

ANSWERS

by Keith Piper

**A Series of Follow Up Bible Studies
On Life's Key Questions**

CHURCH ISSUES



Are you “ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO”?

“And the things that thou hast heard of me
among many witnesses,
the same commit thou to faithful men,
who shall be able to teach others also.” II Timothy 2:2

Website: www.keithpiper.org

30.	DOOR KNOCKING.....	137
-----	--------------------	-----

Church Issues

31.	What an Independent Baptist Church Stands for.....	138
32.	Statement of Faith of Liberty Baptist Church (Independent)	141
33.	Reasons for Coming to Church	147
34.	Baptism	148
35.	Friendship	152
36.	How to Start an Independent Baptist Church	157
37.	The Lord’s Supper	158
38.	Why the Church Exists	159
39.	Ushers’ Duties.....	161
40.	Pastors’ Ethics	162
41.	Things Dead or Lukewarm Churches Won’t Teach You	163
42.	Valuable Things a Good Church Produces	164
43.	Things a Good Church is Compared to	164
44.	Don’t Attend a Counterfeit Church	168
45.	How to Have Genuine Revival.....	169

31. WHAT AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH STANDS FOR

Bible Reading: Matthew 16:5-12

Aim: To make it clear as to what an Independent Baptist Church is and what it stands for, so that we can have strong convictions as to the truth of our position. To beware of the leaven of false doctrine.

Introduction

To many people an Independent Baptist church is something new. To those people in denominations, they find the concept of each church being independent and accountable only to God as difficult to understand. Yet this is precisely the New Testament pattern.

Jesus, in Matthew 16:5-12, compares false doctrine to leaven (ie: yeast), something which permeates the whole batch. Jesus tells his disciples in v.6 to TAKE HEED and BEWARE of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Jesus explains this leaven in v.11,12 to be their false doctrine. Today, much false doctrine exists in Christendom, and we must be very careful to check every idea with the Bible.

Independent churches that baptised believers by immersion were the norm up to 300 AD. They paralleled the Eastern Orthodox and Roman churches. They predated the Reformation. It is not new, nor novel. It lays claim to a long, and glorious heritage. It has been a persecuted church.

Today there are millions of Independent Baptist churches all over the world in China, India, Africa, North and South America, Asia and Europe. They meet in buildings, houses, or in open air in poor countries.

What makes an Independent Baptist church so distinct? An Independent Baptist church is a:

1. **SELF GOVERNING CHURCH** with no external hierarchy. All churches in the New Testament were independent, autonomous, self governing, responsible only to God, not to the commands of some man made hierarchy. The leading of the Lord is sought on all matters and this independence of a man-made hierarchy actually increases our dependence on the Lord. In Revelation 2,3 each church is accountable to Jesus Christ, not to an external, man-made hierarchy.
2. **BIBLE CENTRED CHURCH**
An Independent Baptist Church is a Bible believing, teaching and obeying church. The Bible is central in every service, because God “has magnified his Word above all his name.” Psalm 138:2. The Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, without error and is the standard by which all behaviour and beliefs are judged. 2 Timothy 3:16,17 and 2:15.
3. **KING JAMES VERSION** of the Bible is used, and not modern versions because of their many omissions and errors. This is because they were translated from mainly two corrupted manuscripts namely Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus. Omissions in modern versions include:
Matthew 17:21; 18:11 and 23:14
Mark 7:16; 9:44, 46; 11:26 and 15:28
Luke 17:36 and 23:17
John 5:4
Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7 and 28:29
Romans 16:24
Verses changed, left out partly, or cast doubt on are: Mark 16:9-20; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 5:7,8 and John 3:13; 1 Corinthians 15:47.
We believe in 100% inspiration and preservation of the whole Bible to today as in the King James Version which is translated from the vast majority of NT manuscripts (Psalms 12:6,7).
4. **ACCURATELY INTERPRETING THE BIBLE**
The Bible has only one correct interpretation. This means it is not of any private interpretation (2 Peter 1:20). Rules for correct interpretation are applied such as grammar, context, history, cross-references, word meanings, and whether a passage is literal or figurative speech.

5. **BELIEVERS BAPTISM BY IMMERSION**, not infant sprinkling.
Baptism means to dip or immerse and pictures the Gospel of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is for adult believers, not for infant unbelievers (Acts 8:37, Mark 1:9-11).
by: Immersion, not sprinkling (Matthew 28:19, 20).
to: Obey Christ, not to get saved.
by: a Bible-believing Church, not a false church.
“Sprinkling” in Greek is “rantizo”; Immersion is “baptizo”. The early church immersed believers, but never sprinkled them. Sprinkling was a pagan practice introduced later. Baptism by immersion after salvation shows that a person wishes to obey God’s Word rather than men.
6. **SOUL WINNING and MISSIONARY MINDED**
An Independent Baptist church takes the Great Commission seriously as we are accountable to Christ to be fishers of men (Matthew 4:19, Matthew 28:19,20). We do not just witness, but we seek to explain the Gospel clearly to lost people, challenging them to receive Jesus Christ as their Saviour from sin. We also see the need to preach the Gospel in regions beyond, and the starting of Independent Baptist churches all over the world.
We believe that men are eternally damned to hell without Christ as their Saviour, and it is our responsibility to spread the Gospel to all the world.
7. **PREMILLENNIAL, LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY**
An Independent Baptist Church looks for the blessed hope of believers being caught up to heaven at the return of Christ to the air (Titus 2:13 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17) and to the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ to rule on the earth for 1,000 years. Prophecy is to be taught and taken literally except where the passage uses figurative language. 1,000 years rule of Christ is literally 1,000 years. We look for the catching away of believers, seven year tribulation, glorious return of Christ to earth, 1,000 year rule of Christ, new heavens, new earth, and new Jerusalem. Since about 25% of the Bible is prophetic, we dare not ignore it.
8. **CREATION BY GOD IN SIX LITERAL DAYS**
An Independent Baptist Church believes that when God says He created the heaven and earth in six literal days, He means exactly what He says. (Exodus 20:11). God did not use the unscientific theory of evolution to create life. We resist the modernist trend to believe evolution. We choose to believe God as Creator rather than man's vain philosophy and deceit of evolution, which is woefully lacking real evidence.
9. **PURITY OF LIFE. SEPARATION FROM WORLDLINESS AND SIN. A COMMITMENT TO HOLINESS, GOD AND TRUTH.**
“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” 1 John 2:15,16.
2 Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1 tells us to “come out from, be separate from, and touch not the unclean thing, and to perfect holiness in fear of God.”
Jesus warned His disciples (Matthew 7:15-23), as did Paul warn the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:28-30), against grievous wolves who would come in sheep's clothing. Jude 3,4 warned against those who would creep in unawares and for us to earnestly contend for the faith (doctrine). 2 Peter 2:1 warns against false teachers in the church. We are to “flee fornication” and all ungodliness. The Independent Baptist Church stands apart from apostasy (1 Timothy 4:1,2). We do not fellowship with churches which teach false doctrine (Hebrews 6:1,2) or tolerate unbelieving religious leaders (Romans 16:17,18).
10. **NOT FIVE POINT CALVINIST (not TULIP doctrine)**
We do not believe that God chooses one person to be saved before birth and another person to be damned. This is not the just God of the Bible. God makes salvation 100% available freely to all mankind, and God holds man 100% responsible to receive Christ as Saviour. Man is totally depraved, but can still call on Christ to save him. God chooses people not unconditionally, but

on the condition of Christ's blood sacrifice being claimed for oneself. Salvation is not limited to those who would be saved, but Christ tasted death for every/all men (Hebrews 2:9).

God's grace to be saved is not irresistible but resistible (Acts 7:51; 1 Peter 1:4,5). Saints do not persevere in salvation, but Christ keeps us saved forever.

11. **REVEREND MELODIOUS WORSHIP, NOT ROCK MUSIC**

"Rock music has always been the devil's music." D. Bowie.

Ephesians 5:19 "Making melody ... to the Lord."

It is wrong to bring rock music into the church. Don't use worldly music to worship God.

Don't use worldly music to reach the world for Christ.

12. **AVOID PAGAN PRACTICES** like infant baptism, black robes, rosary beads, statues, Mary worship, holy water, confession to priest, and confirmation.

13. **NOT TONGUES SPEAKING, SLAYING IN SPIRIT, or NEW REVELATIONS**

1 Corinthians 13:11 "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

1 Corinthians 14:22 "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not ..."

1 Corinthians 14:15 "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also..."

The tongues gift was a temporary sign to warn unbelieving Jews to repent or God would judge them. They failed to repent, so God used Titus, the Roman General, to destroy Jerusalem in 70 AD. Hence, the tongues gift is no longer relevant after 70 AD. Praying in tongues is wrong because we must understand what we are praying for. (1 Corinthians 14:15).

"Slaying in the Spirit" is not endorsed for Christians in the Bible. It was a warning of coming judgment on Israel in 712 BC, "they might go, and fall backward, be broken, and snared, and taken." Isaiah 28:13. Therefore don't do it. New revelations from God are not necessary because the Bible is our only and complete revelation from God for this age (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

14. **HELL**

An Independent Baptist Church teaches the reality of a literal burning hell of fire that Christ rejecters send themselves to after death. Jesus Christ warned people against going to hell many times, such as:

"Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Matthew 25:41,46.

"Into hell where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark 9:44,46.

Some people may not like hearing about hell, but we must tell people all the relevant facts. Hell is relevant to unbelievers.

CONCLUSION

An Independent Baptist Church is more concerned about pleasing and obeying God, than about pleasing men. The Word of God will judge us at the last day (John 12:48). We won't have to give account of our lives to men, but to God (Romans 14:12). It is very important **WHAT** we believe.

Matthew 5:19 "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called THE LEAST in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall DO and TEACH them, the same shall be called GREAT in the kingdom of heaven."

Question: Do you want to be called "the least" or "great" in God's kingdom?

Therefore, get involved in doing God's work in an Independent Baptist Church. If you are in a church that does not hold to these important truths or holds false doctrines **GET OUT OF IT NOW**. You will never reform it by staying in it. God says: "What fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." 2 Cor. 6:14,17; Rev. 18:4,5.

Question: Will you be like many chief rulers who believed on Christ, yet were afraid of being put out of the synagogue because "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."? John 12:42,43.

32. STATEMENT OF FAITH of LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH (Independent).

"..... where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Corinthians 3:17.

I. NAME.

The church shall be known as Liberty Baptist Church (Independent).

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

The purpose and programme of this church is to obey the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20). The practice by Pastors and people of soul-winning, discipleship, baptism, Bible teaching, fellowship and edification of the church are the reasons for this church's existence.

The church's aim is to show forth Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour in all things.

Excessive administration will be avoided as will any social or secular activity that tends to divert the church from its God given responsibilities. The financial and physical resources of this church are to be constantly focused on fulfilling the Great Commission.

III. COVENANT (Mutual Agreement).

As members of Liberty Baptist church we accept the following agreement.

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and upon our public profession of our faith in Him, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We promise that we will watch over and counsel one another in the spirit of brotherly love (Galatians 6:1,2), that we will remember one another in our prayers (James 5:16), and that we will help one another in sickness and in distress.

We further agree, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love (John 15:12); to strive for the growth of this church in grace, knowledge, holiness and comfort of Christ (II Peter 3:18); to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin (Ephesians 5:26,27); and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor (James 1:27), and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We further covenant to maintain family and private devotions (Deuteronomy 6:4-25); to educate our children in the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to live carefully in this present world (II Timothy 2:22-26; Titus 2:12); to be just in our dealings, faithful in our responsibilities, and exemplary in our behaviour (I Timothy 4:12); to avoid all gossip, backbiting and excessive anger (Titus 2:6-8); to abstain from everything that will cause our brother to stumble (Romans 14:13; 15:3), or that will bring reproach upon the cause of Christ (I Thessalonians 5:22); and to strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, that amidst evil and good report we will humbly and earnestly seek to live to the honour and glory of Him who loved us and gave himself for us (I Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Philippians 2:3,4,14-16,20,21).

We also agree that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word (Hebrews 10:24,25).

IV. DOCTRINAL STATEMENT.

Members of this church shall hold as an essential part of their profession of faith the following evangelical doctrines:

1. The Scriptures.

We believe that the Holy Bible is God's infallible, inerrant Word, supernaturally and verbally inspired in totality, through holy men of old, such that the actual words were God's words without error or contradiction. The Bible therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to men (II Timothy 3:16,17); the true basis of Christian union and the supreme and only standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried. The Word of God has been preserved in the vast majority of the manuscripts from which the Authorized Version (King James Version) has been translated.

- a) By "the Holy Bible" we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written and preserved to today does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but **IS** the very Word of God.
- b) By "Inspiration" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from all error and omission as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired (II Peter 1:19-21; II Timothy 3:16; Matthew 24:35; Rev. 22:18,19).

2. The True God.

We believe that there is only one living and true God, the Creator and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; perfectly holy, worthy of all possible honour, confidence and love, who is the Upholder, Redeemer and Saviour of mankind. In the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, equal in every Divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. (Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; II Corinthians 13:14)

3. The Deity of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the second person of the Godhead. He is co-existent, co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father of whose person and glory He is the exact expression. This absolute deity of Jesus Christ is indissolubly combined with His perfect humanity in one Person. He is the one and only Mediator between God and man. (I Timothy 2:5; John 20:28; I Timothy 3:16; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 2:9,15-19; Hebrews 1:2,3; John 1:1-4).

4. The Holy Spirit.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son, and of the same nature. The Holy Spirit was active in the creation (Genesis 1:2); in relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled (II Thessalonians 2:6, 7). He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment (John 16:8-11). He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony. He seeks to glorify Christ in all things (John 16:14,15). He is the agent in the new birth (John 3:3-8). He seals, endues with power, guides into all truth (John 16:13), teaches, witnesses to our salvation (I John 3:24), sanctifies and helps the believer.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to the church for mutual edification (Ephesians 4:7-16). The temporary, miraculous sign gifts (for example, tongues, interpretation of tongues, miracles, apostleship, prophecy, knowledge and healing), were intended to be transitional and foundational. These ceased when Israel finally rejected the gospel (I Cor. 13:8-13; 14:21,22; Mark 16:17-20).

5. Creation.

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively. Man was created directly in God's own image (Genesis 1:26,27), and after His own likeness. Man's creation was not a matter of evolution (atheistic or theistic) by change of species by developments through periods of time from lower to higher forms, but that all life was made directly by God, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind".

6. Fall of Man.

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of God, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state (Genesis 3:1-24) in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners (Romans 5:12) by nature and by choice, therefore being under just condemnation without defence or excuse (Romans 1:18-20).

7. Virgin Birth.

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner, born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of a woman. Mary is not an object of worship or prayer, but just a chosen vessel (Luke 1:46,47). Jesus Christ is both the Son of God and God the Son (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:23).

8. Salvation.

a) **The Purposes of God.**

Election and predestination are according to God's fore-knowledge of man's response to the conviction of the Spirit of God. (I Peter 1:2). All men are called to salvation, convicted of sin and enlightened. They therefore are able to exercise faith in Christ. It is God's desire that all men without exception should be saved (II Peter 3:9), though He knows beforehand that many will reject His free offer of mercy.

People are not predestined or ordained to believe, but those who of their own free will, exercise faith in Christ, in God's fore-knowledge, are appointed to eternal and heavenly blessing and they are eternally secure from the moment of conversion (Romans 8:29; I Timothy 2:4-6; Ezekiel 18:23)

b) **Christ's Atonement for the Sin of Mankind.**

The sinner is able to be redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In His death, Christ is the sinners' representative and substitute (II Corinthians 5:21). Something happened to Christ, and because it happened to Christ it need not happen to us. i.e. Because Christ died for our sins, we need not die for them if we accept His sacrifice. The sinner is reconciled to God and justified, not by human merit, but by Divine grace and by faith alone in what Christ has done (Ephesians 2:8,9,10). This atonement is sufficient for the whole world (Hebrews 2:9), but efficient only for those who personally believe in Christ as their Saviour.

Christ honoured God's law by His sinless obedience (Hebrews 4:15), and by His death made a full atonement for our sins (Colossians 2:14-17). His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by his death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. Having risen from the dead for our justification (Romans 4:25), He is now enthroned in heaven (Heb 1:8), and in His perfection is in every way qualified to be a suitable (Hebrew 7:25), compassionate (I Peter 5:7), and a completely sufficient Saviour (I John 2:2).

c) **Freeness of Salvation.**

We believe that the blessings of Salvation are made free to all by the Gospel of Christ (Rom 1:16), that it is the duty of all to accept salvation freely, being sorry for their sins and having an obedient faith (Acts 2:37). Nothing holds back the Salvation of the greatest sinner on earth (John 6:37), except his own desire to sin (John 3:19,20), and his willing refusal of the Gospel (Acts 13:46). This refusal puts a man in a very great judgment (Rev 14:11; Matt 25:46). Repentance is a sincere and thorough changing of the mind and disposition in regard to sin, involving a sense of personal guilt and helplessness, apprehension of God's mercy, a strong desire to escape or be saved from sin, and a desire to abandon it.

d) **Repentance and Faith.**

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn duties (Luke 13:3), and also graces that cannot be separated (Hebrews 6:1), worked in our souls by the Spirit of God (John 16:8). Therefore, being deeply convicted of our guilt (Luke 5:8), danger (Jude 23), and helplessness (Luke 23:42), and of the only way of salvation being through Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Romans 10:9), we turn to God with true sorrow (Romans 10:10), confession and asking for mercy (Luke 18:13); at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Saviour (Hebrews 10:10,12,14).

Faith is **produced** by the **Word of God** (Romans 10:17), showing our need, stating the promises, and conditions, and pointing out the blessings of salvation. Saving faith **begins** with **intellectual belief** of the Word of God, that Christ is available as our Saviour. **Prayer** is the **means to faith**, where we claim the promise of Christ as Saviour. Having done this we are then saved by faith in Jesus Christ.

e) **Regeneration.**

We believe that to be saved, sinners must be **regenerated** or born again (John 3:3), (a change of state). Regeneration means getting a **new mind** (I Corinthians 2:15,16), a new nature

(II Peter 1:4), and becoming a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24). A new governing power has come into the regenerated man's life by which he is enabled to become holy in experience. All this is done in a way above our understanding by the power of the Holy Spirit, working with God's Truth (I Peter 1:23). The results of regeneration can be seen in our lives in the fruit of the Spirit, and in **newness of life** (Romans 6:4).

f) **Justification** is the judicial act of God whereby those who put faith in Christ as Saviour are declared righteous in God's eyes, and free from guilt and punishment due for their sin. (In effect, it is just as if I've never sinned). It is a change of position before God (Romans 5:1,2). We have acceptance with God on account of Christ's righteousness (II Corinthians 5:21). Justification includes the forgiveness of sin (Romans 4:7,8), and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ (Romans 4:20-25). It brings us into peace and favour with God (Romans 4:20-25).

g) **Sanctification.**

Sanctification is living a life separated from a sinful world and dedicated to God.

Each believer is free from sin's guilt, but daily needs deliverance from sin's power. The Old Man (the Old Human Spirit which has produced a habit pattern or way of life in the soul, Romans 6:6), has been crucified, but the principle of sin still operates in the believer's members (Romans 7:17), and will continue to do so until the redemption of the body at the coming of Christ for His Saints. Victory over sinful tendencies is the privilege of every believer, by the Holy Spirit's control and filling. Victory is appropriated by faith (Romans 6:6; 7:21-25; 8:2).

Sanctification is the way by which we are made to share God's Holiness (Hebrews 10:10,14). It is a progressive process (Psalm 119:9), commencing when one is born again (II Corinthians 5:17), and is carried on in the heart of the believer, by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15), through the Word of God (Colossians 3:16), self-examination (I Corinthians 11:31), self-denial (Luke 9:23), watchfulness (Revelation 16:15; Matthew 24:42,44,46), and prayer (Luke 18:1).

h) **Security of the Believer.**

We believe that once a person has been born again into the family of God by faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour, it is impossible for him to lose his salvation. He is kept saved by the power of God unto eternal salvation. (I Peter 1:4, 5; John 10:28).

9. **Church.**

The Church is the body of Christ composed of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. She has her visible form in the local assembly which is responsible for fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20), ministry and mutual fellowship. The church is built on the foundation of the apostles (New Testament) and the prophets (Old Testament). (Ephesians 2:19-22). Evangelists, pastors and teachers are given in our time to teach and lead (Ephesians 4:11-13). Jesus Christ is the only Head and Founder (Matthew 16:18) of the Church by which all the saved are directed as members of His body (Ephesians 4:15; 5:23). The gifts of the Spirit are given to the church for her edification (Ephesians 4:12).

10. **Offices.**

The only offices in a true Church are **Pastors** (also called Bishops, I Timothy 3:1, Elders and Overseers), and **Deacons** (servants), who are appointed by the church for spiritual leadership and service. These are to be fit men as in I Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4; and Acts 6:1-8.

11. **Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.**

a) We believe that Scriptural **Baptism** is the immersion of a believer in water (Acts 2:41; John 3:23; Mark 1:9-11), in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, symbolizing the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection as the means of salvation, with its effect in our death to sin, burial of our Old Man, and resurrection to a new way of life. (Romans 6:1-6; Acts 8:38).

- b) The **Lord's Table** is to be a constant reminder of the sufferings of Christ, His broken body and precious blood by which salvation is purchased and heaven opened. (Acts 20:28). The elements of the supper are unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:26-29). In the Lord's Supper the believer remembers the Lord Jesus Christ till He comes again (I Corinthians 11:26). The taking of the elements does not impart forgiveness, but should be an occasion for solemn self-examination, and putting right any division which may occur within the Body of Christ. All true believers of the Lord Jesus are invited to the Table. This ordinance shall be observed on a regular and frequent basis (I Corinthians 11:23-29).

12. The Resurrection of the Dead.

Christ arose bodily "the third day according to the Scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:4); that He ascended "to the right hand of the throne of God", and that He alone is our "merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God".

After death, the bodies of men return to dust, but their spirits and souls return immediately to God (Ecclesiastes 3:21), the righteous to be with Him in heaven (II Corinthians 5:8), and the unrighteous to be reserved for the judgment (Hebrews 9:27). There will be two resurrections, the saved will be resurrected at the first resurrection (I Thess 4:13-18; Revelation 20:4-6; Matthew 27:51-54), and the unsaved at the second resurrection. (Rev 20:11-15; Acts 24:15; I Cor 15:1-58).

13. The Return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in and accept the Sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their face and full value.

At the end of this age, according to His promise (John 14:3), Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in His glory to the earth (Mark 8:38). The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits His return. He will appear in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16,17), and He will bring His saints with Him (I Thessalonians 4:13). "The dead in Christ shall rise first", and the living saints "shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." The time of this event is known by no man (Matthew 24:44). Following this event will be a time of very great trouble on the earth called the Tribulation (Matthew 24:21,22). This Tribulation will see the death of many on the earth and only those who have Jesus Christ as Saviour have any hope of being delivered from this great trouble. (I Thessalonians 5:9). Christ will therefore come initially to the air as the Heavenly Bridegroom to receive His Church before the Tribulation, and later come as King of Kings after the Great Tribulation when He will judge the nations and reign over all the earth for 1,000 years. (Revelation 20:1-7; Matthew 24:3-31; 25:31-34).

14. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a basic and important difference between the righteous and the wicked (Matthew 25:31-33). Only those who through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour are justified, and are therefore truly righteous in God's sight (Romans 3:24-26). This is because the believer's sins have been judged in Christ and at the first resurrection, believers receive rewards for faithful service. (II Corinthians 5:10; I Corinthians 3:11-15; Romans 14:10; Revelation 22:12). All others, being unbelievers, are under the wrath of God (John 3:36), and immediately upon death enter the literal fire and torment of hell (Luke 16:19-31). They remain there until the end of the 1,000 year rule of Christ, where they are resurrected bodily to stand before the Great White Throne to be judged according to their works. They will then all be consigned to a literal lake of fire where they will suffer everlasting punishment. (Revelation 20:11-15; 14:10,11).

15. Satan.

Satan is a created angelic being, who was once holy, enjoyed heavenly honours, but through pride and rebellious ambition to be like the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels who now make up the demon hordes. He is now the evil prince of the power of the air, the unholy god of this world, man's great tempter, the enemy of the Godhead, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power behind the present apostasy, the force behind the Antichrist and the chief of all the powers of darkness. He is destined to final defeat at the hands of God the Son, and to the punishment of an everlasting justice in the lake of fire, a place prepared for him and his angels. (Matthew 25:41; Ezekiel 28:1-19; Revelation 12:4; 20:10).

16. Civil Government.

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment (Romans 13:1-7) for the interest and good order of human society. Rulers are to be prayed for (I Timothy 2:1-3), conscientiously honoured (Matthew 22:21), and obeyed (Matthew 17:24-27; Romans 3:31) except in matters clearly opposed to the will of Almighty God (Acts 4:19), who is the only True King and Lord of Heaven and Earth (Revelation 19:16).

17. Missions.

We believe that the command to give the Gospel to the World is clear and unmistakable and that this commission is given to the churches. (Acts 1:8; 13:1-5).

Having read the Statement of Faith of Liberty Baptist Church (Independent) and finding myself in agreement with the doctrines, principles and practices contained herein, I hereby apply for membership of this church and agree to conscientiously work towards the achieving of its goals as stated above.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

The Cost, Curse and Cure of Adultery

“Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get: and his reproach shall not be wiped away.” Proverbs 6:32-35
“Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Exodus 20:14. (Matthew 5:28)

“Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

Challenge: When tempted to commit adultery, consider these consequences for you and for others:

1. God: Grieving the Lord who redeemed me.

2. Jesus Christ: At the Judgment Seat of Christ having to look Jesus in the face and give account.

3. Spouse: Inflicting untold hurt on your best friend and loyal wife, losing (her) respect and trust.

4. Children: Hurting your children, destroying your example and credibility and nullifying your efforts to teach them to obey God. There is a high chance that they will follow your sinful example.

5. Your Family: Causing shame to your extended family.

6. Yourself: a) Creating unforgettable guilt. God can forgive you, but you may not forgive yourself.

b) Creating memories and flashbacks that may plague future relationships with your wife.

c) Possibly catching sexually transmitted diseases (such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis, herpes, AIDS), infecting your spouse, resulting in infertility, death or birth defects in your children.

d) Regret and loneliness if your adulterous partner leaves you, losing both your wife and your lover.

e) Losing possible rewards in heaven (II John 8; I John 2:28; Rev 3:11).

f) God will discipline you in some ways on earth (I Thess 4:3-8).

7. Ministry: Wasting years of ministry training by losing your testimony & credibility to teach Bible.

8. Your Teachers: Wasting the years of hard work that others have invested in training you to teach.

9. Christian Community: Undermining the good example & hard work of other Christians in your area

10. Satan: Bringing great pleasure to Satan and to the enemies of Christ (II Samuel 12:14).

11. Your Disciples: Causing shame and pain to your friends, your converts and those you’ve disciple.

12. The Woman: Causing her possible pregnancy, personal and financial costs and a lifelong reminder.

13. The Woman’s Husband and Children: Hatred, resentment & loathing at breaking up their family.

Conclusion: Think through these consequences of adultery before and if you face this temptation.

Adultery is too expensive and not worth it. “Be sure your sin will find you out.” Numbers 32:23.

Prevention is the key. There is no cure to these consequences. “Resist the devil & he will flee from you”

33. REASONS FOR COMING TO CHURCH

If you are: i) not coming to God's house regularly, or ii) not seeking to build it, then

Consider these reasons why you should fully direct your energies to build this and other local churches:

1. God commands us to meet together to consider one another and to **PROVOKE** one another to love and to good works. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much more, as ye see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:24,25.
2. To rescue people from **HELL**. "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments.....and said,..... I am tormented in this flame." Luke 16:23,24.
3. By coming to church, you **TEACH YOUR CHILDREN** that God's **House is important**.
By not coming to church, you teach your children to forsake **God, God's House, God's people** and **God's work**. You also teach them that the things of God **do not matter**. Deuteronomy 6:4,9.
4. Coming to church is an unselfish thing that we do: i) To put ourselves out to help others,
ii) To glorify God,
iii) To extend God's kingdom. Matthew 6:33.
5. You will never be fruitful 100 fold by avoiding church. Do you want to be fruitful? Matt. 13:23.
6. If you know what is right and don't do it, God will count you as unfaithful. Luke 12:42-48.
7. It **proves** our love for God and for others. II Corinthians 8:8.
8. If **Christ gave eternal life to us**, we should give our time and life for God and others. II Cor. 8:9.
9. Not to suffer loss of rewards in eternity. I Corinthians 3:10-15.
10. Coming to church proves our salvation, because we show our love for the brethren. I John 3:14-16
11. **Jesus** went to God's house weekly. Luke 4:16.
12. To learn obedience. If we obey God by attending church, we'll obey God in big things. Luk 16:10-21
13. To become a **Bible Teacher**. Hebrews 5:12.
14. To become great in God's eyes like Moses who: i) Refused worldly honour, v.24
ii) **Chose to suffer affliction with the people of God**,
iii) Did not pursue the pleasures of sin for a season,
iv) He had respect for the recompense of **God's eternal reward**. (Hebrews 11:24-27).
15. We are being watched by so great a cloud of witness of angels and departed believers. Heb. 12:1.
16. To be a labourer in God's harvest. Matthew 9:36-38.
To **reap and receive eternal wages** and **gather fruit** unto eternal life. John 4:34-38.
17. a) To multiply our talents. Matthew 25:19-21.
b) For God to say "Well done thou good and faithful servant."
c) To become ruler over many things. Matthew 24:44-45.
18. To lay up treasures in Heaven. Matthew 6:19.
19. The **Lord is coming soon**. I John 2:28; Romans 14:12. We will all have to give **account of our life and actions** to God. We will be either **confident** or **ashamed**. Revelation 3:11.
20. If you reject the Holy Spirit's promptings on big things like church, you'll never hear God's promptings on important smaller things.
21. The preacher's message at church is often exactly what you **need to hear** from God.
22. To get re-motivated and inspired to serve God.
23. To set up a lighthouse for the **truth** of **Christ** and **salvation** to the community. Matthew 5:16.
24. So you can notice and encourage any **new** or **struggling people**.
25. So you can get the advice of **Godly Christians** regarding **problems** you may have.
26. So you can help **fight** and pull in the spiritual battle for souls. Ephesians 6:11-19.
27. So you can learn soul winning. Matthew 4:19.
28. So you honour the Lord with your tithes and support and send out missionaries. Malachi 3:7-12.
29. You get your next instructions from God at church.
30. It is the first base to spiritual growth.
31. Building this church is a key to multiplying other churches.
32. It gives you self discipline to learn more.

34. BAPTISM

Aim: To be convinced about believers' baptism by immersion.

To encourage believers to get baptised as soon as possible after salvation.

The conditions of Bible baptism are:

- a) Right candidate - believer. Acts 8:35-39.
- b) Right motive - obedience to Christ. Matthew 28:18-20.
- c) Right method - immersion. Mark 1:9-11.
- d) Right authority - local church. Acts 2:41,47.

Baptism pictures:

- a) The **Gospel** of Christ's death, burial and resurrection that I am trusting in to pay for my sins, as I go down in, under and come up out of water.
- b) **Death** to my old way of life, **burial** of my old man & his habits, & **rising** to a new life with Christ.

We should get baptised because:

- a) Christ was baptised by immersion. Mark 1:9-11.
- b) We can completely obey Christ here.
- c) It greatly helps us take a confident stand publicly for Christ.
- d) It helps our unsaved family and friends to understand the gospel.
- e) It is the answer of a good conscience toward God, meaning that our conscience is eased. 1 Pet.3:21

1. MEANING OF BAPTISM.^{908, 911}

- a) baptizo = to **whelm, make fully wet, dip, cover wholly with a fluid.**
It never means sprinkle (Greek = rantizo⁴⁴⁷²), nor does it mean pour (Greek=ekcheo¹⁶³²).
- b) Baptism means "**identification**" with a person, a group, a message, or an event. For example, John's baptism associated his followers with his message of righteousness.
 - i) For James and John to be baptised with **Christ's baptism** meant to be associated with Christ's suffering (Mark 10:38-39).
 - ii) To be baptised with the **Spirit** associates one with the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13) and with the new life in Christ (Romans 6:1-10).
 - iii) To be baptised unto **Moses** (I Corinthians 10:2) involved identification under his leadership in bringing the Israelites out of Egypt.
 - iv) To be baptised for the **dead** (I Corinthians 15:29) means to be identified with the Christian group and take the place of a believer who had died.
 - v) **Christian baptism** (by immersion in water, after salvation) means identification with the **message of the gospel**, the **person of Christ** the Saviour, and with the **group of believers** and **their beliefs**.
- c) Baptism signifies **repentance** and **forgiveness of sins** (in Acts 2:38, "for" here means "because of"). Forgiveness has already been received at salvation.
- d) Water Baptism signifies **Spirit Baptism**, when the Holy Spirit indwelt us at salvation. I Corinthians 12:13.
- e) Baptism means **obeying Christ's command** to be baptised. Matthew 28:18-20.
- f) Baptism means **separation from sin by death**.
"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Colossians 3:3.
- g) Baptism means to **identify with a local church**. I Corinthians 12:13.

2. IMPORTANCE OF BAPTISM.

Baptism is not part of the Gospel. "For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel" (I Corinthians 1:17) and does not save us from hell. Baptism is very important as a step of obedience after salvation. Some people who hold to infant sprinkling as the correct baptism, when confronted with the Biblical facts of immersion baptism, defend their position by saying that baptism is not an important doctrine. However, the Bible emphasizes baptism's importance as follows:

- a) **Christ was baptised** (Mark 1:9-11; Matthew 3:13-17). Note that Jesus came up out of the water showing that He was in, under the water. He was baptised to fulfil all righteousness meaning that it was an example for us to follow to live righteously. (I Peter 2:21).
- b) **Christ approved** of his disciple's baptising. John 4:1,2.
- c) **Christ commanded** that people be baptised in this age. (Matthew 28:19,20). This applies to the apostles and to all believers in the church age, as seen in Christ promising His presence with us all to the end of the age.
- d) **The early church gave an important place to baptism** as seen in these cases:
Acts 2:38,41 (Pentecost); 8:12,13 (Simon); 8:36-38 (Eunuch); 9:18 (Paul); 10:47,48 (Cornelius' household); 16:15,33 (Lydia and Philippian jailer); 18:8 (Crispus and the Corinthians); 19:5 (John's disciples were rebaptised).
The early church never thought of a believer remaining unbaptised.
- e) The New Testament uses baptism **to picture important theological truths**. For example, Romans 6:1-10 shows our union with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection.
"For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). This verse shows our putting on Christ.
I Peter 3:21 shows that baptism saves us from a bad conscience.
- f) Hebrews 6:1,2 states that the doctrine of Baptisms is a foundation principle of the **Doctrine of Christ**. It is as important as repentance, faith, resurrection and judgment.
- g) It proves that we wish to **obey Christ** and the **Bible** rather than men.

3. THE METHOD OF BAPTISM: IMMERSION, POURING or SPRINKLING?

- a) Baptism in the Greek is "Baptizo" which undoubtedly means immersion, never sprinkling "rantizo", or pouring "ekcheo".
- b) In Mark 1:10, Jesus came "up out of the water" showing that we too should be baptised by immersion.
In Acts 8:38,39, the Eunuch came "up out of the water" showing that he had to have been "in under the water".
- c) Only immersion pictures the meaning of baptism, which is death to my old way of life, burial of my old man with his habits, and rising to a new life with Christ. Romans 6:1-4.
- d) "Pouring", not "sprinkling", was the first exception to immersion and was allowed in the case of sickness. This was called "Christian baptism." Cyprian (250 AD) was the first to approve of sprinkling. Even non-immersionists admit that immersion was the only baptism of the first and second century churches.

Objections: Infant sprinklers think that there MAY have been babies in the Philippian jailer's household in Acts 16:30-34. Yet they forget to read v.34 which says "believing in God with ALL HIS HOUSE". Since all his household believed, no babies were present. They must all have been of a believing age and therefore qualifying for believer's baptism by immersion.

4. THE CANDIDATE FOR BAPTISM.

Question: Should believer's ONLY or babies of believing parents be baptized?

Answer: "What doth hinder me to be baptized?"

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36,37). This is the condition of baptism, yet how can a baby believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? He cannot. Therefore it is wrong to baptise a baby.

Objection: The circumcision argument.

"Colossians 2:11,12 links circumcision and baptism. Since babies were circumcised under the Old Covenant, shouldn't they be baptised under the New Covenant?"

Answer:

- a) This circumcision is the Holy Spirit circumcising the heart at salvation, because it is made "without hands." Colossians 2:11.
- b) Circumcision shows membership in the Old Covenant, but does not show personal faith. Circumcision initiated people into a theocracy which did have unbelievers in it. However, baptism initiated people into a **believing community**, entry into which is gained by personal faith.
- c) The Biblical order is always believe first and then be baptised as seen in Acts 10:44-48 (Cornelius' household) and 16:14,15 (Lydia).
- d) All who believed in the house were baptised. Acts 16:33,34. This excludes babies from being baptised.

5. THE MOTIVE FOR BAPTISM.

- a) To **obey** Christ's command in Matthew 28:18-20. Here we can completely obey Christ.
- b) Christ was baptised by immersion (Mark 1:9-11). We **should follow Christ's example**. I Peter 2:21.
- c) To **publicly show** our personal faith in Christ. Believers baptism is the believer's decision. Infant baptism is the parent's decision, thus robbing the individual of the chance to publicly express his faith in Christ by baptism.
- d) It helps **unsaved family** and friends to understand the gospel in picture form. It can lead to their salvation.
- e) It is the answer of a **good conscience** towards God. I Peter 3:21.
Our conscience is eased by obeying Christ.

6. EXAMPLES OF BAPTISM.

All these (except Jesus) were saved and baptised.

- i) Jesus. Matthew 3:13-16.
- ii) 3000 Believers at Pentecost. Acts 2:41.
- iii) Samaritans. Acts 8:9-12.
- iv) Simon. Acts 8:13.
- v) Ethiopian Eunuch. Acts 8:36-39.
- vi) Paul. Acts 9:18.
- vii) Cornelius, family and friends. Acts 10:44-48.
- viii) Lydia and her household. Acts 16:14,15.
- ix) Philippian jailer and his household. Acts 16:30-34.
- x) Corinthians and Crispus' household. Acts 18:8.
- xi) John's disciples were rebaptised. Acts 19:1-5.
- xii) Crispus and Gaius. I Corinthians 1:14.
- xiii) Stephanas' household. I Corinthians 1:16.

Roman Soldier's Oath

Early Christians called baptism a "sacramentum", which in Latin means a soldier's oath of absolute devotion and obedience to his general.

There are 6 baptisms mentioned in the Gospels:

- i) John the Baptist's was a national baptism to show Israel's reception of John's message. Mark 1:4.
- ii) Jesus' baptism. This was immersion in water by John (Matthew 3:15) and with the Holy Spirit by the Father. Matthew 3:16.
- iii) Baptism of sin upon Christ at Calvary. Matthew 20:22.
- iv) Baptism of the Holy Spirit on believers at Pentecost. Matthew 3:11.
- v) Baptism of fire of God's wrath on sinners during the Tribulation. Matthew 3:12.
- vi) Baptism of believers in water. Matthew 28:19.

Question: Why was Christ baptized when He never sinned?

- i) To identify Himself with John the Baptist. John 1:31-34.
- ii) To identify Himself with Israel. John 1:11.
- iii) To identify Himself with sinners. "He was numbered with the transgressors". Isaiah 53:12.
- iv) To identify Himself with the offices of Prophet, Priest and King, because all three were anointed in the Old Testament.
- v) To fulfil all righteousness (Matthew 3:15). Jesus was picturing His work of death, burial and resurrection in making righteousness available to all.
- vi) To set us an example to be baptised. If it was good enough for Christ to be baptised by immersion, then it should be good enough for us. Baptism is an act where we humble ourselves to do things God's way (immersion) instead of man's way (sprinkling). Satan always counterfeits God's way. Infant sprinkling is Satan's counterfeit to believers' baptism.

Question: Will you be baptized God's way or by Satan's counterfeit way?

Conclusion:

All believers were baptized immediately after they believed. If you were baptized before salvation, you just went in a dry sinner and came out a wet sinner. This does not qualify as baptism. If you have been saved and not yet baptized, you are disobeying Christ's command. Please tell your pastor today that you wish to be baptized by immersion.

Baptizing The Cheque Book.

Pastor R.E.Neighbour was in the baptismal pool with a railway engineer. The pastor was ready to proceed with the baptismal service. "Wait!" whispered the engineer; "I forgot something. I want to return to the robing room, and get my cheque book and let you baptize it with me!". Oh, that more of our cheque books were "baptised". Oh, that more of God's children were taking with seriousness their financial responsibilities to God's work!



35. FRIENDSHIP

Theme: Building a church through Friendship. What sort of friend are you?

Bible reading: Proverbs 27:1-27.

Aim: For us to be the type of friends to others that Jesus Christ is a friend to us.

Introduction:

One of the greatest blessings that God offers us is the gift of His friendship, love and acceptance. "Henceforth I call you not servants...but I have called you friends..." John 15:15.

If we are to be Christ like, we should show this same friendship of Christ to others.

Question: Why are some people unsuccessful at winning people to Christ?

Answer: One reason may be that they are not willing to be friends to those that they share Christ with. For any church to grow, quality friendships must be shown.

Notice these verses about friendship:

1. To him that is afflicted, pity should be showed from his friend. Job 6:14.
2. Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. Psalms 41:9.
A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. Proverbs 17:17.
4. A man that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24.
5. Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts. Proverbs 19:6.
6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. Proverbs 27:6.
7. Thine own friend, and thy father's friend forsake not. Proverbs 27:10.
8. Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. Proverbs 27:17.
9. Jesus ... a friend of publicans and sinners. Matthew 11:19.
10. Jesus to Judas at his betrayal: "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" Matthew 26:50.
11. Make no friendship with an angry man, lest thou learn his ways and get a snare to thy soul. Proverbs 22:24.
12. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God. James 2:23.
13. Know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God. James 4:4.
14. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name. III John 14.

1. **WHAT IS A FRIEND?**

A friend is a trusted confidante to whom I am mutually drawn as a companion and ally, whose love for me is not dependent on my performance, and whose influence draws me closer to God.

2. **THREE LEVELS OF FRIENDSHIP.**

- a) Casual friends or acquaintances. These are people that you know of.
- b) Close personal friends.
- c) Intimate best friends. Those few with whom we share our deepest feelings (maybe 3 or 4 people).

3. **EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD FRIEND.**

- a) **Loyal:** Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find? Proverbs 20:6.
Loyalty means:
 - i) Defending my friend, especially in hard times. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me.....Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me." II Timothy 4:16,17.
 - ii) Supporting your friend in difficulty and in prosperity.
"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17.
- b) **Deep Sharing:** This consists of:
 - i) **Listening** "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath." James 1:19.
Listening means that we open our ears, and alert our minds to words and meanings. We listen instead of talking.

Too often we listen only to decide when it is our turn to talk. Don't dominate the conversation. We need to listen to:

- **what is said** (the words),
- the **message conveyed** (the ideas),
- **its meaning** (what is behind ideas and thoughts),
- **the message behind the words** (real or hidden meanings).

ii) **Speaking** the right amount in the right way.

"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life." Proverbs 15:4.

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Proverbs 25:11.

iii) **Accepting the other person** just as they are. "We are accepted in the Beloved." Eph 1:6

iv) **Understanding the other person.** For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6.

If we really care for our friends, we will seek to understand them.

c) **Fun to be with.** Do things together, such as: Tennis, hiking, holidays, common interests.

d) **Stimulating.** We should stimulate and encourage our friends to spiritual development and to personal growth. Help them to solve their problems, ask non-threatening questions and propose some new activities.

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..." Hebrews 10:24,25.

e) **Encouraging.** Share Scriptures, pray together and lift their loads. Encouraging others can keep them from sin.

"But exhort one another daily ... lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Hebrews 3:13.

f) **Self-sacrificing.** "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13.

A true friend gives sacrificially to meet another's needs. Self-sacrifice instead of selfishness measures the depth of friendship.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Philippians 2:4.

g) **Agape Love.** Giving expecting nothing in return. Say: "I love you."

Ask God to give you an honest love for your friends.

h) **Spiritually Challenging.** Friends drive us toward God, or away from God.

Question: Do you stimulate others to a closer walk with God?

Do you pray together?

Do you share common spiritual concerns?

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise." Proverbs 13:20.

Note: TIME and EFFORT builds these qualities into a friendship.

4. **WHY WE NEED FRIENDS.**

Eight Benefits of Close Friends:

eg. David and Jonathan; Paul was a teacher and friend to Timothy.

a. **Emotional encouragement.** A good friend builds us up by letting us know that he accepts us and loves us.

b. **Help in trouble.** "A brother is born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17.

c. **Personal stability.** Friends and family keep us from rash decisions and from self-centred wanderings. Attend church.

d. **Spiritual help and counsel,** will help us to speak the truth in love.

e. **Freedom of expression,** to speak openly and freely without fear of being condemned.

f. **Protection from loneliness and isolation.**

g. **Love and acceptance.** We need to be loved for who we are.

h. **Opportunities to give ourselves to others.** We benefit by giving friendship.

5.

WHY WE AVOID INITIATING FRIENDSHIPS.

- a) **Fear of rejection.** Whenever we attempt to start a friendship that is ignored, we feel wounded and unworthy. Rejection hurts and causes us to build up a defence against trying again. If we hide behind a defensive wall, we deny ourselves the pleasure and joy of future friendships. Continue soul winning. You will be rejected, but you will make many friends.
- b) **Shyness** secludes a person from meaningful friendships. **How?**
By avoiding social contacts.
By fearing self revelation.
Effects of shyness:
i) Loneliness.
ii) More doubts about self-worth
iii) Acute anxiety, and depression.
Two antidotes to shyness:
i) Realise that God has created everyone with valuable qualities.
ii) We have a responsibility to God to give our lives to others.
- c) **Our prejudices.** We seek friends who are similar to ourselves to associate with and often reject the intrusion of someone different. Notice how Jesus mixed with all sorts of people, such as tax collectors, fishermen and zealots. We gravitate to people of similar:
- age. - intellectual development.
 - interests. - spiritual background.
- d) **Poor self-image.** Many people are lonely because they feel that no one could be interested in them. Lack of confidence may be due to:
- i) Critical, negative parents.
 - ii) Rejection by friends.
 - iii) False thinking patterns.
 - iv) Unfair comparisons with others.
- How to overcome loneliness:
- i) Recognise that God has created each of us as a unique person.
 - ii) We do have something valuable to contribute to the life of others.

6.

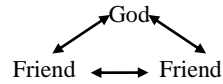
HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS.

- a. **Create opportunities** to meet people. Use small talk about the other person to lead to a more meaningful discussion.
- b. **Take the first step.** Make one new acquaintance each week. Friendships need a starting point: a smile, a greeting, a kind word, an interested question.
- c. **Be yourself.** Honestly be ourselves and under the control of Jesus Christ.
- d. **Allow time** for a friendship to ripen.
- e. **Take risks.** To begin a friendship we must risk time, embarrassment, rejection, and social situations.
- f. **Create a sociable environment.** Be willing to invite new people to your home and to social activities. Small gatherings, such as meals, outings, Bible study etc, provide a good climate for new friendships.
- g. **Look for common interests.** Eg: Children, age, jobs. Be a learner and show interest in their interests. Listen and learn. Six rules to help people to like you are:
 - i. Become genuinely **interested** in other people.
 - ii. **Smile.**
 - iii. A **man's name** is the sweetest sound to him.
 - iv. Be a **good listener**. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
 - v. Talk in terms of the **other person's interests**.
 - vi. Make the other person **feel genuinely important**.

For example, welcome them to church and introduce them to others. Matthew 7:12 says: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

7. HOW TO MAKE LASTING CHRISTIAN FRIENDS.

Key: As both friends draw closer to God, they also grow closer to each other.



a) **Provoke each others spiritual growth.**

"Provoke one another to love and to good works." Hebrews 10:24,25.

Stir up people's thinking processes by asking questions and by teaching. II Peter 3:1.

b) **Prayer** lifts us up together into God's presence, and draws us closer to each other.

c) **Accountability.** A Christian friend has the right to hold us responsible for our actions that may be wrong. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." Proverbs 27:6.

d) **Encouragement or Exhortation.**

Say to people: "I love you"; "I appreciate you"; "You're doing a good job."

Fathers should encourage their children. Pastors and people should encourage each other.

Encouragement can take several forms:

i. **Appreciation** for action.

ii. **Sympathy** in distress or sorrow.

iii. **Support** to accomplish something.

iv. **Thanks** for favours.

v. **Personal presence** in time of need. "Exhort one another daily." Hebrews 3:13.

Exhortation is a spiritual gift. Romans 12:8.

e) **Helping and serving.** Be sensitive to your friend's needs.

f) **Have fun together.** Do things together, go places together.

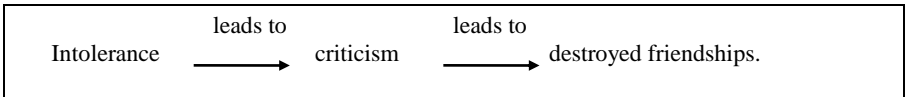
g) **Teamwork in the spiritual battle.** Friendships are best maintained in the midst of the spiritual battle. Go soul-winning together. The dependability of a friend must be fostered.

8. HINDRANCES TO FRIENDSHIP.

a) **Failure to recognise** our need of friendship. We then substitute acquaintances for friends.

b) **A lifestyle that's too busy.** Do things together, like Bible study and shopping.

c) **Intolerance** for the habits, activities, personalities and practices of others. Give friends space to be themselves.



d) **Selfishness** is taking, but friendship is giving.

e) **Criticism.** Friendship cannot grow in the uncomfortable, depressing atmosphere of criticism. What is criticism? Criticism stems from a poor self image, an angry spirit, faulty comparisons and misunderstandings.

f) **Insensitivity** to others needs. Some people bypass or ignore signals that reveal if a friend is depressed, tired, troubled, fearful or irritated.

"Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep." Romans 12:15.

g) **Envy** is wanting what is not rightfully ours. Jealousy is wanting what is rightfully ours.

"Who is able to stand before envy?" Proverbs 27:4. Envy reveals a possessive attitude and an unwillingness to share the friendship with anyone else. Envy occurs where:

i) one friend achieves success, or

ii) one friend begins to spend time with another person.

h) **Unrealistic expectations.** Don't be easily disappointed in friends. No one is perfect.

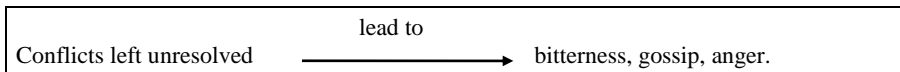
i) **Betraying confidences** and **gossiping** destroys trust which friendships are based on.

9. **HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR MARRIAGE FRIENDSHIP.**

- a. **Review the past**, discussing problems that affect you today without defensiveness or criticism. Listen carefully to learn about your spouse and yourself.
- b. **Set aside time to talk.** Have a good free-flowing meaningful conversation every day.
- c. **Renew your lifetime commitment** to each other.
- d. **Do fun things together**, for example, go out for a meal regularly.
- e. **Think of ways** that you can help your spouse reach their personal goals.
- f. **Be the spouse** God wants you to be. Read Ephesians 5:1-33. Fulfil your God-given role in your marriage. Pray daily for and with your spouse.
- g. **Read the Bible** together, and **pray together** daily.
- h. **Guard against divisive influences**, such as selfishness, or too many one-sided decisions, or excluding your spouse from activities.
Monitor the daily health of your marriage.
- i. **Remain an interesting person** who is enjoyable to be near.
- j. **Keep respect and courtesy** at the core of your marriage.
Be courteous. I Peter 3:8. Refuse to take each other for granted.
- k. **Constantly tell your spouse** "I love you.", etc.

10. **HOW TO RESTORE A BROKEN FRIENDSHIP.**

- a) **Determine what is the source of conflict.** Hebrews 12:14-15.
We cannot live in harmony when problems exist.
We need to know where these problems come from:
 - Have I spoken harshly or unjustly to a friend?
 - Have I neglected contact because of a rushed schedule?
 - Do I avoid friends if they are in trouble or sinning?**Key:** Too often we are willing to settle for an easy stand off, rather than to press through the painful process of honest confrontation and resolution.



- b) **Initiate restoration.** Matthew 5:23,24; 18:15.
Question: Have you hurt someone, or has someone hurt you?
Answer: You are responsible for restoring the friendship.
Peace can come when we confront and heal broken friendships.
- c) **Fix problems quickly.** Restoration of friendship is easiest when the offence is still recent.
If hurts accumulate, restoration becomes harder.
- d) **Go in an attitude of humility.**
 - i) Discover why the conflict occurred.
 - ii) Find a time to talk privately with your friend without time constraints.
 - iii) Decide beforehand to accept all responsibility for the quarrel that is your fault.
 - iv) Listen to the words and meanings carefully.
 - v) Ask for forgiveness without placing blame.
- e) **Allow time to heal.** It takes time for trust and confidence to rebuild.
- f) **Pray for full recovery** of the relationship, and for your attitudes.

CONCLUSION.

What sort of friend are you?

Only as we are Christlike in our friendships, and as we become closer friends to Christ will a really great church be built for His glory. Are you prepared to pay the price to be a good friend?

36. HOW TO START AN INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH

1. **Select a pastor** who is Biblically qualified and who agrees with the Statement of Faith (chapter 32). He must also know what an Independent Baptist church stands for.
2. **Select a meeting hall** available on Sundays 9:30am- 11:00am, 1.00-5.00pm and 6.00pm - 8.00pm.
3. **Start with outreach by:** a) inviting Christians you know who are not going to church.
b) Door knocking to lead people to Christ and inviting them to attend your church.
c) Having a home Bible study with people individually for one hour a week in their home.
4. **Keep a list of all contacts.** Telephone them regularly (Saturday) and visit them weekly or when possible, especially if they have ill health. Love them and meet their needs.
5. **Print** or get “STOP” tracts for soul winning outreach and visitation for your people to use.
6. **Make an order** of service as follows: a) Opening song. b) Opening prayer. c) **Song service**-4 songs, d) Bible reading. e) Announcements. f) Special item in song or a testimony. G) Bible Reading. g) Offering. h) Sermon/message/preaching. i) Invitation/Closing song. j) Closing prayer. k) Tea, cake.
7. Have the **Lord’s Supper** and a **fellowship lunch** and on the first Sunday morning of each month.
8. Hold a **soul-winning seminar**, using the information in chapters 17-19,22,23,29,30.
9. Hold a **Discipleship Seminar** using chapters in this book you consider needful.
10. Have a home, **mid-week Bible study** and **prayer meeting** on Wednesday at 7.30 pm.
11. Allocate different areas for pairs or groups of people to doorknock.
a) Give them an **exercise book** to record names, addresses and phone numbers of contacts.
b) Then **say** at the door: “I’m dropping by to leave this pamphlet with you”. (Give ‘Stop’ tract.)
“This tells you how you can know God, be sure of going to heaven and have eternal life.”
“Have you ever thought much about God?” “One question if I may ask please: If you died tonight, do you know 100% for sure if you’d go to heaven?” “Would you like to be sure?”
(Yes). “Well, this pamphlet summarizes four Bible truths showing how to be sure of going to heaven.” “If you look on the inside, the first truth is that ‘All have sinned’.. as in Chapter 17.
12. When people get saved, **baptize them** after church on Sunday. Hand them a baptism certificate.
13. Those who wish to become a **member** of your church with voting rights, may do so by being saved, baptized and by signing the Liberty Baptist Church Statement of Faith.
14. **Support the Pastor financially** through the weekly offerings. “The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruit.” II Timothy 2:6. Pastor must be able to spend all his time working to build this church. If he is not full-time, he will not be able to help the church grow.
15. Get a **Youth Pastor** to start Bible study groups for teens during the week and take them soul winning.
16. Have a **church dinner** every six months.
17. Support a **church planting pastor** who fits the missionary strategy and the duty statement of Chapter 20. Send him out to start an Independent Baptist church where God calls him, supporting him initially so that, as his church grows, it can soon support him full time.
18. Pastor, write all your sermons in **note books or on your PC**. Keep records of them for later use.
19. Pastor and people **MUST go soul winning every week**.
20. Appoint a **treasurer** and have two or more signatories to the bank account.
21. From your offerings, **purchase quantities of ANSWERS books** for your people. Make Answers books available free to your people to help disciple new people to spread sound Bible doctrine. Buy KJV Bibles to give away to new converts and Old Schofield KJV Bibles for people to buy.
22. Purchase **song books**, eg “Soul Stirring Songs and Hymns” by John Rice.
23. Start a **Sunday School** for pre-schoolers and primary children, starting mid-way through the morning service when the preaching starts or before church starts.
24. **Teach Scripture classes** in government schools. Teach from “Established in the Faith” books.
25. Use **Mail Box Club** to follow-up children aged 8-14. Use **King of Kings** comics for teens.
26. Useful **Commentaries:** Willmington’s Guide to the Bible, Barnes NT Commentary, The Bible Knowledge Commentary by Walvoord & Zuck, The Bible Exposition Commentary–NT, Vol I, II by W Weirsbe, Answers.
27. Pastor’s **sermon outline:** Title, Bible Reading, Aim of Message, Introduction (pose problem), Body of Sermon (several main points), Conclusion and Challenge.

37. THE LORD'S SUPPER

Bible Reading: Matthew 26:20-30; I Corinthians 11:23-34.

Memory Verse: I Corinthians 11:24-26, "And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me...."

Aim: To understand the meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper. To remember Christ's sufferings.

1. Purpose of the Lord's Supper.

- i) **Obedience** to Christ's command: "this do in remembrance of me." (I Corinthians 11:24).
- ii) **Commemoration:** To remember Christ. (I Corinthians 11:25). We should remember Jesus Christ's incarnation, birth, baptism, ministry, transfiguration, temptation, miracles, teachings, sufferings, Gethsemane, trials, mockings, scourgings, death, burial, resurrection, ascension and second coming.
- iii) **Proclamation:** To show forth the Lord's death. (I Corinthians 11:26). The gospel is proclaimed in an object lesson. The broken bread pictures Christ's broken body. The grape juice (unfermented) pictures Christ's blood shed for the remission of sins. We don't partake to get forgiveness of sins.
- iv) **Examination:** v.28 commands us to examine ourselves before eating and drinking the Supper. We are to judge our hearts and lives, and confess any known sin to God. (v.31). Psalm 139:23.
- v) **Anticipation:** To show our belief in Christ's return. "...till he come." (I Corinthians 11:26). We partake with glad thoughts of Christ's soon return.

2. Participants: Who may partake of the Lord's Supper?

- i) Only those who have received Christ as Saviour and are baptised.
- ii) Only those who have confessed their sins and are in fellowship with God. I John 1:9.

3. Requirements: Self Examination is essential before the Lord's Supper. I Cor 11:28; Psalm 139:23,24

- i) **Who** do we examine? Ourselves only. "But let a man examine himself..." (v.28).
- ii) **Why** must we examine ourselves? – it is a Bible command, (v.28).
-- to eat unworthily brings judgment, weakness, sickness and early death. (v.29-31).
- iii) **How** do we examine ourselves? Ask: -- Am I really saved? (II Corinthians 13:5).
-- Is there any unconfessed sin in my life? Such as self pity, pride, laziness, impurity, covetousness, disobedience, worldliness, lust, lack of Bible reading, prayer, soul winning.
-- Do I genuinely repent of my sins? -- Do I obey Christ's commands?
-- Do I love God and other believers? Have I forgiven those who've sinned against me?

4. Elements: of the Lord's Supper are unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice being the symbols of Christ's body and blood. "and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." v.28.

5. Results: -

- i) the believer is cleansed, as he examines himself and confesses any known sin. (I John 1:9).
- ii) the believer is strengthened by fellowship with Christ and with believers.
- iii) the believer is edified (built up) as he meditates on Christ's death and return.

6. Procedure: First have a moment of personal prayer for each person to confess his sins to God. Then:

1. Invite two men to the front and hand the bread to them.
2. Pastor says: "For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat,...." I Corinthians 11:23-24.
3. Pastor asks one of these men to pray for the remembrance of Christ's broken body.
4. Ushers hand out the bread. Hold on to the bread until all have received it.
5. Pastor says: "And when He had given thanks, he brake it and said, take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." I Corinthians 11:24. People eat bread now.
6. Pastor says: "After the same manner also he took the cup...." I Corinthians 11:25.
7. Pastor asks the other person to pray for the remembrance of Christ's shed blood.
8. Ushers hand out the grape juice.
9. Pastor says: 'After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.' (v.25).
All drink grape juice now. After a moment of quiet prayer, ask people to turn to our Closing song:
10. Sing "Amazing Grace" or another suitable song as the Closing song. Close in prayer.

38. WHY THE CHURCH EXISTS

Bible Reading: Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-16.

Aim: The main purpose for the church's existence is to evangelise the world and build up believers.

Introduction: Many people who attend churches wonder what is the purpose of the local church. Some people ask, 'Why go to church?' 'Why go to this particular church instead of another?'

Question: Why did Jesus Christ institute the church?

Answer: Jesus said, 'I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' (Matthew 16:18). This tells us that local churches are to attack the gates of hell, and take captive hell's prisoners. Let us study several reasons for the church's existence:

1. To preach the Gospel and make disciples (teach) of all nations.

God wants us to evangelise the world with the blessed message of eternal life through Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is stated five times by Jesus Christ in the following passages:

- Matthew 28:18-20 '**Go** ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising 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.'
- Mark 16:15 '**Go** ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature'.
- Luke 24:47 'And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.'
- John 20:21,23 'As my Father hath sent me, even so **send I you** . . . Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'
- Acts 1:8 'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.'

The main reason God leaves His church in the world, is to save people from hell by preaching the gospel. Gordon G Johnson writes: 'One day Dr Wilfred Grenfell, medical missionary to Labrador, was guest at a dinner in London, together with a number of socially prominent British men and women. During the course of the dinner the lady seated next to him turned and said, "Is it true, Dr Grenfell, that you are a Missionary?" Dr Grenfell looked at her for a moment before replying. Then he said, "Is it true, madam, that you are not?"' (*My Church*, p 88).

2. To edify believers

Edify means to build up believers in their spiritual life. Edify (3618, 3619) comes from the word 'to construct, or to be a house-builder.' Edification is the purpose for which a church exists as a gathered community. Most of the New Testament was written for the edification of believers. These letters were sent to churches to be read and studied for their spiritual growth and development.

The following verses teach us about edification:

- I Corinthians 14:26, 'Let all things be done unto **edifying**.' Every believer should seek to build up each other, rather than to pull each other down.
- I Thessalonians 5:11, 'Wherefore **comfort** yourselves together, and **edify** one another, even as also ye do.' Strive to build up each other, and to establish each other in Bible truths.
- II Peter 3:18, 'But **grow in grace** and in the **knowledge** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'. Christlike character may be cultivated as much as one wishes to possess. Growth in grace may begin as a grain of mustard seed, and will increase as it is cultivated. To know Jesus Christ means to possess correct views of His person as fully God and fully man, His character, teachings & work.
- Jude 20, 'But ye, beloved, **building up** yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.' We should establish ourselves most firmly in sound doctrine and in fulfilling our Christian duties such as prayer.
- Ephesians 4:11-16, Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were given to:
 - Perfect** the saints;
 - Fulfil the **work** of the ministry;
 - Edify** the body of Christ (v.12,16).

Their job is to build up believers in knowledge, in truth and in godliness.

3. **To glorify God:** ‘That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him . . .’ (II Thessalonians 1:12). **How do we glorify God?** Through our:
- Praise and prayer.** ‘Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me.’ (Psalm 50:23; Hebrews 13:15).
 - Fruitbearing.** ‘Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit: so shall ye be my disciples.’ (John 15:8).
 - Believing and obeying God’s Word.** ‘He (Abraham) staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.’ (Romans 4:20,21).
 - Preaching the Gospel.** ‘Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified . . .’ (II Thessalonians 3:1).
 - Suffering.** ‘If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.’ (I Peter 4:14,16).
 - Preaching God’s Word and serving.** ‘If any man **speak**, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man **minister**, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.’ (I Peter 4:11).
 - Giving.** ‘But to do good and to **communicate** forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.’ (Hebrews 13:16). To communicate is to share what you have with others.
4. **To baptize believers.** ‘Baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.’ Matt.28:19. God commands churches to baptise, and believers to be baptised after salvation.
5. **To teach believers God’s Ways.**
 ‘Commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to **teach** others also.’ (II Timothy 2:2).
 ‘The servant of the Lord must . . . be apt to **teach**.’ (II Timothy 2:24).
 ‘These things command and **teach**.’ (I Timothy 4:11).
 In the church ‘. . . that by my voice I might **teach** others also.’ (I Corinthians 14:19).
 ‘For when for the time ye ought to be **teachers** . . .’ (Hebrews 5:12).
 ‘Daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to **teach** and preach Jesus Christ.’ Act 5:42
 God wants us to pass our Bible knowledge on to others.
6. **To provide fellowship for believers.**
 ‘They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and **fellowship** . . .’ (Acts 2:42).
 ‘James, Cephas and John gave to me and Barnabus the right hands of fellowship.’ (Galatians 2:9).
 Fellowship (koinonia=2842) means “partnership, social participation, communication, contribution and distribution.” God designed people for fellowship, not for isolation. God has put in the human heart the desire to know and be known, to love and be loved. This is best achieved in a local church.
- The **basis** of Christian fellowship – the person of Christ (I John 1:3).
 - The **nature** of Christian fellowship – sharing doctrine and goods (Acts 2:44-47).
 - The **danger** of **losing** Christian fellowship by sin (I Corinthians 10:16,21).
 - The **responsibilities** of Christian fellowship are to:
 - Bear one another’s burdens;
 - Gently restore one another (Galatians 6:1);
 - Comfort and exhort one another;
 - Edify one another;
 - Pray for one another;
 - Forgive one another;
 - Rebuke sin in each other. (Ephesians 5:11).
7. **To provoke each other to love and good works.**
 ‘And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is . . .’ (Hebrews 10:24,25).
 ‘As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith’. (Galatians 6:10).
 By coming to church, we can do good to those attending. We can provoke them to do good works and to show love to others. If we forsake church, we can’t encourage any fellow believers, and we are saying that we don’t care about them.

8. To act as a restraining and enlightening influence in this world.

‘Ye are the salt of the earth . . . Ye are the light of the world.’ (Matthew 5:13-16).

If we work together in church we can have a bigger impact on the world for Christ.

9. To prepare rulers for the future millennial kingdom.

‘If we suffer, we shall also reign with him . . .’ (II Timothy 2:12).

‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ (Matthew 25:21,23).

Conclusion: The task of a local church is to make as many people like Jesus Christ in the time God has given us. God the Father so greatly loves God the Son, that He desires to populate the universe in eternity with people like Jesus Christ. (I John 3:2). He wants to start the work in repentant sinners now.

Challenge: Are you working with God in this church to achieve this goal to your greatest ability?

Your service to Christ now will have a great effect in eternity.

Therefore, let us win the lost, make disciples and edify one another in a good church.

39. USHERS DUTIES

A Pastor should appoint a head usher and assistant ushers to ensure the smooth running of the weekly church services. James 2:1-4 describes a church usher who favoured a rich man and discriminated against a poor man. This is what an usher should **not** do. Ushers’ duties should be as follows:

- 1) Be given a **key** to open up the church;
- 2) Be at church **at least** 30 minutes before the starting time of the service.
- 3) They should turn on the **lights**, the heaters, the public address system and open windows.
- 4) They should be **dressed neatly** with a collar, tie and coat (unless you’re in a very hot land).
- 5) They should give a **songbook, bulletin or visitors card** (and pen) to all who enter.
- 6) They should **smile and warmly welcome** everyone by name who enters by saying something like: ‘I’m so happy to see you. How are you today? We hope you enjoy our service’.
- 7) **Introduce new people** or shy people to those you think will befriend them.
- 8) If there are not many seats left, ask, ‘May I lead you to a suitable seat?’
- 9) Encourage people to **sit closer to the front** before they fill up the back rows.
- 10) Help people with **babies** to find a suitable seat.
- 11) **Delegate people** to do jobs that need doing, eg: car park attendant, lady to manage babies/creche.
- 12) Be alert to **minimize any noise** or disturbances and to help people in any need.
- 13) Be alert to **pastor’s instructions** to hand out any papers.
- 14) Be alert to come forward to take up the **offering**.
- 15) **Come into the service** and enjoy the singing, preaching, etc.
- 16) **Open songbooks for latecomers** at the song being sung.
- 17) Collect filled-out **visitors cards** off people as they leave the service
- 18) **Count the offering** after the service, or appoint someone to count it, approved by the pastor. This may be the deacons or treasurer’s job. Have a 4 week roster of 4 x 2 people.
- 19) **Inform the Pastor** of newcomers or of any special need.
- 20) **Allocate good soul-winners** to lead interested newcomers to Christ.
- 21) Look for people without a friend and ensure that **someone is talking with them** at all times.
- 22) **Build and maintain a warm, happy, Godly atmosphere** in the service.
- 23) **Return songbooks** to cupboard after the service. Delegate children to collect songbooks off seats.
- 24) **Pick up** any rubbish or papers that are on the floor.
- 25) After everyone has gone home, **close windows** and lock doors.
- 26) Prepare the hall for the evening service.
- 27) **Appoint a person to take your place** if you will be absent any Sunday. Appoint trainee ushers.
- 28) Remind people on **canteen roster** to put out morning tea and clean up after morning tea.
- 29) **Pray** before the service.
- 30) Place a **full glass of drinking water** at the pulpit for the preacher.
- 31) Prepare (or appoint someone to prepare) the **Lord’s Supper** when required.
- 32) Only tell a complaint to the person themselves. If you tell another, they’ll tell that person.

40. PASTOR'S ETHICS

'Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners (Greek: *Ethos*)'. I Corinthians 15:33.

Manners = *Ethos* in Greek = **Ethics** = proper Christian behaviour to God's people.

Nobody can destroy you but you. People can lead you to self-destruct.

You can put yourself in a spiritual position for God to reward you. Slander destroys ethics.

1. **Don't visit people of another church.** Do you want other pastors stealing your people?

Do unto others as you'd have them do to you. There is a God in heaven Who can build your church.

Don't build your church on proselytising. Build it on soul winning.

People will be loyal to you if you are loyal to your pastor. 'What you sow you reap.' Galatians 6:7.

2. **I won't make an appointment** with a member of another church **without a letter from their Pastor.**

I'm not going to be unethical. There's a God of justice in heaven who can reward you for your ethics or discipline you for your greedy lack of ethics. You'll be blessed if you are blessable.

God can send people your way. Do you want other pastors chasing your people?

3. **I will not hire someone from another church** unless I have permission from his Pastor to talk with him.

When an Assistant Pastor or a member leave a church and complain about how bad the pastor was, you assume the Pastor was hard to work for. You often wrongly assume the fight was the Pastor's fault. The sports world is more ethical than some pastors.

You should stick with the preacher and think the preacher is right. (I Timothy 5:19).

4. **I will not hire a worker** without a **good reference** from his former employer.

Most employers will trust the former employer more than you do. Get a reference for everybody you employ. This stops difficult workers from wrecking your church.

5. **I will cut ties when I leave a church.** If you phone your old people they'll compare Pastors.

6. **I will not talk to a prospective Bible College student at another church if they have a Bible College of their own.** The pastor may want him to attend their Bible College.

7. **I will treat my predecessor ethically.**

This will get God's blessings. If you take over an existing church you get your predecessor's **buildings and people**. Never criticize the previous pastor. Many of your people still want to love the previous pastor. I don't have to be on people's number one love list.

If they want to love others more than me, that's OK, as long as they love me a bit.

Church growth depends more on a pastor's ethics than on outreach programmes.

I do not require others to treat me with perfect ethics because I want to be right with God.

You cannot be right with God and wrong with His people.

You better **keep your heart right** and **your relations with the people right**.

'Be not deceived evil communication corrupts good manners.' I Corinthians 15:33.

Preachers should try to get right with each other. People should try to reconcile with each other.

The future of your ministry depends more on your ethics and manners than on your oratory.

What he did to me is between him and God and it can't effect my ministry, but what I do to him can affect my ministry. If other pastors visit my members, I don't get upset about it.

If you love someone and they leave you, can you turn the tap of love off? 'Love never faileth'.

Love people who leave your church. They helped build this church with their tithes and work.

There's more to the ministry than preaching and being against Hollywood and Rock music.

'Love your enemies, Bless them that curse you; Do good to them that hate you.' Matthew 5:44.

You are likely to have a long and happy ministry if you try to be ethical, love your people and your enemies. Your future in the ministry depends on your ethical behaviour to others..

41. Things Dead Churches Won't Teach You. (Revelation 3:1-22).

Aim: To identify and to reject error. To rescue people from error. To appreciate sound doctrines in a fundamental church. To leave churches that teach error, or not teaching these truths.

Question: What will dead, modernist, lukewarm churches rarely teach?

- 1) Salvation. That you can be saved today by calling on Christ to save you. (Romans 10:13).
- 2) Soul winning. How to win people to Christ. How to train soul winners. (Proverbs 11:30).
- 3) Separation from error and false doctrines. (Romans 16:17).
- 4) Need to rebuken error and not to tolerate it. (Ephesians 5:11; II Timothy 4:1-3).
- 5) New Evangelical and Ecumenical errors will destroy your life's work for Christ. (II John 8-11).
- 6) Calvinist errors. (II Peter 3:9 'God is not willing that any should perish.').
- 7) Evolution's errors. God created a young earth in 6 days 6000 years ago. (Exodus 20:11).
- 8) Charismatic errors summarized by T.R.A.S.H.. (I Corinthians 14:21-25).
- 9) Modern Bible Version errors and the inerrancy of Scripture. (Psalm 12:6,7).
- 10) Infant Sprinkling and Confirmation errors. (Acts 8:37).
- 11) Roman Catholic errors. (Revelation 17).
- 12) Muslim errors. (I John 2:22).
- 13) Rock Music errors. (Ephesians 5:19; Ecclesiastes 7:5).
- 14) Soul Sleep error.
- 15) Rewards and crowns are available to believers in heaven. (Revelation 22:12).
- 16) Judgment Seat of Christ. (II Corinthians 5:10; I Corinthians 3:10-15).
- 17) 70 Week Prophecy and 7 Year Tribulation (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:21,22).
- 18) Rapture (I Thessalonians 4:16,17); Millennium (Revelation 20).
- 19) Book of Revelation simply and clearly explained.
- 20) Seven Dispensations that world history consists of.
- 21) Future conversion of Israel. (Romans 11:1,2,25-27).
- 22) The Lake of Fire and literal hell fire for Christ rejecters. (Rev. 20:14,15; Mark 9:44,46,48).
- 23) Personal devil who opposes and seeks to destroy us. (I Peter 5:8).
- 24) Security of the believer. (John 10:28; I Peter 1:4,5).
- 25) Importance of printing and distributing Gospel tracts and books.
- 26) Preaching against sin, rebuking error. (II Timothy 4:2-4).
- 27) Fornication and sodomy are sins. (I Thessalonians 4:3-8).
- 28) Spiritual warfare over people's souls. (Ephesians 6:10-18).
- 29) Importance of sound doctrine and rightly dividing the word of truth. (II Timothy 2:15).
- 30) Cessation of miraculous, personal gifts of prophecy, tongues, knowledge, miracles, apostle, prophet and healing gifts in the first Century. (I Corinthians 13:8-15).
- 31) Reality of all the Bible's miracles.
- 32) Dinosaurs lived from Creation to the Flood, and were destroyed in the Flood. (Job 40,41).
- 33) Training preachers and church planters. (Acts 13:5).
- 34) Door-to-door soul-winning. (Acts 5:42).
- 35) What is the Gospel? (I Corinthians 15:1-4).
- 36) Abstaining from alcohol (Proverbs 20:1), pornography, touching women (I Cor. 7:1,2), etc..
- 37) Young ladies dress modestly. (I Timothy 2:9).
- 38) No female pastors, preachers or deacons. (I Timothy 3:2).
- 39) Long hair on men is wrong. (II Corinthians 11:14).
- 40) Church run by pastoral authority. (Hebrews 13:7,17,24). See "apostles and elders" in Acts.
- 41) Home Schooling using ACE curriculum. Evil influence of State schools. (Proverbs 19:27).
- 42) Child raising principles and child discipline. (Proverbs 22:6).
- 43) Separate from bad peer groups. (Psalm 1:1-3).

42. Valuable Things a Good Church Produces.

Bible Reading: Luke 13:6-9.

Aim: To show that the job of a church & its people is to produce spiritual fruit. What is that fruit?

Introduction: Many Christians don't appreciate the Church in general or a good church in particular. Many people don't see or understand the valuable things that a sound church produces. When we see what this church produces, we will support it more as we help produce the fruit God expects. Two examples of God removing an unfruitful steward of His Word are:

- 1) Jesus came to Israel for three years, looking for spiritual fruit but found none (Luke 13:6-9). Jesus said to cut down the tree of Israel if it didn't bear fruit. This reminds us of Jesus removing the candlestick of an unfruitful church, like that at Ephesus. (Revelation 2:5).
- 2) Because Israel failed to bear spiritual fruit, God took away the light of the Gospel testimony from Israel, and gave it to local churches. (Matthew 21:33-46, especially v.41,43).

Question: What Fruit Does a Good Church Produce?

- 1) Souls saved; peace and joy of going to heaven. (John 15:16 'that your fruit should remain.')
- 2) Soul winners produced. (Matthew 4:19 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.')
- 3) Preachers trained and sent out to pastor and plant churches. (Acts 8:4-8).
- 4) New churches started in Australia and overseas.
- 5) Thousands of lives rescued from sin, confusion, loneliness, fear & false doctrine (II Cor 5:17).
- 6) Bible Truths and convictions taught and established in many people's minds. (I Peter 2:9).
- 7) Godly marriage partners are trained and found in church. (Ephesians 5:21-25).
- 8) Tools developed to help win souls & train disciples, eg STOP tracts, *Answers* book, pamphlets.
- 9) It helps us avoid shipwrecking our faith on the rocks of false doctrines. It rightly divides God's Word so we clearly know what God wants of us in all issues of life. (II Timothy 2:15).
- 10) It links us with a worldwide network of strong Christians, churches, and useful resources.
- 11) It is a refuge from the evils of the world.
- 12) It provides Godly role models for young people. (I Timothy 4:12).
- 13) It sets high moral standards of love, self-sacrifice and Bible truths that we seek to achieve.
- 14) It provides a happy, peaceful, spiritual environment where Godly Christians comfort, strengthen, encourage and train each other. (James 3:17,18).
- 15) It encourages other Christians to keep on serving God. It gives answers to life's problems.

43. Things a Good Church is Compared To.

Commitment to a good soul winning church is essential if we are to:

- a) Win the world to Christ, and
- b) Enjoy the benefits of a local church.

These symbols to which God likens a local church, show much about our purposes in serving God:

1) **A Building:** 'Ye are God's building' (I Corinthians 3:9; Ephesians 2:19-22; I Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 3:6; 10:21).

a) We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. This means there are no more apostles and prophets today because they are in the foundation and not in the superstructure.

b) Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone on which the whole building holds together. Eph 2:20,21.

c) We are fitly framed together.

d) We are to grow to a holy temple.

e) The Holy Spirit builds us together as a habitation of God. (v.22).

f) We are as living stones built as a spiritual house to offer spiritual sacrifices to God. I Peter 2:5

2) **A Farm, Field or Husbandry** 'Ye are God's Husbandry.' (I Corinthians 3:9).

'He that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit ... some 100 fold, some 60, some 30.' (Matthew 13:23, 8).

Question: What is the good ground that the seed is planted in?

Answer: A local church with true doctrine and practice (no weeds) will produce much fruit in a believer's life. We are born to reproduce and to be fruitful. We will never bear much fruit unless we get seriously involved in a good local church.

- 3) **A Temple:** ‘Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God.’ (I Corinthians 3:16; II Cor. 6:16). Solomon’s temple is a type of the local church, as follows:
- i) Both are built with gold (I Kings 6:20-32; I Peter 1:7; 2:5). Christians face many trials.
 - ii) As in Solomon’s temple there were many windows to lighten it (I Kings 6:4), so a local church should enlighten people with the light of the gospel and heavenly truths for life.
 - iii) As both Jews (Solomon) and Gentiles (Hiram King of Tyre) were involved in constructing Solomon’s temple (I Kings 5:1-12), so local churches are made up of Jews and Gentiles. (Ephesians 3:6).
 - iv) As the glory of the Lord filled Solomon’s temple (I Kings 8:10,11), so the Holy Spirit of God indwells and fills believers. (I Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 5:18).
 - v) As Cherubim guardian angels were carved in the walls and doors of Solomon’s temple (I Kings 6:23-32), so angels observe the local church and are involved in ministering to it. (I Corinthians 4:9; 11:10; I Peter 1:10-12; Luke 15:10; I Timothy 5:21).
 - vi) As Solomon’s temple was viciously attacked by literal Babylonians (II Kings 25:9), so local churches have been viciously persecuted by the Roman Catholic system known as Mystery Babylon. (Revelation 17:5,6).
 - vii) As Solomon’s temple and Jerusalem’s wall were rebuilt in troublesome times (Daniel 9:25), so local churches are built in troublesome times, facing much opposition from enemies. (Acts 8:4; 14:22).
 - viii) As Solomon’s temple and Jerusalem’s wall were rebuilt by using a sword and trowel (Nehemiah 4:16-18), so local churches are built by defeating false doctrines with the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) and by teaching God’s Word correctly (trowel).
 - ix) As the rebuilders of Solomon’s temple and Jerusalem’s wall were looked on as poor, weak and contemptible persons (Nehemiah 4:2), so people who build local churches are seen by the world in the same way.
 - x) As rebuilders of Solomon’s temple and Jerusalem’s wall had to remove much rubbish (Nehemiah 4:2,10), so building local churches involves removing much Popish rubbish, worldly rubbish and tradition rubbish. (I Peter 1:18; Colossians 2:8).
 - xi) As the ‘nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord’ (Nehemiah 3:5) in rebuilding Solomon’s temple and Jerusalem’s wall, so it is often true today that many wealthy, socially important Christians do very little to build up local churches. (I Cor. 1:26-29).
- 4) **The Pillar and Ground of the Truth:** ‘the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.’ (I Timothy 3:15). A local church is like a pillar because:
- i) It preaches and promotes stability of Doctrine.
 - ii) Local churches support the truth of God’s Word.
 - iii) Many other institutions in society depend on Bible truths taught by local churches, such as our legal system; democratic government (Romans 13:1-6); missionary activity; good literature; Bible Colleges; Christian school system; soul winning; Sunday schools, welfare, art, health, science, military, commerce, etc.
- 5) **An Olive Tree:** ‘thou being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree.’ (Romans 11:17).
- i) Local churches like an olive tree’s leaves should be always green. Greenness means life and sap in the branches. ‘Her leaf shall be green ... neither shall cease from yielding fruit.’ (Jeremiah 17:8). ‘His leaf also shall not wither.’ (Psalm 1:3; 92:12-14).
 - ii) Local churches, like olive trees, should greatly abound with fruit. ‘that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.’ (Psalm 1:3). (John 4:36; 12:24; 15:2,8,16; Romans 7:4; I Corinthians 9:7; Philippians 1:22; 4:17; Colossians 1:10).
 - iii) Olive oil was used to fuel lamps to shed light and to dispel darkness (Matthew 25:3,4). So must local churches shed the Gospel light to a sin-darkened world. (2 Corinthians 4:4,6).
 - iv) As an olive branch is a symbol of peace (Genesis 8:11), so a local church should be a place where the peace of God prevails (Romans 5:1) & the Gospel of peace is sent out. Ephesians 6:15.

- 6) **A Golden Candlestick:** ‘the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.’ (Revelation 1:20).
- i) Local churches must shine forth the light of God’s Word, Christ’s salvation, and Godly example to a sin-darkened world. “Let your light so shine before men..” (Matthew 5:16) “Walk as children of light.” (Ephesians 5:8).
 - ii) Golden candlesticks are very valuable and precious, so local churches are very precious to God.
 - iii) As removing a candlestick brings darkness, so God may remove a church due to its apostasy and leaving its first love. (Revelation 2:4,5).
- 7) **A Merchant Ship:** ‘which hope we have as an anchor of the soul.’ (Hebrews 6:19).
- i) As a merchant ship brings merchandise from a far country, so do good churches bring spiritual blessings from heaven, of eternal life (II John 5:12,13); peace of God (Romans 5:1); comfort of the Holy Ghost (Acts 9:31); fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23); wisdom from above (James 3:17); Godly lifestyle – ‘our conversation is in heaven’ (Philippians 3:20); reports of a better country. (Hebrews 11:16); etc.
 - ii) As a sailing ship sails sweetly along under a favourable wind, so do local churches progress under the favourable wind of the Holy Spirit – The wind bloweth where it listeth.’ (John 3:8); ‘There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind.’ (Acts 2:2). The Holy Spirit is represented by a wind. Sailing ships need wind to progress.
 - iii) As a ship navigates by a compass, so local churches find true direction, doctrine and guidance from God’s Word.
 - iv) As merchant ships cast nets into the sea to catch fish, so local churches cast out the Gospel net as fishers of men to catch men for Christ. (Matthew 4:19).
 - v) As some ships are tossed about in all directions by stormy winds, so some churches and Christians may be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14) & persecution.
 - vi) In stormy winds, every person tries to save the ship from sinking. So, when trouble, persecution, heresy or fighting hits a local church, all members should pray to God and work wisely for the church’s and their own safety. They must not try to destroy it.
 - vii) As a ship’s direction is determined by its rudder, so a church’s direction is determined by how its people use their tongues. (James 3:4,5).
 - viii) As a ship without an anchor is in danger of being destroyed on rocks, so a local church which doesn’t rightly divide the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15) and doesn’t set its hope in God’s Word (Hebrews 6:19) is in danger of making shipwreck of its faith (I Timothy 1:19) on the rocks of false doctrines.
 - ix) As merchant ships greatly enrich those cities and countries to which they belong, by bringing rare and excellent merchandise, so local churches, by bringing treasures from heaven, greatly enrich poor sinners, cities and nations with treasures of truth, peace, pardon and heavenly blessings. ‘She is like the merchants’ ships; she bringeth her food from far’ (Proverbs 31:14). So is a good church like an ideal woman, the bride of Christ.
 - x) As merchant ships need a skilful pilot to prevent shipwreck, so local churches must let Jesus Christ the ‘captain of their salvation’ navigate and guide them through the dangers of this world (Hebrews 2:10), to avoid smashing on the rocks of false doctrines, errors, human inventions and heresies.
- 8) **A Flock:** ‘Feed the flock of God.’ (Acts 20:28).
- i) As sheep need feeding, so do Christians in a church need to be fed the Word of God.’ (Acts 20:28).
 - ii) As sheep are clean, tame and gentle, so this is God’s will for Christians.
 - iii) As sheep may go astray, so may Christians. (Psalm 119:176).
 - iv) As sheep have many enemies, so do Christians have many adversaries. (Romans 8:36).
- 9) **A Body:** ‘For we being many are one bread, and one body.’ (I Corinthians 10:17). ‘For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body.’ (I Corinth. 12:13). ‘For the edifying of the body of Christ.’ (Ephesians 4:12; 2:16). ‘He is the head of the body, the church.’ (Coloss.1:18,24).

- i) As every natural body has a head, so Christ is the head of the church. (Col.1:18; Eph. 1:22)
 - ii) As a natural body has many members (I Corinthians 12:14,20), so a church consists of many believers called members of His body: 'We are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.' (I Corinthians 12:27).
 - iii) In a natural body, members differ in strength, honour and use, such as arms, legs, fingers, hands, eyes, ears, kidney, heart, liver, etc. so churches have members each differing in honour and use, such as pastors, teachers, evangelists, helpers, givers, etc.
 - iv) In a natural body, if one member suffers, all members suffer with it. So in a church, when one saint suffers, all sympathise and suffer with him. (I Corinthians 12:26).
 - v) In a natural body, all members take care of each member. So in a church, every believer should seek the welfare and take care of all other members. (I Corinthians 12:25).
 - vi) As all members in a natural body receive direction and nourishment from the head, so do all members in a church receive direction and nourishment from Jesus Christ. (Colossians 2:18,19).
 - vii) As a natural body increases in strength, size and beauty, so a church increases in strength, size and glory and she reproduces other churches. (Ephesians 4:15,16).
- 10) **An Inn**: 'And brought him to an Inn.' (Luke 10:34). See Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).
- i) As an Inn provides rest and security to travellers as they journey from one city or country to another, so a church provides for believers' needs as they travel through the wilderness of earth to heaven.
 - ii) As an Inn has an Innkeeper who helps and cares for guests, so in a church there are pastors and workers who receive, welcome and help all poor sinners who enter.
 - iii) As an Inn provides convenient food for travellers, so a church refreshes the souls of all pilgrims entering with the sincere milk of the Word of God, or strong meat as needed. (Hebrews 5:12-14; I Peter 2:2).
 - iv) As an Inn is not a permanent dwelling place but a traveller only stays for a night and is gone, so a church is not a permanent residence. We are here for a short time (a night) we have no continuing city, but we rest here a while on our journey to heaven. Hebrews 13:14
- 11) **A Family or Household**: 'Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named' Eph 3:15. 'ye are no more strangers & foreigners, but fellow citizens...of the household of God.' Eph 2:19 'As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.' (Galatians 6:10).
- i) In a Family there are people of different ages, strength and tasks, so there are in a church babies, young men, fathers, grandfathers, teachers, rulers, and servants. (I John 2:12-14).
 - ii) The head of a Family cares for and provides for all in it. (I Timothy 5:8). So Christ supplies all our needs (Philippians 4:19; Matthew 6:25-30).
 - iii) As there is order and discipline in a Family, so there is order and discipline in a church. (Hebrews 12:5-11).
 - iv) As a Family has commitment, love, sharing and close relationships, so a church should show the same qualities.
- 12) **A Chaste Virgin**: 'I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.' (II Corinthians 11:2).
- i) As the Jewish High Priest could marry only a virgin (Leviticus 21:10-15), so Jesus Christ our Great High Priest will marry His virgin, the church.
 - ii) As a virgin is kept pure from fornication, so the church and every Christian should be kept pure from idolatry, love of the world, and anti-Christian worship.
 - iii) As a virgin, engaged to a husband, longs for the wedding day, so the church longs for the return of the Bridegroom, when Christ will take her to Himself. 'The marriage of the Lamb is come.' (Revelation 19:7,8).
 - iv) As an engaged virgin is greatly loved by her husband, so Christ greatly loves His Bride the church. (Ephesians 5:25).

- 13) **A Bride or a Wife:** ‘As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.’ (Ephesians 5:24).
- i) As a wife has made a covenant to be married to a husband, so the church and every true Christian has made a covenant to be married to Jesus Christ. (Romans 7:1-4).
 - ii) As a wife and husband give themselves wholly to each other, so do Christ and every true Christian give themselves wholly to each other. ‘They gave themselves to the Lord’ 2 Cor 8:5
 - iii) As a wife renounces all other men, so all true Christians must renounce sin, self and justification by the law to keep themselves faithful to Christ. (Romans 7:4). (Eph 5:24,33)
 - iv) As a wife obeys & reverences her husband, so churches should obey & reverence Christ.
 - v) As a wife has legal right to her husband’s estate, so Christians will inherit much of Christ’s possessions in eternity. (Revelation 21:7; Ephesians 1:11,14,18; I Peter 1:4).
 - vi) As a wife strives to please her husband (I Corinthians 7:34), so churches and all true Christians strive to please Christ. (Colossians 1:10).
 - vii) As a wife is in close communion with her husband (Matthew 19:6; Eph. 5:31), so the church and all true Christians are brought into a close relationship with Christ: ‘Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.’ Matt. 25:40.
 - viii) As a wife is troubled when she has offended her husband, so all true Christians are grieved when they have offended Christ. (Song of Solomon 5:6).
 - ix) As a wife knows her husband’s mind and secrets, so does the church have the mind of Christ and secrets that are hid from the world. (Psalm 25:14; I Corinthians 2:16).
 - x) As a wife bears children to her husband and cares for them, so the church is to bear spiritual children for Christ and care, feed and nourish them.
 - xi) As a wife married to a King has servants, so the church married to Christ has angels ‘ministering to them that are heirs of salvation.’ (Hebrews 1:14).
- 14) **A House:** ‘But Christ over his own house: whose house are we.’ (Hebrews 3:6).
- i) As a house is built on a sure foundation, so the church is built on the only sure foundation of Christ. ‘Other foundation can no man lay than...Jesus Christ.’ (I Cor 3:11). ‘Upon this rock I will build my church.’ (Matthew 16:18).
 - ii) As a house is built by a wise masterbuilder (I Corinthians 3:10), so we need to take heed how we build local churches on the foundation of Christ: ‘Another buildeth thereon ... let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.’ (I Corinthians 3:10).
 - iii) As a house may be built of gold, silver, precious stones, or wood, hay and stubble, so a local church (or individual Christian) may build with quality materials of suffering for Christ, Bible wisdom and soul winning, or of worthless things such as rock music, man’s wisdom, false doctrines and entertainment.’ (I Corinthians 3:12-15).
 - iv) As a house is built for a family to dwell in, so a church is built for Christ and His family to dwell in. (Ephesians 2:19).
 - v) As a house is a place of security to defend from dangers, so is a local church a place of security from evil, worldliness and false doctrines.
 - vi) As a house has a way and a door leading into it, so a local church has a way and door of Christ leading into it: ‘I am the way....’ (John 14:6). ‘I am the door.’ (John 10:9).
 - vii) As a house is a place of prayer, Bible reading and family instruction, so is a church a place of prayer, Bible preaching, family instruction and service.

44. **Don’t Attend a Counterfeit Church.** Some marks of a counterfeit church are:

- 1) Counterfeit Gospel – salvation by works. II Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6-9; 3:10.
- 2) Counterfeit Jesus Christ – Mormon Jesus, JW Jesus, RC Jesus is not the Bible Jesus (II Cor. 11:4).
- 3) Counterfeit Baptism – Sprinkling of babies or adults. (Acts 8:37; Mark 1:9-11).
- 4) Counterfeit Preachers – Non Soul Winners (II Tim. 4:5), Bible Correcters (Jer. 36:23; Rev. 22:19).
- 5) Counterfeit Doctrines – of devils. (I Timothy 4:1).
- 6) Counterfeit Filling of the Holy Spirit – tongues, Toronto ‘blessing’, animal noises. (II Cor. 11:4).
- 7) Counterfeit Bibles – Modern Versions which omit about 2% of the NT. (Revelation 22:18,19).
- 8) Counterfeit Titles – Father, Pope, Reverend. (Revelation 17:3; Psalm 111:9).

45. **HOW TO HAVE GENUINE REVIVAL** (II Chronicles 29-31).

A number of ingredients are necessary to maintain genuine revival. Major Bible revivals were:

- 1) Hezekiah's revival. (II Chronicles 29-31).
- 2) Jonah's revival at Nineveh. (Jonah 3).
- 3) Jerusalem revival. (Acts 1-12).
- 4) Paul's revivals in his three missionary journeys. (Acts 13-28)

I. Hezekiah's Revival: How Hezekiah promoted revival in II Chronicles 29-31.

- 1) Mothers must train their children in God's ways from infancy. (29:1).
- 2) Honour and repair God's House. (29:3).
- 3) Train preachers, Bible teachers, priests and Levites. (29:4-19).
- 4) Remove filthiness out of the Holy place. (29:5,16-19; 30:14; 31:1; Romans 12:1,2).
- 5) Make a covenant to surrender to serve God in soul winning & disciple making. (9:10,11).
- 6) Gather the rulers to honour the House of the Lord. (29:20).
- 7) Restore private and public prayer. (29:11; 30:27).
- 8) Restore public worship, singing and thanksgiving. (29:20-36).
- 9) Restore visitation by mail and door-knocking. (30:1-13,6).
- 10) Humble ourselves to God. (30:11; 7:14).
- 11) Restore Bible teaching by levites (30:22). *Answers* books may help.
- 12) Encourage preachers by paying them full salaries. (31:4).
- 13) Restore tithing (31:5-12): 'The Lord hath blessed his people.' (31:10).
- 14) Promote good, right, truth and holiness. (31:18,20).
- 15) Seek God wholeheartedly and do God's work wholeheartedly. (31:21).

II. Paul's Revivals. How did Paul promote revivals in Acts 13-28?

- 1) Churches to send out church planting, soul winning, Bible teaching missionaries. (13:1-3)
- 2) Select trainee missionaries to go with them (Mark in Acts 13:5; Timothy in Acts 16:1-4)
- 3) Preach to people who desire to hear the Word of God. (13:7).
- 4) Rebuke error when you meet it. (13:8-11).
- 5) Look for God-conscious people to preach to. (13:14-16).
- 6) Tell people to turn from vanities to the Living God. (14:15).
- 7) Teach many people God's Word. (14:21,22; 15:35).
- 8) Train and ordain pastors in every church started. (14:23).
- 9) Report back to sending church to encourage people & recruit more missionaries. 14:27,28
- 10) Refute false doctrines properly. (15:1-).
- 11) Revisit churches started to encourage them. (15:36-).
- 12) Establish churches in the faith. (16:4,5).
- 13) Baptise converts immediately. (16:14,15; 16:30-34).
- 14) Reason with people from the Scriptures on the proof of Jesus Christ's death, resurrection and Messiahship. (17:1-4; 17:10-12; 18:4,5; 19:26).
- 15) Preach at every opportunity. (17:15-17).
- 16) Train promising Christians, eg: Apollos (18:24-28).
- 17) Train orphan Christians, eg: John's disciples (19:1-7).
- 18) Separate the disciples from error and false doctrines. (19:8-10).
- 19) Get believers to burn evil objects from their unsaved days. (19:11-20).
- 20) Spend blocks of quality time teaching disciples in each area. Two years at Ephesus (19:10); three months in Greece (20:1-3); a long time at Antioch (14:26-28).
- 21) Train the Pastors in a pastors school or conference. (20:17-35).
- 22) Write Bible messages to churches to edify and equip them to serve God better (28:30,31)

III. A Modern Revival: First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, USA, and Hyles-Anderson Bible College are the closest modern-day examples I have seen which apply these revival principles. I wholeheartedly recommend Hyles-Anderson Bible College to any young man or woman considering Bible College, for the following reasons:

- 1) Their intense evangelistic atmosphere. All faculty and students are required to go soul winning weekly and bring these converts to the First Baptist Church on their buses. Over 10,000 new converts were baptised each year since 1996 after each Sunday service.

- 2) Their Biblically-sound Fundamental Doctrinal emphasis:
They believe in a literal hell with fire and brimstone.
They stand for the King James Bible as the only inerrant English Bible.
They stand for the local New Testament Church as the only true church.
They believe in redemption through the blood of Christ, salvation by grace through faith alone, and the premillennial Second Coming of Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:42).
- 3) Their Separatist Position: Absolutely no drinking, smoking or dancing is allowed.
No student may attend Hollywood movies, play cards or participate in questionable amusements. They do not fellowship with liberals, the world or apostasy. (Romans 16:17)
- 4) Their High Moral Standards and Old-fashioned Discipline: Young ladies are not allowed to leave Campus unchaperoned. Young men and young ladies may not date alone in cars. Absolutely no hand-holding or other intimacies are allowed between the sexes. There are date nights with bus transportation and adequate chaperones provided by the College. Student insubordination is absolutely forbidden. (I Corinthians 7:1).
- 5) Their Modest Dress Code: Skirts above the knees are not allowed. Men must wear neckties to class and have short haircuts. Young ladies may not wear shorts or slacks.
- 6) Their Emphasis on Manners, Courtesy and Culture: They oppose pagan humanism of many Colleges. They teach courtesy, proper manners, Christian grace and refinement of how young people should conduct themselves to glorify Jesus Christ. (I Peter 3:8).
- 7) The Practical: They blend the best scholarship with the best practical teaching possible. Young preachers are taught how to start soul-winning churches, how to build church buildings, how to borrow money from lending institutions, how to raise money and adopt a budget, and how to organise, operate and perpetuate a New Testament Church. Every student who has left our church to study at Hyles-Anderson College has returned far more trained, mature, equipped and loyal to Christ and to our church than when they left. They increased in love, fellowship and appreciation to me as their sending Pastor.
- 8) Their Local Church Emphasis: God's program for service today is in the local New Testament Church. They are committed to training preachers who will build Bible-believing, fundamental, separated, soul-winning churches. They also aim to train pastors, evangelists, song leaders, youth workers, bus directors, missionaries, Christian school teachers and administrators, who can enter the ministry upon graduation.
- 9) Their strong three-fold emphasis on:
 - a) The students' spiritual life and personal walk with Jesus Christ. Every teacher is a dedicated Christian and consistent soul-winner.
 - b) The strong academic curriculum teaches how to reach the masses, and what to teach and preach to those reached.
 - c) The practical 'how to do it' side of church ministries which have worked in First Baptist Church when applied elsewhere.
- 10) Proven Results in First Baptist Church which has:
 - a) A church membership of over 100,000 believers.
 - b) Over 10,000 baptisms per year for the last 5 years.
 - c) Over 1,000 pastors and missionaries trained, now serving in USA and overseas.
 - d) Over 1,000,000 people in Chicago claim to have been saved through First Baptist's ministry and have walked the aisle to confess Jesus Christ publicly as their Saviour.
 - e) Their Annual Pastors School every March since 1967 attracts about 10,000 pastors and workers to train, motivate and reinvigorate them to win the world for Christ.
 - f) Over 2,200 full-time students attend Hyles Anderson College. Campus accommodation
 - g) Visitors are greatly impressed with their Christian love, warmth, commitment, zeal & manners shown to each other & to visitors. All is done very well & professionally.

I recommend people training at Hyles Anderson College. Order an application packet from:
Admissions Dept; Hyles Anderson College, 8400 Burr Street, Crown Point, Indiana, USA, 46307.
Phone: 1-219-365-4031 or **Fax:** 1-219-365-2029. Why not visit Pastor's School in March 18-21?



Jesus Christ, the Good Samaritan, came to bind up the sinner's wounds. (Luke 10:25-37). Jesus Christ tells believers to help new Christians grow. "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." (v.35). This book helps you do this.

THE WAY TO GOD and HEAVEN

1. We have sinned by breaking God's laws, the 10 commandments. We have been selfish, putting ourselves first, taking God's good gifts of creation without thanking Him as Provider. We have broken the chief commandment of not loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. We have not loved others as we love ourselves. This is sin. We are all big sinners compared to God.
2. God's Law demands that we receive the penalty for our sin in hell forever. This is bad news. God loves us and is offering everybody the free gift of eternal life which we get through Jesus Christ.
3. Jesus Christ, who is God the Son, came to earth, lived a sinless life, and at the age of 33 died on the cross to take the full punishment due for everybody's past, present and future sins. Having received the full penalty for our sins, He died, was buried and rose from the dead three days later. He is now available to be our Saviour from sin if we want Him to be.
4. If you believe that Jesus Christ is:
 - a) God the Son.
 - b) Died for your sins in your place; and
 - c) Rose again bodily from the dead, then
 Receive or ask Jesus Christ to be your Saviour from sin, then God will forgive all your sins and give you eternal life immediately.

Question: Will you receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour? If Yes, then tell this to God right now:

"Almighty God. I know that I have sinned against you. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins to be my Saviour. I now receive you, Lord Jesus Christ, as my Saviour and my God. I now call on you, Lord Jesus, to save me from my sins, take me to heaven when I die, and give me the gift of eternal life right now. I now open the door of my heart and life for You, Lord Jesus, to come in to be my Saviour, my Friend and my God forever. In Jesus Christ's name, I pray. Amen."