each person keeping the promise of loyalty that each person makes when they stand in the water of their baptism, but also becoming an active part of God's family—which is **God's group of believers or his CHURCH!**

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 10:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

26. TRUE or FALSE: When the Bible speaks of the CHURCH it means a place to worship and pray.
- True.
 - False.
27. The **reason** why we have over 38,000 churches today is
- There are too many languages for just one church.
 - People do not follow God's message correctly.
 - Every person has the right to start their own church.
 - People cannot agree on one church.
28. The **two possible theories mentioned in our lesson** about why people think God lives inside of the church building were
- Our observations about man's religious thinking in the world around us and/or people trying to carry over the OLD AGREEMENT temple pattern into the NEW AGREEMENT.
 - God said to do it and/or Christ taught it in his message.
 - God said to do it and/or the religious leaders give us the pattern to follow.
 - People who have heard God's voice on Sunday and/or they were told by an angel that this is true.
29. TRUE or FALSE: According to what Paul told the people in Athens, God **DOES NOT** live in buildings made by the hands of men.
- True.
 - False.
30. TRUE or FALSE: According to what Paul told the people in Athens, God **NEEDS** men too help him.
- True.
 - False.
31. TRUE or FALSE: **Most people today** think that the church is people and not a building.
- True.
 - False.
32. The word **EKKLESIA** means
- A group of people called out of their homes for a purpose.
 - A group of people.
 - An assembly.
 - All of the above.
33. The Lord's Supper is a meal where people eat and drink **enough so that they are filled**.
- True.
 - False.
34. The passage that uses the word **EKKLESIA** referring to an ordinary group of people is
- Acts 2:47.
 - Acts 19:1-5.
 - Acts 19:23-41.
 - Acts 17:31.
35. When a person is baptized, which of the following happens?
- They join with the blood/death of Jesus.
 - They are added to God's church.
 - They get their sins forgiven.
 - All of the above.
36. The passage where Jesus **first spoke** about building his church was
- Mark 16:16.
 - Luke 22:50.
 - John 1:1-3.
 - Matthew 16:18.
37. TRUE or FALSE: When the Bible speaks of the "first day of the week" it means **Sunday**.
- True.
 - False.
38. **Galatia** was
- A galaxy of stars in the heaven.
 - A geographical region in what is now Turkey.
 - A place where Jesus went many times.
 - A lake in the northern part of Israel.

39. We can tell that the Sunday assembly was a **common practice** in the New Testament because
- We found a command from Jesus telling everyone to meet together every Sunday.
 - We find many examples of the early Christians meeting together on Sundays.
 - Christ changed the Sabbath Day from Saturday to Sunday.
 - Meeting on Sunday was necessary for taking up collections of money..
40. TRUE or FALSE: As Christianity expanded to more and more places, the members from all towns **would come to Jerusalem every Sunday** to attend the assembly.
- True.
 - False.
41. TRUE or FALSE: The Lord's Supper is a **real sacrifice** of Jesus!
- True.
 - False.
42. TRUE or FALSE: In the Lord's Supper, the bread **symbolizes** Christ's body and the wine **symbolizes** Christ's blood.
- True.
 - False.
43. The **Lord's Supper** is an activity for Christians to
- Examine themselves to see if they are making progress.
 - Remember the death of Jesus.
 - Proclaim Jesus to the world.
 - All of the above.
44. In the Lord's Supper, it **is not important** what we think about as we eat the bread and drink the cup.
- True.
 - False.
45. The **reason why** the bread of the Lord's Supper has no yeast in it is
- The bread Jesus used did not have yeast in it.
 - Christians should always copy the patterns of what was used by the Jews in their religion.
 - Bread with yeast is more expensive.
 - Yeast was not yet invented at that time.
46. The practice of people **giving 10%** in the Old Testament was called
- Transubstantiation.
 - Tithing.
 - Praying for forgiveness.
 - Reading the Bible.
47. The **purpose** of tithing was
- To make the people sacrifice for God.
 - To forgive Original Sin.
 - Buy animals for the sacrifices of the people.
 - To provide support for the Levites.
48. TRUE or FALSE: Giving in the **NEW AGREEMENT** is **based upon the 10% rule of tithing**.
- True.
 - False.
49. The **basic rule about giving money** in the **NEW AGREEMENT** is
- That people should give only the amount they have decided to give.
 - That people must give what they say they will give.
 - That giving is based upon NEED!
 - All of the above.
50. The **purpose** of the Sunday assembly is
- For Christians to spend time together getting to know each other better.
 - For Christians to encourage and strengthen each other.
 - For Christians to remember the death of Jesus.
 - All of the above.

LESSON ELEVEN

The LORDSHIP Of Jesus: Man Of The Bible (Part 1)

When we began this journey, at the start of **Jesus: Man Of The Bible**, we spoke of the fact that in the world today there are some 38,000 plus different "Christian" religions and that no two groups teach the same things! Now that we

have completed our study about how God used Jesus as the instrument to bring into existence **HIS SCHEME OF REDEMPTION**, it is time to examine the situation of the 38,000 and see if we should be happy or sad with it.

The answer to the problem can be found by looking at one final picture of Jesus given in the Bible! This picture will settle the matter once and for all time!

Back in Lessons 7 and 8, we studied many examples of people becoming Christians in the time of the New Testament. One of these examples was of a Gentile soldier named Cornelius. Peter was told to go to this man's house and teach him about Jesus. Please turn back to **Acts 10:34-43**, and read the speech Peter made to the people in Cornelius's house. In **verse 36**, Peter made an interesting statement about Jesus. The thing that makes it interesting is that Peter stopped in the middle of his original thought, inserted the statement, and then continued with his speech. Many Bibles place the statement inside parentheses () – which is usually done to show that the words inside are completely separate from the main idea the speaker is discussing. However, it is also important to note that when someone does this, the point they are **ADDING** is usually an important one. What was so **important** that Peter would interrupt himself to make certain that these people heard? Peter wanted these people to know that Jesus Christ, **IS LORD OF ALL PEOPLE!**

Another passage we want to look at is **Romans 14:9**. In Romans 14, Paul is writing to Christians about being tolerant and patient with each other in matters where God does not say what should be considered right or wrong practices in their lives. He tries to get them to stop judging one other in these matters, and to convince them, he speaks about the fact that no Christian belongs to himself or herself any longer. In the middle of this, he says that Jesus died was raised out of the dead so that he might be **the LORD of BOTH THE LIVING PEOPLE AND THE DEAD PEOPLE!**

Aside from these, many other New Testament verses speak about Jesus being **the LORD** and this was a very important teaching in original Christianity, but what does it mean? **What IS a LORD?** Was this simply **a title** for Jesus?

What IS A LORD?

Once again, we must begin our search for answers in the Greek language of the New Testament. The word **LORD** comes from the Greek word **KURIOS**¹⁷. As with all the other Greek words we have studied, this one was not a religious word, but was used in everyday life and it had a very simple meaning. It meant, **an absolute owner**, and it was used to describe people who owned things, like property or houses or animals, but it was also used to describe **PEOPLE WHO OWNED OTHER PEOPLE!** Another English word we could use is **MASTER!** The opposite of a **LORD** would be a **SLAVE!** Slavery was very common in the ancient world and in the time of the New Testament, there were **two basic classifications** of people in the world. Either you were **A FREEMAN** or you were **A SLAVE!**

People living in that time had a certain understanding of the word **LORD**. **We do not have this understanding today because**

SLAVERY IS RARE in our world! Because of this, when we read and say, “**Jesus is LORD**” it may not be clear to us **how serious the meaning of this statement really is!**

A **SLAVE** was someone who **was OWNED by another person** and so they had **NO FREEDOM** and they had **NO RIGHTS!** They were property! **They were BOUGHT** and they could be sold, they were bred like animals to create more slaves, and their main reason for existing was to work in any way the **LORD** wanted. If a slave was useless or disrespectful then the **LORD** could have them killed! This was how life was for millions of people living in the time of Christ!

HOW Did Jesus Become A LORD?

This question has two answers. The first can be easily seen in passages like **Philippians 2:6-11**. Look closely at **verses 9-11**. Paul states that God placed Jesus in a very high place and gave him the name that is above every other name, so that at the name of Jesus, **every knee will bow and EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!** The point is that since Jesus was completely obedient, even to the point of dying, **his Father MADE HIM TO BE LORD!**

¹⁷ This word is pronounced **kūr'-ē-ōs**. There is another Greek word that means “lord” or “master”. It is **DESPOTES** (pronounced **dēs-pō'-tās**) – but this word usually focused more on the owner of a house or property, including house and farm slaves!

“LORD”

- **Absolute Owner**
- **Property/Things**
- **Also of PEOPLE!**

This idea is explained better in another passage we looked at several times in our studies. Please look once more at the speech Peter made in **Acts 2:22-36**. He told the crowd many things about Jesus and at the very end, said that God **MADE JESUS BOTH LORD AND CHRIST!** When the people heard this, they were convicted in their hearts, asked what to do, and were told to **repent and be baptized!** Why did the people react the way they did when Peter told them that Jesus had been **MADE LORD?** These were God-fearing people and, because of their understanding of the meaning of the word in their time, what Peter said meant that **this Jesus that they had crucified OWNED** them and that they were **HIS SLAVES!** That made them afraid! After all, it is not a good thing **when slaves KILL their master!** The result of that encounter was some 3,000 people becoming Christians in a single day!

Therefore, the **first answer** to the question is that Jesus became a **LORD** because **GOD MADE HIM LORD!**

The second answer has to do with the basic meaning of **LORD**. **Every LORD who had slaves PURCHASED those slaves!** Evidence shows that Jesus is no exception. Please read **2 Peter 2:1**. Peter is not speaking about Jesus being **LORD**, but about how false prophets will come in the future. One thing they will do, he says, is **“deny the MASTER WHO BOUGHT THEM.”** This is a definite reference to Jesus **PURCHASING people** to become their Lord!

Please read **Acts 20:28**. Here, we find Paul speaking to a group of church leaders and in his message, he tells them to watch over the church that the Lord¹⁸ **BOUGHT WITH HIS OWN BLOOD!** This passage not only speaks of Jesus **PURCHASING people**, but it tells us what he used to pay for them – **HIS OWN BLOOD!**

Therefore, there are **TWO factors to consider** in understanding **HOW Jesus is a LORD**. First, there is the fact that **Jesus is LORD because HIS FATHER MADE HIM TO BE LORD!** Second is the fact that **Jesus is LORD because HE BOUGHT US WITH HIS BLOOD!** Either way, **JESUS IS A REAL LORD!**

What Does It Mean?

From what we saw in the passages we read, **the word LORD** was a very strong word in that time and when people heard it they paid careful attention. People today are much less concerned. In fact, for many people, the word **LORD** is simply a religious term that applies to Jesus. For many, it is **JUST A TITLE!** However, **LORD is NOT simply a TITLE for Jesus.** It is a **description of WHAT he is!**

JESUS IS THE ABSOLUTE OWNER OF EVERYONE!

As we have traveled along, we read **Matthew 7:21-23** several times in our studies. Jesus said that **not everyone who called him LORD** would enter into the Kingdom, but only those who would **OBEY the will of his Father!** In a later study, we also came across **Luke 6:46**, where Jesus asked the people why they **called him LORD but DID NOT DO what he said!** These passages show that **Jesus IS A LORD** in the true sense of what a **LORD was** in the time of the New Testament! **“LORD”** is not simply a title of respect for Jesus! **He OWNS US and therefore he COMMANDS US!** The people in the New Testament time understood this very well. We must understand it if we hope to one day live with him in his Kingdom!

Jesus IS LORD!

- **APPOINTED!**
- **He BOUGHT us!**
- **Lord of the LIVING!**
- **Lord of the DEAD!**

*Jesus is **ABSOLUTE OWNER OF EVERYONE!***

Religious UNITY!

It is now time to return to the matter of the 38,000 “Christian churches” existing in the world today. **Is THIS what THE LORD JESUS CHRIST wants, or is it what MAN wants?** Is **GOD** pleased with this? After all, this is what really matters! Man may rejoice at the situation, and “Praise God” for all the people who are “coming to faith” but let us not forget **Matthew 7:21-23** and the rest of the warnings we found concerning people changing God’s original teachings! None of the people that Peter, John, and Paul referred to as false teachers in the church **THOUGHT of themselves as false teachers! THEY THOUGHT of themselves as Christians!** Remember that before Paul became a Christian, **he THOUGHT** he was a sincere and dedicated servant of God when he thought that Christ was a “fraud” and anyone

¹⁸ Some ancient copies of the New Testament have the word “God” here instead of “Lord”. The strength of the evidence is such that it could go either way! However, if it is “God” or “Lord”, **we KNOW** that the blood used to **purchase the CHURCH** came from Jesus when **HE died!**

claiming to be “a Christian” should be punished. Therefore, just because many religious leaders today **THINK** the situation, with so many churches is **GOOD** does not mean that it **IS** good! We need to study about this matter and see what the **NEW AGREEMENT** says about the topic of **UNITY**.

Our time is not unique. Maintaining unity was a big problem in the time of original Christianity. It is difficult for people to submit completely to a **LORD** who is not physically present, so that he can continually restate and enforce his law upon all of his slaves. In addition, the natural desire of each person to have their own way takes some time to change, and if people in the church are stubborn about studying, as they should, then the problem of maintaining the unity God wants becomes **even more difficult!** However, just because there were problems with unity in the time of original Christianity does not mean that it is impossible to have this unity! **UNITY under the one LORD is mandatory!**

Please read **Ephesians 4:1-6** and record the main points. Paul is writing to people that are already Christians and he begins by describing himself as a **slave of the Lord**. Then he **encourages**¹⁹ the readers **to walk the way God “called them” to walk**. He clarifies this **WALK** by stating that it should be **with humility** and **with meekness**²⁰, while **being patient with each other IN LOVE!**²¹ He then continues by using that same word Peter used in our “Corn Plant Diagram” - **MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE!** The fact that Paul speaks as he did must indicate that there was a problem of unity in that place!

UNITY under ONE LORD!

- **ONE Church**
- **ONE Spirit**
- **ONE Hope**
- **ONE Faith**
- **ONE Baptism**

ONE GOD AND FATHER OF US ALL!

As we continue through **Ephesians 4**, Paul gives the list of **seven (7) points of unity!** He says that there is **ONE body, ONE Spirit, ONE hope, ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism, and ONE God!**

We have very little difficulty accepting the fact that there is only **one SPIRIT, one HOPE, one LORD, and one GOD**. Even in its present divided condition, the religious world agrees almost completely upon these matters. However, this same passage also teaches that there is only **one BODY, one FAITH, and one BAPTISM**.

We discovered in previous lessons that Paul often uses the word “**body**” to refer to “**the church**” and so we must therefore agree that **there is really supposed to be only ONE CHURCH!**

We also must recognize that since the Bible speaks of only “**one FAITH**” then it does make a difference what we believe, what we practice, and what we teach! Only a faith that is based upon the teachings of the Bible is to be considered “**the ONE faith**”. Can the “**ONE baptism**” mean anything other than the one we studied in **Romans 6:1-4** and all the other passages, and the one we found being received in **EVERY example** of people becoming Christians in the Book of Acts?

Uniting ourselves to Christ and **living under his authority** will bring us into that same “one faith” and “one body” that the first Christians had. However, we must remember that this “faith” is not something that a person can determine simply by having a **FEELING of confidence and security in their heart**. It can only be proven by our complete and honest submission to the will of God. No passage better illustrates this point than our “old friend”, **Matthew 7:21-2**. Remember that Jesus spoke of **many** who were very religious, who possessed supernatural powers, and who **felt very secure** about their faith. However, remember how shocking it was to hear him say that those people will not enter into heaven, not because they were **not active enough, or not sincere enough, or did not do enough** good things. These were not the reason why they were rejected. His point was that they did not do **THE THINGS that the Father**

¹⁹ This word can also mean, “**warn**”.

²⁰ This word means “power under control”, and carries the idea of self-control!

²¹ It is important to point out here that when the Bible mentions “**love**” it usually means “**DOING what is best for another person regardless of how you feel about them**”. This is very different from what most of us think of when we hear the word **love** because we usually think of love as a warm emotional feeling for someone. However, this **IS NOT** what the word **love** in the Bible means. “Love” in the Bible is what many people call “**AGAPE** love”. They call it this because the most common Greek word for **LOVE** in the New Testament is **AGAPE** (pronounced **ă-gă-pă**). This love is **SHOWN BY ACTION** and is done regardless of how a person feels! It has almost nothing to do with emotions! (For two very good illustrations of this idea please read **Romans 5:8** and **Matthew 5:43-44!**) This is the **LOVE** Jesus had for mankind and it is **this Love** that should motivate us to want to be united with him.

wanted. Considering this, we must conclude that having a good heart and doing good works are only important **IF we commit our efforts to doing THOSE THINGS that God wants and THIS can only be achieved IF we study and follow EXACTLY what the Bible says!**

It DOES make a difference what we BELIEVE, TEACH, and PRACTICE!

"So That They All MAY BE ONE"

There has never been a greater need for this **UNITY** than today. Religious confusion grows and unity is not something we see very much of. Shortly before he was crucified, Jesus prayed to his Father. Please read **John 17:20-21** and record the main points. Here is perhaps the **strongest statement of UNITY** to be found in the **NEW AGREEMENT!** Jesus not only wants **UNITY** for his disciples **who lived during that time** but also unity **for all generations of disciples in the future!** Our generation **IS INCLUDED!**

What **IS** this **UNITY** Christ wants? Look carefully at the last portion of the statement. Jesus asks that the unity he shares with the Father will be extended to his followers! **He wants Christians to JOIN THAT UNITY!** This sounds very much like the "**SHARING GOD'S NATURE**" that Peter spoke of in **2 Peter 1:3-4!**

Notice also that there is a **REASON** why Jesus wants **THIS UNITY!** "So that **THE WORLD WILL BELIEVE** that you sent me." If Jesus is the **LORD**, and his followers are not unified under his rule, then **HOW WILL THE LOST WORLD COME TO FAITH?** After all, **A LORD who cannot control his slaves gets NO RESPECT!** The world ignores them! However, **IF all of Christ's SLAVES are unified under his rule then the world cannot ignore HIS authority!**

Therefore, if God wants everyone to be united (or to "**be ONE**") then how can there be so many religious groups in the world today? We have Catholics, Protestants, "Born Again" groups of every kind, Evangelicals, Charismatic groups, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and a wide variety of groups that are not so well known. If the different names are not confusing enough, we also will find that while **all of them CLAIM to follow God**, but these groups accept different teachings, and very often oppose each other while claiming to be united with Christ! From our point of view, this is very confusing, and, considering the prayer of Jesus above, one has to wonder if Jesus is really **IN CHARGE** of the situation!

Some CAUSES Of Religious Division

Before we can accomplish unity, the causes of disunity must be determined and then removed.

Perhaps the greatest cause of disunity is the widespread IGNORANCE of God's word. When people stop studying the message of the Bible, they become dependent upon following what others tell them to think and do. This can make a sincere person the unknowing target of false teachers who promote the teachings of men. Many good and decent people are unable to distinguish between truth and error because they simply do not know what the Bible teaches, or how to study the Bible! Unfortunately, some people simply do not see any need to study things for themselves, while others believe that a **daily READING** of the Bible is **the same as STUDYING!** Remember that in a learning situation, reading your lesson and studying your lesson are two very different things! If you do not know what the Bible teaches then how can you determine if what your religious leaders tell you to do is correct, and how can you know what the Bible teaches if you do not study it?

Causes of DIVISION!

- Ignorance
- Interpretation
- Traditions

Another cause of disunity are the DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS of the Bible found in religious groups today. In Lesson 4 of **Jesus: Man Of The Bible** we learned that **interpretation** means to **explain something ACCORDING TO YOUR OWN OPINION.** One does not have to think very hard to realize that the dangerous part of this definition is the one that refers to the influence of personal opinion upon the explanation. Because different people might look at a situation in entirely different ways, it is possible for two people to look at a single passage from the Bible and come to different (even opposing) **interpretations.** If there are two opposing conclusions then common

sense tells us that both cannot be correct. This explains how we can find different groups today, each one perhaps even reading the same passage of the Bible, coming up with **different** explanations. We should work to discover the exact meaning of the teachings of the Bible and never compromise truth for what we or someone else might **THINK!** Our opinions do not matter, but only what **GOD SAYS** matters!

Another cause of disunity is the introduction of human traditions and practices.²² There are many practices seen in religion today that cannot be found in the Bible and yet many people accept and follow these teachings as if they are genuine. In most cases, men who lived hundreds of years ago created these practices and they have been taught and practiced by people for so long now that they are assumed to have come from God. Of course, not everything being taught in the religious groups today is wrong, but there are many teachings in religion today that can only be traced back a few hundred years. This is a very important point when you consider that Jesus and his Apostles lived two thousand years ago! Therefore, if a certain religious teaching can only be traced back a few hundred years, how can anyone say that **IT WAS PART OF ORIGINAL CHRISTIANITY?** If we are to maintain the unity that Jesus prayed for then we ought to be able to trace our teachings back to the time of Christ! **If you and I cannot distinguish between man-made teachings and the true teachings from God then we may be sincerely following a religion that may seem sincere and may make us feel good inside but in fact is leading us away from Jesus!** This is a very serious and dangerous thing to consider!

*This people honors me with the lips, but their heart is distant, far away from me, and their devotion to me is USELESS BECAUSE THEY TEACH COMMANDS OF MEN FOR THEIR TEACHINGS. **Mark 7:6-7***

If we compare the various teachings found in the 38,000 religious groups in our world today, we find that no two groups teach exactly the same things. However, if each group were to surrender its traditions and “creeds”, and unite with Christ on the teachings of the Bible, then the unity for which Christ prayed **could become possible!** **After all, Christ has ONLY ONE SET OF TEACHINGS and IF EVERYONE FOLLOWED THEM there would be **UNITY and ONLY ONE CHURCH!****

In an attempt to achieve unity, some religious leaders have suggested that all existing religious groups today might combine into one very large group, with each smaller group keeping its own teachings and name. This would be **union**, but **NOT unity!** Unity implies **a common thinking, a common action, and it demands a common submission to Christ AS LORD!** This could not be true with a union because no single group would want to give up its individual beliefs and practices. Therefore, we would be left with the same confusing religious picture we already see in our world today, and **the LORDSHIP of Jesus would be reduced to ONLY BEING A TITLE!**

THE SOLUTION: Let The **ONE TRUE LORD RULE!**

The only solution for the situation in religion today is for people to **LET THE LORD JESUS RULE IN THEIR LIVES!** **Every person who claims to be a Christian MUST go back to the Bible**, search for the original message of the **NEW AGREEMENT**, make any changes in their understanding and actions so that they **become MEMBERS OF THAT AGREEMENT**, and then **LIVE in Christ's ONE CHURCH of which he is the ONLY HEAD!** If that happens, there will only be **ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, and ONE CHURCH**, because that was what Jesus had when he started his rule as **LORD!**

One thing is certain. **We CANNOT REMAIN IN A CHURCH that does not follow the pattern of Christ's church that we see in the Bible.** This is because **JESUS has only ONE CHURCH and THAT CHURCH is the one we find in the Bible.** **HIS CHURCH TODAY must be the same as it was in the beginning of the NEW AGREEMENT and every church that CLAIMS to be HIS, but does not follow HIM, is a fake!** What will he do to them when he returns? Please **do NOT forget Matthew 7:21-23!** Do you want to be with them when he comes? Please **do NOT forget 2 John 1:9-11!**

²² These are sometimes called **creeds**.

We Can Be "CHRISTIANS ONLY"

The believers in the New Testament were what we would call **Christians ONLY!** If we desire to be like this today then all we need to do is follow **that SAME "Christianity" they practiced.** We find this Christianity in the New Testament, and if we take the teachings of the Bible as our guide then **we can become "CHRISTIANS ONLY" today!** By separating ourselves from the confusing religious system we live in, it is just as possible for us to be "Christians only" today as it was for the people in the first Century.

Jesus died to become **our LORD** and so **we MUST become his slaves,** in the way the word **SLAVE** was used in the time of the New Testament. We must remember that **we were BOUGHT** and, as slaves, we have no rights or freedoms. We leave that behind in the water of our baptism, where we died! We now live to **SERVE THE MASTER AS HE WISHES** and he wants us to be faithful and productive. We must be careful to grow and we cannot make changes to the Lord's commands! Unfortunately, this also means that **we CANNOT JOIN** in the celebration of the religious world as they rejoice that so many are coming to God, because what is actually happening is that people are not coming to God! **If they were coming to God there would only be ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, AND ONE CHURCH!** If the **PROOF of faith is in the actions,** then the actions of the religious world condemn it and no person who becomes involved in it can hope to be saved. The only way we can be saved is for us to leave behind the religious world, and **be joined to God's GRACE** through our faithful obedience from the heart to the teachings **we receive from HIM, trusting in HIS works to save us, and committing our lives to change and faithful service in his group of believers,** just as the original Christians did!

You can be a
CHRISTIAN
without
joining a
denomination!

If we do this, then we will not be Protestants, Catholics, "Born Again" Christians, Evangelicals, Mormons, or Jehovah's Witnesses. We will be exactly the same thing the original believers were. **We will be CHRISTIANS only AND Jesus will be LORD!** We will have peace of mind because no matter what happens, we have a **FATHER who loves us, a LORD who sympathizes with us, and a FAMILY that will encourage us, and challenge us, and take care of us when we need help!** This all happens because **God made a PLAN** a long, long time ago!

THIS is TRUE RELIGION!
THIS is the NEW AGREEMENT!
THIS is EXCITING!

Before proceeding, answer the following test questions for Lesson 11:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

51. **Cornelius** was
- A soldier.
 - A believer in God.
 - The first Gentile to become a Christian.
 - All of the above.
52. TRUE or FALSE: Peter interrupted his own speech in the house of Cornelius to say that Jesus the LORD of **only** the Jews.
- True.
 - False.
53. TRUE or FALSE: Romans 14 says that Jesus is LORD of the living and the dead.
- True.
 - False.
54. The Greek word **KURIOS** means
- Having a desire to know about something.
 - A title of respect.
 - Absolute owner.
 - All of the above.
55. TRUE or FALSE: A slave had rights and freedoms during the Bible times.
- True.
 - False.
56. The other Greek word that usually means a house owner is
- BAPTIZO.
 - DESPTOTES.
 - DIKAIOS.
 - EKCHEO.
57. TRUE or FALSE: In the time of the Bible, a person was either a **slave** or a **freeman**.
- True.
 - False.
58. Jesus became a LORD because
- God made him a LORD.
 - He bought us with his blood.
 - BOTH A & B.
 - None of the above.
59. TRUE or FALSE: Someday, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is **GOD!**
- True.
 - False.
60. Peters point in **Acts 2:36** was that
- God had made Jesus BOTH Lord and Christ.
 - Jesus was elected BOTH Lord and Christ.
 - Jesus paid to be BOTH Lord and Christ.
 - None of the above.
61. Which of the following is **NOT** a fact we learned about Jesus' Lordship?
- Jesus purchased us with his blood.
 - Jesus owns his followers.
 - Christians are slaves.
 - "Lord" is only a title for Jesus.
62. TRUE or FALSE: If Jesus is our Lord, then we **MUST obey whatever** he says to do.
- True.
 - False.
63. The approximate **number** of "Christian religions" today is
- Twenty.
 - One thousand.
 - One.
 - Twenty thousand plus.
64. The **passage** that gives us the list of seven points of UNITY is
- Matthew 28:18-20.
 - 2 Peter 1:3-11.
 - Matthew 7:21-23.
 - Ephesians 4:1-6.
65. TRUE or FALSE: Paul uses the word BODY to refer to THE CHURCH and so his statement that there is ONE BODY means there is only ONE CHURCH.
- True.
 - False.
66. TRUE or FALSE: Christ has 38,000 churches in the world.
- True.
 - False.
67. TRUE or FALSE: Christ has many faiths.
- True.
 - False.

68. The word **LOVE** found in the Bible means
- A warm emotional feeling for someone.
 - What you feel for a sweetheart.
 - Doing what is best for someone regardless of how you feel about them.
 - All of the above.
69. TRUE or FALSE: According to the Bible, the **proof** that we have for LOVE for God is our tears!
- True.
 - False.
70. Which of the following is **NOT** a reason for religious division today?
- People always study the Bible to prove their teachings are correct.
 - People often are ignorant of what the Bible says.
 - Teachings of men have been added over the years.
 - People interpret the Bible differently.
71. The point of Jesus in **Mark 7:6-7** is that getting involved in a religion **that has teaching of men**
- Is okay because as long as things are done in the name of the Lord it is acceptable to him.
 - Makes the person's faith useless.
 - Not the best situation, but it is okay.
 - Is okay because Jesus authorizes those leaders to make new teachings.
72. The **solution** to the problem of disunity is
- To make the people sacrifice animals to God.
 - For everyone to go back to the original teachings of Christ in the Bible.
 - Make all groups join together into a UNION!
 - There is no solution because too much has gone wrong.
73. TRUE or FALSE: A person can be a member of the **NEW AGREEMENT** and **stay in a church** that teaches wrong things.
- True.
 - False.
74. The reason why **we cannot be happy** with the 38,000 churches today is
- Jesus only has one church in the Bible.
 - These churches claim to follow, but they do not teach the same things as the original church!
 - The Apostles would never support the idea of many churches.
 - All of the above.
75. When Jesus comes back, **what will he do** to the churches who claim to be his, but do not teach the truth?
- Give them a reward for being so eager to give people the kind of Christianity they want.
 - Send them away because they divided his one church and confused people who were searching for truth.
 - Forgive them and let everyone go to heaven because he is a forgiving judge.
 - All of the above.

LESSON TWELVE

The LORDSHIP Of Jesus: Man Of The Bible (Part 2)

In our previous lesson, we introduced the **LORDSHIP** of Jesus and discovered that **the word LORD** actually means **an absolute owner**. The point of the lesson was that **the LORDSHIP of Christ and UNITY cannot be separated**. Unless we all accept Jesus as our absolute owner and master we will never have unity. On the other hand, unless we have unity how can we truly say that Christ is our absolute owner and master?

In this lesson, we will look at one final part of the **LORDSHIP** of Jesus and the **PLAN** of God.

In past lessons, we saw that God's **PLAN** for the church contains many things that benefit **Christians** who struggle to survive in a very difficult world. These are very important to us all, but there is much more to the **PLAN**. **God wants THE CHURCH to help him reach those who are NOT YET part of his family!**

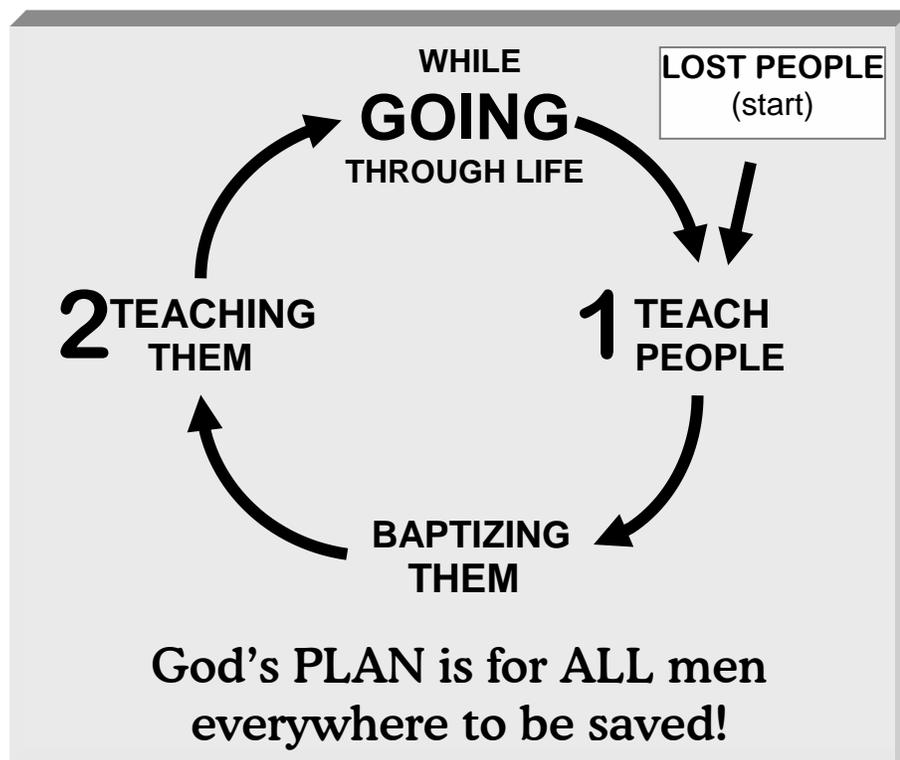
While it is true that Christianity gives a person **REST** from the problems of sin and separation, God is not calling his people to a life of leisure and relaxation. On the contrary, in many of his stories, Jesus spoke about **WORK** that the Father has prepared for his children to do. In fact, just before Jesus left the Earth, he called his disciples together one last time and gave them a **COMMISSION**²³ to carry on the work that he himself started—seeking and saving the lost!

The GREAT COMMISSION²⁴

These words are contained in several passages that are actually different accounts of the same event. Many Bible scholars often refer to this event as the giving of the “**Great Commission**”. The most complete account of this is found in **Matthew 28:18-20**. Please read this passage and record the details. Jesus was speaking to his followers and sending them out into the world to seek out and preach **GOOD NEWS** to lost people.

He told them that **while they were going around** they were to **PREACH/TEACH the Good News** to every creature so that people from all nations might become disciples (learners). Next, they were told to **BAPTIZE** those who **BELIEVED** so that they would be joined with Christ’s blood and be saved! He also told them to **continue teaching those who were baptized to DO ALL THE THINGS** that he commanded them to do.

It is interesting to note that in saying these things, Jesus set in motion a **CYCLE**. The following diagram graphically illustrates this cycle, which by his own words would continue until “**the end of the age**”.



- The starting point is when **lost people** are taught the **GOOD NEWS** by a Christian who is “**GOING**” as Jesus commanded!
- Notice that there are **2 teaching phases** in the cycle!
- **The FIRST** is when a lost person studies “**Elementary School**” topics, which lead them to **BE BAPTIZED** so that they can join with Christ’s blood for salvation!
- **The SECOND** is when they study “**High School**” topics for the purpose of fulfilling their commitment to God and becoming an instrument that God can use to take the message of hope to **more lost people** in the world!
- This will start **THEM GOING**, and the cycle begins again!

Another passage that contains an account of the Great Commission is **Mark 16:15-16**. Notice how this parallels what we found in Matthew almost exactly and by combining the two accounts (as we learned to do from our study of Malchus’ Ear) we get a much better understanding of the Great Commission.

A third account is found in **Luke 24:46-49**, but you will notice how this account concentrates more upon the details of **HOW** the words of the Commission fit into God’s **PLAN!**

²³ A **commission** is a set of orders given to someone to guide them in what they should do. A very common way this word is used today is in the military, where soldiers are commissioned to do certain things.

²⁴ The Great Commission is called by this name because many see it as the “**orders**” Jesus gave to his followers before he left the earth.

The Great Commission was the foundation for the work of the early church, just as it was the foundation of Jesus' work while he was alive. In the same way that the Father sent Jesus, so Jesus sent his disciples. Many religious groups today use this Great Commission as their reason for sending missionaries, priests, and pastors to teach lost people all over the world. However, many people make one mistake when they study about the Great Commission. They believe that these words were **intended for only a few Christians**—for the “professionals” who have special training and titles—or for those who have been **“CALLED to the ministry”**.

If we examine the history of early Christianity, we will find evidence that helps us see if the ideas people today have are correct. Consider carefully what we find in **Acts 8:1-4**. There was a great persecution and Christians living in Jerusalem had to leave but the apostles remained in the city. This passage says that the **“ordinary”** Christians went from place to place teaching **as they traveled**. It was these Christians, and **NOT** the apostles (the professionals), who first spread the Good News outside of Jerusalem!

Why did these people teach others about Jesus? Why should **ANYONE** teach people about Jesus? This topic was discussed by Paul in the second letter he wrote to the Christians living in the town of Corinth. He gave them several reasons why they should become teachers of the lost people.

Please read **2 Corinthians 5:10-11** and record the main points. **Verse 10** is a statement regarding the Judgment Day and it says that every person must stand before Jesus to be judged and that his judgment will be based upon the things each person did while they were alive. Then **verse 11** makes a very important point **about** this Judgment. It says that since Christians **KNOW** what God will do to people who do not obey him, then **THEY must try to persuade them to change. If those people do not become members of the NEW AGREEMENT, they will spend eternity in HELL** and no Christian should want that for anyone. Therefore, Paul shows that members of the **NEW AGREEMENT** must try to convince people to become Christians.

A second reason is given in **2 Corinthians 5:14-17**. Please read this passage and record the main points. Paul begins by saying that the **“love that Christ had for us”** should motivate us no longer to be selfish because Jesus did not die only for us, but for everyone and God is not only concerned with **OUR** salvation, but with the salvation of the whole world! Therefore, we must change the way we think about people and be concerned about them just as God and Christ are concerned about them. Members of the **NEW AGREEMENT KNOW HOW GREAT IT FEELS TO BE FREE** from the burden of sin and they **KNOW** that God **wants every person living on this earth to experience this freedom!** Every member of the **NEW AGREEMENT** is supposed to be **A NEW CREATURE** with a new way of thinking! Because of this, members of the **NEW AGREEMENT** must try to convince people to change.

A third reason is found in **2 Corinthians 5:18-21**. Please read this passage and record the main points. It begins with a summary point from the previous section. Paul says, “All **this** is from God.” By “this”, he is speaking about the reality of the Judgment Day, the love that Christ had for us, and our changed way of thinking. He then speaks about how **God did TWO things** for each member of the **NEW AGREEMENT**; **1)** God made peace between us and himself, through the favor he did for us, and **2)** God gave to us the work of bringing other people into peace with him, through the Great Commission Jesus left for all disciples! In most Bibles, this phrase, “work of bringing people into peace with him”, is translated, **“ministry of reconciliation”**.

Do YOU Want To Change The World?

You will often hear people refer to the work of the church as **“the ministry”** and preachers, pastors, and priests often speak of how they were **“CALLED to the ministry”**. If you listen to them talk, you will think that only certain people are **CALLED** to the ministry, however, Paul speaks very clear in this passage and gives us a test to use to see exactly **WHO** is called to this ministry! He says that God reconciled us to himself **AND** God gave us the ministry of reconciliation! Notice the word **“AND”** in the passage. This means that these two points are **JOINED** together and cannot be separated! What this means is simple. **IF you have been reconciled to God THEN you have also been given the ministry!** Therefore, **every member of the NEW AGREEMENT is CALLED to the ministry!** They are

Members of the NEW AGREEMENT

- **KNOW** what it means to be **LOST!**
- **KNOW** what it means to be **SAVED!**
- **HAVE BEEN GIVEN** the **“Great Commission”** by God!

called **BY GOD** and he makes his appeal to the world **through his ministers** – through his people! Paul closes with the point that members of the **NEW AGREEMENT** are **AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST!**

That has always been God's **PLAN!** Every Christian is a "new creature" and **must have a different attitude about lost people.** Paul says that all of this happens **as a result of a CONVICTION down deep in the heart** and that the conviction causes one to think and act in a new way! The only proof that a change of conviction has happened is **IF there is action.** Only when **ALL** of God's people become **ACTIVE** in this "Great Commission" will the lost people of the world be won for Christ!

This is the final "term" in our study of the **NEW AGREEMENT.** Each member must be willing to become an instrument God can use to bring others into salvation! As we learned from **Romans 6:11-17**, each person must use the parts of their body as instruments of **GOD'S JUSTICE**—to live **AS SLAVES OF GOD!** In this lesson, we now add that we **must live as his AMBASSADORS, representing HIS WILL FAITHFULLY TO THE END!**

Does the fact that the religious world is so divided make you sad? Are you frustrated because you yourself were a victim of the confusion until you began studying the Bible? Do you want to do something about it? **You CAN if you want to! YOU can change the world as one of God's children, through the example of your life and through teaching!** After all, look at what one person (Jesus, who was just like us in every way) was able to do!

If you believe in Jesus, are willing to make the commitment to change, are willing to admit publicly that you will follow him, and if you are willing to be immersed in water to be joined with **HIS BLOOD**, which is the only thing that can take away your sins, and if you are willing to remain faithful to your promise of loyalty until the day you die, **THEN WHY NOT JOIN THE NEW AGREEMENT TODAY?** Start your journey to completeness with Jesus as your model and Lord! Join with us in the Lord's church and together we will spend our lives growing and working for God to help others escape the confusion of religion and have the chance to be where you are right now – **having an understanding of God's PLAN, and what he expects of those who accept the terms of his agreement!**

God loves you and Jesus wants you to come to him! **HE DOES** have rest for your soul, and **HE DOES** stand at the door and knocks and **HE WILL** come in and eat with you! **You KNOW everything you need to know!**

However, **YOU** must decide!

You have to open the door and let him in!

***IF you are willing to accept
the terms of GOD'S AGREEMENT,
THEN you can EXCHANGE your sin
for the blood of HIS SON!***

Why not join with Jesus TODAY?

Please answer the following test questions for Lesson 12:

Each of the following questions has several possible answers. Read each question and review the lesson material carefully. Choose the answer that best fits the question and fill in the CIRCLE for that answer on the answer sheet.

76. The **GREAT COMMISSION** is the combination of
- The final statements of Jesus that are recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
 - All the teachings in the Old and New Testaments.
 - The books of 1 and 2 Timothy.
 - Faith and works.
77. TRUE or FALSE: Being a Christian means that we have **rest from work**.
- True.
 - False.
78. TRUE or FALSE: The **most complete account** of the Great Commission is in Matthew 28:18-20.
- True.
 - False.
79. The **first phase** of teaching mentioned in the Great Commission is
- "Elementary School".
 - People learning the 10 Commandments.
 - "High School".
 - All of the above.
80. TRUE or FALSE: The **GOOD NEWS** is the details of God's PLAN we have been studying in our course.
- True.
 - False.
81. The **second phase** of teaching mentioned in the Great Commission is
- "Elementary School".
 - People learning the 10 Commandments.
 - "High School".
 - All of the above.
82. TRUE or FALSE: The Great Commission was **only for the original apostles** and **we today are not included**.
- True.
 - False.
83. The Great Commission passage that speaks of people being baptized **in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit** is
- Matthew 28:18-20.
 - Mark 16:15-16.
 - Luke 24:46-49.
 - None of the above.
84. TRUE or FALSE: According to God's PLAN, **ONLY the men** are supposed to teach lost people about Jesus.
- True.
 - False.
85. The Great Commission passage that speaks of people **believing and being baptized** is
- Matthew 28:18-20.
 - Mark 16:15-16.
 - Luke 24:46-49.
 - None of the above.
86. The Great Commission passage that speaks of people **being witness of Christ beginning from Jerusalem** is
- Matthew 28:18-20.
 - Mark 16:15-16.
 - Luke 24:46-49.
 - None of the above.
87. TRUE or FALSE: The Great Commission was the **foundation for the work of the early church**.
- True.
 - False.
88. In **Acts 8:1-4**, the **ones who taught people** about Christ outside of the city of Jerusalem were
- The apostles.
 - Jewish priests.
 - Ordinary Christians.
 - The Pharisees
89. According to the verses we studied in **2 Corinthians**, the **reason** Christians are supposed to teach lost people about the Good News is
- Every Christian knows what it means to be lost.
 - Every Christian knows what it means to be saved.
 - Every Christian has been called by God to be a minister.
 - All of the above.
90. TRUE or FALSE: The good example **of just one person** can change the world!
- True.
 - False.

91. TRUE or FALSE: **2 Corinthians 5:14** says that **our love for Christ** controls us.
- True.
 - False.
92. TRUE or FALSE: **Every Christian** is a “new creature” and must change the way they think about lost people.
- True.
 - False.
93. The **2 Corinthians 5** passage that speaks of Christians being **ambassadors for Christ** is
- 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.
 - None of the above.
94. **Everyone** who has been reconciled to God has been given the ministry of reconciliation.
- True.
 - False.
95. The **2 Corinthians 5** passage that speaks of Christians being **new creations** is
- 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.
 - None of the above.
96. The **2 Corinthians 5** passage that speaks of people **standing before Christ in judgment** is
- 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.
 - None of the above.
97. The **2 Corinthians 5** passage that speaks of Christians being **controlled by Christ’s love for us** is
- 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:14-17.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:18-21.
 - None of the above.
98. TRUE or FALSE: If a Christian **is afraid of being rejected**, he or she does not have to teach people the GOOD NEWS.
- True.
 - False.
99. TRUE or FALSE: The passage that says that it was the **ordinary Christians who started spreading the GOOD NEWS outside of Jerusalem** is **Acts 4:1-8**.
- True.
 - False.
100. TRUE or FALSE: If a person wants to be part of the **NEW AGREEMENT**, they **must be willing** to become a teacher of lost people.
- True.
 - False.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have completed the material for our course **Jesus: Lord Of Our Lives!** After you send us your answer sheet, we will grade it and return it to you. We hope that you have enjoyed this series of courses and they have helped you get a clearer and better understanding of the Bible. We enjoyed having you as a student and if you have any questions, or need assistance in any way, please contact us here at the **Bible Study Center**.

Please do not forget that we offer many other courses here at the Center. Please consider enrolling next session so that you can continue your journey through the Bible.