

# *The Church*

## **A. WHAT DOES THE WORD "CHURCH" MEAN?**

1. The word for "church" is composed of two Greek words meaning "to call out - from." It came to mean a "gathering" or an "assembly."
2. As used in the New Testament it came to mean
  - a. A particular local assembly
    - 1) "the church of God at Corinth" (1 Cor. 1:2)
    - 2) "the church of the Thessalonians" (1 Thess. 1:1)
    - 3) "seven churches" (Rev. 1:11)
  - b. The assembly of all believers in Christ regardless of geography. (Usually called the Universal Church)
    - 1) Matthew 16:18 "I will build my church"
    - 2) Ephesians 1:22-23 Christ = "head over all things to the church, which is His body"
    - 3) Acts 20:28 "shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."
3. Place the following references with a short explanatory phrase in the proper section (a. or b.) above. Matthew 16:18; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Thess. 1:1; Rev. 1:11; Acts 20:28

## **B. WHEN DID THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL START AND WHEN WILL IT BE COMPLETED?**

Example of Dick Poole, Center Baptist Church, Omaha, who answered the question of when the church began with "Abraham."

1. Looking at Scripture
  - a. Matthew 16:18 The church is still future.
  - b. Acts 5:11 The church has already begun.

- c. Acts 11:15 Refers to the beginning; includes speaking in tongues--must mean the Day of Pentecost.
  - d. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 The church will be completed at the rapture.
2. An interesting question: Was Abraham in the church?
- a. Best answer = No
  - b. What if the church does begin with Abraham? (A branch of theology called "Covenant Theology" believes it did. What effect would this have on Israel?)
    - 1) Then the promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church.
    - 2) The Church inherits all the promises made to the nation of Israel.
    - 3) God has no future for Israel.
    - 4) The re-emergence of Israel in the land of Palestine is an accident and has no significance in Biblical prophecy.
    - 5) There is no future literal kingdom of Christ upon the earth in which He reigns from Jerusalem.
3. How long will the Church exist?
- a. Evidently throughout eternity.
  - b. Ephesians 5:25-27 uses the figure of marriage to picture the relationship of Jesus Christ to the Church. Christ is in the process of perfecting his church and will ultimately make her a glorious bride, perfect in holiness, one with which He can establish an eternity together.
  - c. In Revelation 19:7, the invitation is given to the marriage of the Lamb and His bride, now prepared for the marriage, clothed in righteousness. The Millennial Kingdom of Christ on the earth evidently is a celebration of the marriage of Christ to His Church.
  - d. Hebrews 12:22-23 speaks of the New Jerusalem, and the Church is seen as being in the New Jerusalem!

- e. Revelation 21:14. The names of the 12 apostles are inscribed on the 12 foundation stones of the New Jerusalem.

**C. SOME THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS**

1. Are you a part of the Universal Church?
2. What are you doing to prepare for your wedding?
3. Why are there 24 elders in heaven? (Rev. 4:4, 10, etc.)

# "Can I Go to Church on TV?"

or

"What Is a Local Church?"

- A. The New Testament gives no real definition, but we can describe what a church ought to be like from the examples there.
- B. Ryrie's definition: "A local church is an assembly of professing believers in Christ who have been baptized and who are organized to do God's will."  
(C. C. Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, p. 141.)
  - 1. an assembly of **professing believers** in Christ:
    - a. New Testament letters are written to professing believers: "Paul ... to the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia" 2 Cor. 1:1
    - b. Even Jesus, however, predicted there would be some "tares among the wheat" (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43). Not all would be genuine "born-again" Christians.
  - 2. who have been **baptized**: The Bible expects all believers will get baptized. The New Testament knows of no unbaptized Christians.
  - 3. who are **organized**: In the New Testament, organization was obtained as soon as possible. It would seem that church leadership called "elders" constitutes the minimal level of organization.
    - a. Acts 14:21-23 (Paul and Barnabas) ... returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
    - b. Titus 1:5 "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you"
  - 4. to **do God's will**: This would include
    - a. Observance of the ordinances (communion, baptism)
    - b. Being open to ministry to all age groups in all parts of the world

- c. Acts 2:40-47
  - 1) Evangelism (38-41, 47)
  - 2) Baptism (41)
  - 3) Apostolic teaching (42)
  - 4) Fellowship
    - a) Communion ("breaking of bread")
    - b) Prayer
  - 5) Expectancy (43)
  - 6) Sharing/Giving (44,45)
  - 7) Unity (46)
  - 8) Assembling together (daily)
  - 9) Eating
  - 10) Joy
  - 11) Praising (47)

C. What is a church not, according to this definition?

- 1. 2 or 3 gathered together
- 2. A building
- 3. Parachurch groups such as Campus Crusade for Christ, Youth for Christ, Bible Studies, Navigators, Inter-Varsity, Mission Boards, Christian Schools

D. What is unspecified according to this definition?

- 1. What kind of building if any
  - a. For awhile (but only temporarily) the early church met in the temple - Acts 2:46
  - b. They met from house to house - Acts 2:46
  - c. Acts 20:8-9 -- they met in a third story room
  - d. They met in houses (Ro 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phm 1:2)
- 2. How many meetings
  - a. (although for at least awhile, the early church met daily - Acts 2:46)
  - b. There is evidence of regular meetings on the first day of the week - Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2

# What Is the Job Description of the Local Church?

- A. Giving Luke 21:1, 2 Cor. 8-9
- B. Deacons and Elders / Overseers:
  - 1. Elders
    - a. Acts 20:28-32 - Job description for elders
    - b. 1 Peter 5:1-4 - job description and style for elders
    - c. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 - qualifications
  - 2. Deacons:
    - a. Acts 6:1-6 - job description
    - b. 1 Tim. 3:8-13 - qualifications
- C. Fellowship -- Sharing in Common
  - 1. Acts 2:44-46
  - 2. Heb. 10:25
- D. Evangelism
  - 1. Mark 16:15
  - 2. Acts 1:8
- E. Preaching / Edifying / Teaching
  - 1. Acts 2:40 - exhorting
  - 2. Eph. 4:16 - edifying
  - 3. Matth 28:20
- F. Communion - 1 Cor. 11:23-26
- G. Baptism - Matt. 28:18-20
- H. Using Spiritual gifts
  - 1. Eph. 4:11-13 - is this Service?
  - 2. Rom. 12:1-8
  - 3. 1 Cor. 12
- I. Worship / Prayer
  - 1. Eph. 5:19
  - 2. Col. 3:16
- J. Edifying - Eph. 4:16
- K. Redeeming the time - Eph. 5:16

# "Our Risen Lord, the Head of His Church!"

## Introduction

There are several "figures of speech" in the New Testament used in relation to Christ and His Church. Each of these figures convey a beautiful **relationship** between Christ and us. They also imply important **responsibility** that we as believers have toward Christ. Watch these unfold in the Scripture passages below.

## A. The GOOD SHEPHERD and the SHEEP John 10:1-18; 27-29

1. **Relationship:** Jesus is the Good Shepherd (10:11, 14); Believers are His sheep. This imagery is taken from life, of course, but also reflects the Old Testament teaching that Jehovah was the Shepherd who would care tenderly for the flock (Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11).
  - a. The sheep hear the shepherd's voice (vv. 3, 4, 27).
  - b. The shepherd calls his own sheep by name (vv. 3, 14, 27). This suggests a personal interest in the sheep (*Wycliffe*, 1094).
  - c. The shepherd leads his sheep out (v. 3), going before them (v. 4).
  - d. The sheep follow the shepherd -- they know his voice (vv. 4, 14, 27).
  - e. The shepherd provides access to safety (v. 9). The going in and out perhaps refers to the freedom believers in Christ have (*Wycliffe*, 1095).
  - f. The shepherd provides food, nourishment (v. 9). Jesus provides real nourishment, not dry, useless teaching (*Wycliffe*, 1095).
  - g. The Good Shepherd came to provide life--life that is above and beyond (v. 10)!
  - h. The Good Shepherd sacrifices for the sheep--He gives up His life on their behalf (vv. 11, 15, 17, 18), instead of fleeing to save himself. This is in contrast to many of the self-serving leaders of Israel (Ezekiel 34), including the Pharisees. The Pharisees were into shepherding to gain control over others' lives. It was a power game. This is why they so resented Jesus.

- i. The Good Shepherd knows His own sheep, and they know Him (v. 14).
  - 1) There is mutual affection between Jesus and His sheep. In the N. T. this knowledge is more than just a knowing the facts about someone or knowing the identity of someone. It refers to an intimacy of relationship. It is a knowledge by experience!
  - 2) This same intimacy of knowledge exists between Christ and His heavenly Father (v. 15)! This knowledge implies willingness to obey, even to the point of giving up one's life.
  
- j. The Good Shepherd searches for other sheep that are not of His sheepfold (v. 16). He will provide unity between both groups of sheep.
  
- k. The Good Shepherd's self-sacrifice for His sheep is given willingly, voluntarily (vv. 17-18).
  - 1) Incidentally, the fact that Jesus is willing to give His life for the sheep is cause for the Father to love Him with a sacrificial love!
  - 2) **Application:** If you want to deepen the love between you and someone else, you will not accomplish it through being selfish and self-centered. You will cause others to love you more as you sacrifice for their best interests.



- l. The Good Shepherd's sheep hear His voice (v. 27).
  - 1) Hear = pres. tense. "My sheep are hearing My voice"
- m. The Good Shepherd knows His sheep (v. 27).
  - 1) knows = pres. tense. "and I am knowing them"
- n. The Good Shepherd's sheep follow Him (v. 27).
  - 1) follow = pres. tense. "and they are following Me."
- o. The Good Shepherd provides eternal life for His sheep that is eternally secure (vv. 28, 29).
  - 1) V. 28 I am giving to them eternal life (pres)
  - 2) and not will they perish (in the future) into the ages
  - 3) and not will anyone seize them (in the future) out of my hand
  - 4) V. 29 My Father, Who has given them to me (perfect -- gave them to me in time past with results continuing up to the present)
  - 5) is greater than all, [reason no one can seize the sheep out of Jesus' hand or His Father's hand!]
  - 6) and no one is (presently) able to be seizing them (pres. tense) out of my Father's hand!

## 2. **Responsibility: The responsibility of the sheep**

- a. **To keep hearing the shepherd's voice** (v. 3, 16, 27). This means to recognize and to obey. This presupposes a confidence in the shepherd. (*Wycliffe*, 1094)
  - 1) The sheep are hearing his voice (v.3) (pres.)
  - 2) (v. 16) And other sheep I presently have
  - 3) which presently are not of this fold
  - 4) and these it is necessary for me to be bringing (a process);
  - 5) and the voice of me they will hear (in the future);
  - 6) and they will become (future) one flock with one Shepherd!

7) V. 27: My sheep are hearing My voice (pres.)

**b. To keep following the shepherd** (v. 4, 27). If someone claims to be a Christian but is not following the Shepherd, is he really a Christian?

1) follow = pres. tense. "and they are following Me."

1 John 2:3-6 suggests that if someone says he knows Jesus, yet does not keep His commandments, he is a liar and the truth is not in him (v.4).

**c. To enter through the door** (Jesus) (v. 9).

1) I am the door; through me, if a certain one should enter (aor. subj. -- at a point in time).

a) This entrance through the door is at a point in time. It is an initial, decisive entrance. One only has to be saved once. One does not keep

2) he shall be saved (future passive) --

a) The saving is done by another (God)

b) It will be completed at an immediate future point in time. -- this salvation takes place immediately when one enters the door, for the next phrase indicates that the one saved shall go in and out and find pasture (all futures irrespective of the duration of action, although the phrases used (go in and go out) indicate a passage back and forth, which carries a durative action).

c) On the other hand, we know from other passages of Scripture that God's salvation has a future, ultimate completion.

(1) Are you saved? (Yes and No)

(2) Is Harold Jorgensen saved? (Yes and No)

(3) Is Milo Christiansen saved? (Yes and No)

(4) Romans 8:20-23 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the

pains of childbirth together until now. 23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.**

- d. To keep knowing the shepherd** (v. 14). See also v. 15. Again, knowledge as it is used here between God and Christ and between Christ and His own is not knowledge about. It implies individuals so in tune with each other that for the follower, disobedience is out of the question!
- 1) Jesus keeps continually knowing His own v. 14
  - 2) His own keep continually knowing Him v. 14
  - 3) The Father continually knows Jesus (v. 15)
  - 4) And Jesus continually knows the Father. v. 15
  - 5) Amazingly, **Jesus continually is laying down His life** for the sheep. The very act of incarnation was laying down his life. The laying down includes (and emphasizes, of course) Jesus' death. Jesus now dedicates His existence on behalf of His sheep -- Heb. 7:25 -- He ever lives to make intercession for them!
- e. To hear the shepherd's voice** (v. 16). "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd.
- 1) Jesus has other sheep. (He already has them even though they will not have been born until 2000 years later!)
  - 2) The other sheep are Gentiles.
  - 3) The initiative is Jesus' -- He must bring them.
  - 4) Certainty! They will hear His voice. (All of Jesus' sheep will hear His voice.)
- f. To keep on believing the shepherd** (vv. 25, 26). 25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not **believe**; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. 26 "But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.
- 1) Why do people not continue to believe in Jesus? Answer: Because they are not His sheep.
  - 2) Because people are Jesus' sheep, they keep on believing Him!
- g. To keep hearing the shepherd's voice** (v. 27). 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; Jesus'

sheep keep hearing His voice; He keeps knowing them; they keep following Him!

- h. To follow the shepherd (v. 27).**

# CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH: The VINE and the BRANCHES

John 15:1-17

1. I HAVE A DREAM
  - a. When I was little I wanted to be a cowboy.
  - b. When I was in Australia I had a big dream--of being a pastor who was able to help other pastors, of helping pastors in different parts of the world, even. I don't know if that will happen, but I still have that dream. I would like to be as helpful and productive for God as I can be. I would like to bear fruit for Him.
2. WHAT'S YOUR DREAM?
3. It is not our goal in life to have fun! Our goal in life is to have a fruitful, productive life for Jesus Christ. There are many young people out for track and field, but their goal is not to have fun. There is nothing fun about running around a quarter-mile oval, gasping for breath, wind searing your lungs, the thighs in your legs screaming in pain, feeling half-dead. You don't run in track to feel good, but to win the race! I have seen runners reach the finish line after a hard, fast 400 meter run and barely be able to stand up after they strode across the finish line, going into oxygen debt to such a degree they were seeing stars, close to collapse. They weren't trying to have fun, they were trying to win!

## A. Relationship: Christ is the true vine; Christians are the branches.

1. Jesus is the true vine (15:1, 5). [What does **true** imply?]
2. Christians are the branches (15:5).
3. God the Father is the vine-dresser (15:1).
4. Central to this concept of vine and branches is the issue of the **union** of the branches with the vine. This of course indicates the importance of a close relationship between the vine and the branches. The most basic thing the branch can do is to **remain, abide or continue** in the vine. The word abide or remain is used 11 x in John 15:1-17.
  - a. **Wiersbe**, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, I, 355.
    - 1) Living Union - so we bear fruit
    - 2) Loving Union - so we enjoy Him
    - 3) Lasting Union - so we need not be afraid.

5. It goes without saying that the branches get their life, their nourishment, their health from the vine. Connected with the vine, all sorts of good things can happen. Separated from the vine, no good can happen. (John 15:5 "...for apart from Me you can do nothing.") **Application: "I cannot do anything worthwhile in life apart from Jesus Christ!"**
6. Teacher / learner (disciple) (15:8).
7. An atmosphere of love (15:9, 10)

## **B. The Responsibility:**

### **1. Of the Branches to the Vine:**

- a. To remain/abide in Christ (15:4, 5, 7; 1 John 3:24). We can do absolutely nothing apart from Christ (15:5).
- b. Accept God's pruning to bear more fruit (15:2).
- c. Bear fruit (15:2). What does this mean?
  - 1) Bear fruit (15:2).
  - 2) Bear more fruit (15:2).
  - 3) Bear much fruit (15:5). This brings glory to God (15:8) and proves we are really Jesus' learners, or disciples (15:8).
  - 4) We were chosen and appointed to bear fruit for God that remains (15:16).
- d. Ask for and receive answers to prayer (15:7, 16).
- e. Remain in Jesus' love (15:9).
- f. Keep Christ's commandments (15:10). (This is how we remain in Jesus' love! -- see v. 9.)
- g. Love one another as believers (15:12). This is a clear-cut command from Jesus (see 15:9 and 10 and again in 15:17). If we love fellow-Christians, we are obeying Jesus and we are demonstrating we are remaining in Jesus' love.
- h. We are no longer slaves, but friends of Christ's, provided we obey Him (15:14-15).

## 2. Of the Vine

- a. Provide cleansing words (15:3).
- b. Abide in the branches (15:4).
- c. Provide the nourishment for the branches to bear fruit (15:4).
- d. Love the branches (us) (15:9).
- e. Provide for our complete joy! (15:11).
- f. To choose us and appoint us to bear fruit that lasts (15:16).

## 3. Of the Vinedresser:

- a. To give attention to branches that aren't bearing fruit (15:2).
  - 1) To take away branches that do not bear fruit (15:2). For this meaning, see John 11:48, where the Jews were afraid that the Romans would take away their place and nation; or Matt. 24:39, where Noah's flood took away all the unbelievers.
  - 2) Or, To lift up the branches off the ground so that they pollinate better, don't get trampled on the ground, and begin to bear fruit. For this meaning see Matt. 4:6, where speaks of angels bearing up Jesus, lest He dash his foot against a stone; or Matt. 9:6, where the paralyzed man is asked to pick up his bed and walk.
- b. To prune fruit-bearing branches so they produce even more fruit (15:2).
  - 1) Note: Sometimes pruning is designed to cut off dead wood so insects and disease won't injure the vine and branches.
  - 2) Sometimes pruning is designed to produce a better quality of fruit--bigger fruit. CALL ON BILL CHRISTIANSEN.
  - 3) GOD IS INTERESTED IN QUALITY AS WELL AS IN QUANTITY.
    - a) **Illustration** of my trying to prune in Australia. It never did bear fruit properly after that. Example: It takes an expert, knowledgeable vine-dresser to know how to prune properly. If I were to bring into

my life the things I thought would be beneficial / and remove from my life the things I thought would be harmful, I would end up making my life unfruitful--unprofitable. Only God knows what is really required to make me useful and fruitful for Him.

4) How does God prune?

a) By using His Word

John 15:3 - "Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken to you." (The word "clean" in 15:3 and "prune or purge" in 15:2 are closely related.

b) By using other peoples' admonition (warning)

(1) 1 Thessalonians 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, **warn** them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all [men].

(2) Romans 15:14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of **goodness**, filled with all **knowledge, able also to admonish** one another.

c) By using pastors, teachers, spiritual leaders

(1) 1 Corinthians 4:14. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn [you].

(2) Colossians 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

d) By chastening us, using life's experiences, including (Hebrews 12:1-11)

(1) Hardship - Example: My hard time in Rexford. What I learned:



- (a) I needed to be more people oriented
- (b) I needed to communicate with the leaders and with the people more
- (c) I needed to make my messages apply to peoples' lives more
- (d) I needed to learn how to be more of a leader.

(2) Suffering

5) Pruning hurts, but it is productive!

c. Love His Son (15:9).

**C. The identity of the branches that get burned**

1. **They are Christians who lose their salvation.** (But see John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 10:28-39; Rom. 8:1 etc.)
2. **They are Christians who lose their rewards.**
  - a. "The unfruitful believer is set aside, shelved. He or she is of no practical use to Christ or to His kingdom--just as an unfruitful branch is of no use to a fruit-producing vine." Charles Stanley, *Eternal Security*, p. 130.
  - b. "The 'burned' branches represent Christians who will lose rewards but not salvation at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 3:15)." Edwin A. Blum, John, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, II, 325.
3. **They are not genuine Christians.**
  - a. "Since all Christians bear fruit, it is clear that the fruitless branches in John 15 cannot refer to them.... Externally they [the branches] may be attached, but no life flows through them.... Some only appear to be a part of God's people....(Matt. 13:30, 38)....Since they have no living connection to Jesus Christ, they are cast out." John MacArthur, Jr., *Saved Without a Doubt: How to Be Sure of Your Salvation*." Victor Books, c. 1992, pp. 32, 33.
  - b. "The 'burned' branches refer to professing Christians who, like Judas, are not genuinely saved and therefore are judged. Like a dead branch, a person without Christ is spiritually dead and therefore will be punished in eternal fire (cf. Matt. 25:46)." Edwin

A. Blum, *TBKC*, II, 325.

- c. Another example is those disciples who left in John 6.

**4. They are Christians who lose their rewards.**

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# "Are You A Priest?"

CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH: "The High Priest and the Holy, Royal Priesthood"

## A. RELATIONSHIP

1. Jesus Christ was designated by God to be a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 5:6, 10)
  - a. We know from Genesis 14:18 that Melchizedek was **King**, so He was royal.
  - b. of (Jeru)salem: Salem means peace (shalom), so he was King of **Peace**. (Now you can't have peace until you have righteousness.)
  - c. The name Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness" (melech = king; zedek = righteousness), so He was a **holy** king.
  - d. We know also from Genesis 14:18 that Melchizedek was "a **priest** of the Most High God."
  - e. Conclusion. Melchizedek was a combination KING / PRIEST. Jesus was designated as God's High Priest after the line of Melchizedek, so Jesus, Our High Priest is a ROYAL PRIEST, a **Priest** who is to rule as **King**.
  - f. It is the job of a priest to offer sacrifice to bring men to God. Jesus, the great high priest, had only to offer one sacrifice to God--His own blood (Hebrews 9:11-14)
2. When Jesus came to His people, He came as their **King**. But since they did not receive Him (John 1:12), He had to serve as their **Priest** who offered Himself as their sacrificial **Lamb** so He could bring both Jews and Gentiles to God. The time is coming when He will return to be their **King** (Matthew 24-25) and the **King** of all **Nations** (Revelation 19)!
3. Just as Jesus is a combination King / Priest, we are a **royal priesthood**, serving as priests underneath Him offering sacrifices to God and bringing men to God.

## B. RESPONSIBILITY

Introduction: "In His love, God called Israel to be a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:1-6), but the Jews failed God and their kingdom was taken from them (Matthew 21:43). Today, God's people (the church) are His kings and priests (1 Peter 2:1-10), exercising spiritual authority and serving God in this world." (Warren Wiersbe, *Bible Exposition Commentary*, II, 568)

1. A **Holy** Priesthood: Our task is to be holy 1 Peter 2:5
  - a. Set apart from sin
  - b. Set apart to God
2. A Holy **Priesthood**: We are to serve as priests 1 Pet. 2:5
  - a. A priest has the task of being a mediator, a bridge between men and God.
  - b. A priest's task is to help people deal with their sins so they can fellowship with a holy God.
  - c. In a real sense we help people find their way to God by pointing them to the High Priest, Jesus!
3. A **Royal** Priesthood: We are members of a royal family because God his our Father, and Christ, our elder brother is the King. 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6
  - a. We are to assist the King in bringing in His Kingdom by helping people leave the Kingdom of Darkness (ruled by Satan and soon his antichrist) and enter the Kingdom of Light (ruled by God and soon His Messiah.
  - b. We are to assist the King in His coming Kingdom. Our job will be even in the kingdom to bring men to God. Many will grow to adulthood and need help in trusting Christ!

4. A Holy Priesthood whose task is to offer up **spiritual sacrifices** acceptable to God through Jesus Christ 1 Peter 2:9
  - a. **Praise!**
    - 1) 1 Peter 2:9 Our job: to proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.
    - 2) Hebrews 13:15 "Through Him then, let us continually offer up a **sacrifice of praise** to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.
  - b. Hebrews 13:16 "And do not neglect **doing good and sharing**; for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
    - 1) It is a useful sacrifice toward God as a believer priest to offer the sacrifice of **doing good** toward God and toward others.
      - a) Any act of kindness toward another in Christ's name is a pleasing sacrifice to God.
      - b) Remember, a sacrifice of doing good always costs us something. It takes **time** which we could spend doing something else. It takes **effort** that could have been used doing something else. When you sacrifice for God as a bel

# *What Are The Church's Symbols?*

## *--The Lord's Supper--*

### *A. Should we call it an ordinance or a sacrament?*

1. "A sacrament is something presented to the senses, which has the power, by divine institution, not only of signifying, but also of efficiently conveying grace." (Council of Trent (1546))
2. An ordinance is "an outward rite prescribed by Christ to be performed by His church." (Ryrie)

### *B. What do locations mean?*

1. In a **Catholic** church, where is: Why?
  - a. The pulpit?
  - b. The baptismal font?
  - c. The altar?
2. In a **Lutheran** church, where is: Why?
  - a. The pulpit?
  - b. The baptismal font?
  - c. The altar?
3. In a **Baptist** church, where is: Why?
  - a. The pulpit?
  - b. The baptistery?
  - c. The communion table?

### *C. What happens at the communion table (or "altar")?*

1. In a **Roman Catholic** church?
  - a. The bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ, though they obviously do not change their appearance. This is called "Transubstantiation."
  - b. What effect does this have? Of re-sacrificing Christ every time there is a "mass."
  - c. Why can this not be true?

- 1) Hebrews 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption [for us].
  - 2) Hebrews 10: 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all].
2. In a **Lutheran** church? [Paragraphs a through d are taken verbatim from Luther's Small Catechism, pp. 28-29.]
- a. "What is the Sacrament of the Altar?  
  
"It is the **true body and blood** of our Lord Jesus Christ **under** the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink."  
  
[Author's note: this view is called "consubstantiation." The second question of this section in the catechism is omitted here.]
  - b. "What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?  
  
"These words, 'Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,' show us that **in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us** through these **words**. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."
  - c. "How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things  
  
"Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: 'Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.' These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: 'forgiveness of sins.'"
  - d. "Who receives this sacrament worthily?  
  
"...But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has **faith in these words**: 'Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.'  
  
But anyone who does **not believe these words or doubts them** is unworthy and unprepared, for the words 'for you' require all hearts to believe."

e. Why can this not be true?

- 1) When Jesus said about the bread, "This is my body" and about the cup, "This is my blood," He was using a figure of speech. so also when He said, "I am the door," He did not mean us to think He was a literal door, but the way of salvation.
- 2) This is supported by the words of Jesus about the Last Supper, "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).
- 3) Jesus never said that believing words about communion would give us forgiveness of sins. He said that His **blood**, (not the wine and the bread) was given for forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 26:27-28 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my **blood** of the new testament, **which** is shed for many for the remission of sins.

- 4) We are to have faith in Jesus' blood, not in words about the communion elements: Romans 3:24-25  
24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:  
25 Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation **through faith in his blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

3. In a **Baptist** church?

- a. We believe that the bread and the cup are strictly a memorial (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). The elements are unchanged; Christ is present in the service but not in the elements at all.

24 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.

25 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.



b. The purposes of The Lord's Supper:

1) A remembrance of Christ (1 Cor. 11:24-25)

24 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.

25 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.

2) It is a way to announce the death of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:26)

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do **shew the Lord's death** till he come.

3) It helps Christians anticipate the Lord's return (1 Corinthians 11:26)

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death **till he come**.

4) It reminds us of the importance of fellowship and unity (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we [being] many are one bread, [and] one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

## "WHY JESUS ASKS US TO BE BAPTIZED"

### A. Command of Baptism (Why should we be baptized?)

#### 1. Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

### B. Examples of Baptism (When should we be baptized?)

1. Acts 2:41 **The Timing of Baptism:** Immediate upon salvation.  
Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added [unto them] about three thousand souls.

#### 2. Acts 8:12-13 **The Timing of Baptism:**

a. Immediate upon salvation;

b. After salvation. Faith comes first, then baptism.

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself **believed** also: and when he was **baptized**, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

#### 3. Acts 8:36, 38 **The Timing of Baptism: Immediate upon salvation.**

36 And as they went on [their] way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, [here is] water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

#### 4. Acts 18:7-8 **The Timing of Baptism:**

- a. Immediate upon salvation.
- b. After salvation. Faith comes first, then baptism.

7. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain [man's] house, named Justus, [one] that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

### C. Meaning/Purpose of Baptism (What does baptism mean?)

1. It is a necessary, outward way of **identifying oneself with Jesus Christ.**
  - a. Water is no more effective in making one a Christian than the blood of bulls or goats was effective in actually forgiving the sins of the Israelites. Even John recognized the difference between water that he used and Jesus' baptizing, using the Holy Spirit  
  
Mark 1:8  
8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.
  - b. **Public testimony that you are a Christian**
    - 1) Uniform for basketball, football, baseball player
    - 2) A statement you *have been saved*, are already a child of God. Not a way to get saved.
      - a) Titus 3:5 5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;
      - b) Ephesians 2:8-10 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:  
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.  
10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

2. **Sign of identification with Christ** in His death, burial and resurrection Romans 6:3-4

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

3. **A sign that the believer has been placed by God's Spirit into the Body of Christ**

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

4. It provides the believer with a **clear conscience** before God  
1 Peter 3:21

21. The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

## Alternative Ideas I Didn't Use

5. **You can't put serving ahead of fellowship with Jesus!** Luke 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.
6. **Jesus was heavily into serving. If we are supposed to be like him (and we are, we cannot avoid serving!** Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.
7. **If you're going to serve Jesus, you have to stay right with Him! You can't keep Him at a distance!** John 12:26a If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be:
8. **If you want to be honored by God, you'll serve His Son!** John 12:26b "... if any man serve me, him will [my] Father honour.
9. **There are many different ways of serving God. We each need to find the best way we can serve Him and do it with all our hearts!** 1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, [even so] minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 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, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

a. What was their job description?

10. What were their qualifications?

11. Were there women Deacons?

a. Romans 16:1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a **servant** of the church which is at Cenchrea:

b. 1 Timothy 3:11 "Women (KJV = "wives") must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things." (NAS)

c. The answer:

1) Women have always had important ministries in the New Testament

a) See Ryrie "The Role of Women in the Church"

- b) Phoebe
  - c) Women who ministered to Christ
  - d) Lydia
  - e) Priscilla
- 2) The first individuals to be called to be official assistants to the apostles were all men. This is especially interesting since the problem they were called to supervise was a feminine problem -- widows being discriminated against.
- 3) It does not appear that women could meet all the requirements of deacons 1 Tim. 3:12
- a) "Husbands of only one wife"
  - b) "Good managers of their own households"
- 4) The feminine reference in 1 Tim. 3:11 is too brief and out of order if a separate office of female deacon were intended
- 5) The term "diakonos" is applied to Phoebe (Rom. 16:1), but this is the common word applied to "household servant." It would seem the best explanation is that Paul here was referring to Phoebe as having a significant, helpful service or ministry in her church, not as an Officer of the church. Phoebe was a servant of the church, not a Servant of the church.