

## **The Church**

### **Colossians 1: 18**

**In John chapter nine, we saw a man who was born blind, and how the Lord Jesus Christ healed him. We saw how the man was also cast out, and excommunicated. What was going to happen? Was our Lord Jesus going to leave people like him left out? No!**

**In John chapter 10, Our Lord Jesus shows us the body of Christ, and the beginning of the Church. This is a major event in history.**

**This is comparable to the people of Israel leaving Egypt, and having to start all over again. We find this in the book of Exodus.**

**We also find this in the Reformation, where the new believers in Our Lord Jesus Christ, set up new churches. I believe that we're seeing it again.**

**In this economic downturn, combined with the emerging new world order; there is much pressure on the Church. Churches are closing all over the place. And the buildings are being sold not only for default on the mortgages, but many banks are now refusing to renegotiate their loans, even if they are still paying them.**

**Where are the people going? Some are abandoning the faith.**

**Matthew 24: 8 to 14 - All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**

**But many are starting home churches. This is almost like it was 2000 years ago. So why don't we look at what the Bible says about the Church.**

**The Church is not mentioned in the Old Testament. Back then, got set up the tabernacle in the wilderness, and then the Temple in Jerusalem. The men of Israel were to go to the Temple three times a year to attend the Feasts. They were; Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. To the Temple they brought their sacrifices and offerings. But wherever there were more than 13 Jews, they had a special building called a synagogue. Here they had their Sabbath services. Here we see our Lord Jesus Christ in Luke four. Luke 4: 14 to 21 - And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there**

was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Many in the Early Church, went to the Temple and the synagogues. However the Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. Many, including Paul, would go to the synagogue's first to preach Jesus Christ. Some believed; many did not. Then Paul would preach to the few believers in their homes or wherever they could meet. Acts 16: 11 to 15 - Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither . And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us : whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us , saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there . And she constrained us.

In John chapter 10, Our Lord Jesus showed how the Body of Christ would operate, by comparing it to a shepherd and his sheep.

In John 14: 6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

We are being shown here that it is not through sacraments or sacrifices that we can join the Body of Christ, and go to Heaven.

Matthew 16: 13 to 20 - When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound

**in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.**

**This passage has many interesting points. First of all, no one comes to Jesus by themselves. As it says in this passage, Our Heavenly Father reveals Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**This is shown in 1 Kings 18; where Elijah prayed that it was God who had turned the hearts of His people back to Him. 1 Kings 18: 36 to 39**

**- And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.**

**Peter was the first one to realize that Jesus Christ was the Messiah. And he was given a special blessing because of this.**

**Matthew 16:18 - And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This is an interesting verse; because it has been mis-interpreted many times. The Peter mentioned here, means a little stone. The rock, is a very large cliff. Clearly the two were not the same. Roman Catholicism uses this to show that Peter was set up to be the first pope. But Peter was never in Rome. The rock mentioned here is clearly Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**The Church is built upon Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Shed Blood.**

**Isn't it reassuring to know no matter what happens the devil and all his demons cannot destroy the church.**

**Romans 8: 38 & 39 - For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**Matthew 16: 19 - And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**

**Our Lord has given us His Authority to bind the demons and even to cast them out; and we loose the spirits of the Lord into us.**

**I know the pope claims these for his own; in fact they're on his personal flag. But from the great commission in Mark 16: 15 to 18 - And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He**

**that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.**

**This is meant for believers to the end of time.**

**Under the Old Covenant, God set His people up in the nation and gave them a special territory.**

**Under the New Covenant, He set His people up as a unit without national boundaries. Matthew 18: 20 - For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**

**So wherever we are, anywhere in the world, Our Lord will be with us in the presence of his Holy Spirit. Revelation 1: 20 - The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.**

**So instead of one nation of God's people, we have churches all over the world and the more the better. Each church seems to have its own protecting angel watching over it.**

**How do we respond to the Holy Spirit convicting us? John 16: 7 to 12 - Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.**

**When we confess our sins and repent; and call upon Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Saviour; we become born again.**

**Thankfully, we have 1 John 1: 9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

**We now have been brought into the Body of Christ. God the Father gives us His Holy Spirit to cleanup and seal our own spirit, until the day of redemption. Ephesians 1: 13 & 14 - In whom ye also trusted , after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

**And when we leave this earth, we will go to be with Our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 5: 8 - We are confident, I say , and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.**

**Remember Stephen, when they were stoning him;**

**Acts 7: 55 & 56 - But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.**

**Under the Old Covenant, the Glory of God was above the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. Ezekiel had an interesting vision in chapter eight. Ezekiel 8: 1 to 4 - And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month , in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.**

**The real miracle then is that God would have anything to do with all the pollution that was in the Temple.**

**The real miracle today is that God would have anything to do with all the pollution that is in us. And yet, He has put His Holy Spirit within us.**

**Then, only a few people had the Holy Spirit within them; like David, Elijah, and Elisha. Now, all believers have Him.**

**And Jesus Christ has given us a special blessing. We can have the baptism, or in-filling of His Spirit. Luke 11: 13 - If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**

**Acts 2: 1 to 4 - And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. With all the works of the devil around us; using the Holy Spirit can make the difference between living a defeated Christian life, and being a victorious overcomer doing the Works of Jesus Christ.**

**John 14: 12 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.**

**But down here, what do we do? Our Lord Jesus Christ, with His Shed Blood, set up His Church here. As Paul went around preaching the whole Gospel,**

he left small groups of believers, as the first of the home churches. And as he went out again, he would touch base with them, to encourage, exhort, and correct them whenever needed. And from time to time, he would write to give some mid-course corrections. Study what he did with the Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 5: 1 & 2 - It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

The early church also had some people to help them. Ephesians 4: 11 to 16 - And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Apostles were men who had been directly called by Our Lord for a special task. They had both seen Him, and spent much time in close fellowship with Him. This was the case for the first eleven apostles and even Paul was added later by Our Lord. Remember when they chose a replacement for Judas Iscariot by lot? This was not how Our Lord wanted it done, and so we don't hear of him again. The apostles had a special mission. They were to go to where the Gospel had never been proclaimed.

The life of Paul clearly reflects this in his missionary journeys, his setting up of churches wherever he went, and his sufferings.

2 Corinthians 11: 22 to 33 - Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in

**cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands. So to all those who claim to be modern day apostles; unless you can match the works of Paul; get lost.**

**Prophets are those called by God for a special work. Jeremiah 1: 4 & 5 - Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.**

**Prophets were to represent God to men; by declaring God's Counsel to them. When he said, "Thus saith the Lord"; people were to pay attention, and correct their sinful ways. The closer the prophets were to God; the greater they were.**

**2 Kings 2: 9 to 12 - And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.**

**And most of the prophets were killed by the manifesting mobs, who didn't want to hear the Voice of the Lord anymore.**

**Evangelists are those who have a special gift in being able to relate to unbelievers in presenting the gospel.**

**1 Corinthians 9: 19 to 23 - For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.**

**But before we go out ministering, we have to be living the faith.**

**Philippians 1: 27 to 30 - Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.**

**Actually, all believers should be like this. Pastors are very important in the local church. They are compared to shepherds who tend their sheep.**

**The tasks of a Near Eastern shepherd were:**

- to watch for enemies trying to attack the sheep;**
- to defend the sheep from attackers;**
- to heal the wounded and sick sheep;**
- to find and save lost or trapped sheep; &**
- to love them, sharing their lives and so earning their trust.**

**During World War II, a shepherd was a pilot who guided another pilot whose plane was partially disabled back to the base or carrier by flying alongside him to maintain visual contact.**

**Our Lord impressed upon Peter how important this was.**

**John 21: 15 to 19 - So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. & when he had spoken this he saith unto him Follow me. Pastors also represent their people to God, and so spend much time in praying for them, and most of it in private.**

**Teachers are to share information with others in a way that they can grasp it. The best ones realize that teaching is a vocation; a calling from God; and so have special gifts, and a love for their students. The best teachers for children are their parents. And Our Lord set the best example.**

**Matthew 4: 23 - And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their**



**synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.**

**There is a doctrine going around that encompasses all of these.**

**It's called, "The five fold ministry". It tends to promote pride and religiosity; as the men go around puffed up; taking the privileges, instead of exercising their responsibilities.**

**When there is a lot of work to do; helpers may be set up. Moses even had to do this. Numbers 11: 11 to 17 - And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness. And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.**

**And so did the Apostles. Acts 6: 1 to 8 - And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.**

**You may have noticed that denominations were not set up; only churches. And special officers were set up.**

**1 Timothy 3:1 to 13 - This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

**So to-day, we have the pastors and elders. The elders help in the ministry; staying in close contact with the members, and helping them where needed. They don't need to be appointed; God will raise up those He wants. 1 Corinthians 16: 15 & 16 - I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us , and laboureth.**

**By doing routine and maintenance tasks; the pastor is free to do his tasks; like praying, studying the Scriptures, and fulfilling his role as a shepherd.**

**There are many models of church structure out there.**

**Roman Catholicism and its offshoots are very autocratic, bureaucratic, and controlling; besides all the false doctrine.**

**The Shepherding Movement, on the other side, also is very controlling.**

**Whatever happened to our freedom? John 8: 36 - If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

**Why do so many churches refuse to help their people get free; with the full gospel of salvation, healing and deliverance?**

**Matthew 23: 1 to 7 - Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and**

**enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.**

**Also churches are not community centres, where anything goes. They are places where believers gather to worship Our Lord, on a regular basis, and on time. 1 Corinthians 16:2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.**

**The giving of tithes and offerings is still important for the Lord's Service.**

**Because of the loose structure here, I tell people to enquire of the Lord as what to do with theirs. There is much need out there in the Body of Christ; and I know that in the third world, many are crying out for Bibles.**

**Churches are where people can hear the preaching of God's Word, and learn, and develop.**

**Hebrews 5: 11 to 6: 2 - Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.**

**Many churches are involved in things that don't please Our Lord. What would He do if He was here on the earth?**

**Luke 19: 45 to 48 - And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.**

**While believers and repentant sinners are welcome in church; sometimes there are those who don't want to grow in the Lord.**

**Romans 14: 1 - Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.**

**Titus 3: 9 to 11 - But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned**

of himself.

**Matthew 7: 15 - Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**

**Acts 20: 29 - For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.**

**Our Lord Jesus even set up a conflict resolution process.**

**Matthew 18: 15 to 17 - Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.**

**Besides being able to worship together, believers support each other by praying for them, and helping them as they need it.**

**Acts 2: 44 to 47 - And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions & goods, & parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, & breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness & singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.**

**And they can share in the only two official sacraments; Baptism and Communion. Matthew 28: 19 & 20 - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**

**Acts 19: 1 to 7 - And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.**

**Luke 22: 15 to 20 - And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:**

**For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it , and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.**

**And so, while walking down here on the earth, we are not isolated. Our Lord has sent His Holy Spirit to help us. He even brought us into the Body of Christ; and set up His Church for us.**

**Colossians 1: 18 - And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.**

**Then it is easier to fulfil His Commands.**

**Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

**You see; Our Lord is preparing us for our re-union.**

**Revelation 19: 5 to 9 - And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.**

**Praise the Lord!**

**Praise the Name of Jesus!**

**Pastor T. John Franklin**

**Church of Salvation, Healing, and Deliverance**

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