

# The New Testament Church

## Outline - Chapter Five

- 1. The New Testament Church Defined:** **Page 3**
  - A. Some Things the Church Is Not
  - B. What the New Testament Church Is
  
- 2. The Origin of the Church:** **Page 9**
  - A. Two Misconceptions about the Origin of the Church
  - B. Pentecost and the Birth of the New Testament Church
  
- 3. The Organization and Government of the Church:** **Page 12**
  - A. The Church Has a Priesthood
  - B. The Church Has Apostles - All Twelve Are in Heaven!
  - C. The Church Has Pastors
  - D. The Church Has Deacons
  - E. The Church Has Teachers
  - F. The Church Has Evangelists
  - G. The Government of the Church
  
- 4. The Mission of the Church:** **Page 19**
  - A. The Mission of the Church Is Not to Convert the World
  - B. The Mission of the Church Is Not to Establish the Kingdom
  - C. The Mission of the Church Is Not to Feed and Clothe the Poor
  - D. The Mission of the Church Is Not to Control Civil Government
  - E. The Mission of the Church Is to Glorify God
  - F. The Mission of the Church Is to Build up It's Most Holy Faith
  - G. The Mission of the Church Is to Fulfill the Great Commission
  
- 5. The Ordinances of the Church:** **Page 22**
  - A. The Ordinance of Believer's Baptism
  - B. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper

## **Chapter Five: The New Testament Church**

### **6. Church Discipline:**

**Page 28**

- A. The Basis for Church Discipline
- B. The Authority for Church Discipline
- C. The Procedure for Church Discipline

### **7. The Destiny of the Church:**

**Page 30**

- A. The Second-coming of Christ, the Church's Bridegroom
- B. The Presentation of the Church, His Bride
- C. The Marriage of the Lamb
- D. The Eternal Home of the Church

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

### Introduction:

Our English word **church** is from the Greek *Ecclesia*, meaning *a called-out assembly*. In the Bible, three such groups are mentioned: (1) a group or gathering (*assembly*, Acts 19: 32); (2) Israel (*the church in the wilderness*, Acts 7: 38); and (3) the body of New Testament believers in Jesus Christ (*and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body*, Ephesians 1: 22-23). It is to the latter group that this chapter refers.

The Scriptures refer to the Church variously as an *individual* local church (1 Corinthians 1: 2), as *several* local churches (Galatians 1: 1-3), or as the body of Christ *in total* (Ephesians 5: 25). No Biblical distinction is made between denominations or sects of believers. The only difference in the Bible is whether a church is fundamentally sound or apostate in doctrine.

Do not misconstrue this as a sort of *ecumenical one-world order* of churches; the Bible very clearly establishes the *independent, autonomous* nature of each local church; however, there is an undeniable unity of believers regardless of denominational affiliations as a result of the common faith of Jesus Christ:

*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* (Ephesians 4: 4-6)

### 1. The New Testament Church Defined:

#### A. Some Things the Church Is Not:

##### 1. The Church Is Not **Spiritual Israel**:

*Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.* (1 Corinthians 10: 32)

The church is a distinct body, different from both Israel and the Gentile world. God's covenant promises to Israel are earthly in nature, while His covenant with the New Testament church is heavenly. Prophetically, Israel is referred to as the *wife of Jehovah*, while the church is identified as the *bride of Christ*.

##### 2. The Church Is Not a **Religious Denomination**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

No particular group or assembly may rightly claim to be the *only true church*. Membership in the New Testament church is determined by and through the new birth of believers only. Every born-again Christian belongs to the true church, regardless of his/her local church affiliation.

### 3. The Church Is Not an **Earthly Organization**:

The visible, local church is the *only* representative of the New Testament church in the world. No social, fraternal, mystical or political club or organization can assume the privilege or responsibility and mission that God has invested in the church alone. Accordingly, the church must execute its divine ministry under the providential direction of God, and not by subjection to the regulation of earthly governments.

### 4. The Church Is Not Made up of **Unbelievers**:

*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6: 9-11)*

It is clear from the Scriptures that only blood-washed, born-again believers are members of the family of God. The practice among some protestant churches of baptizing infants or accepting *non-believers* into church membership has no Bible authority, nor is the custom of *confirming* individuals with no testimony of a true conversion experience into membership. This does not mean that *visitors* should be shunned or made to feel unwelcome; guests, whether saved or lost should be shown every courtesy and be treated warmly, and while encouraged to join in the activities of the church it must be explained that church membership is reserved for *born-again Christians* only. Many troubles in local church are the result of *unregenerate* members who follow the flesh, having not the Spirit. The Old Testament observation of this problem is that *they have begotten strange children*. (Hosea 5: 7)

### B. What the New Testament Church **is**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

### 1. The Church Is a **Body**:

*For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 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. For the body is not one member, but many. (1 Corinthians 12: 12-14)*

The Church Is Not a Mere *Organization* but Rather the Body of Christ, a **Living Organism**:

The **Head** of the Church Is Jesus Christ:

*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Ephesians 1: 22-23)*

Christ Is its **Saviour**:

*For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. (Ephesians 5: 23)*

Christ Is its **Mediator**:

*And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (Hebrews 9: 15)*

Christ Is its **High Priest**:

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4: 14-15)*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

The Church Has **Many Members**:

*But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. (1 Corinthians 12: 18-20)*

The Body of Christ is made up of *all believers*, those who are alive today and those who are in heaven; each member having been placed in the body to function precisely as the Holy Spirit intended, the Body being complete in Jesus Christ.

2. The Church Is a **Building**:

*Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Ephesians 2: 19-22)*

The Church Has a **Builder** (Jesus Christ):

*Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16: 18)*

The Church Has an **Owner** (The Father):

*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6: 19-22)*

The Father Is its **Beloved Benefactor**:

*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1: 3-4)*

The Father Is its **Source of Provision:**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. (John 16: 23-24)*

The Church Has a **Foundation:**

*And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. (Ephesians 2: 20)*

*For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3: 11)*

The Bible declares Jesus Christ to be both the *foundation* and *chief cornerstone* upon which the church is built. It is upon the gospel of Christ that the church stands firm, the truth of the Scriptures (*apostles and prophets*) being its testimony.

The Church Is Built up of **Stones:**

*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2: 5)*

Though the physical construction of the local church is of wood, brick and mortar, the church, as the building of God, is made up of *living stones!* (His saints). The soundness of the New Testament church is determined by the spiritual strength or weakness of its members!

The Church Is the **Pillar and Ground** of the Truth:

*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Timothy 3: 15)*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

### The Church Is **Indestructible**:

*Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16: 18)*

### The **Destiny** of the Church Is **Heavenward** and **Assured!** :

From its beginning, Satan has fought it, the enemies of God have despised it, and the world has scoffed at it. Nevertheless, the church is not going down in defeat; it is going up in victory!

*In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14: 3-4)*

### The **Danger** to **Local Churches**:

*Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. (Revelation 2: 1-3, 5)*

Although the *church universal* is destined to triumph, the local church is warned to guard its ministry (*candlestick*) against the loss of its first love, which represents its sole motive for duty in the world! Many local churches have ceased to exist because the love of God was sacrificed amid the worldliness and compromise of its members!

### 3. The Church Is a **Bride**:

*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church,*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish... For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones... This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5: 25-27, 30, 32)*

*Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. (Revelation 21: 9)*

The Church Was **Purchased** at **Great Price**:

*Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20: 28)*

The Church Is **Espoused** to One **Bridegroom**:

*For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (2 Corinthians 11: 2)*

The Church Will Be **Married** to One **Husband**:

*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. (Revelation 19: 7-8)*

While earthly weddings honor the *bride*, this heavenly celebration is to honor the *Bridegroom*! The *Marriage of the Lamb* is reserved to the glory and adoration of the Lord Jesus Christ, and every member of His body, the Bride will be present on that great day!

### 2. The Origin of the Church:

Today Christians differ on the exact beginning of the New Testament Church. In spite of the precise history of the Church preserved in the Book of Acts, several theological viewpoints argue its actual beginning:

A. Two Misconceptions about the **Origin** of the Church:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

**Error No. 1:** That *Old Testament Saints* Were Members of the Church:

Israel and the New Testament church are two distinct groups (1 Corinthians 10: 32) and are always identified as such in the Bible. The church was born as a result of the rejection of Christ (John 1: 11-12), by His own people. That God would then turn to a *Gentile bride* is fundamental to Bible truth:

*And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.* (Isaiah 11: 10)

*Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* (Romans 11: 25)

**Error No. 2:** That the Church Was Established at the *Baptism* of Christ:

*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* (Matthew 3: 16-17)

If the church had been born at the baptism of Jesus, it would have had no charter and no members, for Christ had not yet died to pay the price for sinners, and not one disciple had yet been called to follow Him. Furthermore, since Israel had not yet rejected Christ, such a premature beginning would have precluded the Gentiles, who are central to the calling of His church. Finally, such an early date is unlikely because Christ had not yet been crucified, buried, and risen again, thereby providing the gospel message for the church to preach.

B. **Pentecost** and the **Birth** of the New Testament Church:

Pentecost is memorable not merely because it marked the birth of the church. The Day of Pentecost (meaning *fiftieth day*) marked Israel's celebration of the *Feast of Weeks*, (or *Harvest*), which came fifty days after the Passover every year. *This Pentecost* is notable because of the events which occurred peculiar to the birth of the New Testament church.

1. Jesus Christ **Ascends** to Heaven as the **Head** of the Church:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

With His death, burial, and resurrection our Lord had completed the work of redemption and ascended into heaven, there to assume His rightful position as Head of the church.

### 2. The Holy Spirit **Descends** upon the Church:

*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (John 14: 16-17)*

*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh... Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (Acts 2: 17, 33)*

The Holy Spirit is the *Comforter* of the church. He is the *Administrator* of the *spiritual gifts* and *ministries* of the church (1 Corinthians 12: 1-11), and He is the *Teacher* and *Guide* of the church. (John 16: 7-14)

### 3. The New Testament Ministry of the **Gospel** Begins:

Peter's inaugural sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2: 14-36), established the standard to which all subsequent preaching desires to attain:

The Gospel of **Christ** Was Preached:

*Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. (Acts 2: 22-24)*

The **Power** of the Holy Spirit Was Manifested:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2: 17-18)*

### Sinners Were **Convicted**:

*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? (Acts 2: 37)*

### Souls Were **Saved**:

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. (Acts 2: 41)*

### The New Testament Church **Grew**:

*And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. (Acts 2: 47)*

## 3. The Organization and Government of the Church:

### A. The Church Has a **Priesthood**:

#### 1. The *Priesthood of Believers*:

*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Peter 2: 9)*

This universal priesthood extends to all born-again believers. There is no Bible basis for a special *priestcraft* in the New Testament church; rather, *all Christians* are believer-priests, and have been called to show forth the praises of God by their service to Him.

#### 2. All Believers Are **Saints**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 1: 7)*

### B. The Church Has **Apostles**:

*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. (1 Corinthians 12: 28)*

*Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead). (Galatians 1: 1)*

#### 1. The **Twelve Apostles** of the Lamb:

*And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Revelation 21: 14)*

In the Bible we learn that God limited the office of apostleship to *twelve*, and *only twelve* men, beginning with the *eleven* who remained after the betrayal and death of Judas Iscariot:

*And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. (Acts 1: 13)*

In the upper room, the eleven chose Matthias *by lot* (drawing straws) to take the place of Judas, but that was not done at the direction of God, nor was he the man God wanted. Matthias was no doubt a devout follower of Christ but his name is not mentioned again in the Bible. God chose **Paul**:

*Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God.  
(1 Corinthians 1:1)*

*For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. (1 Corinthians 15: 9-10)*

*Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead). (Galatians 1: 1)*

### 2. There Are No *Modern-day Apostles*:

Some religious cults frequently refer to their leaders as *latter-day apostles*. Such claims are attempts to lend prestige or authority to an individual but violate the *one restrictive qualification* of an apostle; He must have been an *eye-witness* of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ:

*Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. (Acts 1: 21-22, 24-25)*

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. (1 Corinthians 15: 3-5, 7-8)*

### 3. The Danger of **False Apostles**:

*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11: 13)*

*I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars. (Revelation 2: 2)*

### C. The Church Has **Pastors**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4: 11)*

The word *pastor* is a translation of the Greek *Poimen*, meaning *shepherd*. It is descriptive of the love and care for the church which is imparted to men in the divine call of God to the pastoral ministry. Another word used in the Scriptures to describe the pastor is *Bishop*, from the Greek *Episkopos*, meaning *superintendent*, or *overseer* of the church. The Bible sets forth the qualifications of the pastor:

*A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (1 Timothy 3: 2-7)*

### D. The Church has **DEACONS**:

*Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. (Philippians 1: 1)*

#### 1. The **Qualifications** of Deacons:

*Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3: 8-13)*

#### 2. The **Duties** of Deacons:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. (Acts 6: 1-3)*

### E: The Church Has **Teachers**:

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

*The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. (Titus 2: 3-5)*

*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. (1 Timothy 2: 12)*

### The Bible Warns Also of **False Teachers**:

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.  
(2 Peter 2: 1)*

### F. The Church Has **Evangelists**:

*And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. (Acts 21: 8)*

*But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist.*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

(2 Timothy 4: 5)

According to the Scriptures, an *Evangelist* (Greek *Euaggelistes*), is *one who preaches the gospel*. His ministry to the church is two-fold: (1) *evangelism* of the lost, and (2) *revival* among the saints.

### G. The **Government** of the Church:

#### 1. How Various Religious Denominations Govern:

##### The **Papal** Form of Church Government:

In *Roman Catholicism*, the Pope is regarded as both *apostle* (in succession to Peter), and *vicar* (personal substitute and representative) of Christ. Thus, papal government is subject to the leadership of one dominant, earthly figure. Many other religious cults, built around the teachings of a strong authoritative individual, practice a form of papal government.

##### The **Episcopal** Form of Church Government:

Most protestant denominations are structured around the *Episcopal* form of church government, whereby member churches are governed by a central body of *ruling bishops*. In England, this **Anglican** form of government is endorsed and approved as the official state church.

##### The **Presbyterian** Form of Church Government:

Founded by John Calvin in the infancy of the protestant reformation at Geneva, Switzerland, *Presbyterianism* is a form of church government in which supporting churches provide *representatives*, or *elders* to a central governing assembly. Though more representative of the will of the local churches, *Presbyterianism* still invests its authority in a strong central church government. Many Presbyterian and other protestant congregations, in protest of the growing apostasy of their national assemblies, are withdrawing fellowship and identifying themselves strictly as independent, self-governing local churches.

#### 2. The Independent **Congregational** Form of Church Government:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

The **Autonomy** of the Local Church:

In the New Testament, each local church is an *autonomous* congregation, independent of outside control or accountability. The concept of centralized authority is *foreign* to the Scriptures. Only the writers of the inspired word of God exercised any outside influence over the local assemblies.

The Congregational **Authority** of the Local Church:

Since *every* Christian is a *believer-priest*, no Biblical distinction is made between *clergy* and *laity*. On the contrary, the elevation of the minister to a position superior to that of other believers is an error and is condemned in the Scriptures:

*But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.* (Revelation 2: 6)

The dissimulation of the Nicolaitanes (Greek *Nikao*, to conquer, and *Laos*, the people; together meaning *to conquer the people*), refers to the practice of imposing a clerical hierarchy over the people, which violates these Biblical doctrinal precepts:

*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*  
(1 Peter 5: 2-3)

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* (Galatians 3:28)

### 3. Jesus Christ Is the *Only Head* of the Church:

In the local church, the *pastor* is not the head, he is its *shepherd*; the *deacons* are not the head, they are its *servants*. The *true and only Head* of the church is our Lord Jesus Christ:

*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4: 15-16)*

### 4. **Decision-making** in the Local Church:

By the **Determination** of *Spirit-led* Believer-priests:

Membership in a local church, because Christians are *believer-priests*, is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is a *privilege* because God has honored the church with the ministry of the gospel of Christ; it is a *responsibility* because the Holy Spirit administers the offices and ministries of the local church through the spiritual advice and consent of its members.

By Biblical and Spiritual **Rules of Order**:

*Let all things be done decently and in order. (1 Corinthians 14: 40)*

The Bible *expects*, even *demands* that believers, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, exhibit Godliness and brotherly respect in the conduct of church business. This should be especially manifest in the regular business meetings of the local church, parliamentary procedures being graciously observed.

The Prohibition Against **Strife** and **Discouragement**:

*And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men.*  
(2 Timothy 2: 24)

*Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.*  
(Romans 14: 13)

### 4. **The Mission of the Church:**

A. The Mission of the Church Is Not to **Convert the World**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

Some religious theologians teach that the *Great Commission* (Mat. 28: 19-20), chartered and empowered the church to *save every creature and prepare the world* for the second-coming of Christ. Such a theology, however, is disputed by our Lord Himself:

*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*  
(Matthew 7: 13-14)

That God would call the church to a task (*the salvation of all the world*), which He had already declared *would not and could not* be accomplished, is *theological error*.

### B. The Mission of the Church Is Not to **Establish the Kingdom**:

Contrary to the *social gospel* of the modern *apostate* church, Christianity will not *revolutionize* the social, economic systems of the world, thereby ushering in the kingdom of Christ! It is neither by *revolution* nor *evolution* that God changes man, but by the *individual regeneration* of the *new-birth*. The millennial kingdom of Christ will come as *fulfillment of Bible prophecy*, not as a result of the social and religious efforts of man.

### C. The Mission of the Church Is Not to **Feed & Clothe the Poor**:

Although the plight of the homeless and the poverty of the destitute should provoke the compassion and assistance of Christians everywhere, soup kitchens and thrift stores do not constitute the *primary mission* of the church. Thank God for every gospel-preaching, soul-winning New Testament church that supports such rescue ministries *as a means* to fulfill its true mission!

### D. The Mission of the Church Is Not to **Control Civil Government**:

The church has neither *authority* nor *dominion* over earthly governments. However, where society violates or diminishes Biblical laws or moral absolutes, Christians *must as good citizens* respond, both *from the pulpit*, and *at the ballot box*!

### E. The Mission of the Church Is to **Glorify God**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. (Ephesians 3: 21)*

By Regular **Worship and Praise**:

*Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*

*(Psalms 100: 1-2, 4)*

By **Walking Worthy** of His Name:

*That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Colossians 1:10)*

F. The Mission of the Church Is to **Build up its Most Holy Faith**:

*But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (Jude 20-21)*

By Trusting God **in Prayer**:

*And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (John 14: 13)*

*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. (John 15: 7)*

By the **Study** of the Scriptures:

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2: 15)*

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3: 16-17)*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

By Teaching & Preaching **Sound Doctrine**:

*Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 1: 13)*

*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. (2 Timothy 4: 2-3)*

G. The Mission of the Church Is to **Fulfill the Great Commission**:

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28: 19-20)*

To Preach the Gospel to **Every Creature**:

*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16: 15)*

To Sponsor Missions in **All the World**:

Beginning with the missionary journeys of the apostle Paul, sent by the Holy Spirit from the church at Antioch, Syria, the worldwide outreach of the gospel has been accomplished by the missionary endeavors of local churches in obedience to the Great Commission. Churches which bear the name *Missionary*, yet support no missions anywhere, practice *deceit* and *deny* God's plan for the church.

To Foster Evangelism in the **Local Church**:

The ministry of the local church is not that of family *entertainment* or *recreation*, but for the preaching of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit, that lost souls might be saved! Some family-oriented activities are commendable, but not to the extent that they become the main function of the church.

To Practice Benevolence **Integral to the Gospel Ministry**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? (James 2: 15-16)*

*But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?  
(1 John 3: 17)*

It is clear from the Scriptures that the very heart of the gospel is *compassion*. Benevolence, as a means toward the opportunity to present the gospel message, is a *natural by-product* of soul winning!

### 5. The Ordinances of the Church:

The New Testament Church has no *sacraments*! In Roman Catholicism a sacrament is a church instituted ritual which is said to impart a saving grace. Such practices as Infant Baptism, the Eucharist, the Mass, Confession, and Last Rites, are taught as essential to personal salvation. Because it is contrary to the Bible doctrine of salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10), and because it violates the Scriptures by teaching that salvation may be earned by good works (Titus 3: 5), *all true* New Testament churches *reject* the *sacrament* rituals.

The church does observe, however, *two Biblical ordinances* commissioned by our Lord Jesus Christ. They are *Believer's Baptism*, and *the Lord's Supper*; neither believed to be essential to salvation, and both correctly celebrated as *symbolic, memorial* observances.

#### A. The Ordinance of **Believer's Baptism**:

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Matthew 28: 19)*

*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. (Romans 6: 3-5)*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

### 1. Believer's Baptism **Defined**:

The word *baptize* is an English transliteration of the Greek *Baptizo*, meaning *to ceremonially cover wholly with water* (total immersion in water). By its very definition, baptism *excludes sprinkling or pouring* as practiced by some protestant denominations. Also, the Scriptural portrayal of *burial* depicted in baptism is *impossible* to conceive in sprinkling or pouring.

### 2. The **Purpose** for Believer's Baptism:

Baptism Is **Not unto** Salvation, but **Because of** Salvation:

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*  
(Romans 1: 16)

*For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*  
(1 Corinthians 1: 17)

Baptism Is a **Memorial** to the Gospel:

The baptismal ceremony memorializes the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ: *Buried with Christ in the likeness of His death, and raised in the likeness of His resurrection to walk in the newness of life.* (Romans 6: 4)

Baptism **Establishes Identification** with Christ:

It is the formal, public *testimony* of what has already taken place *in the heart* of new believers; the old man of sin is dead and buried, and the new man is raised to walk in the newness of life.

Baptism **Symbolizes** the Believer's **Sanctification**:

It is being *openly set-apart* to walk in the newness of life; the *answer of a good conscience toward God.* (1 Peter 3: 21).

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

### 3. The **Participants** in Baptism:

There is no biblical justification for *infant baptism*, nor for baptizing *unbelievers*. The *only evidence* of Christian baptism in the Scriptures is for *born-again believers*. Infants may not be Scripturally baptized because they are incapable of decision-making; unbelievers may not be Scripturally baptized because they are unrepentant and unconverted.

### 4. The **Observance** of Baptism:

The **Obligation** of Believers:

Because it is *commanded* in the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 19-20), baptism is not to be regarded as an *optional* consideration, but as an *obligation of obedience* for new believers:

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. (Acts 2: 41)*

Whether baptisms are conducted outdoors or inside, weather conditions or other circumstances may justify a brief delay; however, no "waiting period" is prescribed in the Scriptures. *Every* example in the New Testament shows baptism occurring *immediately after* conversion:

*Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. (Acts 16: 29-33)*

The **Administration** of Baptism:

Baptism is neither a *civic* nor *social ceremony*, but a *Scriptural ordinance* of the Great Commission, vested in the New Testament church. Pastors and deacons, the ordained officers of the local church, are qualified to baptize new believers.

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

Baptism is not a ritual for *local church membership* (ex: the Ethiopian Eunuch, Acts 8: 26-39). The church is directed to baptize all new believers; however, the matter of church membership is a personal decision for each Christian under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

### B. The Ordinance of **the Lord's Supper**:

*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. (Matthew 26: 26-29)*

#### 1. The Lord's Supper **Defined**:

A solemn ceremony instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ for His disciples on the eve of His crucifixion. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the true meaning of the gospel and the promise of His second-coming, which is the hope of the believer.

#### 2. The **Purpose** of the Lord's Supper:

*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 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. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. (1 Corinthians 11: 23-26)*

The Lord's Supper Provides a Reverent Service in **Remembrance** of Our Lord:

*This do in remembrance of me. (1 Corinthians 11: 24)*

The Lord's Supper Is a **Memorial** to Our Lord's **Death**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. (1 Corinthians 11: 26)*

*This is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 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. (1 Corinthians 11: 24, 25)*

The Lord's Supper *Anticipates* the **Marriage Supper** of the Lamb:

*But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. (Matthew 26: 29)*

*That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. (Luke 22: 30)*

### 3. The **Participants** of the Lord's Supper:

The Lord's Supper Is Not for **Unbelievers**:

*Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11: 27)*

The Lord's Supper Is Not for **Unclean Believers**:

*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. (1 Corinthians 11: 28-30)*

The Lord's Supper Is for **Baptized Believers** Only and Represents the **New Life** of Believers:

*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)*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

The Lord's Supper Represents That Which **Sustains New Life**:

*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* (John 6: 51)

The Lord's Supper Is for **All Qualified Believers**:

In the local church, the question of *open*, or *closed* communion may arise. That is, does the church permit only *its* members to observe the Lord's Supper, or may *all believers attending* participate. Since the concept of closed communion appears to discriminate against *visiting brethren*, it violates the Scriptural principle of the unity of the *body of Christ* (Galatians 3: 28; Ephesians 4: 4-5.) Therefore, open communion is correct.

### 4. The **Elements** of the Lord's Supper:

The **Unleavened Bread**:

In the Lord's Supper, the unleavened bread is symbolic of Christ's *broken body*. Unleavened bread is used because *leaven* typifies the presence of *sin* (Matthew 16: 6-12; 1 Corinthians 5: 6-8), and Jesus Christ was sinless!

The **Fruit of the Vine**:

The cup of the Lord's Supper memorializes Christ's *shed blood*. Whether to use alcoholic wine, or unfermented *fruit of the vine* (fresh juice), is, in fact, a matter of doctrine! Wine (*strong drink*), is fermented by a leavening process. Since leaven typifies sin, the use of wine is prohibited *doctrinally*! Furthermore, since the Bible condemns the use of strong drink (Prov. 20: 1; 23: 29-35), its use at the Lord's Supper is an affront to the word of God!

### 5. The **Ceremonial Constitution** of the Bread and Cup:

**Transubstantiation** is the Roman Catholic view that the bread and cup become the actual body and blood of Christ during the Mass. **Consubstantiation** is the view of Lutherans and the Church of England that the body and blood of Christ is present spiritually in the bread and cup during communion. **Memorialization** is the view of

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

Bible fundamentalists that the bread and cup are only symbols of Christ's body and blood, which were offered only once (Hebrews 9: 24- 28; 10: 10- 14), as the sacrifice for sin. Thus, the ceremony is observed *in remembrance of Christ*.

### 6. The **Frequency** of the Lord's Supper:

*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. (1 Corinthians 11: 26)*

There is no Scriptural requirement for the frequency of the observance. Some churches include it each Sunday, some once a month or once per quarter-year; most Baptist churches observe the Lord's Supper on every Fifth-Sunday service. The glory in this most reverent ordinance is not in how often it is done, but in the joy of the memorial which reminds us of the price the Lord Jesus paid to redeem us, and in anticipation of that day when we will sup with Him in heaven.

### 6. **Church Discipline:**

Church discipline is not to be confused with *chastisement*, which is God's correction of erring saints; it is, rather, a divinely-instituted procedure for the local church to maintain holy, acceptable behaviour among brethren. Church discipline is the exercise of Biblical principles to reprove, rebuke, and restore believers fallen in sin:

*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (Galatians 6: 1)*

#### A. The **Basis** for Church Discipline:

Because of What **God Expects** from Believers:

*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Timothy 3: 15)*

Out of *Respect* for **God's Will**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

(2 Corinthians 6: 17-18; 7: 1)

*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (1 Peter 1: 15-16)*

### B. The **Authority** for Church Discipline:

Church Discipline Is Not Derived from **Civil Courts**:

*Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.*

(1 Corinthians 6: 1-6)

The **Sole Authority** for Church Discipline Is the Bible Alone:

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3: 16-17)*

### C. The **Procedure** for Church Discipline:

Church Discipline **Always Allows** Space for **Self-judgement** and **Repentance**:

*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. (1 Corinthians 11: 31)*

The **Goal** of Church Discipline Is **Restoration**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

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

The **Response** Toward the Unrepentant Is **Withdrawal of Fellowship**:

*But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. (1 Corinthians 5: 11-13)*

### 7. The Destiny of the Church:

#### A. The **Second-coming** of Christ, the **Bridegroom**:

His Coming Will Be **Visible**:

*And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1: 9-11)*

His Coming Will Be **Personal**:

*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

*(1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17)*

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

His Coming Will Be **Pre-tribulational**:

Will the church go through the tribulation? Throughout church history much speculation has arisen concerning the time of Christ's return. Some hold that His second-coming is to be *mid-tribulational* (in the middle of the tribulation period); others think His return will be *post-tribulational* (after the tribulation period). Such views, however, demean the relationship of Christ to His bride. What bridegroom would claim to love his bride (Ephesians 5: 23-32), yet subject her to such horrible punishment as the tribulation? That Christ's coming is to be *pre-tribulational* (before the tribulation period begins), fits His promises to the church:

*For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5: 9)*

*Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. (Revelation 3: 10)*

B. The **Presentation** of the Church, His **Bride**:

*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5: 25, 27)*

C. The **Marriage** of the **Lamb**:

*And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. (Revelation 19: 6-8)*

The Church Gathers for the **Marriage Supper**:

## Chapter Five: The New Testament Church

*And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (Revelation 19: 9)*

This is both the marriage feast of the King (Matthew 22: 1-10), and the first communion supper of the church united in heaven (Matthew 26: 29!) It is a heavenly supper, with heavenly food, partaken by the saints in glorified bodies (1 Corinthians 15: 35-57).

The Church Joins Christ for the **Marriage Celebration:**

*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Revelation 19: 11-14,16; 20: 4-6)*

D. The **Eternal Home** of the Bride:

*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God:... And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And there shall in no*

## **Chapter Five: The New Testament Church**

*wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

(Revelation 21: 2, 10-11, 22-23, 27; read all of Chapter 21)