

New Testament Church

First Quarter 2012
Pepper Road church of Christ

These lessons are intended to examine the New Testament's teaching on the church. We will study both the one universal church built by Jesus (Matthew 16:18), and the work, worship, and organization of the local churches formed in different cities (e.g. Revelation 1:11).

Contents

Week One: The Church in Prophecy	3
Weeks Two and Three: The Kingdom and the Church; the Universal Church and Local Churches	6
Week Four: Admission to the Kingdom; “What Must I Do to Be Saved?”	9
Week Five: Importance of the Local Church Relationship	11
Weeks Six through Eight: Need for and Establishment of Bible Authority (Knowing and Doing God’s Will).....	14
Week Nine: The Collective Works of a Local Church.....	20
Weeks Ten and Eleven: The Worship of a Local Church	24
Weeks Twelve and Thirteen: The Organization of Local Churches	27

Weeks 1-5

January

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

Titus 2:11-14

Week One: The Church in Prophecy

1. Defining church.
 - a. Translated from the Greek *ekklesia*, the word means an assembly or gathering of people.
 - b. In the New Testament it is used in two different senses.
 - 1) It can refer to all the saved in all the world. This is sometimes called the universal church.
 - a) *Church* is not used in Titus 2:11-14, but these verses describe a special, purified people saved by the grace of God. This is what we mean by the universal church.
 - 2) The word *church* is also used of a group of Christians in a specific geographic area that meet and work together as a body. See Rev. 2, 3.
 - c. List at least two other ways the English word church is used today.
2. While the word church does not appear in the Old Testament, the idea of a special, redeemed, and purified people is frequently found there.
 - a. The Israelites were a special people of God prior to the coming of Christ (Eph. 2:11-18).
 - b. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were a kingdom composed of the physical descendants of _____ and lived in the land of _____.
 - 1) Who were the first three kings of Israel?
 - c. However, the prophets pointed to a time when the kingdom would not be limited to fleshly Israelites or the land of Canaan.
 - d. This lesson looks at some prophecies of this different kind of kingdom and God's plan to create a special people from every nation on earth.
 - 1) The church as revealed in the New Testament is the culmination of an eternal plan. Eph. 3:8-11
 - 2) These prophecies should help us to better understand what God wants us to be as His "special people, zealous for good works."
3. Research: The following questions deal with Messianic prophecies. What does *Messiah* mean?
4. Gen. 12:1-7; 22:15-18
 - a. Abraham (Abram) was promised that God would make of him a great _____ and give his descendants the _____ of Canaan.
 - b. The Lord also promised that in Abraham's _____ all the _____ of the earth would be blessed.
 - c. Galatians ____:16 identifies the promised Seed of Abraham as Christ.
 - d. Who are the heirs according to the promise? Gal. 3:26-29

5. Psalm 110:1-4
 - a. The promised Messiah/Lord would rule in the midst of His _____.
 - b. Psa. 110:3 describes the Lord's people as _____ in the day of His power.

6. Isa. 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-5; Heb. 12:22-24
 - a. The events of Isa. 2 (Micah 4) were to take place in the _____ days.
 - b. Who would flow (stream) to the mountain of the Lord's house?
 - c. Those that go up to the Lord's house are to walk in what paths?
 - d. They shall beat their _____ into _____, and their spears into _____. What do you think this means? Why?
 - e. What did sitting under one's vine and fig tree signify? Micah 4:4; cf. 1 Kings 4:20-25.

7. How is the ruler of the kingdom described in Isa. 9:6, 7?

8. Isa. 11:1-10.
 - a. The Messiah would spring from the stem of _____.
 - b. What does Isa. 11:6-9 tell us about the character God expects us to have?
 - c. Note the usage made of this prophecy in Rom. 15:10. The prophecy was fulfilled in the first century when the Gentiles were drawn to Jesus.

9. Jer. 31:31-34
 - a. Where in the New Testament do you find this quoted?
 - b. What is a covenant?
 - c. Where did God intend to write His law?
 - d. What would happen to the sins of the people under this new covenant?

10. Ezekiel 37:24-28
 - a. David died ca. 970 B.C. When did Ezekiel prophesy?
 - b. Those who submitted to David as King would walk in the Lord's _____ and observe His _____.
 - c. What did the Lord intend to set in their midst?

11. Zechariah 9:9, 10
 - a. Find two New Testament quotations of Zech. 9:9.
 - b. The King's dominion would extend from _____ to _____.

12. Malachi 1:6-14; 2:13-16; 3:8
- a. What were the Israelites seeking to offer God in ch. 1?
 - b. The Lord hates _____. 2:16
 - c. How had they robbed God?

Weeks Two and Three: The Kingdom and the Church; the Universal Church and Local Churches

1. Defining the word kingdom.
 - a. Commenting on the Greek word *basileia*, Vine says it “is primarily an abstract noun, denoting ‘sovereignty, royal power, dominion,’ ...; then, by metonymy, a concrete noun, denoting the territory or people over whom a king rules....” *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
 - b. “Kingship...the eternal kingship of God...the realm in which God’s will is fulfilled....” *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*

2. Jesus promised to build His _____ and give Peter the keys of the _____ of heaven. Matt. 16:18, 19

3. Is the church the same as the kingdom?
 - a. Because kingdom emphasizes the sovereign rule of God and/or His Son, it can be used without any direct reference to the church, i.e. a group of people.
 - 1) Kingdom of heaven in Matt. 7:21 probably refers to heaven itself.
 - 2) In Matt. 6:33 Jesus taught His disciples to put God first, though the church was not yet in existence.
 - b. But because the church is composed of those who have chosen to submit to Christ as King, the term kingdom is sometimes applied to the church. Matt. 16:18, 19; Col. 1:13, 14; Heb. 12:18-29

4. Premillennialism, a popular doctrine today, denies that the terms church and kingdom can be used of the same people. Premillennialists do not believe that the kingdom of Christ will be established until Jesus returns to reign for 1,000 years on the earth.
 - a. Daniel prophesied that the Lord would “set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.” Read Daniel 2 and tell when that kingdom was to be set up.
 - b. According to Gal. 4:4, when was Jesus born?
 - c. What was the message of both John the Baptist and Jesus regarding the kingdom? Matt. 3:1, 2; 4:17
 - d. How many of those to whom Jesus spoke in Mark 9:1 are now dead? What does this tell us about the establishment of the kingdom?
 - e. Read Acts 2:30-36. What had God sworn with an oath that He would do for David? Peter connected this promise to the _____ of the Christ.

- f. The Colossians were conveyed (translated; transferred) into the _____ of the Son.
Col. 1:13
 - g. Compare Dan. 2:44 and Heb. 12:28. Note that Heb. 12:28 speaks to ones who are also part of the _____ of the firstborn. Heb. 12:22-24
5. The one universal church.
- a. Several passages, including Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:22-27, speak of the church in the singular. Jesus has only one church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven. Heb. 12:22, 23
 - b. How does one get into this one church?
 - 1) Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to all who _____ Him. Heb. 5:8, 9
 - 2) This one church is the body of Christ and we are _____ into Christ. Gal. 3:26-29; Rom. 6:3; cf. Eph. 5:25, 26
 - 3) Those that obey the gospel and are baptized into Christ for the remission of sins are seen by God as part of a special group of people called His church. In this life, we will never know most of our fellow-members of this one church, but God knows the names of every member and has them registered in heaven.
6. The many local churches.
- a. Rev. 1:4, 11, 20 speak of the _____ of Asia.
 - b. Rom. 16:_____ mentions churches of Christ in the plural.
 - c. These multiple churches were not different denominations.
 - 1) The same things were taught in every church. 1 Cor. 4:17
 - 2) Though there were contentions among the Christians at Corinth, Paul commanded them to _____ the same thing. 1 Cor. 1:10-13
 - 3) As churches were established in different cities they were guided by a common faith. Jude 3; Eph. 4:4-6
 - 4) The same organization was established in each church. Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5
 - d. The nature of a nondenominational local church can be seen in Acts 11:19-26. The church at Antioch resulted from the Lord and His word being preached (Acts 11:19, 20). The preaching of the Lord resulted in a group of people who...
 - 1) _____ and _____ to the Lord. 11:21
 - 2) Were urged to _____ with the Lord. 11:21
 - 3) Were _____ to the Lord. 11:24

- e. A local church that is faithful to the New Testament is made up of disciples of Jesus who have made a commitment to the Lord and His truth.
 - f. Thought questions. Does being baptized for the remission of sins make one a part of a local church? Could a person be a member of the universal church and not a member of a local church? Can one be a member of a local church and not in the Lord's one universal church?
7. The universal church is composed of Christians everywhere, but is not a collection of all the churches.
- a. Each local church should have its own oversight (Acts 14:23), with elders accountable to the Chief Shepherd and not other churches or any other organization of men. 1 Pet. 5:1-4
 - b. The New Testament never speaks of a multi-church organization or any other organization larger than the local church.

Week Four: Admission to the Kingdom; “What Must I Do to Be Saved?”

1. The universal church is made up of those who are registered in heaven (Heb. 12:23). This lesson will look at how one becomes registered in heaven, or to put it another way, how can one be saved?
2. The false doctrine known as Calvinism teaches that God must directly operate on a sinner’s heart to bring him to faith and salvation. This is known as *irresistible grace* or the *direct operation of the Holy Spirit*.
 - a. Why was Paul unashamed of the gospel and committed to preaching it at Rome and everywhere he could? Rom. 1:15-17
 - b. The recipients of 1 Peter had purified their souls by doing what? 1 Pet. 1:22-25
 - c. How were they born again? 1 Pet. 1:22-25
 - d. Why did John record the miracles found in his account of the life of Jesus? John 20:30, 31
 - e. Faith comes by _____, and hearing by the _____ of God. Rom. 10:17
 - f. From whom did the following learn what they had to do to be saved?
 - 1) The Ethiopian eunuch? Acts 8:26-40
 - 2) Saul of Tarsus? Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-16
 - 3) Cornelius? Acts 10:1—11:18
 - g. The sword of the Spirit is the _____ of _____. Eph. 6:17
 - h. How can our friends and family members learn how to be saved?
3. Faith is a requirement of the gospel.
 - a. According to John 3:16, what must we do to have everlasting life?
 - b. But without _____, it is impossible to please God. Heb. 11:6
 - c. What is faith?
4. But we are not saved by faith alone, nor are we saved at the moment of believing.
 - a. Where do we find, “a man is justified by works, and not by faith only”?
 - b. He who believes and is _____ will be saved. Mark 16:16
 - c. God wants all to come to _____ so that they will not perish. 2 Pet. 3:9
 - d. Because a day of judgment approaches, God commands all to _____. Acts 17:30, 31
 - e. What are we to do with our mouths? Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 Tim. 6:12, 13
 - f. Thought question: Why is it sometimes hard to confess Christ? See Matt. 10:28-33.

5. Though denied by many, baptism is essential to our salvation.
 - a. Baptism is linked to the _____ of sins in Acts 2:38.
 - b. After three days of prayer and fasting, Saul was told to do what? Acts 22:16
 - c. The Romans had been baptized into _____ and His _____. Rom. 6:3, 4
 - d. Those who are baptized into Christ have _____ Christ. Gal. 3:26, 27
 - e. According to 1 Pet. 3:21, what saves us?
 - f. Read Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:4; and Col. 2:12. Was New Testament baptism sprinkling, pouring, or immersion?

6. Though God requires us to do the things listed in numbers four and five, we must appreciate that salvation is still undeserved.
 - a. Read Eph. 2:8-10. How can salvation not be by works if God requires us to repent and be baptized?
 - b. Redemption is in _____. Rom. 3:21-26
 - c. Read Rom. 5:6-11. Christ died for the _____ (5:6) while they were still _____ (5:8), and the _____ of God (5:10).
 - d. Even if we have done everything the Master commanded, we should still see ourselves as _____. Luke 17:10

7. Repentance.
 - a. Define repentance.
 - b. How much commitment does Jesus require of His disciples? Luke 9:23; 14:25-33
 - c. After being buried in baptism, we are to walk in _____ of life. Rom. 6:4

8. More on faith.
 - a. While salvation is not by faith alone or at the moment of belief, believing is not a one-time act like baptism.
 - b. As Rom. 4:12 puts it, we are to “walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had....” We must live everyday by faith in God and His word.
 - c. Faith is the _____ of things hoped for, the _____ of things not seen. Heb. 11:1
 - d. We are to live each day with the assurance that God both is and is the rewarder of those who _____ Him. Heb. 11:6

Week Five: Importance of the Local Church Relationship

1. Keep in mind that baptism does not automatically make one a member of a local church.
 - a. Baptism does make one a member of the church of the firstborn registered in heaven (Heb. 12:23), i.e. the universal church, the body of the saved. Eph. 5:25-27
 - b. In this lesson we want to establish that after we have been baptized into Christ, our Lord expects us to be joined together with other saved individuals and work together in a local church relationship.
 - 1) Some have the idea that it is okay to have local churches, but they are not a necessary part of one's relationship to God.
 - 2) We will see that while everyone bears an individual responsibility to follow the Lord, it is God's will we fulfill some of our responsibilities to him in the collective arrangement called the church.
 - c. We will also explore some of the attitudes, dispositions, responsibilities, etc. that come with being a member of a local church.
2. Find at least three things in Acts 2:41-47 showing that the earliest disciples met together and worked together as a body.
3. The apostles were to go and make _____ of all the nations (Matt. 28:19). As they fulfilled the Great Commission, look at the results...
 - a. The scattering of the disciples from Jerusalem resulted in more _____ in Judea. Acts 8:1-4; Gal. 1:22-24
 - b. When the disciples reached Antioch and preached the word of the Lord, a church soon began to assemble. Acts 11:19-26
 - c. As Paul and Barnabas went through southern Galatia in Acts 13, 14 they made many disciples and these disciples formed churches. Acts 14:21-23
 - d. What did Paul attempt to do when he returned to Jerusalem in Acts 9:26?
 - e. The Hebrew saints were urged not to forsake what? Heb. 10:24, 25
4. What were these local churches called?
 - a. Acts 5:11
 - b. Acts 8:1, 3
 - c. Acts 13:1
 - d. Acts 20:28
 - e. Rom. 16:1, 4, 16

- f. 1 Cor. 1:2
 - g. Gal. 1:2, 22
 - h. 1 Thes. 1:1
 - i. Rev. 2:1, 8
 - j. In the New Testament, local churches were described by their geographic location, demographic makeup and/or their relationship to the God and His Son Jesus Christ.
5. List at least four names not found in the New Testament used for churches today. Why do the various denominations have these different names? (E.g. why is the Presbyterian Church called Presbyterian and not one of the other names common today?)
6. Later we will examine the work and worship God intends for these local churches, but this lesson focuses on being able to work together and edify one another in the local church relationship.
- a. How does one achieve greatness in Christ's kingdom? Matt. 20:20-28
 - b. What lesson did Jesus teach His apostles in John 13:1-17? What should we learn from this?
 - c. Read Rom. 12:9-21.
 - 1) We must _____ one another. 12:9, 10
 - 2) What is hospitality? Rom. 12:13
 - 3) What should we do if another Christian hurts us?
 - d. Using Eph. 4:1-6 as the basis for your answer, what does it take for a church to be properly united?
 - e. What attitudes from Phil. 2:1-11 should characterize our dealings with other Christians?
7. Observations on Christian-to-Christian relationships from 1 Peter.
- a. Have _____ love for one another. 1:22
 - b. _____ the brotherhood. 2:17
 - c. List six things found in 3:8, 9 that should describe our relationship with fellow-saints.
 - d. Have fervent _____ and be _____. 4:8, 9
8. Thought questions.
- a. Are we to have the same degree of friendship with every member of the local church? Can we have some with whom we share a closer relationship?
 - b. Did Jesus have a special relationship with some of His disciples/apostles? Did Jesus exclude anyone from His association or friendship?
 - c. Churches are sometimes troubled by cliques (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10, 11). How can we avoid destructive cliques?

Weeks 6-9 February

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

Matthew 7:21-23

Weeks Six through Eight: Need for and Establishment of Bible Authority (Knowing and Doing God's Will)

1. Overview of this lesson.
 - a. In *Radical Restoration* F. LaGard Smith quotes Jesus as saying, "Not Rules, but righteousness." P. 22
 - 1) Though Smith used quotation marks, is that an actual direct quote from Jesus?
 - 2) If there are no rules, how will we define righteousness? How can we know when we are doing the right things?
 - b. Some of the most critical questions we face as a local church and as individual Christians deal with the importance of **doing** God's will.
 - 1) Many contend that an insistence upon strict obedience to the teachings of the Bible is legalism and contrary to the principles of the New Testament.
 - 2) In this lesson we will see that, though He is a God of grace, the Lord still expects us to obey Him strictly and carefully.
 - 3) We will also look at how we can know what the Lord expects of us.
2. According to Matt. 7:21-23, who will enter the kingdom of heaven?
3. Is man capable of knowing God's will by feelings or guesses? Isa. 55:8, 9
4. "No one knows the things of God except the _____ of _____." 1 Cor. 2:11
 - a. Where did the words Paul wrote and spoke come from? 1 Cor. 2:12, 13, 16
5. How was a man of God to be equipped for every good work? 2 Tim. 3:16, 17
- Summary of #2-5.
 - a. It is important that we come to know God's will through the study of the Bible and knowing His will we must obey it.
 - b. In the next two sections of questions, we consider a couple of related questions. Is the Bible intended to be a loose or strict guide? Are we making the same mistakes as the Pharisees if we try to follow the Bible too closely?
6. Who is a wise man? Matt. 7:24-29
7. What was the sin of the Pharisees in Matt. 15:6-9?
8. In Matt. 23:1-4 the Pharisees were guilty of teaching the Law while failing to _____ it.
9. Read Matt. 23:23, 24 carefully. Did Jesus rebuke the Pharisees for insisting on tithing the herbs of the garden? Did He encourage them to begin "eating the gnats?"

10. Jesus is author of eternal salvation to whom? Heb. 5:8, 9
 11. According to John 14:15 and 1 John 5:3, how is love for God and Christ demonstrated?
 12. Why was God not pleased with Cain (before he killed Abel)? Gen. 4
 13. What two priests died because of an unauthorized offering of incense? Lev. 10
 - a. How was God to be glorified? 10:3
 14. Why was Uzza killed in 2 Samuel 6 / 1 Chron. 13?
 - a. Look at the emotion and sincerity of that occasion. 1 Chron. 13:8
 - b. David had failed to consult God about the proper _____. 1 Chron. 15:13-15
 15. According to Gal. 1:6-9, who has the right to change the gospel?
 16. What warning is sounded in Rev. 22:18, 19?
- Summary of #6-16.
- a. While we are saved by grace, God demands obedience. The Lord has never tolerated changes to His word.
 - b. In the next section, we will look at how God communicates His will to mankind.
- Discussions of how God's will is revealed are often referred to as issues of Bible authority. Because *authority* can have different meanings, we need to define what we mean in this lesson.
- a. The basic meaning of authority is the power or right to do something. To have Bible authority for an action means it has God's approval.
 - b. Though the word authority primarily refers to things permitted but not required, when we talk about Bible authority we also include things required by Scripture.
 - c. In fact, rather than use the term Bible authority, perhaps we should speak of determining "God's will." Matt. 7:21
- How do we determine what is required or permitted?
- a. Among churches of Christ, the answer has usually been command, example, and necessary inference.
 - b. In recent years, this means of establishing Bible authority (knowing God's will) has come under attack from many as a contrived tradition that distorts the meaning of Scripture.
 - c. In the next few questions we will see that it may sound man-made or contrived, but it is actually a valid concept used in the Bible and in everyday language.

- Imagine you have just been hired for a new job and are told the following your first day.
 - ✓ Load those boxes in that truck.
 - ✓ All our drivers are allowed 30 minutes for lunch.
 - ✓ We want to make it clear that all our drivers are expected to abide by the law.
 - ✓ For the first week we want you to ride with Fred. He's been doing this for years and will show you the route and how we do things.
17. Think about what has just happened, what you have learned about the employer's expectations for you, and how you learned them.
- a. How do you know you need to start loading the truck?
 - b. Are you allowed to drive over the speed limit?
 - c. Are you allowed to stop and get a sandwich? A burrito? Required to do either?
 - d. Why are you asked to ride with Fred?
18. Commands.
- a. Some consider any emphasis on commands to be legalism, Pharasaical, and missing the point.
 - b. Does Jesus issue commands or does He simply tell us to be guided by the principle of love? See Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; 1 Cor. 14:37; 1 John 2:3-5.
 - c. Read Col. 3:9. What is God's will for us? How do we know that He does not want us to be dishonest?
 - d. Sometimes commands are implied in conditional statements or declarations. From Mark 16:16, what do we know to be God's will for us?
19. Examples.
- a. We learn by example in everyday life and the same is expected in the Scripture.
 - b. 1 Jn. ____:3-6 links the example of Jesus to keeping God's commandments.
 - c. _____ was an example to others. 1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 4:9; 2 Th. 3:7-9
 - d. The apostles taught the churches to observe all the commandments (Matt. 28:18-20), so the example of these churches helps us understand the will of God. 1 Cor. 4:16, 17
20. Necessary inference/implication (inescapable conclusion).
- a. Parent: "If this room is not clean by Friday, no one is going to the football game." Though never told he "had to clean" the room, the son knows the will of the parent.
 - b. How did Jesus arrive at the conclusion that what God had joined together was not to be separated? Matt. 19:3-6
 - c. How did God convey to Peter that Gentiles were not to be called common or unclean? Acts 10:28
 - d. Can we come to an inescapable conclusion about infants as proper subjects of baptism by reading Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12; 18:8; Rom. 6:3, 4?

- Once we realize God reveals His will through commands, examples, and necessary inferences, another question arises. How are we to react to God's silence?
 - ✓ We understand that if commanded to do something, we must do it, and if forbidden to do something, we must abstain, but if God does not prohibit a thing, is it permitted?
 - ✓ Is silence permission or prohibition?

- 21. Whose will are we commanded to obey? Matt. 7:21
- 22. Our wishes are not always the same as God's. Isa. ____:8, 9
- 23. If we are given complete instructions, do we need to be told all the things we are not to do?
 - a. Is a building contractor allowed to add things to the house plans? Is he allowed to add additional rooms if the plans don't specifically forbid him to do so?
 - b. Has God given us complete instruction?
 - 1) Jesus promised the apostles that _____ truth would be revealed. John 16:13
 - 2) The mind or desire of God has been fully revealed. 2 Pet. 1:3; 2 _____ 3:16, 17
- 24. How did Jesus view the silence of the Scriptures? Cf. Gen. 1:26-31 and 2:21-24 with Matt. 19:3-6. Did Gen. 1, 2 specifically forbid divorce?
- 25. Jesus, from the tribe of Judah, could not be priest under the Law because Moses said _____ concerning priests from that tribe. Heb. 7:11-14
- 26. If God has revealed all truth and we use His silence as our permission to do something, are we not adding to God's word? Deut. 4:1, 2; 5:32; 12:32; 2 John 9; Rev. 22:18, 19
 - a. What specific command did Nadab and Abihu break? Lev. 10:1-3
 - b. Was Uzzah specifically forbidden to put the ark on a cart? 2 Sam. 6; 1 Chron. 15:12-15

- Summary of #21-26.
 - a. God has not provided us with an exhaustive list of all that is prohibited, but by command, example, and implication has shown us what He wants.
 - b. Let us search the Scriptures for what God wants and know that if He had wanted anything different He would have told us.

- Does respect for silence of the Scriptures mean that we must have specific authorization for everything we do? Some, wishing to justify instrumental music in worship, churches building gyms, etc., argue that by the principles in #21-26 we cannot have song books, a building, etc. and be consistent. We must understand 2 fundamental principles:
 - a. Some commands are specific, while others are general.
 - b. There's a difference between an aid to doing God's will and a change to doing something else.

GENERAL and SPECIFIC AUTHORITY; AIDS and ALTERATIONS

Imagine being given \$75 and the following list:

Grits	Cereal (3 boxes)
Heinz [®] Ketchup	Apples (1 doz.)
Clorox [®] Lemon Scented Bleach (1 gal.)	Boneless Chicken Breasts
Pillsbury [®] Hungry Jack Biscuits (10)	Le Sueur [®] English Peas (2 cans)
Instant Banana Pudding (6 serving box)	Skim Milk (1 gal.)

27. Which of the actions below follow the instructions given for the shopping list? Be able to explain your answers.
- Purchased Martha White[®] “instant” grits?
 - Purchased Jim Dandy[®] “quick” grits?
 - Substituted chicken thighs since they were on sale?
 - Used a calculator to keep up with your total?
 - Bought Rocky Road ice cream?
 - Purchased 6 Rome apples and 6 Red Delicious apples?
 - Purchased 12 yellow apples and 1 watermelon?
 - Purchased 6 apples and 6 oranges (adds up to 12 pieces of fruit)?
 - Purchased 3 boxes of Cap’n Crunch[®] cereal?
 - Bought Heinz 57[®] sauce?
 - Carried your groceries around the store in a plastic basket?
 - Pushed a shopping cart through the store?
 - Carried the groceries home in plastic bags?
 - Carried the groceries home in paper bags?
28. If we understand how general and specific commands are used in everyday life, we should be able to see how they are used in Scripture.
- Can we see that Heinz[®] Ketchup is specific as to product and brand, while the size is optional (within the \$75 constraints)?
 - Some brands were specified and others were left in the generic category. Even the specific instructions left certain choices to our discretion.
29. The same goes for aids and alterations.
- In everyday life we recognize that an orange changes the list, while a shopping cart only expedites the purchase and is an expedient or aid.
 - One might keep up with his money spent in his head or use the calculator. Both aid the process of carrying out the expressed will of the grocery list without altering it.

30. Do the following aid or alter the command to sing? Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - a. Song books?
 - b. A song leader?
 - c. A piano?
31. We have been given the will of our Lord (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34). Are the following faithful to His instructions?
 - a. A single loaf of unleavened bread? Six loaves of unleavened bread? Individual wafers of unleavened bread?
 - b. Taking the Lord's Supper before the sermon? Having the Lord's Supper after the sermon?

Week Nine: The Collective Works of a Local Church

1. What is a local church?
 - a. It is made up of people who have first committed themselves to the Lord. Acts 11:19-25
 - b. After having become disciples of the Lord, they then form a united group that assembles together and works together. Acts 11:26 (See the lessons for weeks 2, 3, and 5).
 - c. In this lesson we will examine the works the Lord intended to be done by a local church. As we will see, the collective works of a church (i.e. responsibilities of the church as a body) are not the same as the things individual disciples do.

2. When we begin to ask what works a local church should do, it is imperative we remember the importance of Bible authority (i.e. knowing God's will) for all we do. _____ 7:21; Col. 3:17
 - a. While we do not need specific authorization for everything we do as a church, we must have a command, example, or necessary inference providing either general or specific authority for what we do.
 - b. Traditions, majorities, mainstream views, "success," previous experiences, etc. do not constitute divine authority.

3. Because the local church is made up of Christians, some fail to distinguish between obligations God has given us as individuals and those He has assigned us as a local church.
 - a. Read 1 Tim. 5:8-16.
 - 1) Why was the church not to be burdened with the care of certain widows? 1 Tim. 5:16
 - 2) Were there some widows the church was to be responsible for?
 - b. The distinction can easily be seen in fundraising.
 - 1) How does the church raise the funds necessary for its collective functions? 1 Cor. 16:1, 2
 - 2) How are individuals to gather the funds they need? Eph. 4:28; 2 Thes. 3:10
 - c. A good rule for studying the Bible is to ask...
 - 1) Who is speaking/writing?
 - 2) To whom are they speaking?
 - 3) Under what circumstances was it said?
 - 4) What is the subject under discussion?
 - d. On the subject of the work of the church we need to make certain we are looking at things addressed to local churches and not individual Christians.

4. Local churches in the New Testament did the following:
- a. NT churches assembled regularly. Acts 2:42; Heb. ____:24, 25
 - 1) Where do we read of the disciples gathering on the first day of the week to break bread?
 - b. In those assemblies they ate the Lord's Supper. Acts ____:7; 1 Cor. ____:17-34
 - c. Sang together. ____ 5:19; Col. ____:16
 - d. Prayed together. Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:16, 17
 - e. Preached and taught God's word. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 14:3-5, 26
 - f. Took up a collection on the first day of the week. 1 Cor. ____:1, 2; Acts 4:32-35
 - 1) What was the significance of laying it at the apostles' feet in Acts 4?
 - g. Supported men who preached the gospel. 2 Cor. ____:8; Phil. 4:15, 16
 - h. Provided for the needs of destitute saints. Acts 4:34, 35; 11:27-30; Rom. ____:25, 26; 2 Cor. 8, 9
 - i. Disciplined unruly members. 1 Cor. ____:1-13; 2 Thes. 3:6-15
 - 1) List the brothers they were told not to keep company with in 1 Cor. 5.
 - 2) What specific problem was dealt with in 2 Thes. 3?
 - 3) What purposes were given for the discipline in 1 Cor. 5:4-6?
 - 4) Do not keep company with him, that he may be _____. 2 Thes. 3:14
 - 5) Though he is to be withdrawn from, the erring saint is not to be treated as an _____, but as a _____. 2 Thes. 3:15
 - j. Some would put edification on this list, but edification is actually the result of the church doing the works assigned to it. Eph. 4:11-16
 - 1) How did Paul seek to edify the church in 1 Cor. 14:3-5?
 - 2) The church was edified or built up when it worshiped God and listened to His word. 1 Cor. 14:26
5. Can we find a command, example, or necessary inference (inescapable conclusion) to justify churches being involved in...
- a. Political activities?
 - b. Secular education?
 - c. Entertainment?
 - d. Recreation?
 - 1) Did people of the first century play games, have athletic contests, etc.?
 - 2) Do we ever read of a NT church sponsoring or being involved in any way with recreation?
 - 3) What Scripture, if any, could we use to justify the gyms and Family Life Centers being built by many churches, including some churches of Christ?

- 4) Did churches of the NT sponsor camps that provided recreation, food, and Bible study for young people?
- 5) If God's expressed will does not provide for churches to be involved in recreation and entertainment, should sporting events, concerts, etc. be used to attract crowds in "mission fields?"
- e. Providing medical care for the general population?
 - 1) Most denominations are involved in the establishment and operation of hospitals, but was this done by NT churches?
 - 2) Many "mission trips" sponsored by churches of Christ involve medical care for the people in other countries. Explain why you believe this is right or wrong.
 - 3) What is God's power to save? Rom. 1:16
6. Most religious bodies today, including many churches of Christ, include a kitchen and dining facilities (often called a fellowship hall) in the building in which they meet, but is there any Bible authority for local churches being involved in providing for "fellowship meals", i.e. meals eaten for enjoyment and to satisfy hunger?
 - a. What instruction did Paul give the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 11:22, 34?
 - b. Does the NT ever refer to eating a common meal as an act of fellowship?
 - c. Can Christians get together as individuals and eat? Should they? Provide Scriptures to support your answer.
7. Even when biblical authority has been established for a practice, there are still questions of judgment and opinion that can arise. E.g. how big and how nice should the meetinghouse be? Or which of two faithful preachers should we support?
 - a. Think about this and list at least two or three principles that should guide us in making these kinds of judgments.

Weeks 10-13

March

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:23, 24

Weeks Ten and Eleven: The Worship of a Local Church

1. Define:
 - a. Worship
 - b. Praise

2. Whom should we worship? Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9
 - a. Is Jesus to be worshiped? Give Scriptures for your answer.

3. Why should we offer worship to God?
 - a. _____ . Rev. 4:8-11
 - b. _____ . John 4:23
 - c. _____ . Eph. 1:3

4. God must be worshiped...
 - a. In _____ and _____. John 4:23, 24
 - b. With _____. Heb. 12:28, 29; cf. Abraham in Gen. 17:1-3.
 - c. _____ and in _____. 1 Cor. 14:40

5. In the assemblies of NT churches we find them engaged in...
 - a. Prayer. Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:13-17
 - b. Singing. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:_____; 1 Cor. 14:15
 - c. Teaching and learning God's word. Acts 2:42; _____:7; 1 Cor. 14:3-5
 - d. Contributing a free-will offering into a common treasury. 1 Cor. _____:1, 2
 - e. Eating the Lord's Supper. Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. _____:17-34

6. Giving.
 - a. Some argue that giving is not an act of worship in the same way that singing and praying are. That may be true, but it is to be done (1 Cor. 16:1, 2) and there are some elements of worship involved in it.
 - b. What enabled the Macedonians to give "beyond their ability?" 2 Cor. 8:1-5
 - c. The contribution of the Corinthians was to reflect the sincerity of their _____. 2 Cor. 8:8
 - d. What can we learn from 2 Cor. 9:6, 7 about the way we should give?
 - e. When did the church take its collection? 1 Cor. 16:1, 2
 - f. Did NT churches require their members to tithe?
 - g. Did NT churches raise funds through raffles, bake sales, appeals to the community, etc.?

7. Praying.

- a. Define supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks as used in 1 Tim. 2:1.
- b. Men who pray should have _____ hands. 1 Tim. 2:8
- c. Matt. 6:5-8 should teach us to avoid what two things?
- d. What does “hallowed be Your name” mean in Matt. 6:9?
- e. What are some things for which we should pray? Matt. 6:10-13; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2
- f. Did first century Christians pray to Mary or ask her to intercede for them? 1 Tim. 2:3-5

8. Singing.

- a. Are there any NT passages that speak of Christians worshiping God with musical instruments?
 - 1) Were musical instruments used in OT worship?
 - 2) Since first century Christians had access to a variety of musical instruments, but were only commanded to sing, what should we conclude about God’s will in this matter?
- b. Define the three types of songs mentioned in Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16?
- c. What does it mean to make melody in your heart to the Lord? To sing with grace in your heart to the Lord?

9. The Lord’s Supper.

- a. When did Jesus first give the apostles instructions about the Lord’s Supper?
- b. Did Jesus use leavened or unleavened bread for the first Lord’s Supper?
- c. Was the Lord’s Supper intended to be eaten as a congregation or as individuals? Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34
- d. When did the disciples at Troas gather to eat the Lord’s Supper? Name another passage which points to this day as a special day for Christians.
- e. What is meant by communion in 1 Cor. 10:16?
- f. Read 1 Cor. 11:23-29 carefully and tell what we are to do as we partake of the Lord’s Supper.
 - 1) The NKJV warns us not to partake in an “unworthy manner” and the KJV has “unworthily.” Is there a difference between partaking in an unworthy manner and in being unworthy to partake?
- g. Making it practical: list some things you can do to better focus on the remembrance and the proper manner of partaking.
- h. Since “the cup” in 1 Cor. 11:25, 26 is singular, should we only use one cup or container for the fruit of the vine?
- i. Roman Catholicism teaches that the bread and fruit of the vine are miraculously transformed into the actual body and blood of Jesus, even though they retain the appearance of bread and wine. Is this doctrine known as *transubstantiation* true? Use Scriptures to prove your answer.

10. Preaching.

- a. 1 Cor. 14 points to the teaching of God's word as an important element of NT assemblies and when Paul was at Troas he preached until midnight (Acts 20:7).
- b. List at least three Scriptures that talk about the importance of God's word.
- c. List some obligations a speaker has. Rom. 1:16; Acts 20:20, 26, 27; Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 Tim. 3:16—4:5
- d. Making it practical: what are some things you can do to get more out of the lessons?

Weeks Twelve and Thirteen: The Organization of Local Churches

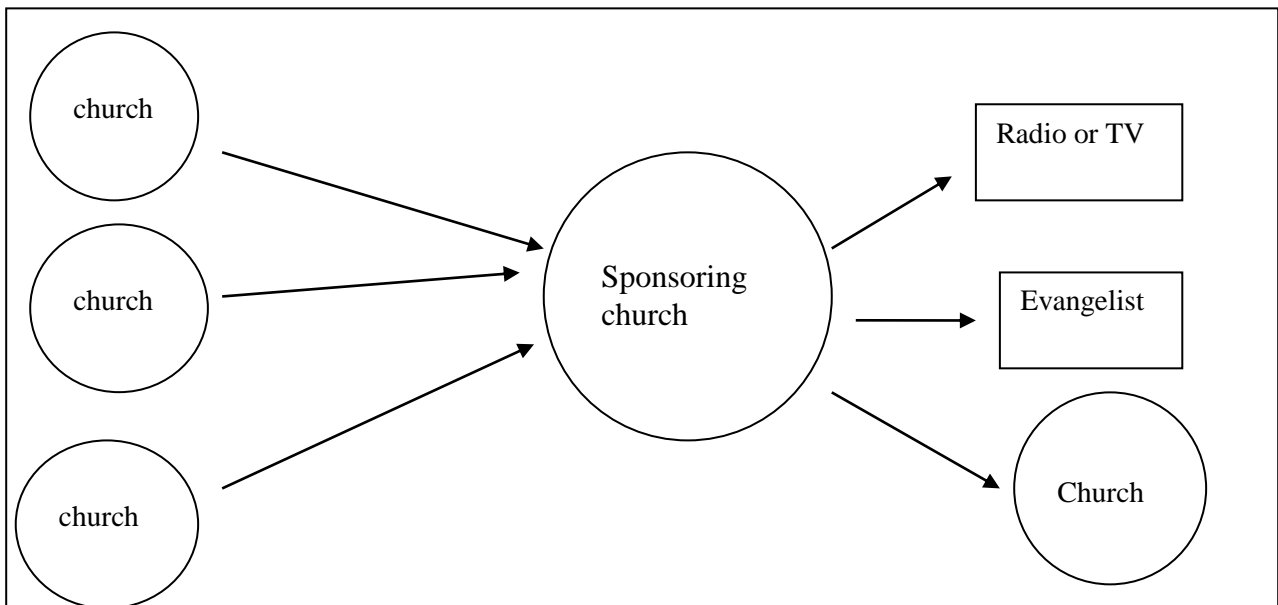
1. Elders.
 - a. When Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, they appointed _____ in _____ church. Acts 14:21-23
 - b. What was Titus instructed to do in Titus 1:5?
 - c. What other name is given to elders in Titus 1:5-7?
 - d. The elders of the church at Ephesus were told that the Holy Spirit had made them _____. Acts 20:17, 28
 - e. What responsibility was assigned to elders in Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:1-4?
 - f. What flock were they to oversee?
 - g. Answer the following from 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11.
 - 1) What kind of family must an elder have?
 - 2) What “abilities” must an elder possess?
 - 3) List some things a man can do to prepare himself for the work of an elder.
 - a) As a teenager?
 - b) As a thirty-year old?
 - c) As a forty-year old?
2. Linking churches with churches.
 - a. Does the NT describe any kind of organization for the universal church?
 - b. Religious groups (churches) today are often linked together in some type of denominational structure which varies from group to group.
 - 1) The Roman Catholic Church has a very rigid structure with the Pope and the archbishops exercising strict control over local affairs.
 - 2) The Southern Baptist convention is not as authoritarian, but still links churches, allows them to share in certain works, issue “position statements,” etc.
 - c. The NT does not provide for any kind of denominational hierarchy.
 - 1) E.g. the seven churches of Asia were dealt with by Jesus directly, not by an *Asian Church Assembly*.
 - d. Who is the one head of the church? Eph. 5:23, 24; Col. 1:18

3. Institutionalism.

- a. The term institutionalism refers to the practice of churches establishing or contributing to various organizations as a means of carrying out their work. The term is also used of a sponsoring church arrangement in which several churches may send their money to another church to engage in a work bigger than what any of the individual churches could afford.
 - 1) The first type of institutionalism is seen in churches sending funds to orphanages and foster care facilities for benevolent work and to colleges and schools to assist in edification and evangelism.
 - 2) The sponsoring church arrangement is often used for television programs, support of evangelistic efforts in other countries, et al.
- b. Is there any record of a church in the NT sending funds to a separate organization? Did churches use any “middleman” organizations to do their work of benevolence? Acts 4:32-37; 6:1-7; 11:27-30
- c. Should individual Christians help non-Christians (Gal. 6:10)? Did NT churches give benevolent help from their treasuries to non-Christians? Acts 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2; Rom. 15:25, 26, 31; 2 Cor. 8:4
 - 1) Review question 3 from week nine on the collective works of the church. See p. 21.
- d. Do we ever read of a NT church sending money to a school or any other organization to do its work of teaching?

4. The sponsoring church.

- a. The sponsoring church arrangement usually involves a church taking on a work larger than it can provide for on its own. The elders of the sponsoring church then ask other churches to contribute to them. In this arrangement the elders of one church oversee a work that belongs to several churches.



- b. Using a concordance, list every NT reference to contributing churches, sponsoring churches, and mission churches.
- c. Read Acts 11:27-30; Rom. 15:25-27; and 1 Cor. 16:1-3.
 - 1) Why did the Christians at Antioch send funds to the churches of Judea in Acts 11? To whom was the money delivered?
 - 2) Why did the churches of Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia send money to Jerusalem?
 - 3) Do we ever read of one church sending money to another church for any purpose other than taking care of a legitimate benevolent need?
- d. How can a local church be involved in evangelism outside its own community? See Acts 11:19-26; 2 Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15, 16