

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

First Baptist Church - Dallas

Foundations Of The Faith

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THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

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I. The Doctrine Of The Church

A. Introduction And Purpose

1. What Is The *Church*?

- a. *Definition* - from the Greek "*ekklesia*" which literally means "the called out ones". Scripture also refers to the Church as the body of Christ and the bride of Christ.
- b. *Form* - the Church has historically taken many different forms, from the house churches of the New Testament era to the highly organized and centralized denominational structures of history. It has both a physical form (what we see) and a spiritual or mystery form (what is invisible). In the New Testament, church always refers to a local body of believers or to all the redeemed of the Church Age - never to a denominational structure.
- c. *Scope* - the Church is both local and universal. It is for our age and for every age since Christ.

2. Who Is Its *Head*?

- a. The head of the Church, in all its forms, is the Lord Jesus Christ (Col.1:18), and the Church belongs to Him (Matt.16:18).
- b. Various versions of Christianity have different organizational structures that lend themselves to diverse types and forms of human leadership, but no human being must ever presume to be "the head".

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3. Who Are Its *Members*?
 - a. The members of the universal (catholic) Church are all those, throughout history since Pentecost, who have believed in Jesus Christ as savior.
 - b. Each and every one is a part of the elect whom the Father has given to the Son (See John 6:37-40).

4. What Are Its *Purposes*
 - a. Confess the Faith (Matt.16:15-18)
 - b. Declare the glory of God (Eph.3:8-11, I Pet.2:9)
 - c. Model the early church (Acts 2:42)
 - d. Exercise spiritual gifts (Eph.4:11-16)
 - e. Perform the ordinances (Matt.28:19 and I Cor. 11:17-34)
 - f. Exercise discipline (Matt.18:15-17)
 - g. Make disciples (Matt. 28:19-20)

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B. Birth And Early Development

1. The *predictions* of the Church

- a. The Lord Jesus Christ predicted the establishment of the church in Matthew 16:13-20.
- b. In John 10:14-16 Jesus looks forward to the church and declares that it will be universal in scope with Him as its shepherd.
- c. Jesus gave specific instructions in Acts 1:1-5.

2. The *birth* of the Church

- a. God began the Church in Acts 2 when He poured out the promised Holy Spirit on the disciples.
 - (1). Acts 2:1-14
 - (2). Acts 2:15-36
 - (3). Acts 2:37-47
- b. The foundation of the Church, then and now, is the Lord Jesus Christ (See I Corinthians 3:11). There can be no other foundation to the true Church.

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3. The early *development* of the Church

- a. The earliest development of the Church is recorded in the book of Acts.
 - (1). The stoning of Stephen - Acts 7:51-60
 - (2). The conversion of Paul - Acts 9:1-9
 - (3). The first missionaries sent out – Acts 13:1-3
 - (4). The Council of Jerusalem
 - (a). Acts 15:1-5
 - (b). Acts 15:6-18
 - (c). Acts 15:19-21
 - b. Further insight into the development of the Church is found in the epistles.
4. Application
- a. The Church has always been part of God's plan. Our local body is also a part of that plan.
 - b. The gospel is for everyone. We must faithfully share it in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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C. The Church In History

1. The Apostolic Church

a. *Simon Peter*

- (1). Simon Peter was called from his fishing nets to become the most prominent of the Lord's twelve disciples (See Matthew 4:18-20).
- (2). His confession of faith in Matthew 16:13-20 is one of the highlights of the gospels and plainly states the foundation of the church.
- (3). He was prominent in the accounts of the arrest, trial, crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord (See John 18-21).
- (4). Jesus gave Simon Peter special instructions in John 21:15-22 regarding his role in the building of the church.
- (5). Simon Peter is the main character in the first part of Acts (Chapter 1-12). He preached the first sermon in Acts 2 and was instrumental in God's inclusion of the gentiles into His church.
- (6). Simon Peter wrote the two New Testament epistles that bear his name.
- (7). Tradition says that he was crucified upside down on a cross outside of Rome about 70 AD.

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b. *Paul* (Saul of Tarsus)

- (1). Paul was born in Tarsus to Jewish parents and

studied under the great teacher Gamaliel. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish council, the Sanhedrin. He was considered to be the rising young star of Judaism and was a zealous student and follower of the Law.

- (2). He was an early hater of Christianity and was a determined persecutor of the early church. While on a mission to Damascus to arrest the believers in that city, Jesus Christ appeared to Paul in a vision and converted him (See Acts 9:1-9)
- (3). The last half of the book of Acts is primarily concerned with Paul's missionary journeys as the Lord used him to take the gospel to the gentiles.
- (4). Paul was a brilliant thinker and is the premier theologian of the Christian faith. He authored at least 13 epistles in the New Testament and most of the theology of the Church comes to us through his pen. He is perhaps most noted for his insistence on salvation by grace through faith.
- (5). Tradition says that he was beheaded in Rome around 66 AD.

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c. John

- (1). John, the son of Zebedee, like Simon Peter was also a fisherman. His calling by the Lord

is recorded in Matt. 4:21-22.

- (2). He, along with his brother James and Simon Peter, was a member of the "inner circle" of disciples of Jesus Christ.
- (3). John is portrayed in the Gospels as the disciple whom Jesus loved and was assigned the special task of caring for Mary, the Lord's mother, upon His death (See John 19:26-27).
- (4). John wrote the New Testament gospel that bears his name, the three epistles and the Revelation. His central themes are the love of God, the love of our fellow men and the triumphant return of Jesus Christ.
- (5). Late in his life he was the elder of the church at Ephesus and was imprisoned for a period of time on the island of Patmos, where he received the vision of Revelation.
- (6). Tradition says that John was boiled in oil in Ephesus around 95 AD. He was probably the last of the twelve original apostles to die.

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2. The Medieval Church

a. *Augustine*

- (1). Augustine was born in North Africa and lived

from 354-430 AD. He was a very intelligent youth but one who wasted these years in sin and dissipation. He was educated and taught in Italy and then returned to live in Africa.

- (2). God saved Augustine and he eventually became the Bishop of Hippo, a city in North Africa. He was a great defender of the faith and wrote extensively.
- (3). His contemporary contributions were his steadfast defense of Christian orthodoxy against the heresies of Pelagius and others. He was a stout defender of the sovereignty of God regarding election and of other great points of Pauline theology.
- (4). His major contributions are his writings. They were critical in the lives and theology of both Martin Luther and John Calvin. In many ways Augustine is considered to be the father of the Reformation, even though it came over a thousand years after his death.
- (5). Augustine was the greatest theologian of the middle ages and is still read and honored by the Church today.

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b. Thomas Aquinas

- (1). Thomas Aquinas was born near Naples in Italy about 1225 AD and died in 1274. He entered the Dominican Order of friars against his family's wishes.

- (2). He spent most of his adult life teaching and writing. He was highly respected in the Church but refused all offers of appointment to high office.
- (3). His most famous work is SummaTheologica which is his systematic theology interspersed with philosophy and general knowledge.
- (4). Aquinas also influenced the reformers but to a lesser extent than Augustine. He has been most influential in Roman Catholic theology and is still highly honored today by that tradition.

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c. Great councils

(1). Nicaea

- (a). In 324 AD, the Roman emperor Constantine established Christianity as the state religion of the empire. Then, in 325 AD, he called a great council of bishops to consider the quarrel between Arius, a priest of Alexandria, and Athanasius, a leader of western bishops. The council was held in Nicaea, Asia Minor.
- (b). Arius maintained that Jesus Christ was *not* the equal of God the Father but was created by Him. Athanasius claimed that the Father and the Son, though distinct, are *equal* and of the same substance.
- (c). Constantine presided over the council which condemned the Arian view as heresy and drew up the *Nicene Creed* (see below) which is still accepted as the basic doctrine of most Christian churches.

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(2). *The Nicene Creed*

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made: Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man: And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come, Amen.

(3). *Great Schism of 1054*

- (a). There was a great split in the Christian Church in 1054 AD over the authority of the Bishop of Rome.
- (b). The eastern churches refused to recognize the supremacy which the Bishop of Rome (the Pope) claimed over the entire church.

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- (c). The remnants of the split became known as the Roman Catholic Church and the various national flavors of the Eastern Orthodox Church. This schism is still in effect today.
- (4). Other councils
- (a). *Council of Pisa* - 1409. This council decided which of three rival claimants to the papacy would be declared pope.
 - (b). *Council of Constance* - 1414-1418. It dealt with rival claims to the papacy and reform issues raised, primarily, by John Huss, a Bohemian reformer.
 - (c). *Council of Lateran* - 1515. With the invention of the printing press and the mass availability of all types of reading matter, the Church became concerned with the potential influence of the written word. This council addressed the issue and decided that the local Bishop would determine books that were appropriate for his parishioners.
 - (d). *Council of Trent* - 1545-1565. This was the Roman Catholic **response** to the Reformation. It took a hard-line stance against the reformers and their doctrine and attempted to justify Roman dogma that had come under attack by the reformers

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3. The Reformation

a. *Causes of the Reformation*

- (1). The *Renaissance* had emphasized the importance of man, his work and a "this-world" view to the detriment of a society previously focused on God and His Church. It was in some ways a return to the philosophy and rational thought of the Greeks. The Church was so influenced by the atmosphere of the Renaissance that it developed too low an opinion of the majesty and holiness of God and too high an estimate of the worth and potentiality of man.
- (2). The political empire that had been dominated by the Church for a thousand years was giving way to local sentiments of nationalism and desires for independence - political and economic. The rise of the merchant class and the craft guilds contributed to these views.
- (3). The Church had become corrupted by its power, influence and political entanglements. The truth of the gospel had been slowly but surely compromised. The organizational structure of the Church made the common man a captive and threatened "eternal damnation" to all who would not conform to its rule. Greed and lust were rampant in the clergy.

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b. *Martin Luther*

- (1). Martin Luther (1483-1546) was born in Germany and, against the wishes of his family, became an Augustinian monk in 1505.
- (2). As a monk who was tormented by his own sense of sin and helplessness, Luther studied the writings of Paul and Augustine and became convicted of the "*sole fide*" message of which these men had written so boldly.
- (3). In frustration at the sale of indulgences by the Church (fees paid to release one from the temporal penalties of sin and to bring about eternal forgiveness as well), on ***October 31, 1517*** Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. He intended them to stimulate debate and to be the catalyst in bringing about reform. It was not Luther's intention to bring about schism. The theses (protests) were primarily concerned with 3 points:
 - (a). German national resentment against papal financial exploitation.
 - (b). Jurisdiction of the Pope over purgatory.
 - (c). Indulgences induce a wrong state of mind. There is nothing the sinner can do to escape God's wrath. Peace comes only in the word of Christ through faith.

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- (4). Luther was eventually ruled a heretic and excommunicated by the Pope.

- (5). He became the father of the reformation, was instrumental in getting the Bible into the hands of the common people and is considered to be the founder of the Lutheran Church.
- (6). Though not a classical theologian, Luther did write and with the aid of Philip Melanchthon defined much of the protestant theology.

c. *John Calvin*

- (1). Calvin was born in France in 1509 and studied for the priesthood. At 22 he was converted and rejected the Roman church. He was eventually forced to flee France and, in 1536, he settled in the French speaking Swiss city of Geneva. He remained there almost constantly until his death in 1564.
- (2). John Calvin was the key theologian of the Reformation and his "The Institutes of the Christian Religion" is its primary work. He is the father of the "reformed faith" and his theology, which became known as Calvinism, is known for its optimism of God despite its pessimism for man.

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- (3). He wrote extensively and is generally considered to be the greatest Christian theologian since Augustine.

- (4). Through Calvin's efforts, Geneva became a "city of God". In the social life of the community, Calvin enforced the ideals of purity, simplicity and a devout faith. Religious heresy was not tolerated. Civil and criminal penalties, including capital punishment, were meted out for heresy.

4. The Church in America

a. *Jonathan Edwards*

- (1). Jonathan Edwards (1703 - 1758) was America's greatest thinker, philosopher and theologian. He was the pastor of the church in Northampton, MA, and at the end of his life he was made president of Princeton.
- (2). He is best known for his famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" and for his writings, "The Freedom of the Will" and "Religious Affections"
- (3). Edwards was the last and best of the great Puritans (Calvinists). He was instrumental in the Great Awakening of the 1740's. He believed that true religion was a supernatural gift of God's Holy Spirit and would be evidenced in responsive affections, his term for a loving heart that results in godly living.

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b. *Revivalism*

- (1). *George Whitefield* and *John Wesley* were eighteenth century revivalists who had

great impact on the American church. They strongly emphasized doctrinal substance and Biblical content in their messages. It is interesting to note that Whitefield, the Calvinist, and Wesley, the Arminian, were each mightily used by God in this country.

- (2). In the latter nineteenth century and on into the twentieth century the revivalist movement gained steam through personality centered movements led by such men as Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday and Billy Graham.
- (3). Revivalism was not historically centered in a particular church or denomination although it was usually supported most strongly by the low-protestant tradition.
- (4). Through the influence and experiences of Moody, the twentieth century highly organized and highly publicized crusade developed.
- (5). The thrust of the revival message has evolved over the years from one concerned with the revival of the saints to one concerned with the evangelization of the lost.

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- (6). Today, the form of revivalism has changed. It is moving away from mass crusades where people assemble in vast stadiums to the more intimate surroundings of our homes through the media of radio and television.

(7). As the form has changed so has the message. Currently, most revivalism is centered in Pentecostalism and Charismatic theology.

c. *Other Religious Groups*

(1). The mid-nineteenth century gave America the founding of the four major religious groups. These are significantly different from what has been accepted as historical orthodox Christianity.

(2). Contemporary Congregations

(a). *Mormonism*

(b). *Jehovah's Witnesses*

(c). *Seventh Day Adventist*

(d). *Christian Science*

{1}. Unity School of Christianity

{2}. New Age Movement

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d. *Liberalism*

(1). Theological liberalism arose in Europe in the nineteenth century as a child of the enlightenment and a brother of the scientific achievements of that day. It was a blend of then current philosophy and politics, and it

drew heavily on the humanism that came out of the Renaissance. It began to surface in the United States in the mid-nineteenth century.

- (2). Liberalism was basically a skeptical view of, and a retreat from, Christian orthodoxy. It glorified man, de-emphasized God and rejected most of the Bible. In some forms it was socially and politically proactive.

e. *Fundamentalism*

- (1). Christian Fundamentalism arose in the early twentieth century as a response to what was perceived as liberalism in the church, its institutions and society in general.
- (2). It was based on an article defining the five fundamentals of the Christian faith:
 - (a). Deity of Jesus Christ
 - (b). Substitutionary Atonement
 - (c). Inerrancy of the Scriptures
 - (d). Bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ

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- (e). Bodily return of Jesus Christ
- (3). In recent years this movement has become quite pro-active in local, state and national politics supporting a conservative political agenda.
- (4). Christian Fundamentalists have been

accused by their opponents of being mean-spirited, narrow minded, and of being pawns in the hands of self-appointed religious and political leaders.

- (5). They have responded by declaring their orthodoxy to a church and nation they see as bent on compromise, moral breakdown, religious deterioration and apostasy.

f. *Prosperity Gospel*

- (1). The prosperity gospel movement is a recent phenomenon in America. It is basically rooted in the belief that God wants all of His church to be healthy, wealthy and wise. It plays itself out in wealthy western countries but has no message for poverty stricken parts of the world.
- (2). This movement is rooted in Arminian theology and declares that the key to success is in the individual Christian having "enough faith". Any failure to achieve success is attributed to a lack of same.

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- (3). The prosperity gospel is most prominent on certain religious television programs and generally surrounds itself with upbeat music and demonstrative individual worship. Seemingly endless appeals for money are generally included, and viewers are often promised "special tangible blessings" if they will contribute.

- (4). The movement has come out of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement as is evidenced by the promises of healings and success, and the style of worship.
- (5). Its theology is feelings or experience based rather than biblically based. The dramatic and often miraculous personal experiences of its followers are emphasized and presented as normal.
- (6). Major historical proponents have been Robert Tilton, E. V. Grant, Kenneth Copeland and Jim Bakker.
- (7). Recently, this approach to Christianity has evolved into a less “showy” and more sophisticated message emphasizing positive attitudes and feel-good blessings with some general moralizing. But, as in the past, the focus is on fulfilling the individual’s selfish desires. Joel Osteen is a current leading proponent.

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5. Application

- a. God continues to build His church in our own day just as He has continuously done so in the past. Ask Him to grant you the opportunity to participate in His holy endeavor.
- b. Thank God that He provided great leaders and great theologians throughout history. These are the Christians on whose shoulders we stand.

- c. Pray that God will deliver us from the heresies and cults that have arisen throughout the ages. Commit yourself to the unassailable truth of His holy word. Be discerning and be bold, but do so gently in Christian love.

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D. Organization Of The Church

1. *Episcopal* form of church organization

a. Defined

- (1). The Episcopal form of church government is one based on a hierarchical or layered structure. It emphasizes a church government ruled over by bishops (Gk. "*episkopos*" which means overseer) in a top-

down manner.

- (2). Its evidence is based more on early church tradition rather than scripture. Although proponents would point to Titus 1 as biblical support for this form. Much weight is given to apostolic or historic succession.
- (3). This is the most organized and strongest form of church government. Bishops are usually appointed and assigned by the council of bishops or by the pope.

b. Structure

(1). Offices

- (a). Bishops
- (b). Priests or presbyters
- (c). Deacons

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- (2). A geographical area of jurisdiction (diocese) comprising several local churches is presided over by a bishop. The bishop has great authority. He, in turn, is responsible to a council of bishops and, in the Roman Catholic tradition, the bishops are all under the authority of the Pope.

c. Examples

- (1). Roman Catholic

- (2). Orthodox (Eastern, Russian, Greek, etc.)
- (3). Anglican/Episcopal
- (4). Methodist
- (5). Lutheran
- (6). Various splinter groups from the above

2. *Presbyterian* form of church organization

a. Defined

- (1). The Presbyterian form of church government consists in the rulership by the elders (Gk. *presbuteros*) as representatives of the local churches. It is a federal form of government very similar to that of the United States of America. It is, like the episcopal form, multi-layered but in a bottom-up manner.

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- (2). In the New Testament the care of the church was committed to elders. Scriptural support for an organized, ruling body above the local church is implicit but not explicit. Such implicit support is built on the apostles and not on an organized presbyterian structure.
- (3). The presbyterian form is more de-centralized and more democratic than the episcopal form.

b. Structure

- (1). Offices

- a. Teaching elders (pastors or ministers)
 - b. Ruling elders
 - c. Deacons
- (2). The local church is governed by the session, which is composed of ruling elders elected by the membership, and the teaching elder or minister (pastor) as presiding officer. The next highest-ranking body is the Presbytery, which includes all the ordained ministers or teaching elders and one ruling elder from each local congregation in a given district. Above the presbytery is the synod, and over the synod is the general assembly, the highest court. Both of these bodies are equally divided between ministers and laymen or ruling elders.

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- c. Examples
 - (1). Presbyterian
 - (2). Other forms of reformed churches
 - (3). Various splinter groups from the above
- 3. *Congregationalist* form of church organization
 - a. Defined
 - (1). The congregational form of church government recognizes each local church as

an autonomous body with no organization above it save the Lord Jesus Christ.

- (2). There is considerable scriptural support for the autonomy of the local church body operating in a democratic manner. The New Testament teaching concerning the priesthood of the believers states that the church member needs no emissary between himself and Christ.
- (3). This is the most de-centralized and democratic form of all and, theoretically, gives no special ecclesiastical authority to any church member over any other – each having but one vote.

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b. Structure

- (1). Offices
 - (a). Pastors (bishops, teaching elders)
 - (b). Deacons
 - (c). Ruling elders (in a few instances)
- (2). There is no authoritative structure above the local church, but many choose to affiliate with a denomination for synergy regarding mission endeavors, publications, etc. The unity of the entire body of Christ is

recognized.

- c. Examples
 - (1). Baptist
 - (2). Congregational
 - (3). Disciples of Christ
 - (4). Church of Christ
 - (5). Bretheran
 - (6). Most non-denominational churches

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E. Ordinances Of The Church

1. *Baptism*

- a. Types
 - (1). Holy Spirit or Real Baptism
 - (2). Water or Ritual Baptism
 - (3). Fire or Judgment Baptism
 - (4). Identification Baptism
- b. Meaning of water baptism

- (1). Symbolic of the cleansing of sin
- (2). Symbolic of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord
- (3). Public witness of conversion
- (4). Identification with Christ
- (5). Identification with the church

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c. Modes of water baptism

- (1). The Greek word "baptizo" has been transliterated into the English *baptize*. It means to dip or to immerse.
- (2). The two general methods of water baptism have been immersion (full dipping of the body) and affusion (sprinkling or pouring).
 - (a). *Immersionists* emphasize baptism as a picture of Christ's death, burial and resurrection and the symbolic cleansing by His blood.
 - (b). *Affusionists* emphasize baptism as representing the coming of the Holy

Spirit into the believer's life and point to the Old Testament ceremonial cleansings, including the Day of Atonement, which utilized sprinkling.

d. Subjects of water baptism

- (1). Professing believers (mostly protestant low church tradition)
- (2). Infants (mostly catholic and high church protestant tradition)

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2. *Communion* or The Lord's Supper

a. Meaning

- (1). Orthodox Protestantism believes that Communion is a remembrance of His death and a symbolic proclamation of the gospel.
- (2). Roman Catholicism believes the communion *mass* to be a necessary source of grace to the participants.

b. Substance

- (1). *Transubstantiation* holds that the elements are literally transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ.

(2). *Consubstantiation* holds that the real presence of the body and blood of Christ are "in, with, and under" the elements but without any literal transformation.

(3). Others view the elements as symbolically representing the body and blood.

c. Participants

(1). Believers - open communion

(2). Confirmed believers - open confessional communion

(3). Jurisdictional believers – closed communion

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3. The Seven Roman Catholic Sacraments

a. *Baptism*

b. *Confirmation*

c. *Holy Eucharist*

d. *Penance*

e. *Marriage*

f. *Extreme Unction*

g. *Holy Orders*

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F. Church Offices And Qualifications

1. Pastor/Bishop/Overseer - Elder

- a. In the New Testament "pastor", along with several other words, is used to describe the office that we also call "pastor". Synonyms found in the Scriptures include bishop, shepherd and overseer. These are English translations of Greek words (eg. *episkopos*) that tend to emphasize the functions that are carried out by the "pastor". Many Biblical scholars would include the term "elder" in this group but others do not and understand "elder" to be a separate office.
- b. Biblical Qualifications of a Pastor
 - (1). *I Timothy 3:1-7*
 - (2). *Titus 1:5-9*
- c. Qualifications organized by type
 - (1). Personal qualifications
 - (a). *Above reproach* - Of excellent reputation, not likely to be accused
 - (b). *Temperate* - moderate in word, deed, appetite and passion, calm and even tempered

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- (c). *Prudent* - exercising wisdom in practical matters
- (d). *Respectable* - conducting oneself in a manner causing the proper esteem of others
- (e). *Not addicted to wine* - not a drunkard
- (f). *Gentle* - mild and caring in action
- (g). *Free from the love of money* - not concerned with financial gain and its benefits, not expecting a "clergy discount"
- (h). *Not self-willed* - not conceited or arrogant, has a servant attitude, respects other opinions
- (i). *Not quick-tempered* - slow to anger, temperate
- (j). *Loving what is good* – loving decency and morality, ethical
- (k). *Sensible* - exercising good judgment
- (l). *Just* - fair and reasonable
- (m). *Self-controlled* - self-disciplined, temperate

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(2). Family Qualifications

- (a). *Husband of one wife* - not divorced, not a polygamist
- (b). *Manages his own household well* - exercises his role as spiritual leader, good husband and father
- (c). *Keeping his children under control with all dignity* - able to manage and discipline his children
- (d). *Having believing children* - his children are to be Christians

(3). Social Qualifications

- (a). *Not pugnacious* - not quarrelsome, not a fighter. He does not "go for the jugular" or "wage holy war"
- (b). *Uncontentious* - does not enjoy strife, does not start fights
- (c). *Hospitable* - kind and receptive to strangers
- (d). *Good reputation* with those outside the church - a man of good public reputation

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- (e). *Not accused of dissipation* - does

not squander talents or resources,
encourages others to exercise their own
spiritual gifts

(f). *Not accused of rebellion* - does not
revolt against proper authority, has a
servant attitude

(4). Spiritual Qualifications

(a). *Able to teach* - has the spiritual gift of
imparting Biblical knowledge and
wisdom

(b). *Not a new convert* - not a new
Christian

(c). *Devout* - reverent and dutiful in his
personal devotions

(d). *Able to exhort in sound doctrine* -
strong and bold in his proclamation
of the truth of God's word, not
intimidated in spiritual matters

(e). *Able to refute contradictory
doctrine* - knowledgeable in God's word
so that he can lovingly correct any
aberrant teachings, not intimidated in
spiritual matters

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d. Observations

(1). It seems that the Lord, in listing the qualifications, is most concerned with the *character* of the individual aspiring to be a pastor. This is the overriding issue. It is interesting to note the qualifications that are frequently given by church members that are omitted by the Lord. Among these would be: great preacher, strong leader, good administrator, proper positioning in denominational matters, exceptional educational credentials, etc.

e. Biblical Imperative of the Pastor

(1). Ephesians 4:11-16

(2). Ephesians 4:11-16 clearly states that God gives the pastor to the church as a gift. It is interesting to note that the passage differentiates as separate gifts those of the apostle, the prophet, the evangelist and the pastor-teacher. The repetition of the word "some" suggests that these gifts are usually not given to the church through the same individual.

(3). In vs. 11 the pastor is referred to as the pastor-teacher. The Greek structure in this verse makes it quite clear that these two roles must go together. We can conclude that according to this passage one *can not* be a pastor without also being a teacher.

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(4). The importance of the teaching role becomes evident and critical when we proceed to verse 12. Here, God gives His charge to the pastor.

This is to be the pastor's primary assignment, exceeding all others. The pastor is to equip the saints (members of the church) for the work of service to build up the local body of Christ. He must primarily do this - equip the saints for the work of service - through a teaching ministry. The pastor is to be an enabler more than a doer. It is the saints who are to perform the works of service. We might think of the pastor as the football coach who trains, instructs, teaches and motivates the players (saints). Yet, he does not actually execute the plays - this is done by the players.

- (5). The long-term results of the equipping of the saints by the pastor are to be found in the remaining verses of the passage. Note that verses 13 through 16 are primarily grounded in unity, doctrinal understanding and spiritual maturity that is the direct result of the application of sound, Biblical *teaching*.
- (6). A pastor is successful when he builds and leads his congregation to a spirit of unity, doctrinal maturity and Christ-like love. Any other measure of success is based on the world's values and not the Lord's. True success is accomplished through the careful utilization of the various spiritual gifts given by the Spirit to every member for the building up of the body of Christ – His Church.

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2. Deacon

- A. The term deacon is a translation of the Greek word "*diakonon*". It literally means *servant*. The service

of the deacons and their setting apart is first described in Acts 6:1-6 but the office is not mentioned until the epistles (See Phil. 1:1 and I Timothy 3)

b. Biblical qualifications of a deacon

(1). I Timothy 3:8-10

(2). I Timothy 3:12-13

3. Deaconess

A. The term *deaconess* is a feminine form of the word deacon and may mean any of the following:

(1). A separate office in the church, a female auxiliary to the deacon body

(2). The wives of deacons

(3). Female members of the deacon body

b. Biblical qualifications of a deaconess

(1). I Timothy 3:11

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4. Application

a. Thank God that He has set such high standards for those who serve in His church.

- b. Commit yourself to evaluate His servants by the standards that He has set and not by those of the world.
- c. Remember that God has given our church leaders to us and that they are His chosen instruments. We must respect their office because of the One whom they serve. The test of their service is its conformity to the Word of God.

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G. Worship In The Church

1. Definition

- a. Meaning - worship is a shortening of the English word "*worship*" which means to attribute worth

or great value to an object at hand.

- b. Scope - the worship of the church consists of individual, corporate, public and private service for the Lord which is generated by a reverence for and a submission to Jesus Christ.

2. Character of worship

- a. Model - John 4:23

- b. In spirit

- (1). Worship can and should take place anywhere and everywhere. It is not confined.
- (2). Worship is centered in man's spirit, not his body. It is internal, not a surface ritual.
- (3). Worship is a person-to-Person experience. We honor with our spirit the God of the universe who is revealed through Jesus Christ.

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- c. In truth

- (1). True worship must be of the only true God.
- (2). True worship must be genuine and sincere.
- (3). It must be in accordance with the Word of

God (see John 17:17).

(4). It necessitates a growing knowledge of the Word which will increase our appreciation for the worth of our God whom we worship.

d. Corporately in order

(1). Public worship must be in a unity of spirit (I Cor. 11:18-22).

(2). Public worship must be orderly (I Cor. 14).

(3). Public worship must be to edify the body of Christ (I Cor. 14:26).

3. Content of worship

a. The Word of God

(1). All worship must center on a message from God

(2). This message from God is in His revealed word

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(3). The message should include the reading of God's Word, the interpreting of God's Word and the application of God's Word

b. Prayer

c. Singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs

- d. Giving of offerings
 - e. Fellowship
 - (1). Close relationships are to be built on common doctrinal allegiance and unity of the faith
 - (2). We are eternal brothers and sisters in Christ
4. Effect of worship
- a. God is acknowledged and praised.
 - b. The gospel is declared and exemplified.
 - c. Individuals grow in grace, knowledge and the Spirit.
 - d. Unity is promoted.
 - e. Each member ministers the gift(s) bestowed to him by the Spirit for the benefit of the body, both receiving from others and contributing to them.
 - f. The congregation is edified or built up.

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H. Ministry In The Church

- 1. The nature of ministry
 - a. The ministry of the church as the body of Christ is differentiated from the ministry of its members
 - b. The ministry of Jesus

- (1). All ministries of the church are in reality the ministry of its head, Jesus Christ.
 - (2). The church ministers in His name when it ministers:
 - (a). Under the direction of the Holy Spirit
 - (b). In the power of the Holy Spirit
 - (3). Jesus set the example in the Gospels of how we are to minister
 - (a). We are to be servants in every way
 - (b). We are to be faithful and consistent
- c. The ministry of the early church
- (1). Bondslaves to Jesus Christ (Greek "*doulos*")
 - (2). Servants to others (II Cor. 4:5)

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2. The scope of ministry
 - a. One of the foundations of Reformation truth, and a concept that Southern Baptists have particularly emphasized, is the priesthood of all believers.
 - (1). This denotes the *direct access* to God that each believer enjoys through our one and only High Priest, Jesus Christ.

- (2). It also speaks to the *ministry* which each member of the church bears. Each one is a priest unto God carrying out special service.
- b. Equality of ministers and ministries
 - (1). Jesus prohibited class distinctions among his disciples (Matt. 23:8-10)
 - (2). All saints are made a "royal priesthood" (I Peter 2:9) and "priests unto God" (Rev.1:6)
3. The power of ministry
 - a. The power that energizes the ministry of the church is the Holy Spirit
 - b. Ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested through the spiritual gifts He gives to each believer. Following is a list of these gifts as defined in the New Testament:

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- (1). Apostleship
- (2). Prophecy
- (3). Miracles and healings
- (4). Tongues and interpretation of tongues
- (5). Evangelism

- (6). Pastor/teacher
- (7). Serving
- (8). Teaching
- (9). Faith
- (10). Exhortation
- (11). Distinguishing spirits
- (12). Showing mercy
- (13). Giving
- (14). Administration
- (15). Wisdom and knowledge

4. The object of ministry

- a. As royal priests the object of our ministry is God

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- b. We must always remember that we serve God and Him alone (Matt. 4:10 and 6:24)

- c. The Lord Jesus will reward us for our service to Him at the judgment seat of Christ

- d. Practically, we serve Him through serving others

5. Biblical examples of church ministry

- a. Church discipline

- (1). Objectives in discipline
 - (a). Remove sin & its influence (I Cor.5: 6 - 8)
 - (b). Protect others from sinning & challenge them to godliness (Gal.6:1, I Tim.5:20)
 - (c). Produce soundness in faith (Titus 1:13)
 - (d). Reclaim and restore the erring brother (II Cor. 2:5-11)

- (2). Attitudes in discipline
 - (a). Meekness (Gal. 6:1)
 - (b). Uncompromising stand against sin (Matt. 18:15-20)
 - (c). Love (II Thess. 3:9-15)

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- (d). Forgiving spirit at repentance (II Cor. 2:5-11)

- (3). Principles for discipline
 - (a). No partiality (I Tim. 5:21)
 - (b). Not hasty, deliberate (Matt. 18:15-20)
 - (c). Goal is correction and eventual restoration (II Cor. 2:6-8)

- (4). Those subject to discipline
 - (a). Elders (I Tim. 5:19-20)
 - (b). A sinning brother (Matt: 18:15-10)
 - (c). An overtaken brother (Gal: 6:1)
 - (d). An unruly brother (II Thess. 3:6)
 - (e). False teachers (Titus 1:10-16)
 - (f). Factious people (Titus 3:8-11)
 - (g). The immoral brother (I Cor. 5)

b. Ministry to widows

- (1). Pure religion in James 1:27
- (2). The family's responsibility

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- (a). The Jews supported widows and orphans through a fund at the temple. As they converted to Christianity the church continued their support.
 - (b). The primary responsibility for the care of widows falls to the immediate family (I Tim. 5:3-16).
- (3). The church's responsibility
- (a). If there are no relatives to support a widow, then the church must assume the

responsibility.

(b). Note that younger widows are encouraged to remarry.

c. Ministry of charity

(1). Our first responsibility is to those within the church who are in need (James 2:2-3, 15-16, I John 3:17, Gal. 6:10).

(2). We should also be concerned with the needs of believers in other places (Acts 11:27-30).

(3). Paul worked to support himself on his several missionary journeys but he also accepted gifts from others (Phil. 4:16) and defended the right of ministers to be supported (I Cor. 9:4-14).

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6. Application

a. We should focus on Jesus Christ for it is Him whom we serve.

b. We serve Him by serving others.

c. Each of us is a minister of Christ. How are you doing?

d. His grace is sufficient for all our needs and for all of our ministries. Praise Him for this truth.

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I. Teachings Of The Church

1. Basis Of Teachings

- a. Some would hold that the sole basis for Christian faith and teaching is the *Bible* (Orthodox Protestantism).
- b. Some believe that the Bible is a product of the church and that *church tradition and declarations* share and may even supercede the Bible as a basis of authority (Roman Catholicism, Mormonism).
- c. Some believe that the Bible merely *contains God's word* and, at the same time, it also

contains man's

errors. One must use his own faculties of reasoning and evaluating to sort out the truth within the scriptures. This process is carried out against a backdrop of modern enlightenments regarding such things as the hard sciences, anthropology, archeology, psychology, sociology, etc. Therefore modern man uses his educated and enlightened reasoning in conjunction with some portions of the Bible to establish a basis for the Christian faith (Neo-orthodoxy).

- d. Some believe that the Bible is the written basis for the Christian faith, but that God also reveals *other truths* to the individual through significant personal and/or mystical experiences (Pentecostalism).

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2. Fundamentals

a. Definitions and distinguishments

(1). *Fundamental* - a basic, essential, primary principle

(2). *Fundamental Christian doctrine* - the foundational teachings upon which all of the Christian religion rests

b. Implications of fundamental doctrines

(1). If these teachings are found to be in error then one's faith is pointless.

- (2). If these teachings are rejected then one's faith will crumble for a lack of a foundation.
 - (3). If these teachings are compromised then one's faith loses its strength and resiliency.
 - (4). If these teachings are not taught and understood then one's faith is grounded in ignorance and one becomes ready prey for heresy and the cults.
- c. Contemporary social views of fundamental doctrines

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- (1). *Post-Modernism* - whatever one chooses to believe is fine for that individual. No teaching is so firm that it can not be compromised. We should be open-minded and accepting of all positions because there is no absolute truth.
- (2). *Firm rigidity* - everything one believes is thoroughly right and correct and must never be compromised. Anyone who does not believe exactly like this individual is wrong. Every single issue is crystal clear and is only open to one understanding.
- (3). *Responsible faith* - this view distinguishes, within its authority base (see 1.a. above),

between those things that are fundamental to its position and those that are not. Primary beliefs will not be compromised in any way, but there are many secondary area that are not crystal clear. These areas require an attitude of openness and tolerance of alternate views.

d. What are the fundamental doctrines of Christianity?

- (1). There is a *triune God* revealed as three persons - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - (a). Matthew 28:18-20
 - (b). I Peter 1:1-2

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- (2). The Bible is the inspired *word of God*.
 - (a). II Timothy 3:16-17
 - (b). II Peter 1:20-21
- (3). Man is a *sinner* and cannot save himself.
 - (a). Romans 3:23
 - (b). I John 1:8
- (4). Jesus Christ, incarnate as a man, *paid the penalty* for sin by His death on the cross.
 - (a). Romans 5:8

- (b). II Corinthians 5:21
- (5). Jesus Christ is the *only way* to salvation.
 - (a). John 14:6
 - (b). Acts 4:12
- (6). Jesus Christ was *bodily resurrected* from the dead.
 - (a). Romans 10:9-10
 - (b). I Corinthians 15:12-17

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- (7). Salvation is a *free gift* from God to all who trust the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to save them.
 - (a). Ephesians 2:8-9
 - (b). Titus 3:5-7
 - (8). Jesus Christ will physically *return* to earth.
 - (a). Acts 1:6-11
 - (b). Acts 3:19-21
3. What are some examples of secondary doctrines?
- a. Millennialism

- b. Eschatology
- c. Modes of Baptism
- d. Election and predestination
- e. Church organization and discipline
- f. Christian stewardship
- g. Inerrancy of scripture
- h. Spiritual gifts
- i. Eternal security

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- 4. What are some examples of personal preference?
 - a. Denominationalism
 - b. Order and style of worship
 - c. Social mores and cultural values
 - d. Church music
 - e. Open/closed communion
 - f. Church and politics
 - g. Church programs

5. Application

- a. Stand firm on the Bible as the sole basis for the Christian Faith.
- b. Remember that the fundamentals are our foundation as believers. Do not allow cracks to develop. We must not compromise.
- c. Be tolerant in Christian love of secondary differences with other believers. God is neither finished with you or with them.
- d. Insure that your children are well grounded in the Word of God. From a human perspective, Christianity is just one generation removed from extinction.

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J. Spiritual Gifts - Theology

1. A spiritual gift or gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to each believer at the point of salvation. These are part of our salvation legacy and no one is excluded from this blessing. The Greek word for spiritual gifts is “*charisma*” which is a derivative of grace “*charis*”.
 - a. I Corinthians 12:7-11
 - b. I Peter 4:10
 - c. A spiritual gift should be understood as an ability as described in the scripture, not as an assignment, an office, a technique or a talent.
 - d. The purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13).

- e. Lists of the gifts are found in Romans 12:6-8, I Corinthians 12:8-10, I Corinthians 12:28-30 and Ephesians 4:11.
- 2. Ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested through the spiritual gifts He gives to each believer. Following is a list as defined in the New Testament:
 - a. *Time Dependent* Gifts
 - (1). *Apostles* (unique to time period)
 - (2). Limited to those who had personally seen the risen Jesus Christ - I Corinthians 9:1

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- b. *Sign Gifts* (gifts that are a sign pointing to the truth of God)
 - (1). *Prophecy* - Ability to proclaim God's word (forthtell) and to predict the future (foretell)
 - (2). *Miracles and healings* - these physical phenomenons were used by God in the early church era to authenticate the Gospel message
 - (3). *Tongues and interpretation of tongues* - the ability to communicate in an unlearned (or unknown) language and the related ability to interpret the communication.
- c. *Other* Gifts

- (1). *Evangelism* - the ability to proclaim the Gospel message with exceptional clarity
- (2). *Pastoring/teaching* - the ability to shepherd, provide for, care and protect God's people
- (3). *Serving* - the ability to help or serve others
- (4). *Teaching* - the ability to explain God's truth with clarity and challenge
- (5). *Faith* - the ability to believe (trust) God for the providing of specific needs

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- (6). *Exhortation* - the ability to encourage, comfort and admonish others to action
- (7). *Distinguishing spirits* - the ability to discern between what is of God and what is not (some believe this to also be a sign gift)
- (8). *Showing mercy* - the ability to serve those who are in special need (ill, destitute, etc)
- (9). *Giving* - the ability to be especially generous with one's earthly means
- (10). *Administration* - the ability to rule in the church
- (11). *Wisdom and knowledge* - the ability to

learn, understand, communicate and act on God's truth (some believe this to also be a sign gift)

3. Application

- a. God has given you a spiritual gift(s). Have you identified your spiritual gift(s)?
- b. This church can not realize its full potential until we are all exercising our own spiritual gifts for the building up of this body. Are you exercising your gift(s)?

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K. Spiritual Gifts - Personal Application

1. The Imperative

- a. In I Peter 4:10 we are instructed to employ it in serving one another. We are to be good stewards of our gift.
- b. We are not instructed in the Bible to discover our gift. Perhaps this suggests that we can employ our gift in serving others without knowing what it is. What do you think?

2. Categories Of Gifts

- a. *Natural abilities* - these are God-given at birth to all human beings (eg. IQ, co-ordination, musical aptitude, etc.)

- b. *Acquired abilities* - skills, based on natural abilities, that are learned and refined through practice and effort (eg. playing a musical instrument, skiing, public speaking, etc.)
- c. *Spiritual gifts* - Grace gifts from God given to each believer so that he or she may help to build up the Body of Christ.

3. Prepare Yourself For Service

- a. The proper exercising of many gifts requires an amount of preparation. We should sharpen our talents, acquire skills, and work on the development of our spiritual gift.

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- b. For example, the gift of teaching obviously requires knowledge of content, wisdom in presentation and application, and polish in speaking ability. Successful teaching requires much hard study and preparation.
- c. Personal discipline and self-denial are required in the exercising of all spiritual gifts.

4. Be Active And Available

- a. Gifts are both discovered and developed by activity.
- b. If one is seeking to discover his gift, he should not turn down opportunities to serve. God may use these opportunities to either teach one what his gift is or what it is not.

5. Be Faithful

- a. Do not be discouraged if your gift seems elusive. God will deal with that in His time.
- b. Listen to your Christian friends whom you respect. They may see things in you that you are not aware of regarding your gift. They can provide help and direction.

6. Be Willing

- a. Always be prepared to use your spiritual gift to build up the body. Be willing when it is convenient and when it is not.

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b. Remember the example of Philip

(1). In Acts 6:5 he is helping to distribute the relief money to bickering widows. This was not a glorious task, but it needed to be done and he did it.

(2). Later, in Acts 8, God used him to evangelize the Samaritans and then the Ethiopian eunuch.

(3). In Acts 21:8 he is referred to as Philip the Evangelist, but first we must remember that he was Philip the server of bickering widows.

- c. Be like Philip. He was prepared, active and available, faithful and willing. Each of us, by God's grace, can do the same.

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L. Membership In The Church

1. Membership Procedure

- a. In most Christian traditions baptism precedes church membership.
- b. In most Baptist churches an individual can present themselves for membership in one of three ways:
 - (1). By profession of faith as a candidate for baptism
 - (a). As a new believer
 - (b). As one who is already a believer but has not been previously baptized by immersion after their acceptance of Jesus Christ as savior. (This would apply to those joining Baptist churches from

other Christian churches.)

- (2). By transfer of membership from another similar Baptist church (by “letter”)
 - (3). By statement of a previous membership in a similar Baptist church
- c. Some Baptist churches allow one to affiliate with the local church without receiving formal membership status. This is usually called “Watchcare” and does not include some of the privileges stated below.

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2. Obligations – Acts 2:42-47

a. As members of the universal church

- (1). Devote oneself to the Apostle’s teaching - both privately for one’s own edification and publicly as a witness and apologist for the faith
- (2). And to fellowship
- (3). And to the ordinances
- (4). And to prayer
- (5). And to the unity of the Spirit

b. As members of a local church

- (1). Faithfulness
 - (a). In attendance

- (b). In practice
- (c). In spiritual growth
- (d). In witness
- (e). In seeking the unity of the Spirit

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(2). Obedience

- (John
- (a). To the “new commandment”
13:34-35
 - (b). To the direction of the Holy Spirit as found in and through the Word of God
 - (c). To church leaders as those who must give an account

(3). Service/Ministry

- (a). Utilizing one’s spiritual gift(s)
- (b). Utilizing one’s natural talents
- (c). Utilizing one’s skills
- (d). All done in humility – focusing upon the Lord Christ whom we serve and to the glory of God alone

(4). Support

- (a). Prayer
- (b). Encouragement
- (c). Financial means
- (d). Unity

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3. Benefits

a. As members of the universal church

- (1). Eternal life with the Lord and all believers
- (2). Indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit
- (3). Assurance that our sins are paid for and forgiven, that Satan is defeated
- (4). Immediate access to God through prayer
- (5). Assurance of the sovereignty of God
- (6). Confidence that we are and always will be loved by Him

b. As members of a local church

- (1). Fellowship and encouragement of other believers
- (2). Ministry in times of need
- (3). Blessings of corporate worship
- (4). Prayer support network
- (5). Opportunities for service
- (6). Accountability
- (7). Synergy

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M. Destination Of The Church

1. Rapture Of The Church - The *Rapture of the Church* is that future event when the Lord Jesus Christ will return in the air to catch up or translate His Church to be with Him.
 - a. The term "rapture" comes from the Latin "*raptura*" which means to be caught up. In the Latin Vulgate it is the word used in I Thessalonians 4:17
 - b. I Thessalonians 4:13-18
 - c. I Corinthians 15:51-53
 - d. There are several views as to when the Rapture will take place. Generally, Post-Millennialists and A-Millennialists (see next section on the Millennium) do not expect a literal rapture but prefer to view it in a spiritual or allegorical way. Pre-Millennialists have suggested three different interpretations regarding the timing of the rapture in relation to the time of the tribulation.
 - (1). *Post-tribulation Rapture* - this view holds that the Church will go through the entire tribulation and will be raptured at its close, therefore placing the rapture immediately preceding the second coming of the Lord. Those who would call themselves Historic Pre-Millennialists hold this view.

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- (2). *Mid-tribulation Rapture* - this view believes that the Church will go through the first half of the Tribulation (3 & 1/2 years) and then be raptured before the onslaught of what has been called the Great Tribulation.
- (3). *Pre-tribulation Rapture* - this view holds that the Church will not go through the Tribulation at all but will be raptured just before the Tribulation begins. Most of the Dispensationalists take this position.

e. Conclusions

- (1). To maintain integrity and consistency of interpretation we should expect a literal Rapture and a literal Tribulation.
- (2). There are Scripture passages that seem to support each of the three views concerning the timing of the Rapture. The weight of Scripture supports the pre-tribulation view.
- (3). The evidence is not overwhelming. The Bible's emphasis regarding the Rapture is as a source of encouragement and comfort to us. Let's emphasize that.

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2. Judgment Seat Of Christ

a. Will those who have trusted Jesus Christ to save them from their sins (based on His sacrifice) be judged for their sins?

(1). John 5:24

(2). Romans 8:1

(3). Colossians 2:13-14

(4). Ephesians 5:24-27

(5). Believers will not be judged for their sins. Jesus Christ received our judgment on the cross. This concept is known as *substitutionary atonement*.

b. Then what is the Judgment Seat of Christ?

(1). Judgment, as it is used here, is a translation of the Greek word "bema" which is the word used to describe the place where athletes gathered after the competition to receive their respective awards, wreaths, trophies, etc.

(2). Romans 14:1-12

(3). II Corinthians 5:5-10

(4). I Corinthians 3:10-15

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(c). Characteristics of the Judgment Seat of Christ

- (1). Only believers will be present
 - (2). Salvation is not the purpose of evaluation but it is rather the basis for admittance.
 - (3). The works that believers have done in service to the Lord will be evaluated on their *quality* by the Lord
 - (4). Acceptable service will earn rewards from the Lord. Service performed to glorify ourselves, or our friends, or our church, or our pastor, or our denomination or anything else other than the Lord Himself will not be rewarded.
- (d). Motivation of the Judgment Seat of Christ
- (1). An understanding of this doctrine under the umbrella of God's grace should motivate us to Christian service.
 - (2). Remember that we are accountable to the Lord for what we do, and that He looks to the heart, not just to the outward appearance.
 - (3). All of our service should be to glorify God and not ourselves or some earthly object (see Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18)

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3. Millennial Kingdom
 - a. Introduction

- (1). **Millennium** - is derived from two Latin words, "mille" meaning thousand, and "annum" meaning year. Therefore the literal meaning of the word is a thousand years.
- (2). **Post-millennialism** - "that view of the last things which holds that the Kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit, that the world eventually will be Christianized, and that the return of Jesus Christ will occur at the close of a long period of righteousness called the "Millennium." (Vos)
- (3). **A-millennialism** - "that view of the last things which holds that the Bible does not predict a "Millennium" or period of worldwide peace and righteousness on this earth before the end of the world. (A-millennialism teaches that there will be a parallel and contemporaneous development of good and evil - God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom - in this world, which will continue until the second coming of Jesus Christ. At the second coming of Christ the resurrection and judgment will take place, followed by the eternal order of things - the absolute, perfect Kingdom of God, in which there will be no sin, suffering or death)." (Vos)

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- (4). **Pre-millennialism** - "that view of last things which holds that the second coming of Christ will be followed by a period of worldwide peace and righteousness, before the end of the

world, called the "Millennium" or the "Kingdom of God", during which Christ will reign as king in person on the earth." (Vos)

(5). Recapitulation

- (a). Postmills believe that Jesus will return *after* the millennium, that worldwide peace will be brought in by the Church, and that things will progressively get better and better as the Church leads everyone to faith in Christ. When this is accomplished He will return.
- (b). Amills believe that there *will not be* a literal millennium reigned over by Christ or the Church.
- (c). Premills believe that Jesus will return and reign personally and physically over the earth for a thousand years. His return will be *before* the millennium. Prior to that time things will get worse and worse on the earth climaxing in the tribulational period immediately preceding Christ's return.

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(6). Comparison of Differences

<u>Postmillennialism</u>	<u>Amillennialism</u>	<u>Premillennialism</u>
A long period	Symbolic Church Age	Literal 1000 years
2nd coming after	Not Applicable	2nd coming before

|Brought by Church
|World gets better
|Reign is spiritual

|Not Applicable
|Gets better & worse
|Reign is spiritual

|Brought by Christ
|World gets worse
|Reign is literal

b. Representative Scriptures

(1). Old Testament

(a). Isaiah 9:6-7

(b). Isaiah 11:1-12

(c). Isaiah 65:19-25

(d). These verses seem to suggest that Israel has been left with unfulfilled prophecy.

(2). New Testament

(a). Matthew 19:28

(b). Matthew 20:21-23

(c). Acts 1:6

(d). These verses suggest that the disciples were still expecting the kingdom and that Jesus viewed it as future and physical

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c. Conclusions

(1). The different views on the Millennium are not fundamental to our faith but are properly classified as secondary doctrine. We should

not be dogmatic but sensitive to the Spirit's leading.

(2). There have been many Bible believing, committed Christians who have supported each of these views. Below are examples:

(a). Post-millennialists

[1]. B. B. Warfield

[2]. George W. Truett

(b). A-millennialists

[1]. John Calvin

[2]. Martin Luther

[3]. Augustine

(c). Historic Pre-millennialists

[1]. Russell Dilday

(d). Dispensational Pre-millennialists

[1]. John Walvoord

[2]. Charles Ryrie

[3]. W. A. Criswell

[4]. Chuck Swindoll

[5]. Mac Brunson

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4. Eternal State

(a). The eternal state is defined as that time in the future, after the millennium, when the redeemed of all ages will enjoy their eternal existence with God. Frequently this is referred to as "heaven".

- (1). Revelation 21:1-8
 - (2). It immediately follows the Great White Throne Judgment (where all non-believers are judged by Jesus Christ) and is the eternal residence of all believers.
- (b). Characteristics of the Eternal State
- (1). It will be composed of a new heaven and a new earth, so it is physical.
 - (2). Earth will be renewed to its pre-fall state.
 - (3). It will be a place of splendor (see Revelation 21:9-22:5)
 - (4). It will be a place of complete righteousness prepared for "those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life". (see Revelation 21:27)