



LIFE

**APPLICATION
MINISTRIES**



***New Member-New Convert
Course Booklet***



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CHAPTER ONE

How We Got Our Bible: God's Word to Us

How We Got Our Bible: God's Word to Us

ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE

Divine Sources

The Bible came from God. Other books present the evidence of this; here we merely note that such a book never has come and never would come from man alone.

Human Writers

God used about forty men in writing the Bible. Some of these writers are unknown, such as the writers of the last chapter of Deuteronomy, the book of Job, and some of the Psalms. In round numbers, the time in which the forty worked included about fifteen hundred years, from 1400 B.C. to A.D. 100.

The perfect harmony of these writers is convincing evidence that all of them were guided by a single mind - the mind of God. Some of the writers simply wrote down what God had told them, as when Moses wrote the law (Deuteronomy 31:24). Some of them wrote what they had seen, as when Matthew recorded what Jesus had done in his presence. Some of them no doubt recorded what they had learned from others, as when Luke wrote about the birth of Jesus, probably repeating what Mary had told him. Some of them may have used earlier writings, as when the writer of 2 Samuel 1:18 referred to the book of Jasher, a book that had been lost. But the Spirit of God specially guided all the writers so that they wrote just what God wanted them to write. Men so guided by God's Spirit are called inspired men. Such men wrote God's word for us.

Purpose of This Lesson

Much might be written about how men were inspired, but this lesson is rather a study of how the Bible has been transmitted to us after the original authors wrote it. We do not have a single book in the handwriting of Moses or Isaiah or Paul. How do we know the Bible we have is the Word as written by the original writers?

A. God did not inspire all who copied or translated the Bible, as He did the original writers, so that they could not make mistakes. It is evident that both copyists and translators could, and did, make errors.

B. Many ancient manuscripts and translations have been preserved. By comparing them, we can usually find the mistakes that have been made. In a few cases, we cannot be sure exactly what the original writing was, but none of these cases have any effect on our Christian faith or life.

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS AND VERSIONS AND MANUSCRIPTS

While we have no part of the Bible in the handwriting of the original author himself, we have two kinds of sources from which we can learn what the original writers wrote. These are manuscripts and versions.

Definitions

Manuscripts are documents written by hand. Before printing was invented, this was the only way of producing books. We have no Bible manuscripts written by the original authors, but we have many copies; that is, manuscripts copied from the original manuscripts or from copies of them. In this lesson, we use the word manuscripts to mean copies written by hand, in the same language used by the original writers.

A **version** is a translation of any document into another language. Some ancient versions were translated from manuscripts older than any we now have. Therefore, they help us to know just what the original writer wrote.

Old Testament Scriptures

Manuscripts: The Old Testament books were written in the Hebrew language between 1400 B.C. and 400 B.C. The oldest Bible manuscripts now known are the Scripture portion among the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found in the caves near the Dead Sea in 1947 and the years following. Probably, it was about 100 B.C. when these manuscripts were copied from earlier copies.

There are many Old Testament manuscripts that were copied in later centuries.

Versions: The oldest version of the Old Testament is a Greek version called the Septuagint (pronounced Sep-tu-a-jint), from the Latin word for seventy. This name was given because about seventy Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt made the translation. Made about 250 B.C. from Hebrew manuscripts older than any we have now, this version helps us to know what the original writers wrote.

Other important Greek versions include those of Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus, which were translated in the second century after Christ. There were also ancient versions in Syrian, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Armenian, and other languages.

New Testament Scriptures

Manuscripts: All the books of the New Testament were written in Greek during the first century after Christ. The oldest New Testament manuscripts now known were copied about three hundred years later, around A.D. 350. Only two known manuscripts are of this age. They are called the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts (pronounced Sy-nay-it-ik and Vat-i-can).

The **Sinaitic Manuscript** is so called because it was discovered in 1844 in a monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai. It is now in the British Museum.

The **Vatican Manuscript** was placed in the library of the Vatican soon after that library was established in 1448, and is still kept there.

The **Alexandrian Manuscript**, copied about A.D. 400 or a little later, is in the British Museum. In 1628, it was a gift to King Charles I from the patriarch of Constantinople, who had brought it from Alexandria, Egypt at an earlier time.

There are more than one hundred other manuscripts dating from the fifth to the tenth century and called **uncial manuscripts**. Derived from the Latin word for inch, this term indicated that these manuscripts were written in letters an inch high. This is actually an exaggeration, but writers of those centuries used only large capital letters. In the ninth and tenth centuries a new style of writing was developed, using small letters. This kind of writing is called cursive or running. There are hundreds of cursive manuscripts dating between the ninth century and the invention of printing in the fifteenth century.

Versions: Perhaps in the first half of the second century, the Bible was translated into Syrian and, not much later, into Latin. A more careful Latin version was completed about A.D. 400. Called the Vulgate, which means common or popular, this version became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church and of Western Europe. Probably in the third and fourth centuries, versions were also made in Coptic (Egyptian), Gothic, Ethiopian, and Armenian. Made from very ancient manuscripts, all of these help us to be sure the Bible we have is approximately the same as the original writings.

ENGLISH VERSIONS

Old English Versions

There were people in the British Isles in the early days of the church, but the English people and the English language developed later. There was an early need for God's Word in the native tongue.

In 735, the Venerable Bede, then at the point of death, finished his translation of John's gospel into Anglo-Saxon, one of the languages from which English developed.

About 900, King Alfred translated a portion of the Bible. Later came the Norman Conquest led by William the Conqueror, and in the course of time the Norman French language blended with the Anglo-Saxon to become what is sometimes called Middle English.

About 1380, Wycliffe and his co-workers translated the Bible into Middle English. These early translations were not made from the Greek and Hebrew but from the Latin Vulgate, which was the official Bible of the church in that time.

In 1525, William Tyndale brought out an English version of the New Testament. In the following years, he added translation of Old Testament books. Tyndale translated directly from the original Greek and Hebrew instead of translating the Latin translation into English, but he no doubt compared the familiar Latin version and obtained help from it. The printing press had now been invented, so it was possible to produce thousands of copies at small expense. In a short time, the Scriptures were distributed more widely than ever before.

English church men angrily opposed the work of Tyndale, but the popular demand was so strong that both the church men and the king (Henry VIII) approved the translation made by Miles Coverdale in 1535. Not knowing Hebrew and Greek, Coverdale used the Latin Vulgate and Luther's German translation. But he undoubtedly was influenced also by Tyndale's version, which had been made from the original languages. Other translations followed, all strongly influenced by Tyndale.

Opposition to the English Bible again rose when Mary Tudor came to the throne and exerted strong efforts to bring England again under the power of the Roman church. Some of the best English scholars fled to Europe. In Geneva, William Whittington and others produced a revised English Bible, based largely on earlier versions. Completing this *Geneva Bible* in 1560, they dedicated it to England's new queen, Elizabeth.

Some of the marginal notes in the Geneva Bible offended the bishops of the Church of England, and they responded by producing a new version of their own. This *Bishop's Bible* was published in 1568.

Through the rest of that century, the clergymen used the Bishop's Bible in the churches, but the Geneva Bible was preferred by many of the people, especially the Puritans who were intent on reforming some practices of the church. In 1604, King James appointed a committee of fifty-four scholars to prepare a new version. They followed the Bishop's Bible except where they thought changes were needed; but they used other English translations, German, Greek and Hebrew texts, the Syrian, the Septuagint, and several Latin versions. The result of their labors was the King James Version, published in 1611 and still the most used Bible in the English language.

Revised English Versions

Any living language is constantly changing. Many words used in the King James Version are now almost unknown. Examples are *neesings*, *besom* and *wist*. Other words have changed their meanings. For example, "let" formerly meant to hinder (Romans 1:13), but now it means to permit. Another word that has changed its meaning is "conversation." To us today it means talk, but to the English people of King James' day, it meant the whole way to living. Unless we recognize the old meaning, we miss the point of such passages as 2 Peter 2:7 and 3:11.

In the course of centuries, therefore, scholars began to see a need to revise the King James Version. In 1885, a committee of fifty-one British scholars, assisted by thirty-two Americans, produced a Revised Version.

In 1901, the American members of the committee brought out the American Standard Version, introducing some variations more in accord with American usage of English. This American Standard Version has been hailed as the most accurate translation in the English language.

Modern English Versions

While they dropped many obsolete words, the revised versions named above kept old pronouns such as *thou* and *thee*, which are always singular, while *ye* and *you* are always

plural. Thus, they accurately reflect the distinctions found in the original languages, but in modern English *you* is used for both singular and plural. Also, *thou* and *ye* are always in the nominative case, while *thee* and *you* are always in the objective. But in modern English, *you* is both nominative and objective, so the distinctions of the Greek and Hebrew are lost. Nevertheless, there are many who think the Scriptures should be available in the kind of English that is commonly used.

A number of modern translations have been produced, each the work of one man.

The Revised Standard Version, completed in 1952, is the work of a committee of American scholars.

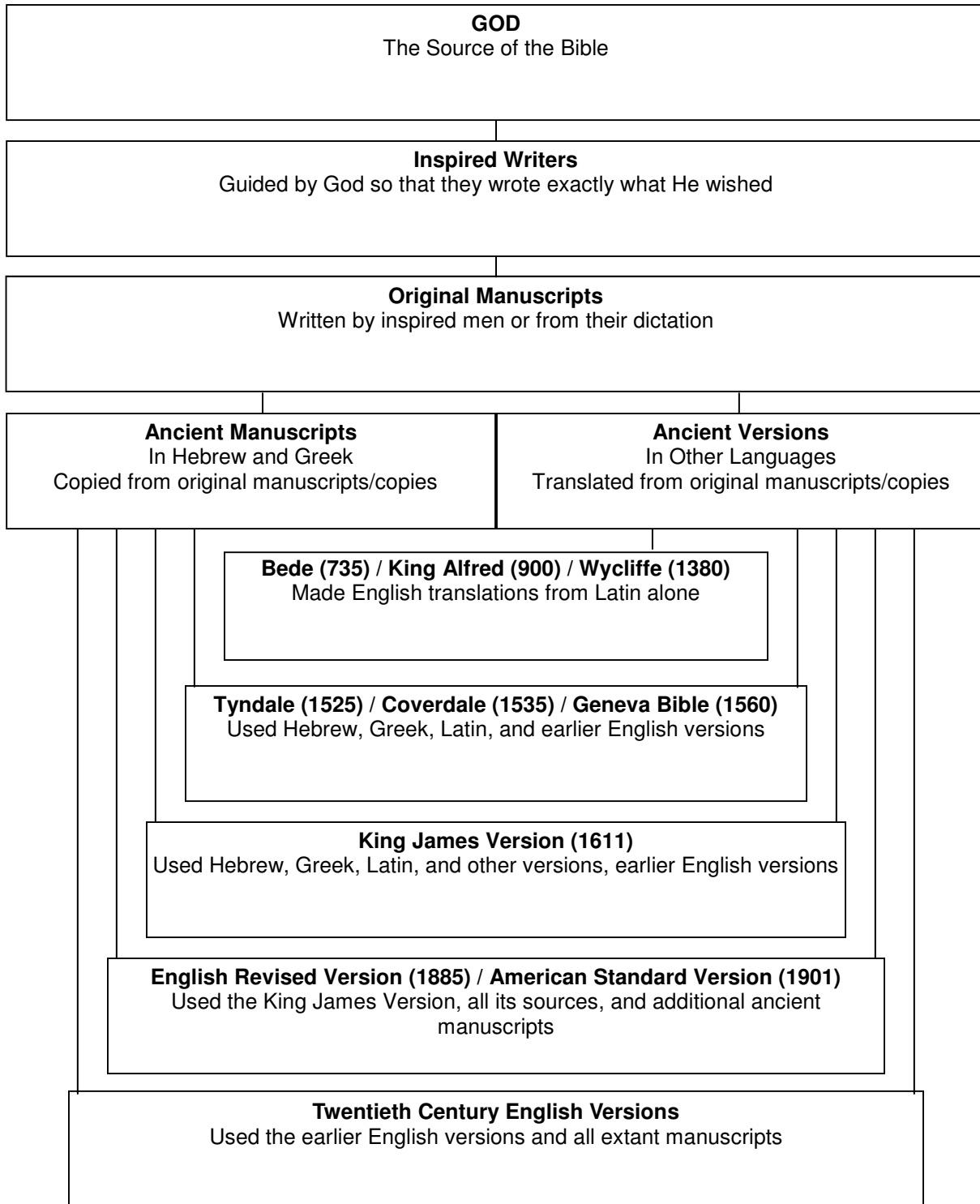
The New English Bible, prepared by a British committee, was completed in 1961.

The New American Standard Version was published in 1963.

The New International Version was completed in 1978.

The New King James Version was introduced in 1982.

Diagram of the Bible's Creation



GOD'S WORD

The Bible is God's Word. Other books have been written to prove this, but in this book, we take it as already proved. Let us think about what this means.

God Speaks with Authority

Authority is needed. Without it a baseball game would become a riot, an army would become a mob, a nation could not exist, religion would be no more than imagination or "wishful thinking." Baseball finds the needed authority in its rule book, the army in its orders, a nation in its constitution, religion in its Bible.

Inadequate sources of authority have been suggested and accepted by some.

1. Writings of thinkers such as Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed, Plato
2. Writings of literary men such as Milton, Shakespeare, Longfellow
3. Pronouncements of church officials such as bishops, cardinals, popes
4. The findings of scientists such as Newton, Darwin, Einstein
5. One's own mind, conscience or experience

God is the supreme authority because He created all things, He knows all things, and He is able to control all things. The Bible carries authority because it is His Word. It is His way of making His will known to us.

Man's welfare depends on his acceptance of proper authority. One who defies the law of his state or nation is a criminal or a rebel. He may be imprisoned or put to death. What fate can one expect if he defies the Word of Almighty God?

The Bible as God's Word

The Bible is a special revelation from God. Inspired men wrote, specially guided by God's Spirit, so that they wrote just what God wanted them to write. Through the Bible, God tells us things that we could never learn in any other way. Some of them are mentioned here. Can you think of others?

1. The nature of God. See Genesis 17:1; Exodus 34:6, 7; John 3:16.
2. The duty of man. See Ecclesiastes 12:13; Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:1 – 7:29.
3. The origin of earthly things. See Genesis 1:1 – 2:25; Psalm 104:1-24; John 1:1-3.
4. The destiny of men and the world. See Mark 16:15, 16; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Revelation 21:1-22:7.

The Purpose of Bible study

Many purposes may be suggested, but here we mention two of the most important. Add as many others as you wish.

1. To know God. If we come to know the Book, but do not come to know God, we have failed and the purpose of God has been defeated.
2. To guide our lives. If we come to know the Book, but do not come to live by the Book, this too is a failure. Read James 1:22.

Our Attitude Toward the Bible

God's Word is holy. It deserves not only our study, but also our reverent study. One who approaches it with a skeptical or faultfinding attitude misses its treasures. One who reads it as a message from God is richly rewarded.

GOD'S WORD TO US

God has given His Word, but it has no affect in our lives unless it actually comes to us: unless we receive it, study it, understand it and obey it. As we try to understand the Bible, several rules are helpful. Study those given below and keep them in mind whenever you study the Bible in the future.

A. Each scripture is to be understood in the light of all other Scriptures.

An example may be seen in the answers given to people seeking salvation. One was told to believe in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), others were told to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:37-38), and another was told to be baptized and wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). But when we study further, we see that there is not contradiction or confusion here. Each one was told what he should do at that particular time. When we know the whole story, it is plain that all converts believed, repented and were baptized.

B. A distinction is to be made between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament foretold a new and different covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34); the book of Hebrews explains at length that this new and better covenant has replaced the old one. We are under the new covenant, not the law of the Old Testament.

Early in the history of the church, an effort was made to bring all Christians under Old Testament law, but Christian leaders, guided by the Holy Spirit, rejected that attempt (Acts 15:1-29). We can safely follow their example and reject a similar attempt whenever it is made.

Nevertheless, it is profitable to study the Old Testament as well as the New Testament (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 10:11). The Old helps us understand the New (Galatians 3:24, 25); it tells much about our Savior (Isaiah 53); it helps us to know God (Exodus 34: 6-7); it helps to guide our living (Micah 6:8).

C. Any passage of Scripture is to be studied in its immediate context.

Such questions as the following should be considered. When these are answered correctly, we are less likely to misunderstand the message of God's Word.

1. ***Who is speaking?*** The whole Bible is God's Word, but sometimes God's Word quotes the word of someone else. For example, Satan inspired Genesis 3: 4, 5 which quotes a lie told by a serpent. This lie was in direct contradiction to God's statement quoted in Genesis 2:17. Mark 9:5 quotes a mistaken suggestion of Simon Peter. This suggestion should be not attributed to God; in fact, God promptly corrected it (Mark 9:7,8). We should not think a lie of Satan or a mistake of man is God's truth just because it is recorded truthfully in God's Word.
2. ***To whom is he speaking?*** The angel's announcement in Luke 1:26-33 was spoken to Mary, but the teaching of Romans 12 was given to all the Christians in Rome. Ephesians 5:22, 6:9 have messages directed especially to wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants and masters.
3. ***Is the passage intended for others in addition to those to whom it was first given?*** It is generally agreed that the announcement to Mary cannot be applied to anyone else, but the instructions in Romans 12 are for all Christians everywhere. The messages from Ephesians that were mentioned above are no doubt intended for all Christian families, employees and employers.
4. ***Is the passage intended to apply to a limited time or under specific circumstances, or is it of universal application?*** Paul once wrote to Timothy, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1 Timothy 5:23). Doubtless this was excellent advice under the circumstances, but it can hardly be applied to anyone else unless he has the same stomach trouble Timothy had – and even then, it may be that a better medicine is available under present circumstances.

CHAPTER ONE QUESTIONS

1. Who is the ultimate source of the Bible?
2. About how many human writers of the Bible were there?
3. Through how many years was the writing done?
4. How can we account for the perfect harmony of all these writings?
5. Since we have no Bible books in the handwriting of their authors, what two kinds of documents help us to know what was in the books as they were originally written?
6. In what language was the Old Testament originally written?
7. In what language was the New Testament originally written?
8. The oldest known Bible manuscripts are among the Dead Sea Scrolls. About when were they made?
9. What version became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church?
10. When was the King James Version published?
11. Name some English versions published after the King James Version.
12. What are the ABC's of studying the Bible?

CHAPTER TWO

Denominationalism: Fixing Labels

Denominationalism

FIXING LABELS

Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elias, and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." The rash and weak Herod thought Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, for he had no peace of mind since the day he had allowed a woman's revenge to go unchecked (Mark 6:13-15). Some thought he was Elias and others thought he was Jeremiah. It is striking that wherever Jesus went, wherever people saw him work miracles and heard him teach, they thought about someone who was great. Yet, in spite of the unintentional compliment implied in their discussions, they did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God.

When Jesus came he said some things which were rather difficult for the people to accept, for they would require many basic changes in behavior. Consequently, as they heard him speak and as they watched him work miracles, their tendency was to give him a label, **to put him into some already existing, familiar, convenient category, and to dismiss him from their thoughts.** This saved them the trouble of really looking at Jesus and making a fresh, independent evaluation of him. "Who is Jesus?" they asked. Each reply was some familiar classification. Each reply was wrong, but each was completely satisfactory to the one who made it. Their minds were operating like the skilled arm of a mail clerk tossing letters into pigeonholes.

The categories into which these people put Jesus were all wrong. He was not John the Baptist, he was not Elias, he was not Jeremiah, and he was not one of the prophets. It was easy and convenient for them to pigeonhole him. The tragic part of the story is that they never seemed to realize that Jesus was new, that he was unique, and that he did not fit into any of the categories that had ever been made. Having failed to realize that, these people missed Christianity. Jesus was different from anyone who had ever lived. There was no category big enough, or adequate enough for him. Jesus faced the problem of being too lightly considered. Jesus fought against the tendency of people to consider him too quickly and too lightly.

PIGEONHOLING THE CHURCH

We face the same kind of problem. There is a tendency among men now to consider the church too quickly and to pigeonhole it without giving it due consideration. We, who are members of the church, particularly have this problem. We find it difficult to convey to our neighbors and friends the distinctive position of the church.

Our heritage in Western Civilization has been a great one. The contributions of men of genius and the sacrifices of countless millions have brought us to our present state of civilization or culture. As thankful as we are for our past, we must recognize the mental ruts which have been cut by the past. This is to say, we must be conscious of the convenient labels we invent to paste upon movements and ideas which are new to us. We have concocted labels for all fields, and have certainly not missed religion.

There are three great categories into which men normally classify anything religious. They say it is Protestant, Catholic or Jewish. Our radio and television networks give free time in terms of these three categories, so countless hours of costly broadcast and telecast time are

given to Protestants, to Catholics and to Jews. When a boy in the Army, Navy or in some other branch of the service looks for a chaplain, he finds him labeled Protestant, Catholic or Jewish.

There is a tendency to classify churches by putting them into these same familiar types of pigeonholes.

CHRISTIANS ONLY

We are attempting to be in truth and in fact just what people were in New Testament times: Christians, members of the church. If Paul was here today and someone would ask him if he were a Protestant, he would not understand the question. Paul never claimed to be a Protestant. He refers to himself in I Corinthians 4:1 as a "minister of Christ and that is a follower of Christ, a Christian." He sought to persuade Agrippa to be a Christian, nothing more (Acts 26:28-29). The church cannot be called Protestant in the ordinary sense of the word because Protestant churches did not exist in New Testament times. Neither then nor now is the church a party within a party, built around a powerful personality or upon one passage of scripture to the neglect of others. Paul states the reason why this could not be the case when he condemns the people of Corinth for their party divisions by saying, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollus, or Cepha, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's" (1 Corinthians 3:21-23).

As Jesus was neither John the Baptist, Elias, nor Jeremiah, so the church is neither Catholic, Protestant, nor Jewish. We are unique and different, for we are endeavoring to model the New Testament Church. We believe in calling Bible things by Bible names and insist on having a "thus saith the Lord" for all we do.

The attempt to consider the followers of Jesus Christ under fixed labels obscures the Christ, and the beauty of holiness. Is it possible to be just a Christian today? Even the world will admit that it is, and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch (Acts 11:26).

CHAPTER TWO QUESTION

1. What biblical name or denomination was given to the New Testament church and where?

CHAPTER THREE

Proper Attitudes Toward Ministry Gifts

Proper Attitudes Toward Ministry Gifts

INTRODUCTION

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

Ephesians 4:8-11

Who is **he** to whom this passage is referring? Jesus Christ. According to the Apostle Paul, Jesus gave His Church gifts - apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. He established offices in His Church, and He is still calling men and women to fill those offices today. Therefore, these are ministry *gifts* from the Lord Himself to His Church for our benefit and instruction.

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12

In this verse we see that these ministry gifts were set in the Church for the perfecting of the saints, to do the work of the ministry - Christ's ministry. These offices have been established and filled with godly men and women for the purpose of maturing or developing the saints, so that the saints will be able to do the work of the ministry and have a part themselves in the edifying or building up of the Church.

Those who fill these positions or offices are given to the Church by Jesus Christ; therefore, they are gifts.

Many Christians have talked improperly or wrongly about the men and women of God. That must stop! We may not agree wholeheartedly with everything that is being said or done by ministers of the Gospel, but we must not put ourselves in the position of judging them. Our attitude must be, "I may not always understand or agree with these people, but they are my brothers and sisters in Christ and I will not criticize them!" We need to learn to weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice; to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

We must have the proper attitude toward leadership in the Body of Christ. Notice that it was Jesus who gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to serve as pastors and teachers. He gave them to us for our benefit and welfare. That means that your pastor is a pastor to the Body of Christ.

I believe that for every one of us who has talked wrongly or adversely about a man or woman of God and their ministry, this ought to be a day of repentance. This day we should confess before God, "Father, forgive me, I know not what I do."

The Body of Christ ought to be doing what the Apostle Paul recommends in Ephesians 4:3 - Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We may not agree when the rapture is going to take place - pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, or post-tribulation - but we can all agree that Jesus is Lord!

ARE YOU IN THE RIGHT CHURCH?

If we know that God has led us to the church or fellowship, then we can receive the minister as a gift from God and take on the attitude of being a blessing, and not "rocking the boat." There are too many believers in churches causing problems because they're in the wrong place.

We are all set in the Church to be part of the answer and not part of the problem. We are supposed to have the right attitude toward the ministry we are called to be involved in, catch hold of the God-given vision and "hook into" that vision so we can do our part in accomplishing the will of God.

So the next question after realizing these are gifts from God and God has given them their assignment is, "Am I where I'm supposed to be?"

If you cannot receive your leader as being from God, then you have become carnal; or if you don't feel that God led you there, then you are obviously in the wrong place. Sooner or later, you will begin to criticize, find fault, lay blame, ridicule and stir up strife. Eventually, you will gather a little clique around you of others who agree with you – against the leadership. But if that leadership is of God, then it will become evident that God is displeased with your behavior.

The problem could be that you are simply in the wrong place. If you are in the proper place, then your attitude ought to reflect it. Your attitude should be as right as your position. There is a perfect place for you. Your growth is there, your healing is there, your purpose is there, and your blessings are there.

There is a spiritual authority that accompanies every spiritual office. There is also an anointing placed by God that accompanies the office itself and will rest upon the person who fills that office -whomever he or she might be. When you are where God wants you to be, and you receive your spiritual leader as being from God, then you are in a position to begin to

truly benefit from the authority and anointing upon that office and person. But if you are in the wrong place where people do not respect their leader, or especially if you are in the wrong because *you* do not respect your leader, then you have stepped out from under the authority and anointing that God has placed upon the person who fills that position of leadership. As a result, you won't benefit from being where you are, no matter how hard you work or how much you pray or give.

So our **first attitude** should be, "Because I believe this person has been set in a position of spiritual authority by God Himself, I receive him (or her) as from the Lord." Our **second attitude** should be, "Since I receive this person as from the Lord, and believe both of us are where we are supposed to be, then I will be and receive God's blessing. Pray and allow your Chief Shepherd to lead you to the fold in which you belong and where you can be and receive God's blessing. There is a fold for every person. Every individual believer ought to have a pastor. Despite what you may hear some people say, there is no such thing as a "television pastor."

A pastor is not *your* pastor unless you let him pastor you. You can have your name on the church roll, go through ten weeks of classes, shake the pastor's hand at the altar and become a member of that congregation, but until your attitude is such that you allow the pastor to exercise a pastoral influence upon you, he's not *your* pastor.

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Hebrews 13:7 and 17

KNOW YOUR LEADERSHIP

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them, which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.

And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13

One way to judge whether the message being set forth by a man or woman is of God is to examine the fruit of that person's individual life.

Accusation of Jesus being Satan (Matt. 12:33)

Jesus teaches about fruit (Matt. 7:16 – 20)

It is important to check the accuracy of the message that has been preached. Observe the Leader's public, professional and personal behavior or life. If the leader has a family, you want to observe how he or she ministers to their family.

CHAPTER THREE QUESTION

1. What are the four basic attitudes toward leadership in the church?

CHAPTER FOUR

Stewardship

Stewardship

FINANCIAL

Once the four basic attitudes toward leadership are established, there are three different areas of support which need to be provided to those in positions of spiritual leadership: 1) financial support, 2) prayer support, and 3) physical support.

Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

1 Timothy 5:17, 18

The Amplified Bible version of this passage reads this way:

Let the elders who perform the duties of their office well be considered doubly worthy of honor [and of adequate financial support], especially those who labor faithfully in preaching and teaching.

For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain, and again, The laborer is worthy of his hire.

One evidence of a proper attitude toward spiritual leadership is a willingness to provide adequate financial support for that leadership. If we know that a man or woman is of God and has been set up as our spiritual leader, then we owe that person the right to expect to be adequately compensated.

In Galatians 6:6, the Apostle Paul writes:

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Again, The Amplified Bible translates this verse:

Let him who receives instruction in the Word [of God] share all good things with his teacher - contributing to his support.

In other words, we are not to eat at McDonald's and then get up and go pay at Wendy's! We are to pay where we are fed. We are to contribute to the financial welfare and support of the one who feeds us spiritually, the one who faithfully teaches us the Word and ways of the Lord.

You see, I don't believe the Bible teaches us that the man or woman of God who devotes full time to the ministry should have to work eight hours a day on a secular job to support himself or herself. Many people in the Body of Christ expect their spiritual leader to work a regular 40-hour-per-week job just as they do, and then to serve as spiritual leader in addition to their paid work. That is neither scriptural nor reasonable. No one can operate effectively in the ministry if he has to devote the bulk of his time to earning his own living; then serving the ministry on "overtime." That is asking too much. I assure you that Christian ministry is a full time occupation, and should be rewarded as such financially. That means the minister is to be compensated in full for ministry, so that outside work is not necessary.

So many church members wonder why their pastor doesn't have more to share with them on Sunday morning than he does. Often the reason is simple: he has been so busy working to earn a living and ministering to the needs of others, he has simply not had the time needed to devote to prayer, Bible reading, meditation and communion with the Lord. The Bible teaches that a workman, a laborer, is worthy of his hire (his wages). It also teaches that the one who benefits from spiritual teaching should contribute to the one who provides him that instruction.

I am a pastor and I don't punch a time clock. I don't work eight hours a day on a secular job. I devote full time to my church. Therefore, my congregation has every right to expect me to provide them with quality teaching and preaching every service. As a church member, you have a right to expect your pastor to provide you that kind of service if he or she is free to devote full time to the church.

It is true that many pastors work outside their churches. I would hope that the reason they are doing so is because the Lord has instructed them to work a regular job, and not because they have to work to support themselves and their family or because they are driven by a love of money.

If your pastor is employed full time in the ministry, then you have a right to expect him or her to devote full time to that ministry. If he is not compensated by the ministry to support him adequately and therefore has to take on a regular job, then you have no right to expect quality ministry from him. He simply won't have the time or energy to provide it.

The "bottom line" is: If you adequately support your pastor financially, then he can adequately feed you spiritually.

If your pastor desires to walk in the calling and anointing of God and to fulfill that which God has placed in his heart, then he should be allowed to do so. But he can't do that if his people are stingy!

We must put first things first. And guess what? Self is not first! The kingdom of God is first. The things of God are first. Obeying God's Word is first. Unless we put the kingdom of God and His righteousness first in our lives, we have no right to expect to receive "all these other things" we expect "to be added unto" us (*1 Chronicles 29:1-5*).

Notice to whom David is talking here: to the whole congregation of the people. He is telling them what he has given and prepared for the building of the temple for the Lord God of Israel. His question to them is: ". . . and who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" When this verse says "service," it is not referring just to manpower, but primarily to gifts, goods, and possessions. David wants to know who is going to dedicate his material possessions to the building of the temple.

Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly.

1 Chronicles 29:6

How did these people offer their "services"? Willingly. Not grudgingly, but willingly. God hates the attitude of a begrudging-type giver. He loves a cheerful giver, one who gives willingly (*2 Corinthians 9:7*).

So the people gave willingly for the construction of the temple. They wanted to have a share in supporting the man and the work of God. So they went and got their possessions and dedicated them to the Lord. They exhibited an attitude of support.

When you know you're in the place you're supposed to be, when the man or woman of God stands before you and asks for your support, what should your attitude be? If you know that person is God's anointed, then your attitude should be, "I'm going to support this man and this work!"

Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways.

Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put into a bag with holes.

Haggai 1:5-6

"No matter how much you make," the Lord says to these people in Old Testament days, "it seems like you're just putting it into a bag with holes in it." Why? What was causing these people in the days of Haggai to always be living on a lower level than they should have been financially? What were they doing wrong?

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways.

Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.

Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house.

Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit.
Haggai 1:7-10

"Listen My people, you're wondering why things are not going right for you, why you can never make ends meet, why no matter how much you harvest you never have enough. It's because you put yourselves before Me. You put your own priorities before the priorities of Almighty God. You've become selfish and lustful. You just want to satisfy your own selves and to make your own lives comfortable. You've left off building My house in order to construct elegant palaces for yourselves. You have put off construction of the house of the Lord year after year while you have heaped up more and more possessions for yourselves.

"So I have shut up the heavens. You're not going to be blessed any more. Nobody is going to give into your bosom. The windows of heaven are not going to be opened until you build the house of the Lord your God. Until you put the things of God first in your life, until you learn to support My work with a willing heart, you won't be blessed the way you should be."

It is time the Body of Christ learned to "hook in" to the vision of the ministry and to support the work and the man or woman of God one hundred percent in order to see that vision come to pass.

PRAYER

Another part of the support that is owed the spiritual leader is prayer support. Every spiritual leader needs the prayers of the people, because more pressure comes against the spiritual leader than against those who follow his leadership. It doesn't matter whether the people in the congregation agree with me on everything; as their pastor I need for them to pray for me. Sheep cannot totally and thoroughly understand the leader. Sheep are not in his position. They don't have the same assignment and responsibility he bears. Only a fellow minister can know what another minister is experiencing.

So I need the prayers of my people. You need to pray for your leader. God doesn't just automatically do things for him just because he's the spiritual leader; he has to use his faith just as you do. He has to believe God, as you do. He has to walk in love, to minister to his family, to meet his personal obligations just as you do. Yet he has the added responsibility of the people of his church or ministry. They are his responsibility because God has set him in that particular fellowship as overseer.

Now, a member of the congregation may have three or four people in his household to care for. A pastor has his own household, plus three, four, or five hundred - perhaps three, four, or five thousand - others to care for. He needs prayer.

I wonder sometimes how many Christians spend even five minutes a day, every day, praying for their spiritual leader and his or her spouse and family. If every church member prayed one minute a day for their pastor and his family, there is no telling how much more powerful that man of God would be - to say nothing of that church! I wonder how much more would get done if the people truly devoted even five minutes a day to prayer for their leader. I also wonder how much more in tune with God and with his people that leader would become.

So many times we begin our day just praying for self: "Lord, bless me today. Lord, bless my family, my home, my job, my possessions."

Then we "confess the Word of God" upon ourselves: "I say that I am blessed going in and I am blessed going out. Because I give, men give generously into my bosom. I am the head and not the tail, above only and not beneath. No weapon formed against me shall prosper, and every tongue that rises up against me I condemn in Jesus' name. "I . . . me . . . my . . . What about the pastor? What about the vision? What about the brothers and sisters in Christ?"

Instead, we ought to begin each new day by focusing our minds and hearts on the Lord and His will. God instructs us to pray: first of all for those in positions of authority, the leaders in this country and in the Body of Christ - the whole Body of Christ, not just our particular segment of it.

We need to pray that the ministry gifts will be able to function freely. Whether you realize it or not, those in the ministry receive far more persecution than their followers (laymen). They have the responsibility of ministering the Word of God and the devil doesn't want it preached. They have an anointing that accompanies the office they fill. The enemy will do anything to cause that anointing to become ineffective. He will attack God's ministers in their minds, bodies and homes. He will sow discord and strife in their congregations. He will stir up animosity and provoke church splits. That's why prayer must be constantly wrought for the men and women of God: because prayer brings deliverance.

You know, sometimes even Christians are used by the adversary to come against spiritual

leadership. You and I must pray for our leader that he or she will be delivered from misguided believers. The devil will even use ministers themselves. He will arouse religious jealousy in an attempt to destroy God's anointed. He'll use pride to cause him to begin to accuse other ministries of not preaching the Word as they should or of "ripping off" the people. He'll use prejudice to cause the minister to label other ministries and teachings "of the devil." Paul knew all of this. That's why he asked his people to pray that he and his teammates would be delivered from ungodly men - and even from those in the Church who would stir up trouble and dissension among the brethren.

There are enough people out to destroy God's ministers - let's covenant to be among those who are determined to be daily engaged in intercessory prayer for all of those who labor in His harvest fields.

Paul says to pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course: that it won't be hindered. I want God's Word to go forth as never before in my hometown. Guess what will cause that to happen? Intercessory prayer for the spiritual leadership in that city. If we are faithful to pray, God will expand the ministries of those who are doing His will. If there are those who are not pleasing to the Lord and are not willing to change, then He will cause them to be removed from their positions of leadership. However, all those who are on fire for the Lord and preaching His Word will be caused to increase and expand by the power of prayer on their behalf.

God wants your city. Do your part in helping Him to take it, by giving your prayer support to those whom He has set in positions of spiritual leadership. Do you want to see more of an anointing on your pastor? **Pray.** Do you want to see more of an anointing on his ministry? **Pray.** Do you want to see more of the things of God in his ministry? **Pray.** Your prayers will have a great effect on your spiritual leader. You can have a much more positive effect than you will ever know. Your prayers can make the difference!

PHYSICAL

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Exodus 17:8-13

So the Israelites went to battle with the people of Amalek. Obviously, Moses had received instructions from the Lord on how to wage this warfare, because he went to the top of the hill to oversee the battle. At the summit of the hill, Moses raised his hands. As long as his hands were up in the air, the Israelites would push their enemies back. But when his arms would

get tired and his hands begin to come down, then the Amalekites would begin to take the field.

Have you ever been in a church service in which the leader asked everyone to stretch out their hands toward one particular person in intercessory prayer for him or her? Have you ever stretched out your arm toward someone and then had to hold it there while the leader talked or prayed for five minutes or more? What happened? Didn't your arm begin to get tired and your hand begin to droop? That's what happened to Moses here. His arms began to get heavy, so he found it hard to keep them raised in the air. Every time his hands went down, the Israelites would start to lose. What could he do? What was the answer to his problem? Physical support.

Seeing the situation, Aaron and Hur ran up to Moses and told him, "Moses, we see what needs to be done here. Sit down on this stone, and we will stand on either side of you and hold up your hands for you. That way, our troops will continue to win the battle." Now, notice that Aaron and Hur did NOT say, "Hey, look! Moses is getting tired. This is our chance to take over!" Instead, they came and supported him. They lifted up his tired arms and bolstered his waning strength.

As a pastor, I want you to know that your spiritual leader needs that very same type of support from his people. There is no man or woman of God who can do it all alone. There comes a time in the life of every minister when he needs somebody who will come and stand beside him - physically, tangibly - and help him hold his hand to the plow. Not someone who will try to take advantage of the situation and put himself in control, but someone who will support the one God has set in the position of leadership. Many times when people see the man of God becoming weary, they want to jump up and take over instead of going to him and saying, "Can I help you? I'm available. What can I do?" We need to learn to flow with the plan of God.

Aaron and Hur didn't try to take over. They simply held up Moses' hands, one on one side and one on the other. That is a good example to the Church today. It is high time the Body of Christ quit trying to become leaders and learned first to be good followers. It's time we quit looking for "positions" and just made ourselves available for service. Christians need to make their talents, skills, and know-how available to their ministers - not just verbally either. Every time an opportunity for service arises, Christians ought to be ready to step in and lend a hand as Aaron and Hur did for Moses.

The problem is that many times people make themselves available with their mouths. When the time for actual work comes, they always seem to have excuses. They've got to do this, that, or the other. It's always a "bad time" for them. They have something else that must be done first. The Lord said for us to give first place to His kingdom and His righteousness. We must learn to set our affections on things above, not on things here below.

It doesn't matter if a person has a doctorate in music; he or she is not necessarily the best qualified to lead the choir. In fact, the best person for that job may not be able to read a note of music. Ministry gifts have to follow the Spirit because it leads them to the church for His purpose. It is God Who places the anointing upon them to do what He has called and set them aside to do.

In choosing leaders, in making decisions, we must be careful to seek the Lord's will. The Bible tells us:

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5, 6

In matters of spiritual service, you cannot just trust your own mind and choose the person who seems to have the best qualifications on paper. Instead, you must pray and allow the Lord to reveal to you the person He has chosen and anointed, the one He wants in that position. As good as proper qualifications are, it is important to remember that the Bible says: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and he hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27). Peter and John were unlearned and ignorant fishermen, but God used them to confound the wisdom of the Sadducees and Pharisees (Acts 4:13). Never forget, the call and the anointing make all the difference in the world.

Be open to the Lord and how you can physically support your pastor and perform other ministry gifts. Maybe you could baby-sit, wash the car, cut the grass – there are so many ways to be a blessing. Remember, even Jesus needed help.

SUMMARY

The spiritual leader needs financial support, because like everyone else in the church he wants to live well. He needs prayer support, because he too has to deal with the problems and affairs of everyday life in addition to his ministry. And he needs physical support to free him to concentrate on those things which are most essential and of primary importance to the welfare of all God's people.

The support must come from those who have committed themselves to share as partners with their spiritual leader in the ministry to which the Lord has called him and them.

CHAPTER FIVE

Serving God by Serving Others

Serving God by Serving Others

INTRODUCTION

Saints are people who care. The world is filled with the silent cries of persons who hurt. People are lonely, lost, confused; having no foundation on which to stand and no North Star by which to set their life's compass, many persons are like ships floating aimlessly at sea. Saints have a place of service unparalleled in the world today.

SERVE AS PARTNER WITH YOUR PASTOR

Now that you are a member of the Body of Christ, you have become a partner in Christian service with your pastor. Pastor and laity share a divine responsibility to proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, provide care for church members and other persons of the community, build and maintain church fellowship and provide leadership in order to help the church attain its spiritual mission. You are a co-laborer – a partner with your pastor in God's work (I Corinthians 3:9, II Corinthians 6:1-10).

The laity are exemplary leaders. They serve as examples or models for fellow Christians to follow. Rather than providing general directional leadership, as does the pastor, they serve as personal Christian examples to others. As exemplary leaders you will often serve behind the scene, out of the spotlight or central focus of activities.

BECOMING A CARING WITNESS

Share your Christianity by witnessing with those you meet daily. The heart of Christian work today centers around the ministry of being a caring witness. You will continue to grow spiritually as you serve.

What will help you be caring witness?

1. Be attentive to the voice of the Lord. A caring witness is ready to respond immediately to the voice of God when He speaks.
2. Be willing to get involved personally. People need personal involvement in their lives.
3. Know the scriptures and be able to interpret God's plan to others. Be familiar with the scriptures and use your knowledge to enlighten others regarding God's plan of salvation.

Early Christians won the pagan to Christ by demonstrating a loving, glowing, Christ-like spirit. The pagan recognized the Christ-like behavior and first called them Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26). Early Christians lived out their religious experience in daily life. Christ was real to them. These early Christians shared their love with others.

Become a fisher of men. Don't wade in the shallows of spiritual experience. You will have frequent opportunity for sharing your faith as you visit in homes, offices or hospitals as a part of your Christian service. A caring witness has an abiding spiritual interest in people. His concern is more than legalistic interest. He's not concerned with people for what they can do for him. A caring witness is willing to be a friend. He will take the time required to cultivate a trusting friendship. Your home life should be an inspiration to anyone who spends time

there. The closeness of your family and devotion to God should not be dragged out of the closet only on Sunday and paraded to church. You should live, eat and sleep your faith.

THE CHURCH HAS DIVINE PURPOSE

The church is divine in nature - the righteousness of God in the earth (Romans 8:3-4). You must remember that the church is not brick and mortar; the church is made up of God's people who have experienced spiritual conversion from sin and death to life and peace.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

Matthew 28:19-20

THE CHURCH HAS DIVINE FUNCTION

- Worship
- Proclaiming the Gospel
- Education
- Ministry (service) to Mankind

Ministry – you serve God by serving others. People are hurting. Great personal needs exist. Jesus went about ministering to the needs of people. Human needs must often be met before there is an opportunity for spiritual ministry. We are to minister in Christ's stead. Our loving response is to be made because Christ first loved us.

Ministry is at the heart of Christian faith. Invest your time and service. Time is an ultimate human possession. As a Christian, you need always to be aware of how you program the priorities of your life. What concerns should you, as a Christian, have for proper investment of your time? Where does Christ fit into your priorities? How can you invest your time for Christian purposes? Obviously, through your participation in the church.

The happy, joyful, productive Christian is one who is personally involved in the mission and purpose of God's church. He attends church regularly, because he finds spiritual fulfillment in worshipping God with others. He gets his personal assignment from God's Word, so he can go show God's love and perform God's service in the world in which he lives.

Even as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many.

Matthew 20:28

CLOSING

My hope for you is that you experience a sense of divine purpose, as did Jesus when He said, "I must be about my father's business." You cannot find a happier person than the individual who is busy for the Master, using his or her gifts in Christ's service.

CHAPTER SIX

Operation & Administration

Operation & Administration

INTRODUCTION

Church administration is ministry, not methods. It's people, not paperwork. It's human processes, not inhumane policies. It's management, not manipulation.

Administration and management refer to an organization's "People Processes" and help institutions use their resources well. In the church and other Christian organizations, administration is growing people, not simply doing things. Administration is vital if a church is to reach its mission.

ADMINISTRATION: SCIENCE, ART, GIFT

Church administration or management is a science, an art and a gift. As a science, church management involves procedures and techniques that can be learned by study and by practice. As an art, administration calls for relational sensitivity, intuition, and timing. These artistic "people skills" are largely natural talents or God given, but they can be enhanced by experience and training. Additionally, the Apostle Paul names administration as a spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:28). Different translations of the New Testament refer to this gift by using a variety of terms such as "governments" (KJV), "administrators" (RSV), "workers of spiritual power" (Phillips) and the "power to guide" (NEB). The Greek term for administration in this passage translates as "Helmsman". In the same manner that pilots steer their ships through the rocks and shallows safely to their destinations, ministers help to guide their congregations in the pursuit of their missions.

Two important observations about steersmen apply also to Christian managers. First, Helmsmen are members of the ship's larger crew. Steering is only one vital function in the operation of a ship or an organization. Likewise, ministers serve a congregation's overall needs. Second, Helmsmen take orders from the captain. No minister stands above Christ in the management of Christian ministry.

Fundamentally, church management set up by God calls for creating, catalyzing and coordinating people and organizational resources. The management model describes basic processes in congregational management and specifies four key areas:

- What – A definition of the process
- Why – A theological perspective
- Who – Initiators of the processes
- How – The application of the process

What (I Corinthians 12:4-7) – The Spirit of God, through the Holy Ghost which worked all in all. It is God who inspires and energizes all, that His will be accomplished in us. God defines the process.

Why (II Corinthians 4:6-7) – That the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. God has shone in our hearts as the light for the illumination of the knowledge of the Glory of God as it is manifest in the person and revealed in the face of Jesus Christ.

Who (I Corinthians 12:28) – “God has set some in the church as initiators; first apostles, secondary prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments and diversities of tongues.” It is people like you and me who are the initiators of the processes, ministers or servants whom God has selected to fill these administrations and operations of the church or the Body of Christ.

How (Ephesians 4:1-16, Psalm 68:18) – “Wherefore he saith, when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. He ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles and some evangelists; and some pastors and some teachers; for the perfecting of the saints **for the work of the ministry**, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

The basic management challenge for the people of God today is self-management. Servants of God set their own schedules and do work that’s sometimes difficult to measure and evaluate. Time use, then, provides proof of effective stewardship.

Here are some principles servants of God can use in time management.

Find out how you’re using your time now. Keep a time diary of your actual work activities for a week. What do you notice about your stewardship of your professional energies?

Plan to use your time on priorities. Most effective ministers work from a prioritized “To Do” list of daily tasks. We also use a “quiet hour,” an uninterrupted time for concentrating on crucial projects. We reserve the times when (thanks to our built-in biological clocks) we are at our best for working on our most challenging tasks. We plan before we attempt to complete our work.

1. Work on a weekly and daily schedule. Regular structure improves productivity.
2. Handle a piece of work once. Use a three-step cycle of action: start, work, and stop.
3. Delegate to team members. Free yourself for crucial tasks and give others a chance to participate and grow.
4. Pace yourself. Move from intense involvement to “Sabbath” refreshment.
5. Group similar tasks together. For example, think “communication” as a category and write a thank-you note while you’re waiting for someone to come to the phone for another communication opportunity.
6. Plan to grow personally and professionally.
7. Live one day at a time.
8. When uncertain or frustrated, ask yourself the basic time management question, “What is the best use of my time right now?”.

CHAPTER SIX QUESTIONS

1. What are three things that define church administration?
2. What are the basic processes of congregational management?
3. List some time management principles for God's servants.
4. From the introduction, list the four differences between church administration and secular administration.

Appendix

Fullness of the Holy Spirit

Scriptural References:

The Promise of the Comforter	John 14:16-17, 26
Ask and He Will Give It to You	Luke 11:9-13
Evidence by Tongues	Acts 1:8, 2:4, 10:44-46, 19: 2-6
Faith to Believe Without Doubting	Mark 11:22-24
Lack Wisdom? Ask God in Faith	James 1:5-8

*And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. **1 John 14-15***

*He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. **John 7:38***

*I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. **Joel 2:28***

Peter said ...

*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost. **Acts 2:38***

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. **Mark 16:15-18**

*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. **Romans 6:4***

Gift of the Holy Spirit Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to you now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, thanking you and praising you for saving me. I am also grateful for the revelation of your Word, by which you have shown me that it is your will that I be filled with your Holy Spirit. So now; in obedience to you, Father, I ask you to fill me with your Spirit now, moreover, by faith I believe that I receive right now the indwelling presence of your Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues, (another language) into my Spirit forever . . . continue praising God for his Gift: (Thank-you Lord, Bless your Name, Hallelujah, etc...) until you have been filled with His Unspeakable Gift.

God's Plan of Salvation

Why We Were Created	Isaiah 43:7, Colossians 1:16, Revelation 4:11
To Glorify God	Genesis 1:26, Psalm 96:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 1 Peter 1:15-16
All Have Sinned	Genesis 6:5, Psalm 14:1-3, Ecclesiastes 7:20, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 3:9-23
The Heart of Man Without God	Jeremiah 17:9, Mark 7:21, Romans 1:21

3 Deaths:

"In Body" (Spiritual)	Proverbs 21:16, Ephesians 2:5, 1 Timothy 5:6, Revelation 3:1
"Out of Body" (Physical)	Genesis 25:8, Hebrews 9:27
"Eternal" (Lake of Fire)	Matthew 25:41, Revelation 21:8
Christ Our Redeemer	Isaiah 53:5, 10-15, John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Hebrews 9:28

Promise of Salvation	Mark 16: 15-18
What Must I Do?	Acts 2:38, 16:30-31, Romans 10:8-10

We cannot operate in this worldly system - Galatians 1:4

Who gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from This present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.

After repentance - Colossians 1:13

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

Baptism - Acts 2:22-38, 8:12

(Peter's sermon proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the call for baptism, to be part of an assembly, and be added to the church)

Praying for your Pastor and Others in Ministry

Pastors and people in ministry are under attack today as never before. That is why it is so important to hold them up in prayer. Many people do not know what to pray on a regular basis for them. Here are some sample Scripture-based prayers. Each one was written with a specific need in mind. (These are simply models and suggestions. Use them to get started or to get ideas about what to pray.)

I **THANK YOU** Father, that Your eyes are on my shepherd, Your ears are attentive to my pastor's prayers and Your face is against those who plot evil against my pastor (1 Peter 3:12). For I know that in all things You work for the good of **Bishop Cast** who loves You (Romans 8:28). Who can accuse my pastor who is daily interceded for by Christ Jesus? (Romans 8:33-34). Therefore, in all things my pastor is more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37). Thank You God.

Lord, I pray for **DISCERNMENT** in exposing any **SCHEMES OF THE ENEMY** against my pastor. Show our congregation how to pray against all powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of darkness in heavenly realms. And, Lord **PROTECT US** as we wage warfare on behalf of our pastor (Ephesians 6:11-12).

Father, I thank You that **NO WEAPON** formed against my pastor will prosper. Every tongue against my shepherd will be cast down. Rumors and gossip will be turned aside. For **Bishop Cast** will be still before the Lord and **WAIT ON YOU**. My pastor will dwell in the shadow of the Most High God and will be delivered from terror, darts of doubt, & diseases (Psalm 91:5-6). Set Your angels about my pastor (Psalm 91:11) and no power of the enemy shall harm him, (Luke 10:19). Thanks be to God forevermore.

Lord, let **Bishop Cast** have a **DISCERNING MIND** to prioritize the precious minutes in the day. Let my pastor **DISCERN** what is most important and be guarded against the tyranny of the urgent (2 Corinthians 11:14, 1 John 4:1).

Father, allow my pastor to glory only in the cross (Galatians 6:14). Keep my pastor from Pride and Pity. Let the cross be my pastor's **REASON** for ministry.

RENEW my pastor in the Holy Spirit. Let my pastor wait and mount up with wings (Isaiah 40:27-31). Quicken my shepherd's body with the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11). Renew **Bishop Cast's** Vision and Confidence (1 John 5:13-14).

Jesus, keep my pastor **HOLY IN EVERY WAY** (1 Peter 1:16). **PROTECT** my shepherd from seducing spirits, especially when my pastor is tired and hard-pressed. Give **Bishop Cast** comrades to help **PROTECT** this pastor, and to share in personal holiness (James 4:7). As my pastor draws near to You, draw near to my pastor (James 4:8).

I pray that the **EYES** of my pastor may be **ENLIGHTENED** to know the hope to which we are called and know the riches of our glorious inheritance in the saints. Let my pastor know the incomparable **GREAT POWER** which is in us who believe (Ephesians 1: 18-19). Let him see the full revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1 :12). Place in pastor a **DESIRE TO KNOW** Christ and the **POWER** of His resurrection (Philippians 3:10).

Lord, as my shepherd spends **QUIET TIME** with You, shed Your love abroad in my pastor's

heart. Let my pastor know how much this shepherd is loved (Romans 5:5). In Jesus' name let the love of God be my pastor's mainstay in ministry.

Lord, I lift up hands of my pastor and his family. Place them in the **SHELTER OF THE MOST HIGH** to rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, **YOU ARE THEIR REFUGE AND FORTRESS**. You will **PRESERVE** their family time. You will **COVER** their home. Your **FAITHFULNESS** will meet their financial needs in Christ Jesus (Psalm 4:19). You will **COMMAND** Your angels to guard them as they travel and win the lost. You have said "I will be with {them} in trouble. I will **DELIVER** {them} and **HONOR** {them}. With a long life, I will satisfy {them} and show {them} my salvation" (Psalm 91:15-16).

In Jesus' name, we ask that church Hurtful, Abusive and Ungrateful Forces move out of **LAM Church**. We pray that mountains of Criticism and Inordinate Expectations be cast into the sea along with stress, excessive phone counseling and fatigue. We believe every **NEED, VISION** and **DREAM** of **Bishop Cast** that are in accordance with Your Will and Your Desires Lord will be completed in Jesus name through His Power and His Authority (Mark 11 :22-24, Philipians 4: 19).

FORGIVE those who hurt **Bishop Cast** and speak against this shepherd without just cause, and may my pastor **WALK IN FORGIVENESS** (Ephesians 4:32, 5:1). **GUARD** my pastor from futile thinking (Ephesians 4:1-7) and a vain imagination. Let every thought be **TAKEN CAPTIVE** to Obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

In Jesus' name, we ask that **FEAR OF FAILURE** and **FEAR OF HUMANKIND** (John 14:1) be cast down. Let **Bishop Cast's** confidence in Christ Jesus and His Word not be eroded by the daily resistance to the gospel or pastor's Vision. Allow my pastor to **FEAR GOD** more than people (John 12:42-43). Lord, by Your Holy Spirit, anoint him to preach bringing forward the results You desire Dear Lord (Acts 2:37). As he proclaims Your **WORD**, let your confirmations follow (Mark 16:20). We ask that Your **WORD** (John 1:1) will heal the sick, set free the oppressed and that people will be cut to the heart and accept Jesus Christ.

Father, **HEAL** my shepherd's heart of any Grief caused by the ministry. Bestow on my pastor a "crown of beauty" instead of ashes and anoint this shepherd with the "oil of gladness" instead of mourning. **CLOTHE** my shepherd with a "garment of praise" instead of a spirit of depression. May our pastor be called an Oak of Righteousness, a Planting of the Lord to display **YOUR SPLENDOR** (Isaiah 61:3).

Jesus, You said "Do not let your hearts be troubled. **TRUST IN GOD**; trust also in me. ..Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you" (John 14: 1,27). Apply These Promises to **Bishop Cast**. Let my pastor know the Plans **YOU HAVE** - plans to prosper, plans to give hope and a future (Jeremiah 29: 11).

Lord, please keep my pastor in the midst of Good and Exciting **WORSHIP**. Keep my pastor from the traditions of men and religion, which holds the form of goodliness, but deny its power (2 Timothy 3:5). Give him a vision of heaven (Isaiah 6; Revelation 4).

Father, we pray that You will Let the **MIND OF CHRIST** be Strong in my pastor (1 Corinthians 2:16). That You will **PROTECT** this pastor with the Shield of Faith and quench flaming darts of doubt or vain imagination or mental distractions (Ephesians 6:16; Colossians 2:6-8).

Father, we pray that You will give my pastor the Time, Desire and Place **TO PRAY** (Acts 16:16a).

We pray that You will send the Spirit of Prayer upon **Bishop Cast** (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26) and Your Church. Father, God, please send others to join us in Praying for our Pastor (I Timothy 2: 1-8). Bless pastor with rich study time (Acts 6:4).

Father God, we come before You in prayers of intercession asking that You **WILL HELP** our pastor **STAND FIRM** that nothing will move this shepherd (I Corinthians 15:58) and that pastor will always give fully to Your Work because my pastor's labor is not in vain.

Lord, as You have promised, grant my shepherd **LASTING FRUIT** (Malachi 3: 11; John 15:16). Let these converts become disciples who, in turn, disciple others. Bless pastor with disciples who grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Let Pastor's preaching be in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit with boldness proclaiming Jesus Christ only.

Lord, based on Psalm 35, we pray that You will grant **Bishop Cast BOLDNESS** to confront **SIN** and **FALSE TEACHINGS**. Honor pastor's stand for You. Take my pastor's hand so that this shepherd **WILL NOT** fear. Lead my pastor through difficult times. Let my pastor know that You are near and that You are His God. Do not let my pastor be dismayed, but let my pastor continually be strengthened and upheld with Your Righteous Right Hands (Isaiah 41:10).

Lord, make my pastor **STRONG** and filled with **COURAGE** (Joshua 1). Thank you for being with him.

Dearest God, allow **Bishop Cast** to enter **YOUR REST** (Hebrews 4; Matthew 11:28). Put Your Yoke on him. When pastor is heavily laden or burdened, may this shepherd find comfort and peace in You, Dear Father. That You will refresh and renew pastor by Your Power in every aspect of this shepherd's life.

In Jesus' name, please help Bishop Cast FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, Fleeing from Evil to God by pursuing righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness (I Timothy 6:12). We praise You, Lord, that You have taken hold of this special shepherd in the personal experience of eternal life.

Unspoken Covenant I

A leader expects those who serve to:

1. Be on time for all major services and remain until adjournment.
 - Sunday Morning Services
 - 7:45 & 10:45 (Quarter To) Meeting if applicable
 - Tuesday Bible Class
 - Youth Service
 - Wednesday and Thursday Prayer
 - Staff Briefings & Meetings
 - Christian Education
2. Listen.
3. Contribute ideas, and be flexible enough to modify those ideas as a group vision or plan evolves.
4. Do the tasks required on time and according to the specifications of the group or leader.
5. Keep the leader informed about the progress on assigned tasks as well as any difficulties that hinder their completion.
6. Approach the whole enterprise with Christian love for all who will be involved in or affected by your work.
7. Respect confidentiality.
8. Lift the ministry in prayer regularly.

Unspoken Covenant II

Members expect the leaders to:

1. Attend **all** major services, arriving 15 minutes prior.
2. Be prepared for the service and reasonably organized.
3. Run the service so that all things get done without wasted effort and with due consideration for persons attending.
4. Provide all pertinent information to the members in a timely fashion.
5. Coordinate the work with other bodies in the parish to avoid overlap, encroachment, or misunderstanding.
6. Ensure that all work is done with the approval of authority structure.
7. Respect confidentiality
8. Lift the ministry up in prayer regularly.

Discipleship Covenant

Having entered into blood covenant with Jesus Christ (through salvation) and joined the local family of God through baptism; I pledge to be intentional in my efforts to be a true Disciple of Christ at Life Application Ministries.

1. I shall make Christ first in my life, in my heart, in my home and in my decisions.
2. I shall strive to know Christ more personally and intimately.
3. I shall pray daily for my self, my family, my employer, my government, my church and my pastor.
4. I shall study the Word of God regularly through one or more of the following opportunities:

(Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Christian Education	9:30am Sundays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible Study	6:30pm Tuesdays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prayer Service	6:30pm Thursdays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Seminars	As Announced
<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Courses	As Announced

5. I shall apply God's Word in my life, home and work.
6. I shall work in at least one ministry of Life Application Ministries.
7. I shall be obedient to the Lord in surrendering God's tithes and my offerings.
8. I shall, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, lead at least five (5) persons to Christ this year.