

Marks that Matter

13 Lessons

With Charts

and Study Questions

Orangeburg Church of Christ

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."
15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"
16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome you. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."
20 He warned his disciples not to tell anyone of what they had seen and heard.
NIV

Marks That Matter

Orangeburg (SC) Church of Christ Adult Bible Class Lessons

Address Questions and Corrections:

Jim Wilsford

803-534-4759

jwilsford@phonicstoo.com

These lessons are available from www.orangeburgchurchofchrist.info in PDF format.

CD ROM format is available from Jim Wilsford (this format includes PowerPoint presentations).

Credit: The name *Marks That Matter* appears on a pamphlet by James R. Cope.

Contents:

Correctly Handling the Word of Truth—A Mark That Matters	4
The Church Founded on the Pentecost after Christ’s Death—A Mark That Matters	7
New Testament Requirements for Membership—A Mark That Matters	10
The Church of Christ—A Mark That Matters	13
Preaching the Gospel—A Mark That Matters	16
New Testament Church Organization—A Mark That Matters	19
The Work of the Lord—A Mark That Matters	22
New Testament Worship—A Mark that Matters	25
The One Baptism—A Mark That Matters	28
The New Testament Church Has No Human Creeds—A Mark That Matters	31
The Local Church—A Mark That Matters	34
The New Testament Is Verbally Inspired—A Mark That Matters	37
Christ, the High Priest, and All Christians, A Royal Priesthood—A Mark That Matters	40

Correctly Handling the Word of Truth—A Mark That Matters

Paul admonished Timothy: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (II Tim. 2:15, NIV).” The true church will be the church that correctly handles the word of truth, understanding the relationship between the Old Testament law of Moses and the New Testament law of the spirit and life (See II Cor. 3:1-11). **Correctly handling the word of truth is a mark that matters.**

God made clear that we should hear Christ. On the Mount of Transfiguration, He commanded: “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear him. (Mt.5:17).” The writer of Hebrews correctly handled the relationship between the Old and New Testaments: “God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, has at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son (Heb. 1:1).”

The Old Testament taught that a new covenant would replace the old. “Behold the days come, declares the Lord, that I will make a new covenant . . . not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers . . .(Jer. 31:31-32).” In Hebrews of the New Testament, the writer endorses this principle that the New should replace the Old Testament by quoting Jeremiah in Heb. 8:8. The writer concluded in Heb. 8:13: “In that he says, a new covenant, he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxes aged is nigh unto vanishing away.”

Jesus himself taught the proper relationship between the Old and New Testaments. At the beginning of his preaching in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught: “Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill (Mt. 5:17).” At the end of his time on earth he said: “. . . All things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets and psalms, concerning me (Lk. 24:44).” At his death, John records: “After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, says, I thirst (Jno. 19:28).” And a little later, He said: “It is finished: and bowed his head, and gave up his spirit (Jno. 19:30).” According to Matthew, at this very time, “And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom (Mt. 27:51).”

The apostle Paul confirms the changes that occurred at the death of Christ. Speaking of the Jews and Gentiles, he said: “. . . having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments . . . (Eph. 2:15).” Of the law, Paul added the following: “He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross (Col. 2:14).” Paul spoke of the old and new laws: “. . . Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant (II Cor. 3:6).” The summation of the law was Christ and his church, with the New Testament firmly in place: “So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ (Gal. 3:24).” Rom. 10:4 tells us: “For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believes.”

The New Testament church in the 21st century will correctly handle the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament. *This is an identifying mark that matters.*

Correctly Handling the Word of Truth II Tim. 2:15—A Mark That Matters

God Has Spoken Heb. 1:1

“I will make a new covenant.” Jer. 31:31

“In thee and thy seed shall all the nations be blessed.”

“To thy seed which is Christ.” Gal.3:16

“In that he says a new covenant, he has made the first old.” Heb. 8:13

“Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments.” Eph. 2:15

Hear ye him. Mt. 17:5

The Ten Commandments

God's Promise

Abraham

Mount Sinai

Christ

430 Years

“Our tutor to bring us to Christ.” Gal. 3:24

“Christ is the end of the law.” Rom. 10:4

“He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Col.2:14

Old Testament

New Testament

Patriarchal Age

Jewish Age

Christian Age

2500 Years

1500 Years

Until the End

B
E
G

E
N
D

Correctly Handling the Word of Truth—A Mark That Matters

Questions and Answers

How did Paul tell Timothy to present himself? _____

How should one to handle the word of truth? _____

How will the true church handle the word of truth? _____

Where can one read about the Mount of Transfiguration? _____

In whom is God well pleased and who are we to hear? _____

Through whom did God speak in past times? _____ How? _____

Through whom did God speak in these last days? _____

What did God promise to do in Jer. 31:31-32? _____

What Old Testament passage is quoted in Heb. 8:8-12? _____

What two things happen to an old covenant once there is a new covenant (Heb. 8:13)? _____

In Mt 5:17, what did Jesus say that he would not do to the law and the prophets? _____ What did he say that he would do to them?

In Lk. 24:44, what did Jesus says must be fulfilled? _____

When Jesus died (Jno. 19:28), what as finished? _____ What was accomplished? _____

What was the last thing Jesus said before dying (Jno. 19:30)? _____

At Jesus' death, what happen to the veil of the temple (Mt.27:51)? _____

When Jesus died what happen to the law of commandments (Eph. 2:15)? _____

In Col. 2:14, what was taken away and what was nailed to the cross? _____

Paul and the apostles were ministers of what covenant (II Cor. 3:6)? _____

In Gal. 3:24, what was the law called? _____ What did it bring us to? _____

Who is the end of the law in Rom. 10:4? _____

What is the correct relationship between the Old and New Testaments? _____

The Church Founded on the Pentecost after Christ's Death— A Mark That Matters

Jesus said: “On this rock I will build my church (Mt 16:18).” Paul taught: “For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (I Cor. 3:11).” Paul described Christ as the “chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20).” Peter explained that the Lord was “a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious . . . A chief corner stone.” (I Pet. 3-6). *The founder of the church was Jesus Christ.*

The Lord's church was founded on the Day of Pentecost after his death.

Three significant events identify the exact day of the founding of the church:

- John the Baptist died before Christ said: “I will build my church.”
- Jesus said, “There are some here . . . who shall no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom come with power.”
- On the Day of Pentecost after Christ's death, “And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

John the Baptist did not found the church nor was it founded in his day.

The death of John is described in detail in Mt. 14.1-12: “ And he sent and beheaded John . . . And his disciples came, and took up the corpse, and buried him; and they went and told Jesus. It was two chapters later that Matthew recorded that Christ said: “ I will build my church (Mt. 16:18). Therefore, John the Baptist was not the founder of the true church and the founding of the church did not happen in his lifetime.

Some people living at the time of Christ would see the kingdom come with power. Jesus said in Mk. 9:1: “There are some here . . . who shall no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom come with power.” Jesus told his disciples in Lk. 4:49 to wait in Jerusalem for this power: “Stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” On the Day of Pentecost after Christ's death, they received power in the form of a blowing of a violent wind, tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each one of them, the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the ability to speak in languages (Acts 2:1-4). From that day forward the kingdom is spoken of as being in existence. Paul said: “He has brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves (Col. 2:12). John likewise said: “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom . . . (Rev.1:5-6).” Any Church founded before or after the Day of Pentecost can not be the church in the New Testament.

The saved are added to the church for the first time on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:47 teaches: “And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” From this point onward in the New Testament, the church is spoken of as being in existence. The church of the New Testament was not founded in 325 AD, in 606 AD, at anytime during the Protestant Reformation Age, nor as the result of some latter day revelation in the 19th or 20th centuries. The Lord established his church on the Day of Pentecost after his death.

When the church was founded is a mark that matters. Any church founded before the Day of Pentecost is not the true church. Any church founded after the Day of Pentecost is not the true church.

The Church Founded on the Pentecost after Christ's Death

The Church Could Not Have Been Founded by John or in His Day!

The Saved Were First Added to The Church on This Pentecost

John the Baptist died before Christ said, "I will build my church (Mt.16:18)."

Before Pentecost the kingdom and church are prospective; afterward, retrospective!

"This is that spoken of by the prophet Joel. . . .Before that day come, that great and notable day." Acts 2:16-20

"And the Lord added to the church daily those that were being saved." Acts 2:47

"He brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves." Col. 2:12

"To him . . .that has made us to be a Kingdom." Rev. 1:5-6

P
E
N
T
E
C
O
S
T



John the Baptist: to prepare the way for Christ. Mk.1:1-3	John the Baptist, beheaded by Herod. Mt.14:1-12	Jesus said: "Upon this rock I will build my church. Mt.16:18
Some shall not die till they see the kingdom come with power. Mk.9:1	Disciples told to wait in Jerusalem for power. Lk. 24:49	They received the power on Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4

The Church Was **Not** Founded:

- In 325 AD
- In 606 AD
- During the Protestant Reformation
- As a Result of Some Latter Day Revelation in the 19th or 20th Century

The True Church Was Founded by Christ, in Jerusalem, on Pentecost

The Church Founded on the Pentecost after Christ's Death

Questions and Answers

1. Who said I will build my church (Mt. 16:18)? _____
2. What is the foundation of the church (I Cor. 3:11)? _____
3. What other foundation can be laid? _____
4. Describe the chief corner stone (I Pet. 3-6). _____

5. Describe three events that identify the exact day of the founding of the church: Mt. 14:1 _____
Mt. 16:18 _____ Acts 2: 37-47 _____
6. Which came first, John's death (Mt. 14:1-12) or the statement, "Upon this rock I will build my church (Mt 16:18)." ?

7. Who does Mk. 9:1 teach will see the kingdom come with power? _____
8. For what did Jesus tell his disciples to wait in Jerusalem in Lk. 24:49? _____
9. What were the three showings of power on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4? _____

10. In Col. 1:12, how did we get into the kingdom of the Son of his love? _____
11. In Rev. 1: 5-6, what did Jesus make us to be? _____
12. What happen to the saved on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:47)? _____

13. In what four times could the church *not* have been established? 1. _____
2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
14. Was the true church founded before the Day of Pentecost? _____
15. Was the true church founded after the Day of Pentecost? _____
16. When was the true church established? _____
17. Where was the true church established? _____
18. By whom was the true church established? _____

New Testament Requirements for Membership—A Mark That Matters

Requirements for membership in the true New Testament church matter. In our present world, churches have many different ways by which folks become members. Some require joining; others vote folks in; still others require baptism of infants. The list is endless. Doesn't it make sense that the same New Testament that said: "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:47)," also told people how to become members.

The New Testament is exact and consistent in what it tells people to do. The Lord commanded the apostles to go preach to the whole creation: "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved (Mt. 16:16)." In Acts 2:37, the people asked an unambiguous question: "What shall we do?" To this question, Peter gave a clear answer in Acts 2:38: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." In Acts 8:37-39, the eunuch asked: "Why shouldn't I be baptized? . . . Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." In Acts 11:14, Cornelius is told of Peter: "Who shall speak unto you words whereby you shall be saved." We are told in Acts 10:48: "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." Saul, later called Paul, said: "What shall I do, Lord?" The Lord answered: "Go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do (Acts 22:10)." In Damascus, Ananias gave Paul an unambiguous command: "Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name (Acts 22:16)."

The same actions that saved these New Testament Christians made them members of the church of Christ (Acts 2:47). Paul wrote: "For in one Spirit were we baptized into one body (I Cor. 12:13)." Paul tells us that the church is that body (Eph. 1:22-23). This same church is the home of the saved: "The church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28)." Paul added: "Christ also is head of the church, being himself saviour of the body . . . that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of the water with the word (Eph. 5:23-26)."

In conclusion, there are five requirements for membership which you must meet just as those people of the New Testament met them.

- *Hear the word of God:* Mt. 17:5; Rom. 10:17; Jno. 6:44.
- *Believe in God, the Son, and God's word:* Heb. 11:6; Jno. 3:16; Eph. 1:13.
- *Repent of your sins:* Acts 2:38; Acts 3:19 & 17:30; II Cor. 7:10; II Pet. 3:9.
- *Confess your faith before men:* Rom. 10:10; I Tim. 6:13-16; Jno. 12:42.
- *Be baptized:* Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-6; I Pet. 3:21.

The New Testament requirements for membership constitute a *mark that matters*. The same actions—hearing, believing, confessing, repenting, and being baptized—will save you and add you to the church of the Lord. **Won't you act now!**

New Testament Requirements for Membership

Acts 2:47: “ The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

The Saved Are

- Mk. 16:16: Belief + Baptism
- Acts 2:38: Repentance + Baptism
- Acts 8:37: Belief + Baptism
- Acts 10:48: Hearing + Baptism
- Acts 22:16: Baptism

Results

-
- Saved
 - Remission of Sins
 - Rejoicing
 - Saved
 - Wash Away Your Sins

In the Church

- I Cor.12:13: Baptized into One Body
- Eph. 1:22-23: The Body Is the Church
- Acts 20:28: Lord Purchased the Church
- Eph. 5:23-26: Christ is Head of Church
Savior of the Body
He Sanctified the Church
He Cleansed the Church
He Washed the Church with
the Water and the Word

- BE BAPTIZED: Mk. 16:16, Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:3-6, I Pet. 3:21
- CONFESS: Rom. 10:10, I Tim. 6:13-16, John 12:42
- REPENT: Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19 & 17:30, II Cor. 7:10, II Pet. 3:9
- BELIEVE: Heb. 11:6, John 3:16, Eph. 1:13
- HEAR: Mt. 17:5, Rom. 10:17, Jno. 6:44

New Testament Requirements for Membership

Questions and Answers

1. List some of the many ways that people say that you can get into their church. _____
2. According to Acts 2:47, how does one get into the church? _____
3. When Jesus gave the Great Commission in Mk. 16:16, what did he say that people must do to be saved? _____
4. What question did people ask in at Acts 2:37? _____ What did Peter answer them in Acts 2:38? _____
5. What question did the Ethiopian eunuch ask in Acts 8:37? _____
6. What did Philip and the eunuch do in response to the question? _____
7. What kind of words did Peter speak to Cornelius in Acts 11:14? _____
8. What did Peter command Cornelius and his house to do in Acts 10:48? _____
9. What question did Paul ask in Acts 22:10? _____ Who answered him? _____ What was the answer? _____
10. What was the unambiguous command given to Paul by Ananias in Acts 22:16? _____
11. What happen to Paul's sins? _____
12. What two things happen when people obey these commands (Hint: Acts 2:47)? _____
13. What else is the body of Christ called in Eph 1:22-23? _____
14. How do we get into the body, according to I Cor. 12:13? _____
15. Who is head of the church according to Eph. 5:23-26? _____
16. Who is the savior of the body? _____
17. What do Mt. 17:5, Rom. 10:17, and Jno. 6:44 teach? _____
18. What do Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19 & 17:30, II Cor.7:10, and II Pet. 3:9 require of us? _____
19. What do Rom. 10:10, I Tim. 6:13-16, and Jno. 12:42 teach about confession? _____
20. What is the result of baptism in Mk. 16:16, Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:3-6, and I Pet. 3:21? _____
21. What five actions save you and put you in the Lord's church at the same time? _____

The Church of Christ—a Mark That Matters

The nature of the church to which the Lord added his saved people is a mark that matters. Those added were saved, and the saved ones were added: “The Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved (Acts 2:47).” In John 15:5, the Lord said, “I am the vine and you are the branches.” Christ is one; we, the branches, are one with him. The Lord prayed for us all: “That they may all be one (John 17:21).” **In these statements, there is no allowance for a subdivision of denominations.**

The Bible teaching was certain. There was to be *one* foundation of *one* church. Paul taught, “No other foundation can any man lay than that which is laid which is Christ Jesus (I Cor. 3:11).” Peter added, “You are the Christ! (Mt. 16:18);” and “A chosen, precious cornerstone (I Pet. 2:6).” Christ responded, “Upon this rock I will build my church.” Christ laid one foundation and built one church. **Christ’s teaching leaves no room for a subdivision of denominations.**

In order to be saved and added to the church, all Christians follow the same New Testament teaching. When they follow this teaching, they will end up exactly where Christ wants them. “I am the door,” Christ said in John 10:9. “Whoever enters through me will be saved.” In Mt. 7:7 he said, “Knock and it shall be opened.” Christ gave one way and there is no other. Hear the word (Rom. 10:14-15); believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Jno. 3:16, Heb.11:6); confess his name before men (Rom. 10:10, Mt.10:32); repent before it is everlastingly too late (Acts 17:30, II Pet. 3:9); and be buried with Christ in baptism (Acts 2:38, Mk. 16:16). When this is accomplished, we are added to the church of Christ that was established in 29 AD in Jerusalem. **There is nothing in the New Testament about joining or being added to a denomination.**

Once people enter the door to the true church, they find themselves in the household of God. “I am writing you these instructions so that . . . you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth (II Tim. 3:15).” This teaching on one church runs throughout the New Testament. God gave Christ to be head over everything for the **church** which is his **body** in Eph. 1:22. Then he taught that there was one body in Eph. 4:4, and, therefore, one church. In Rom. 8:16-17, Paul tells us we are God’s children and if children, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. We are translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love (Col. 1:12). The metaphors *house of God* in Heb 3:1-6 and *bride of Christ* in II Cor. 11:1 and Rev 22:17 further affirm the oneness of the church and the ownership of the church by Christ. The one church—called the body, the family, the kingdom, the house, and the bride of Christ—leaves room for only the church of Christ which he purchased with his own blood. **The idea of many denominations does not fit.**

The nature of the church requires oneness and unity of all true Christians in the church of Christ. This is a New Testament mark that matters when identifying the true church that Jesus built. Where are denominations in the Bible? How can we all be one, and at the same time be members of different denominations following different doctrines? If you obey only Christ’s gospel, you will be saved and added to his church and no other.

The Church of Christ

“The Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved.” Acts 2:47

“I am the vine and you are the branches.” Jno. 15:5

I am writing you these instructions so that . . . you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.” I Tim.3:15

“That they may all be one.” Jno. 17:21

- The church: Eph.1:22
- The body: Eph.4:4
- The family: Rom.8:12-17
- The kingdom: Col. 2:12
- The house: Heb. 3:1-6
- The bride: II Cor. 11:1; Rev. 22:17

“I am the door.”
“Knock and it shall be opened.”
Jno.10: 9; Mt. 7: 7

More Marks that Matter ↓

- N.T. Organization
- N.T. Worship
- N.T. Work
- N.T. Authority

Jerusalem
AD 29
Acts 2

“No other foundation can any man lay than that which is laid which is Christ Jesus.” I Cor. 3:11

Be Baptized: Acts 2:38; Mk.16:16

Repent: Acts 17:30; II Pet 3:9

Confess: Rom. 10:10; Mt. 10:32

Believe: Jno. 3:16; Heb. 11:6

Hear: Rom. 10: 14-15

“You are the Christ!”
“Upon this rock I will build my church.”
“A chosen, precious cornerstone.” Mt.16:18; I Pet. 2:6

The Church of Christ—a Mark That Matters

Questions and Answers

1. The nature of what church is a mark that matters? _____
2. What was the condition of those added to the church (Acts 2:47)? _____
3. What happens to saved people (Acts 2:47)? _____
4. In John 15:5, who is the vine? _____ Who are the branches? _____
5. For what did Jesus pray in John 17:21? _____
6. How many foundations have been laid (I Cor. 3:11)? _____ Who is the one foundation? _____
How many churches did Christ say he would build (Mt. 16:18)? _____
7. Who is the door in John 10:9? _____ What happens to those who enter? _____
8. What happens when we knock at the door? _____
9. What are the five steps to be saved and added to the church? 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
10. In Rom. 10:14-15, what does faith come by? _____ What does the hearing come by? _____
Who must be sent? _____
11. In whom must man believe on in John 3:16? _____ In Heb. 11:6? _____
12. What happens to people who refuse to confess Jesus before men (Mt. 10:32)? _____
13. What result follows confession with the mouth in Rom. 10:10? _____
14. How urgent is it that we repent (Acts 17:30 and II Pet. 3:9)? _____
15. What are the results of baptism in Mk. 16:16 and Acts 2:38? _____
16. What is the household of God called in II Tim. 3:15? _____
17. What is the church called in Eph. 1:22? _____
18. How many are there of the following: Household of God? _____ Church? _____
Body? _____ Kingdom? _____ Bride of Christ? _____
19. All true Christians are one and unified in what church? _____

Preaching the Gospel—A Mark That Matters

Jesus said: “ Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation (Mk. 16:15).” Someone has said hypothetically that the Master was asked what would happen if we Christians did not follow this command. The Lord’s answer was brief: “There is no other plan.” The one and only plan is that the church works to save the lost. How Christians conduct the work of the church is a mark of New Testament Christianity that matters.

The New Testament gives the church in its congregational sense three missions to accomplish. It is to preach the gospel, edify and teach its members, and serve the needs of certain elderly and destitute folk. The church must follow the specific plan of the New Testament. Rom. 6:17 calls the teaching a form or pattern: “Though you used to be slaves of sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching.” Paul told Timothy: “ Hold the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me (II Tim. 1:13).” We can only be saved if our work conforms to the will of the Father: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven (Mt. 7:21).” We are to do the work God commands and re-create the form of New Testament teaching.

The only way to save the world is for the church to preach the Gospel. Paul described the gospel as “ the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes (Rom 1:16).” In I Cor. 1:18, 21 he added: “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” And further: “God was pleased through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe.” Without the preaching, there is no gospel; without the gospel, nothing to believe; without belief, no salvation.

Preaching the Gospel is clearly the work of the church. The command to disciples to preach the gospel is central to the great commission (Mt. 28:19, Mk. 16:15, Lk. 24:47). The church’s preaching of the gospel was a part of God’s eternal purpose: “His [God’s] intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished through Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:10).” In the strongest language possible, the church is described as “the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth (I Tim. 3:15).”

The congregations in the New Testament advanced the gospel. Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:3). When Paul was at Corinth, he took support from other churches (II Cor. 11:8). And when Paul left Macedonia, the church at Philippi sent support once and again to Paul (Phil. 4:15-16). Preaching the gospel to the whole creation and to every creature is no small task. It takes support.

“How can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news (Rom. 10:14-15).”

Preaching the Gospel

Christ's Plan:

- Go into all the world
- Preach the gospel
- Baptizing them
- Teaching them

The Church's Mission:

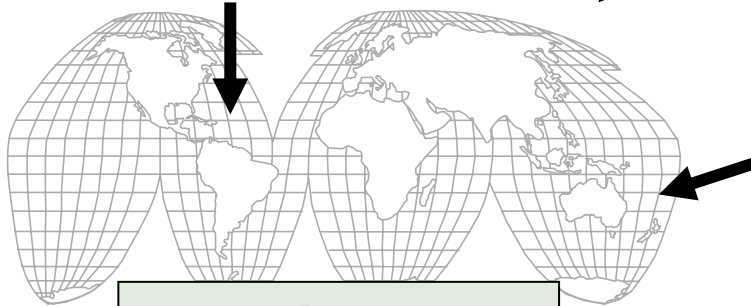
- Follow the form of teaching (Rom. 6:17)
- Hold the pattern of sound words (II Tim 1:13)
- Do the will of the Father in heaven (Mt.7:21)

God's Power:

- The gospel is the power of God (Rom. 1:16)
- The word of the cross is the power of God (I Cor. 1:18,21)

The Work of the Church:

- Preach the gospel--central to the great commission (Mt. 28:19, Mk. 16:15-16, Lk. 24:47)
- Make known the manifold wisdom of God (Eph 3:10)
- The pillar and ground of truth



There is no other plan!

New Testament Churches Advanced the Gospel

- Asia Minor
- Macedonia
- Greece

“How can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news (Rom. 10:14-15).”

Preaching the Gospel

Questions and Answers

1. Where did Jesus tell his followers to go Mk. 16:15? _____
 2. What were they to do? _____ To whom? _____
 3. What alternate plan did the Lord have should the disciples fail? _____
 4. What three specific missions are given to the church? _____
 5. How specifically must the church follow God's plan (Rom. 6:17)? _____
 6. Paul told Timothy to hold what pattern (II Tim. 1:13)? _____
 7. Upon what does Christ condition our entrance into the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 7:21)? _____
 8. What is God's power to salvation (Rom. 1:16)? _____
 9. To whom is the message of the cross foolishness (I Cor. 1:18)? _____
 10. To whom is the message of the cross the power of God? _____
 11. In this passage, what pleased God? _____
 12. Find the similarities among Mt. 28:19, Mk. 16:15-16, and Lk. 24:47. _____
 13. How does the church fit into God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10)? _____
 14. To whom is the church to make known the manifold wisdom of God _____
 15. How does Paul describe the church in I Tim. 3:15? _____
 16. How did the church organize the first missionary journey of Paul (Acts 13:3)? _____
 17. What metaphor did Paul use to describe his support from other churches while at Corinth (II Cor. 11:8)? _____
 18. Write out Rom. 10:14-15. _____
-
-

New Testament Church Organization—A Mark That Matters

Any organization that is larger than the local congregation, but smaller than the church in its universal sense is not in the Bible: denomination, synod, convention, council, diocese, etc. The local church—its nature and character—is a mark that matters!

The character of the local church must be the same character as portrayed in the New Testament. Replication of these characteristics creates a New Testament church in the 21st century.

The local congregation was pervasive. In Acts 14:23, Paul and his cohorts appointed elders in every church. Paul told Titus to appoint elders in every city in Tit.1:5. Paul recognized these churches in the congregational sense; for example, he said, “All the churches of Christ salute you (Rom16:16).” In I Cor. 16:1, he spoke of the congregations of a region, “I gave order to the churches of Galatia.”

The local congregation was all-sufficient. The all-sufficient word of God provided the all-sufficient local congregation to get God’s work done. Paul wrote: “Our sufficiency is from God (I Cor. 3:5).” He added, “. . . So that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (II Tim 3:17).” The local congregation is sufficient for God’s work.

The local congregation was overseen according to the will of God. In I Pet. 5:2, Peter himself recognized that a congregation could only be governed by elders according to the will of God.

The local congregation was autonomous. Since each local church was autonomous or independent, their own elders had the oversight. Peter was specific when he said to fellow-elders: “Tend the flock of God which is among you (I Pet. 5:2).” In Acts 20: 28, Paul told the elders at Ephesus, “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.” These passages restrict the government of the church to the local congregation and make them independent of outside influence.

The local congregation organized itself according to the New Testament. In Eph. 4:11 Paul names evangelists, pastors (elders), and teachers. In Phil. 1:1, he address the saints (all Christians), overseers (elders) and deacons.

In addition to these New Testament characteristics, there are distinctive features in every true New Testament church. They will all have the New Testament organization of Phil. 1:1. The worship will include singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16); praying (Acts 2:41); the Lord’s Supper (I Cor.11:17); teaching and preaching (Acts 20:7); and giving (I Cor. 16:1-2). These congregations will do the work prescribed: preaching (Eph. 3:10; I Tim.3:15); teaching and edifying (Eph.4:12); and benevolence (Acts 2, 6, 11).

These are marks that matter! You will not find any of the following in the Bible: denominations, preachers as pastor, raffles or pie suppers, legislative conventions, and baptisms or the Lord’s Supper held for special events only on some Sundays.

New Testament Church Organization

Any organization that is larger than the local congregation, but smaller than the church in its universal sense is not in the Bible: denomination, synod, convention, council, diocese, etc.

The Local Church Is:

- Pervasive: Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5; Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:1
- All Sufficient: II Cor. 3:5-6; II Tim. 3:15-16
- Overseen by the Will of God: I Pet. 5:2
- Autonomous: I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28-29
- Organized According to the Bible: Eph. 4:11; Phil. 1:1

No Denominations, No Preachers As Pastor, No Raffles or Pie Suppers, No Legislative Conventions, No Special Event Baptisms or Lord's Supper

The Local Church Has:

- NT Organization: Phil. 1:1
- NT Worship
 - Singing: Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19
 - Praying: Acts 2:41
 - Lord's Supper: I Cor. 11:17
 - Teaching & Preaching: Acts 20:7
 - Giving: I Cor. 16:1-2
- NT Work
 - Preaching: Eph. 3:10; I Tim. 3:15
 - Teaching and Edifying: Eph. 4:12
 - Benevolence: Acts 2, 6, 11

A Marks That Matters!

New Testament Church Organization

Questions and Answers

1. List five organizational formats larger than the local congregation but smaller than the church in the universal sense.

2. In how many churches did Paul appoint elders (Acts 14:23)? _____ Where did Paul tell Titus to appoint elders in Tit. 1:5? _____
3. What are congregations of the church called in Rom. 16:16? _____
4. Who makes us sufficient (I Cor. 3:5)? _____ What equips us for “every good work?” _____
To what should we look when organizing the church and congregation for the 21st century? _____
5. What is the organization sufficient to do God’s work here on earth? _____
6. What is the rule that applies in overseeing the local church (I Pet. 5:2)? _____
7. What flock of God are elders charged to tend (I Pet. 5:2)? _____
8. What flock of God were the elders at Ephesus charged to keep watch over (Acts 20:28)? _____
9. What protects the local church from outside influence? _____ How? _____
10. In Phil. 1:1, Paul addresses the church. What three different groups of members does he mention? 1. _____
2. _____ 3. _____
11. What kind of music did the early church have (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)? _____
12. List four components of worship outlined in Acts 2:41. 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
13. List three components of the work of the church. Eph. 3:10 _____
Eph 4:12 _____ Acts 2, 6, 11 _____
14. List some modern day features of church organization, worship, and work not found in the Bible. _____

The Work of the Lord—a Mark That Matters

The work of the New Testament church is a mark that matters. To replicate the New Testament church is to replicate the work that the church does. The Bible is specific when it tells us what we should be doing. I Cor. 15:58 says: “. . . stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” The phrase *work of the Lord* tells us what kind of work we are to be doing—the Lord’s work. The Scriptures instruct us on the nature and type of work that we are to be doing: “All Scripture in God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (II Tim. 3:16).”

Not just any work will do. Throughout the Bible, men have sought to innovate when it comes to doing what the Bible commands. “Nadab and Abihu died when they offered strange fire before Jehovah,” we learn in Numbers 26:61. God has always required that his servants do his work. Jesus taught: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers (Mt.7:21-23)!’” To Jews that believed on him, Jesus said: “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire.” The work of the Lord is the only work that will do. The scriptures thoroughly equip us for his work.

What do the Scriptures tell us to do? *The Work of the Church, Part 2* will study in detail the specific items of the work that the church is to do. In brief, there are four functions. One function is the worship, which will be studied in the lessons on worship. The remaining three are preach the gospel, edify and teach the church members, and do benevolent work as required by the New Testament. The following passages will help you study for Part 2:

- Preach the gospel: Mark 16:15-16; Mt. 28:19; Eph 3:10; II Tim.3:2
- Edify and teach the church member: Eph. 4:12; Tit. 2:1-15
- Benevolent work: Acts 2, 6, 11; I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 8, 9; I Tim. 5:9.

What things are not included in the Scriptures? The biggest obstacle to imitating the New Testament pattern for work is a prevailing notion that the gospel is a social gospel. People with this idea change the focus from preaching the Gospel to save the souls of the lost to ministering to their social and physical needs. The Social Gospel idea emphasizes such works as feeding the hungry, creating recreation for the young, and solving the social problems of homes and society. All of these are good works; and in the proper place and with the proper emphasis, they are appropriate for individuals and sometimes for the church. However, the good works label alone is not enough to justify them. “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven.”

The Work of the Lord—a Mark That Matters

Nature of the Lord's Work I Cor. 15:58

- Stand firm
- Don't move
- Always
- Give yourselves fully
- Labor in the Lord
not vain

Authority for the Lord's Work Mt. 7:21-23

- Old Testament examples
Ex. 26:61
- Scriptures thoroughly equip for
good work I Tim. 3:16
- Do the Will of the Father
Mt. 7:21-23
- Some work is of the devil
Jno.6:44

The Work of the Church

- Preach the gospel: Mark 16:15-16; Mt. 28:19; Eph. 3:10; II Tim.3:2
- Edify and teach the church member: Eph. 4:12; Tit. 2:1-15
- Benevolent work: Acts 2, 6, 11; I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 8, 9; I Tim. 5:9

Beware the Social Gospel with Its Good Works Label

The Work of the Lord—a Mark that Matters

Questions and Answers

Read I Cor. 15:48 .

1. List four characteristics that describe our work for the Lord. 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
2. When is your labor in the Lord not vain? _____
3. Read Mt. 7:21.
4. Who were the priests who offered strange fire (Ex. 26:61)? _____
5. What was wrong with their fire? _____
6. What did God do to them? _____
7. What equips us for every good work (I Tim. 3:16)? _____
8. To what degree are we equipped? _____
9. Who will enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 7:21)? _____
10. List three groups to whom Jesus will say, “I never knew you, away from me.” _____
11. What did he call these people? _____
12. Who are the children of the devil (Jno. 6:44)? _____
13. The church is charged with doing what three categories of work? _____
14. List four scriptures that tell us to preach the gospel. _____
15. List two scriptures that tell us edify and build up the church. _____
16. List four scriptures that tell us do certain benevolent works. _____
17. What is the social gospel? _____
18. Does the end ever justify the means? _____
19. Name some good works that are not the work of the church (For a clue see I Tim. 5:11 and 5:8). _____
20. Can you discuss the difference between individual and congregational responsibility? _____
21. Can you identify some works that both individuals and congregations are to do? _____

New Testament Worship—a Mark that Matters

Worship is a word that denotes an act of reverence paid whether to a creature or creator. Jesus set the parameters for true worship: “ Yet the time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks (Jno.4:23).”

From the beginning God has required that worship conform to his will. Cain offered an unacceptable sacrifice from the fruit of the ground instead of from the flock (Gen. 4:1-8). Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire and died (Lev. 10:1-7). The New Testament describes unacceptable worship. Jesus describes acts of the Jews as vain worship when their heart was far from God and they followed the precepts of men (Mt. 15:1-9). In Col. 2:18-23, Paul described certain acts as will-worship.

True worship has New Testament characteristics: It must be according to the will of the Father (Mt.7:21), in spirit and truth (Jno. 4:23), in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17), with understanding (I Cor. 14:12), unto the Lord (Eph. 5:19), with the peace of Christ ruling in our hearts and the word of Christ dwelling in us richly (Col. 3:15-16)

Singing was the only music in the worship (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:17). *Generic versus specific commands.* Wood was generic. Gopher wood was specific. Music is generic. God commanded vocal and not instrumental music. *Law versus expediency.* The New Testament commands singing. Lights and song books are expedient. Instrumental music adds another type of music. *David played a harp.* David served under the Old Testament. Many things were permitted for David, such as multiple wives, incense, animal sacrifices. These were put away when Christ nailed the Old Testament law to the cross. Paul wrote, “God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. Colossians 2:13-15. Some say that there are trumpets in heaven. Many things in heaven are not commanded for the church: incense, an altar, streets of gold, etc. Others find their instrument in the Greek word PSALLO. However, the word means plucking and the instrument named is the heart. Therefore, sing and make melody in your hearts (Col. 5:19).

The Lord’s supper was taken on every first day of the week. The Lord made it a permanent institution (Mt. 26:28-29). The church at Jerusalem continued to be steadfast in observation (Acts 2:41). The church gathered together to break bread in Acts 20:7. The church assembled to observe the Lord’s supper in I Cor. 11:17-34, and the assembly was on each first day of the week in I Cor. 16:1-2

Let us pay close attention to Col 2:20-23. “If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch! (which all refer to things destined to perish with use) -- in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.”

New Testament Worship—a Mark That Matters

Worship in Spirit and Truth
John 4:23

False Worship
Nadab and Abihu: Lev. 10:1-7

Precepts of Men
Mt. 15:1-9; Col. 3:18-23

Six **Musts** of True Worship As Commanded in the New Testament

- It must be according to the will of the Father (Mt. 7:21)
- It must be in spirit and truth (Jno. 4:23)
- It must be in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17),
- It must be with understanding (I Cor. 14:12)
- It must be unto the Lord (Eph. 5:19)
- It must be with the peace of Christ ruling in our hearts and the word of Christ dwelling in us richly (Col. 3:15-16)

Two Examples of True Worship Not Practiced in **Most** Religions of Today

Singing was the only music in the worship (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:17).

Generic versus specific commands. Music is generic. God specifically commanded vocal and not instrumental music.

Excuses:

David played a harp. Instrumental music along with incense and polygamy were put away when Christ nailed the Old Testament law to the cross. (Col 2:13-15).

There are trumpets in heaven. Many things in heaven are not commanded for the church: incense, altar, streets of gold, etc.

The instrument is in the Greek word PSALLO. The word means plucking and the instrument named is the heart. Therefore, sing and make melody in your hearts (Eph. 5:19).

The Lord's supper was taken on every first day of the week.

The Lord made it a permanent institution (Mt. 26:28-29).

The church at Jerusalem continued to be steadfast in observation (Acts 2:41).

The church gathered together to break bread in Acts 20:7.

The church assembled to observe the Lord's supper in I Cor. 11:17-34, and the assembly was on each first day of the week in I Cor. 16:1-2

New Testament Worship—a Mark that Matters

Questions and Answers

1. What did Jesus say true worship is in John 4:24? _____
2. What was Nadab and Abihu's mistake in worship? _____
3. When is your worship vain (Mt. 15:1-9; Col. 3:18-23)? _____
4. In whose name do we worship? _____
5. List six musts of true worship. 1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____
6. What music is commanded of the church (Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:19)? _____
7. If *wood* is generic and *gopher wood* is specific, what would have happen had Noah built the ark out of oak wood? _____

8. If music is generic and vocal music is specific, what would happen if we use the instruments of music? _____

9. What happened to the Old Testament law when Christ died (Col. 2:13-15)? _____
10. Where are we to make melody (Eph. 5:19)? _____
11. What did Jesus call the bread and fruit of the vine in Mt. 26:28-29? _____
12. When did Jesus say that he would partake of the supper again? _____
13. How often did the church in Jerusalem participate in the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:41)? _____
14. For what reason was the church gathered together in Acts 20:7? _____
15. On what day were they gathered together? _____
16. For what reason was the church gathered together in 1 Cor. 11:17-34? _____
17. On what day were they gathered together in 1 Cor. 16:1-2 _____

The One Baptism—A Mark That Matters

The Bible teaches very clearly that there is one baptism. This is a mark that matters. We are told: “4 There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Eph. 4:4. Yet in the religious world, there are many baptisms. Some baptize to put people into their denomination; some baptize for the false concept of original sin in spotless infants; and still others, for the sins of dead people so that they might have hope for relatives long gone. What do you think about your baptism? Were you baptized for the purpose taught in the Bible? The Bible teaches that at least four things happen when baptism is scriptural: the subject is baptized into Christ, baptized into the death of Christ, baptized into the church, and baptized unto the remission of sins.

Were you baptized into Christ? How important is it to be in Christ? Peter said: “12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12. It is essential to be in Christ, for therein is salvation! Salvation is in Christ and the true subject is baptized into Christ: “27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Gal.3:27.

Were you baptized into the death of Christ? Paul teaches very emphatically: “. 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” Rom. 6: 3-4. Jesus told Nicodemus: “No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” John. 3:3. In his death, the blood of Jesus was poured out for many unto the remission of sins. Mt.26:28. His blood was shed at his death. John19: 34.

Were you baptized into the church? The saved are in the church. “And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47. He purchased the church with his own blood. Acts 20:28. “Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.” Eph. 5:23. He was given, “22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, Eph. 1:22. Finally, “For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body.” I Cor. 12:13.

Were you baptized unto the remission of sins? On the day of Pentecost, those that heard the gospel asked: “What shall we do?” Peter answered, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” Acts 2:37-38. Ananias told Paul: “And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away.” Acts 22:16.

What do you think about your baptism? Were you baptized for the purposes taught in the Bible? *Won't you be baptized into Christ, into his death, into his church, and unto the remission of your sins? What are you waiting for?*

The One Baptism—a Mark That Matters

Eph. 4:4--“There is one body, and one spirit, even as you were called into one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**, one God and Father of all who is over all, and through all, and in all.”

The Religious World Teaches Many Baptisms

- Some baptize into their denomination.
- Some baptize for the false concept of original sin in spotless infants.
- Others baptize for the sins of dead people in order to give hope for those long gone.

Were You Baptized into Christ?

Acts 4:12

Gal.3:27.

Baptized into Christ

In Christ Is
Salvation!

Were You Baptized into the Church?

Acts 2:47

Acts 20:28

Eph. 5:23

Eph. 1:22

1 Cor. 12:13

Baptized into the Body,
the Church

The Saved
Are in the Body,
the Church

Were You Baptized into the Death of Christ?

John 3:3

Mt.26.

Rom. 6: 3-4 Baptized into His Death

Jno19: 34

In His Death
Is Newness of
Life--the New
Birth

Were You Baptized unto the Remission of Sins?

Acts 2:37-38

Acts 22:16

Baptized unto the
Remission of Sins

Our Sins Are
Washed Away

What do think about your baptism?

Were you baptized for the purposes taught in the Bible?

The One Baptism—A Mark That Matters

1. How many baptisms are therein Eph. 4:4? _____
2. What four things does the Bible teach happen when you are baptized? _____

3. In whom is salvation found? _____
4. How does one get into Christ? _____
5. How does one get into the death of Christ? _____
6. What must one do to see the kingdom of God? _____
7. For what did Jesus pour out his blood? _____
8. How does one get to the blood of Christ? _____
9. With what was the church purchased? _____
10. What did Christ save in Eph. 5:23? _____
11. What is the Body called in Eph. 5:23? _____
12. What is the church called in Eph. 1:22? _____
13. How does one get into the body the church? _____
14. What did the people ask after hearing Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost? _____
15. What did Peter tell them to do? _____
16. What did Ananias tell Paul (Saul) to do in Acts 22:16? _____
17. What do you think about your baptism? _____
18. Were you baptized for the purpose taught in the Bible? _____
19. What are you waiting for? _____

The New Testament Church Has No Human Creeds—A Mark That Matters

That the New Testament church has no man-made creed is a mark that matters. Man often writes his own creeds. The so-called apostles' creed is one of the earliest man-made creeds. The creed appears nowhere in the Bible. This creed and all other human creeds are not scripture and, therefore, not inspired. Many groups follow creed books.

Human creeds are dangerous. Paul warned: “6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!” Even a perversion is a different gospel! Gal. 1:6-9. *Eternally condemned* means *accursed*: Paul uses the word in I Cor. 16:22: “If anyone does not love the Lord — a curse be on him. “ Preaching any other gospel or perverting the gospel receives the strongest condemnation. In Gal 1:11-12, Paul adds: “1 I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. 12 I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.”

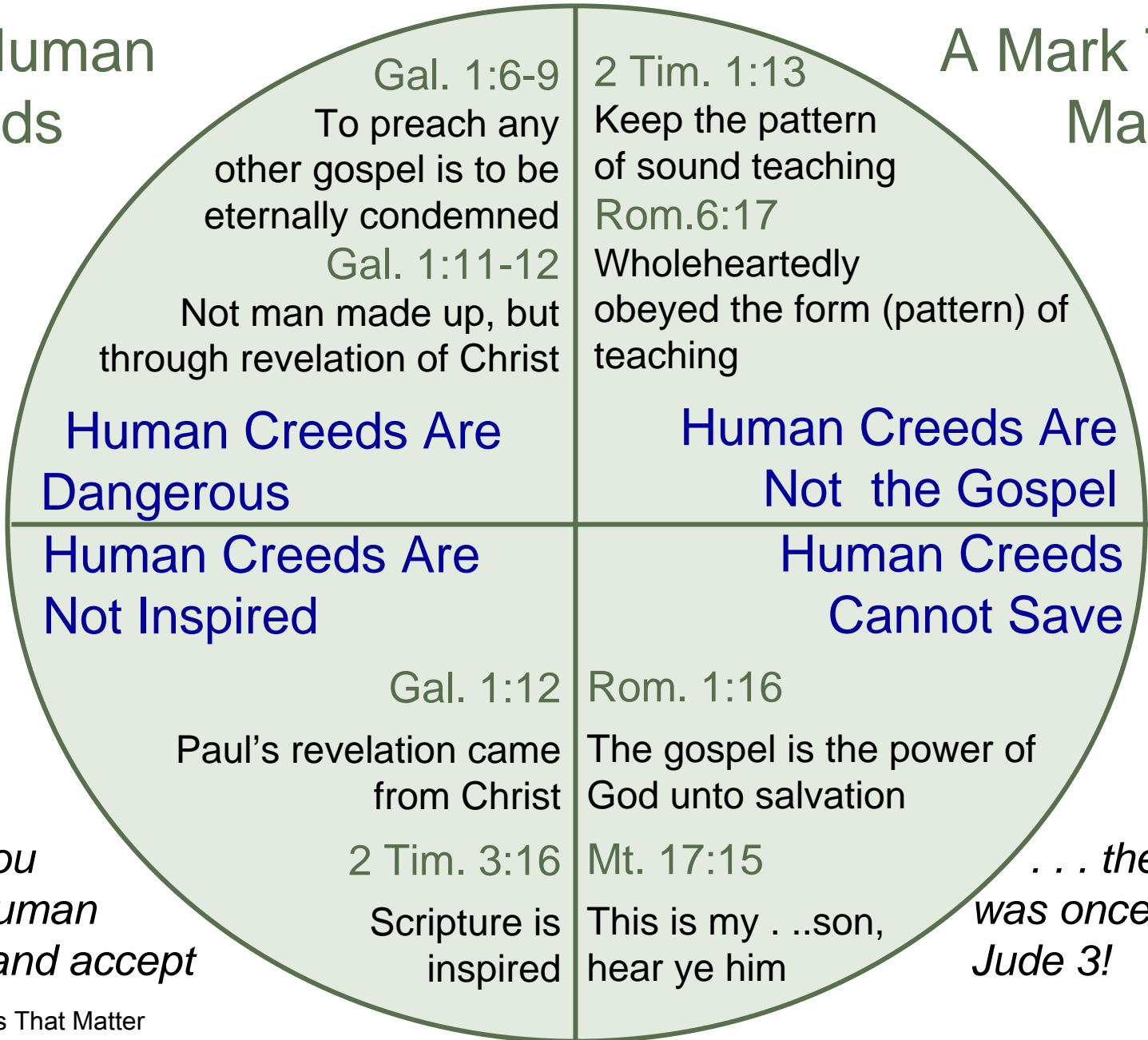
Human creeds are not the gospel. There is a pattern of sound teaching. Paul told Timothy: “What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching.” II Tim. 1:13. The word *pattern* is used by Paul to state the certainty of New Testament teaching: “17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.” Rom. 6:17-18. The same root word, TUPOS, is translated *form*—the same word we use for concrete forms. Change the shape of the form, and the shape of the material changes. When human creeds change the form of teaching, the outcome changes. No longer are servants of sin made servants of righteousness. Human creeds are neither the pattern of sound words from Paul nor the form of teaching delivered to the Romans!

Human creeds are not inspired revelation. They are human in idea and words. Paul's revelation came from Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:12). In Eph. 3: 3-4, Paul elaborates: “. . . 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.” Since creeds are not revealed from Christ, they are not revelation, neither are they inspired. The Bible is clear: “16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” II Tim. 3:16.

Human creeds can not save. Paul said, “16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation.” Rom. 1:16. Peter said: “Crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.” I Pet. 2:2. God said: “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” Mt. 17:5. *Won't you forget human creeds and “ . . . contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints”.* Jude 3!

No Human
Creeds

A Mark That
Matters



Won't you forget human creeds and accept

... the faith that was once delivered Jude 3!

The New Testament Church Has No Human Creeds

1. Who writes human creeds and creed books? _____
 2. According to Paul, what is the penalty for following a different gospel? _____
 3. What is the penalty for perverting the gospel? _____
 4. What does *eternally condemned* mean? _____
 5. Where did Paul get his revelation? _____
 6. How did Paul describe what Timothy had heard from him? _____
 7. What does the word pattern mean? _____
 8. How does one get from being a slave of sin to being a slave of righteousness? _____
 9. When one changes the form of teaching, what else changes? _____
 10. Where did Paul get his revelation? _____
 11. How can we understand what Paul knew of the mystery of Christ? _____
 12. What is scripture? _____
 13. For what is scripture useful? _____
 14. To what extent do the scriptures equip a person? _____
 15. What does Paul call God's power unto salvation? _____
 16. For what are Christians to crave? _____
 17. To whom did God say that we are to listen? _____
 18. What does the phrase *the faith once for all entrusted to the saints* mean? _____
-

The Local Church—A Mark That Matters

Any organization that is larger than the local congregation, but smaller than the church in its universal sense is not in the Bible: denomination, synod, convention, council, diocese, etc. The local church—its nature and character—is a mark that matters! The character of the local church must be the same character as portrayed in the New Testament. Replication of these characteristics creates a New Testament church in the 21st century.

The local congregation was pervasive. In Acts 14:23, Paul and his cohorts appointed elders in every church. Paul told Titus to appoint elders in every city in Tit.1:5. Paul recognized these churches in the congregational sense; for example, he said, “All the churches of Christ salute you (Rom16:16).” In I Cor. 16:1, he spoke of the congregations of a region, “I gave order to the churches of Galatia.”

The local congregation was all-sufficient. The all-sufficient word of God provided the all-sufficient local congregation to get God’s work done. Paul wrote: “Our sufficiency is from God (I Cor. 3:5).” He added, “. . . So that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (II Tim 3:17).” The local congregation is all-sufficient.

The local congregation was overseen according to the will of God. In I Pet. 5:2, Peter himself recognized that a congregation could only be governed by elders according to the will of God.

The local congregation was autonomous. Since each local church was autonomous or independent, their own elders had the oversight. Peter was specific when he said to fellow-elders: “Tend the flock of God which is among you (I Pet. 5:2).” In Acts 20: 28, Paul told the elders at Ephesus, “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.” These passages restrict the government of the church to the local congregation and make them independent of outside influence.

The local congregation organized itself according to the New Testament. In Eph. 4:11 Paul names evangelists, pastors (elders), and teachers. In Phil. 1:1, he address the saints (all Christians), overseers (elders) and deacons. In addition to these New Testament characteristics, there are distinctive features in every true New Testament church. They will all have the New Testament organization of Phil. 1:1. The worship will include singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16); praying (Acts 2:41); the Lord’s Supper (I Cor.11:17); teaching and preaching (Acts 20:7); and giving (I Cor. 16:1-2). These congregations will do the work prescribed: preaching (Eph. 3:10; I Tim.3:15); teaching and edifying (Eph.4:12); and benevolence (Acts 2, 6, 11).

These are marks that matter! You will not find the following in the Bible: denominations, preachers as pastor, raffles or pie suppers, legislative conventions, and baptisms or the Lord’s Supper held for special events only on some Sundays.

Local Church Organization—A Mark That Matters

Any organization that is larger than the local congregation, but smaller than the church in its universal sense is not in the Bible: denomination, synod, convention, council, diocese, etc.

The Local Church Is:

- Pervasive: Acts 14:23; Tit.1:5; Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:1
- All Sufficient: II Cor. 3:5-6; II Tim. 3:15-16
- Overseen by the Will of God: I Pet. 5:2
- Autonomous: I Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28-29
- Organized According to the Bible: Eph. 4:11; Phil. 1:1

No Denominations, No Preachers
As Pastor, No Raffles or Pie
Suppers, No Legislative Con-
ventions, No Special Event
Baptisms or Lord's Supper

The Local Church Has:

- NT Organization: Phil. 1:1
- NT Worship
 - Singing: Col. 3:16; Eph.5:19
 - Praying: Acts 2:41
 - Lord's Supper: I Cor.11:17
 - Teaching & Preaching:
Acts 20:7
 - Giving: I Cor. 16:1-2
- NT Work
 - Preaching: Eph. 3:10;
I Tim.3:15
 - Teaching and Edifying:
Eph.4:12
 - Benevolence: Acts 2, 6, 11

Marks that Matter!

The Local Church—A Mark That Matters

1. List five organizational formats larger than the local congregation but smaller than the church in the universal sense.

2. If you replicate the church of the New Testament, what kind of church will there be in the 21st century? _____

3. In how many churches did Paul appoint elders (Acts 14:23)? _____ Where did Paul tell Titus to appoint elders in Tit.1:5? _____
4. What are congregations of the church called in Rom. 16:16? _____
5. Who makes us sufficient (I Cor.3:5)? _____ What equips us for “*every good work?*” _____ To what should we look when organizing the church and congregation for the 21st century? _____

6. What is the organization sufficient to do God’s work here on earth? _____
7. What is the rule that applies in overseeing the local church (I Pet. 5:2)? _____

8. What flock of God are elders charged to tend (I Pet.5:2)? _____
9. What flock of God were the elders at Ephesus charged to keep watch over (Acts 20:28)? _____
10. In Phil. 1:1, Paul addresses the church. What three different groups of members does he mention?
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
11. What kind of music did the early church have (Eph. 5:19; Col.3:16)? _____
12. List four components of worship outlined in Acts 2:41. 1. _____
2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
13. List three components of the work of the church. Eph. 3:10 _____
Eph 4:12 _____ Acts 2, 6, 11 _____
14. List some modern day features of church organization, worship, and work not found in the Bible. _____

The New Testament Is Verbally Inspired—A Mark That Matters

The Bible teaches very clearly that the New Testament is the verbally inspired word of God. The bible teaches this truth so clearly that it is difficult to believe that some in the religious world deny it. However, many opt for views of inspiration that give them more latitude in interpretation—a latitude that allows them to practice as they please. The Scriptures themselves expressly deny any such latitude. Peter wrote, “20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Three views of inspiration. Religious people usually hold one of three views of inspiration: poetic inspiration, idea inspiration, and verbal inspiration. Poetic inspiration is the idea that the Scriptures are inspired in the same way that Shakespeare or other literary figures are inspired. Man, not God, is the moving force behind the Scriptures. Believers in idea inspiration hold that God gave the ideas to men but left the words up to these men to select and use. The view that the Scriptures are the verbally inspired word of God teaches that God gave men the ideas and the exact words to voice them, making the Scriptures the exact word of God. Paul wrote, “12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.” 1 Corinthians 2:11-13

God-breathed writings. All Scripture and not some Scripture (sacred writings) is literally God-breathed: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17. The Scriptures not only come directly from God, but they equip us thoroughly to every good work. Nothing is lacking, nor is there room for human speculation and construction. According to Peter, what Paul wrote was scripture: “16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.” 2 Peter 3:16. Paul’s teaching was the verbally inspired word of God.

Exact knowledge and understanding to the readers. Today, when we read the scriptures we can know exactly what God breathed and what the apostles and prophets wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit: “Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets.” Ephesians 3:2-5

The exact word of God, now and forever. Only one method of inspiration can deliver the exact word of God today—the verbal inspiration by God with the apostles and prophets recording them. That you accept the New Testament as the verbally inspired word of God is a mark that matters. The conclusion is clear: We must listen to the inspired word of God and not the

The New Testament Is Verbally Inspired —A Mark That Matters

No Scripture Is of Private Interpretation

"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Three Views of Inspiration

- Poetic inspiration—Shakespeare
- The inspiration of the idea with the words left to the writer.
- The verbally inspired word of God—ideas and words come from God

Paul wrote, "12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words." 1 Corinthians 2:11-13

God-Breathed Writings:

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

"16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." 2 Peter 3:16.

Exact Knowledge and Understanding to the Readers:

"Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. 4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets." Ephesians 3:2-5

The New Testament Is Verbally Inspired—A Mark That Matters

1. How is the New Testament inspired? _____
2. What are the three generally held views of inspiration of the Scriptures? _____

3. How do men speak from God in 2 Peter 1:20-21? _____
4. Where do spiritual ideas come from? _____
5. Where do spiritual words come from? _____
6. Paul's word did not come from what kind of wisdom? _____
7. Fill in the blanks: "expressing _____ truths with _____ words.
8. How much of the Scripture is God-breathed? _____
9. For what is Scripture useful? _____
10. What does "sacred writings" mean? _____
11. For what do the Scriptures equip us? _____
12. Whose writings were included in the term "other Scripture"? _____
13. How were Paul's writings inspired? _____
14. What was made known to Paul? _____
15. How was it made known to Paul? _____
16. When we read what Paul wrote, what can we understand? _____
17. To whom was the mystery of Christ revealed? _____
18. By whom was the mystery of Christ revealed? _____
19. The exact word of God in the New Testament is available to whom and for how long? _____

Christ, the High Priest, and All Christians, a Royal Priesthood—A Mark That Matters

The Old and New Testaments clearly teach that Christ is the high priest and that all Christians compose the royal priesthood. This New Testament teaching runs contrary to what is practiced in most modern denominations and sects, where the clergy are specially ordained to perform spiritual services. In these churches, the members are called *laity* to distinguish them from the *clergy*. The most prevalent practice is that the clergy are the priests in the church and that all other Christians are laity and not priests.

Christ as high priest is generally accepted. The teaching is very clear. Hebrews 2:17 teaches: “For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. The third chapter of Hebrews continues this thought, “Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.” Hebrews 3:1: In Hebrews 4:14, Christ is called a great high priest who sits on the throne of grace (4:16). In Hebrews 6:20, we learn that Jesus “has become a high priest forever.” God affirms Jesus on his throne eternally and Jesus as a high priest forever in Hebrews 7:21-22:

21 but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

"The Lord has sworn

and will not change his mind:

'You are a priest forever.'"

22 Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Hebrews 10:19-23 shows Christians as priests entering the Most Holy Place and Christ as the great high priest over the house of God: “21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God.” Genesis 1:1 - Revelation 1:6

All Christians are priests. Peter describes our relationship as spiritual stones in the spiritual house of God and as a holy priesthood: “You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:5. Peter, then, asserts the emphatic nature of this relationship as priests, calling us a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation: “9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9

Christians are presently a kingdom and priests. The Revelation confirms all Christians as priests: “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father.” Revelation 1:6. This relationship is true now on earth and forever in the heavens: “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:10. Death has no power to change the relationship sustained by Christians as priests of God and of Christ: “6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ.” Revelation 20:6.

Christ as High Priest, with Christians as a Royal Priesthood, is a mark that matters. There is no clergy mentioned in the Bible, nor is there a laity mentioned. To so elevate the religious leaders is to demean all Christians who are the body of Christ and the house of God, serving as priests now upon the earth and eternally in heaven after the second death which has no power over them.

Christ as high priest is generally accepted.

- Hebrews 2:17: A merciful and faithful high priest
- Hebrews 3:1: The apostle and high priest whom we confess
- Hebrews 4:14, A a great high priest who sits on the throne of grace
- Hebrews 6:20: A high priest forever
- Hebrews 7:21-22: On his throne eternally and a high priest forever
 - Hebrews 10:19-21: Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God.

All Christians are priests. 1 Peter 2:9

- Living stones in the spiritual house
- A holy priesthood
- Offering spiritual sacrifices
- A chosen people
- A royal priesthood
- A holy nation

Now and eternally in heaven

- Revelation 1:6: “Made us to be a kingdom and priests.”
- Revelation 5:10: “Made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God.”
- Revelation 20:6: “The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ.”

No Clergy, No Laity, All Christians Are Priests, Now and Eternally in Heaven—

Christ, the High Priest, and All Christians, a Royal Priesthood—A Mark That Matters

1. What does the word *clergy* mean? _____
2. What does the word *laity* mean? _____
3. Who is the high priest ordained of God? _____
4. Why was Jesus made like his brothers in every way? _____
5. Jesus became what kind of priest in service to God? _____
6. Upon whom do we fix our thoughts? _____ Whom do we confess? _____
7. How long will Christ be a priest? _____? Who said this? _____ Why will it not change? _____
8. Why has Jesus become the guarantee of a better covenant? _____
9. Under the New Testament law, who may enter into the holy place? _____
10. Who is the great high priest over the house of God? _____
11. What stones build into the spiritual house of God? _____
12. How are Christians like living stones? _____
13. Who is described as the chosen people, the royal priesthood, a holy nation? _____
14. Who has made us to be a kingdom and priest to serve his God and father? _____
15. With what were we freed from our sins? _____
16. Over whom does the second death have no power? _____
17. In this same passage, who will be priest of God and Christ? _____
18. Are you a member of a church where you are taught that you a priest of God and Christ now and forever? _____