

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

INTRODUCTION: WHY THE BIBLE MATTERS

1. **At one time God spoke to people through the prophets, but now he speaks to people through whom?**

Page 2: At one time, [God] spoke through the prophets who recorded the Old Testament, but now he speaks to human beings through his Son.

2. **To whom did God give all authority in heaven and on earth? What is one verse that confirms this?**

Page 2: The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is now the spokesman of God's Word (Heb. 1:2), and his Word is a message of salvation (2:3). When Peter wanted to put Jesus on the same level with Moses and Elijah, God commanded, "This is my Son, my Beloved, . . . listen to him!" (Matt. 17:4–5). In the presence of Jesus, Moses and Elijah (the Law and the Prophets) disappeared (v. 8). They are no longer authoritative in comparison with Christ. Jesus himself after his resurrection declared, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (28:18).

Jesus received his authority from God. He said, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me" (John 7:16). He also declared, "[F]or I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak" (12:49).

"The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Jesus said, "All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him" (Matt. 11:27).

Against those who wanted to treat Jesus as one among other spiritual beings and authorities, Paul affirms, "He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:18–19).

Therefore, God placed him “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come” (Eph. 1:21).

3. To whom did Jesus reveal the Father?

Pages 2, 3: Those to whom Jesus chose to reveal the Father were his closest disciples.

4. What did Christ commission his followers to do (Matt. 28:19)?

Page 3: . . . he commissioned his followers to make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:19).

5. What was Christ’s promise to his apostles regarding the Holy Spirit? What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

Pages 3, 4: Christ promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles to guide their understanding, communication, and preservation of his Word. To support the message of the eye and ear witnesses to Jesus’ ministry, “God added his testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will” (Heb. 2:4).

Jesus defined the ministry of the Holy Spirit: “[T]he Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you” (John 14:26).

He added, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:13–15).

The Spirit has nothing to teach but what Jesus taught. His words are the same as Jesus’ words. The Spirit’s work is to glorify Christ—not himself, not the messenger, not an experience. He does this by communicating the truth revealed

by Jesus.

The Spirit performed his work. In regard to the salvation brought by Christ, “It was revealed to [the prophets] that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven” (1 Pet. 1:10–12).

6. In what book is the message of salvation continued even today? Who had authority to write the message of salvation?

Pages 4, 5: The message of the great salvation was at first delivered orally (“spoken by the Lord and was confirmed by those who heard him” Heb. 2:3; NKJV). Then those who were the eye and ear witnesses and those associated with them committed it to writing (Luke 1:1–4).

The apostolic authority continues through the written word. The same message was delivered by word of mouth and in writing.

Peter, quoting Isaiah 40:6–8, identifies the “living and enduring word of God” with the gospel of salvation.

People today have access to the words of Christ and his apostles only through the written words collected into the Bible.

7. Who inspired the writers of the Bible to guide them in preserving God’s teachings?

Pages 5, 6: The guidance of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to his disciples in preserving his teachings, we call *inspiration*. Inspiration functions to communicate with accuracy and sufficiency the authoritative words delivered by the Lord and his representatives. Apostolic writers spoke of the inspiration of the spoken word of the prophets and of the written word of Scripture (“the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms,” Luke 24:44) that they had received. We know those Scriptures as the Old Testament.

Peter writes, “First of all you must understand this, that

no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet. 1:20–21).

Paul writes to Timothy, "From childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:15–16).

This latter passage, along with setting forth the purposes of inspiration, places beside the Jewish Scriptures the salvation through faith in Christ. Thus the basis was laid for the Christian affirmation of the same inspiration for the writings of the New Testament.

8. What is the difference between God's revelation and the Holy Spirit's inspiration?

Page 6: Although revelation and inspiration are related, they are not the same. Revelation is both broader and narrower than inspiration. It is broader because God reveals himself in creation (nature) and in saving acts (the Exodus, the resurrection of Christ). It is narrower because an inspired writer might record material that was not revealed to him and make use of material not itself inspired (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12). For example, Luke did research (Luke 1:3) and included documents that were not a matter of revelation (Acts 23:25–30). Inspiration applies to words, whether spoken or written.

The writings of the New Testament record the revelation made by God through Christ and passed on by his disciples and their associates, interpret that revelation, and apply it to the lives of those who receive it.

Scripture, the written form of the message of salvation, showed the meaning of what God had done through Christ and made possible the preserving of the revelation in Christ.

Inspiration guarantees the written records, and will carry out the purposes for which they were intended. The doctrine of inspiration provides an assurance that divine authority

stands behind the words of Scripture. We should be careful that our understanding of inspiration accords with the characteristics of the documents accepted as inspired and does not impose a preconceived idea on them.

CHAPTER 1: THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH, I

1. **How does the New Testament's use of Old Testament terminology for the people of God show a continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament?**

Pages 9, 10: The New Testament's continuity with and break with the Old Testament are both indicated by the way the Old Testament language is used in reference to Christians. The New Testament uses the same words used for God's people in the Old Testament but claims them for Christians. Christians are the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).

The language of Exodus 19:5f., when the covenant agreement at Sinai was made between God and Israel, is used in 1 Peter 2:9 in reference to the church—Christians are "a royal priesthood," "a holy nation," "God's own people." "We are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit" (Phil. 3:3). "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal" (Rom. 2:29).

Christians are "the righteous remnant" about which Isaiah wrote. Christians are also the people of the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah (31:31–34) as may be seen by Paul's language about a "new covenant" in 2 Corinthians 3:6ff. and the quotation of Jeremiah in Hebrews 8:6ff. Christians are also the "saints of the Most High" mentioned by Daniel (7:22) who possess "the kingdom" (Rev. 13:7, 10; Rom. 1:7).

2. **What is the meaning of the word "Christian"? What is the origin of the word? What does this meaning say about the nature of Jesus' disciples?**

Page 10: The term "Christian" means "of, or belonging to, Christ." It is formed from "Christ" and a Latin suffix – *ianus* which, under the Roman Empire, was frequently borrowed in Greek. This suffix indicates that one belonged to the person to whose name the ending was added. It thus served as a special substitute for the possessive genitive; the better Greek phrase "those of Christ" is more common—1

Corinthians 1:12; 15:23; Galatians 5:24. This kind of word formation was in general use; one of the instructive parallels is *Caesarianus*, literally one who belonged to Caesar, a designation for an imperial slave. These “Caesarians” often had important administrative posts under the Empire. Thus Christians are the servants of the Messiah; theirs is a royal title. The name “Christian” was first used in Antioch (Acts 11:26), and that may be significant, for at Antioch the universalism of the new people of God composed of both Jews and Greeks was first realized.

3. What does the word “kingdom” mean in biblical usage?

Page 11: The basic idea of kingdom is not “realm,” as we tend to think in English, but “reign.” The “kingdom of God” proclaimed by Jesus in the Gospels refers to the kingly rule, or royal authority, of God.

4. Are individual Christians ever termed “saints” in the New Testament?

Page 12: The results of this study have importance for the nature of the church. It is what its Lord is. It is what it is because he is what he is. The nature of the church is derivative. The church is what it is only because of what Christ is. Christians are partakers of the nature of him whose they are. Furthermore, this is not an individualistic quality. They are saints and sons, beloved and elect, only collectively, not individually. Thus in the New Testament Christians are referred to as “saints,” but never is a single Christian called a “saint.” Such quality is possessed only because he is a part of the church, the gathered people of God. All qualities shared with Christ are only “in him.” One is a “saint,” or any of these other titles, not because of anything he is or has done, but because he derives this quality from Christ. The nature of Christians is the nature of Christ, but this is not possessed independently; it is only by incorporation in him.

5. What are some titles shared by Christ and his people?

Pages 11, 12: Some of Jesus' individual messianic titles are also used of Christians. Jesus is "the Elect One," or "the Chosen One" (Luke 23:35; 1 Pet. 2:4). Christians are "the elect ones," or the "chosen ones" (Col. 3:12; Rom. 8:33; Rev. 17:14). Jesus is "the Holy One" of God (Mark 1:24; John 6:69; Acts 3:14). Christians are "the holy ones," or "saints" (Rom. 16:15; 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 5:3). Jesus is God's "Beloved" (Matt. 3:17; Luke 9:35; cf. Eph. 1:6). Christians are God's "beloved ones" (Rom. 1:7; Eph. 5:1).

Jesus is "the Son of God" (John 1:18), and Christians are also "sons" (Luke 6:35; Rom. 8:14). He is the First-born One (Col. 1:15), and the church is made up of "first-born ones" who are enrolled in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Baptism "into Christ" means that one has "put on Christ"; he is "in Christ Jesus." If one is in Christ, he is "Christ's" so that the nature of Christ becomes his nature. Since Christ is the Son, the Christian shares in his sonship.

The same word is used in the original language for both Christ and Christians, a fact sometimes obscured in the translations. But with few exceptions the singular is used exclusively for Christ, and the plural is used for his people. This word usage shows the difference between Christ and Christians—he is singularly and uniquely God's Son, Beloved, Saint, and Chosen one. A Christian as an individual does not possess this quality in relation to God. Yet the fact that the same word is used of them shows the association of the disciples with their Master. What is said of him is true of his people. They are sons, beloved, saints, chosen ones. But these things are not true of their own nature. They are true only through union with him, only "in Christ." The church derives its nature from Christ, but the church is not Christ.

6. What is the meaning of the Greek word *ekklesia*?

Page 13: "Church" (*ekklesia*) in classical Greek referred to the assembly of citizens in a Greek city state (cf. Acts 19:39). In actual usage the word did not carry the connotation of

“called out.” The separation of the church from the world is a correct theological idea taught in the New Testament (2 Cor. 6:17), but this feature of the church cannot be supported from the dictionary meaning of the word “church” itself. The basic meaning in New Testament times was simply “assembly,” and in this meaning the word early appears in Christian literature for the actual assemblies of believers in Christ (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19, 23, 34, 35).

The new theological quality *ekklesia* has in the New Testament comes from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, where it was used of the assembly of God’s people Israel (Deut. 23:2–4, 9; Mic. 2:5; Ps. 89:6; cf. Acts 7:38). . . . the emphasis was on the *solidarity* of the group, rather than on the “collection of individuals.”

7. What are some images of the church not discussed in this lesson?

Page 14: Several collective figures are applied to the Lord’s people, such as the family of God (1 Tim. 3:15), the sheep and the sheepfold (John 10), the vineyard (Matt. 20—21).

8. What are some of the lessons taught by the description of the church as the body of Christ?

Pages 14, 15, 17: In Romans 12:3–8 and 1 Corinthians 12:12–26 the emphasis is on the individual members of a body, each contributing its part to the functioning of the whole. In Ephesians 4:11–16 the emphasis is on the church as Christ’s body, while Colossians 1:18 stresses that Christ is the head of the body, the church.

The church consists of individuals who are in Christ because they have been baptized (1 Cor. 12:12f.; Rom. 12:4f.). The background of Paul’s usage is probably to be found in the Hebrew idea of “corporate personality,” in which a whole people may be viewed as one and in which one person may stand for and embody the whole (Gen. 10:6, 22; 36:1; Deut. 33; Jer. 31:15; Hos. 5:3; 11:1; Heb. 7:9; Rom. 9:13; see lesson

above on the messianic titles which are shared in common by Christ and Christians). The body finds its wholeness in Christ (as the branches and the vine in John 15). In the Old Testament concept of corporate personality the head stands for the whole. The head indicates the source (“beginning”—Ex. 12:2; Ezek. 16:25) and authority (first in rank—Ex. 6:14; Deut. 33:5). Christ is the principle of authority for the church because he is its creative source, and the church has its beginning and origin in him. Corollaries of his headship are the church’s dependence on him and subordination to him.

There can only be one body, since there is only one Christ (Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12).

Each one in the church has a task to do (Eph. 4:16).

One cannot be subject to the head and united to Christ without being in his body. This body is the place of peace (Col. 3:15), reconciliation (Eph. 2:16), and salvation (Eph. 5:23).

The body of Christ concept has important implications for Christian ethics: since our bodies are joined to the Lord and belong to him, certain conduct is ruled out (Eph. 4:17ff.; Col. 3:12ff.; 1 Cor. 6:15–20.). The idea of the body appears in important teaching in regard to baptism and the Lord’s supper.

As long as [the church] is in subjection to him and in union with him, it is of supreme importance. But the church loses its importance when it does not submit to the authority of Christ and seeks to become its own authority. Thus all one does for Christ he does “in the church.” And the church always sustains these relations to Christ, not just when it is assembled. These images further show the importance of the individual Christian’s relationship with others in the body.

9. What are some of the lessons suggested by the metaphor of the bride applied to the church?

Page 16: The love and authority of Christ, and the submission and response of the church are exemplified in the relationship. The headship is not an arbitrary authority but is an authority based on love. Only the greatest love can

command the greatest obedience, but where the love is the greatest, the submission is freely rendered.

. . . the New Testament perspective . . . affirms both a “now” and a “not yet” that the bride is presented to Christ at baptism in Ephesians 5:26f., but from another standpoint is not thought of as presented to him until the end time (Rev. 19:7, 8; 21:2). The “word” which accompanies the washing with water is probably the confession of faith (Heb. 10:22f.) rather than the baptismal formula or the preached word of the Gospel.

10. The designation “temple” suggests what about the nature of the church?

Pages 16, 17: In the Old Testament God chose a place where his name was to be recorded and where his presence was particularly to dwell (Deut. 12:5–14; 1 Chron. 5:13—6:1; 6:41—7:3). The most holy place of the temple, where the *shekinah*, or glory of God’s presence dwelt, was the mercy seat (Ex. 25:22; Ex. 40:34; Lev. 16:13ff.), on which the atoning blood was offered annually. Jesus Christ is now God’s glory among men (John 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:17), and he is the mercy seat (Rom. 3:25 is perhaps best to be understood as a reference to the mercy seat of the temple). The church of Christ is now the temple where God meets those who worship him.

It is obvious that this is not a real building, but a “spiritual house.” The word “church” never refers to an actual building in the New Testament. Jesus Christ, to whom the other stones are joined, gives unity to the structure and is the cornerstone (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20).

That God dwells there is what makes the church holy. The church is the dwelling place of God among men through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:22; 1 Cor. 3:16).

CHAPTER 2: THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH, II

1. Is being “in Christ” the same as being “in the church”?

Page 20: “In Christ” sometimes carries the idea of incorporative union: “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in [union with] Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1); “So if anyone is in Christ [united to Christ], there is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). “So that in him [incorporated into the person of Christ] we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21). “For all of you are one [by being] in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). The locative idea may be present in the description of “the churches of Judea that are in Christ” (or, we could translate, “the churches of Christ that are in Judea”—Gal. 1:22). Or, sphere of reference may be the thought there, as it is in the description of individuals in Romans 16:7, “They were in Christ [were Christians] before I was.” These examples show an intimate relation with Christ that goes beyond an ordinary association with him and suggests the theme of incorporation into him. Thus in some passages “in Christ” becomes virtually the same as “in the church.”

2. Is the body of Christ just a figure of speech or a real relationship? That is, do those who enter Christ actually become his spiritual body?

Page 22: . . . the “body of Christ” is more than simply a figure of speech or image, but expresses a real relationship. It is a “root metaphor,” that is, it describes the basic character and nature of the church. The body finds its wholeness in Christ, and Christ has his fullness in his people. Members of the body are all interrelated.

3. What is something a person should not do with his or her body if he or she is in the body of Christ?

Page 23: In writing to the Corinthians, Paul affirmed that the bodies of Christians are “members of Christ” (1 Cor. 6:15). This makes inconsistent the taking of the body and using it

for sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:16). In a comparable way to the sexual union making a man and woman “one flesh,” so being joined to Christ makes a person “one spirit with him” (1 Cor. 6:17).

4. First Corinthians 12 says we are one in Christ. Does that mean that we are totally identical in thought and abilities?

Pages 23, 24: Christ is the whole; we are the parts. Unity is once more presented first. The body is one. This oneness includes diversity. Each member of the body has a different function, each function is necessary, and each part needs the other. Since the body “does not consist of one member but of many” (1 Cor. 12:14), no member should feel inferior (1 Cor. 12:15–19). Yet these “many members” are “one body” (1 Cor. 12:20), so there is no excuse for being conceited (1 Cor. 12:21–24). Rather, instead of dissension there should be mutual care for one another (1 Cor. 12:25–26). It should be noted that as the illustration is developed in this passage, the head is not Christ but simply another member of the body (1 Cor. 12:21). This accords with the initial affirmation that Christ is like a body—he is compared to the whole body, not to a part of it. The passage is summarized in a similar statement: “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (1 Cor. 12:27).

5. How did Paul use the word “head” in connection with the church in Colossians? Use only one or two words to respond.

Summary of Pages 24, 25: Christ is the head of the church meaning he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, the origin of the church, and the vital source through which the church exists and finds meaning.

6. When speaking of the church as a household, what is the relationship of God the Father and Jesus Christ with the church?

Pages 28, 29: Indeed, “household” appears to be the primary imagery for the church in Hebrews. The members of this household (Eph. 2:19) share a common faith (Gal. 6:10).

According to this family imagery for the church, God is the Father over his house; indeed, he is the source and pattern of human fatherhood (Eph. 3:14–15). Although there is a sense in which he is “Father of all” (Eph. 4:6; cf. Acts 17:28), the usual biblical language speaks of him as Father in relation to his spiritual children (John 1:12–13; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). For them there is access to him as Father in prayer (Matt. 6:6–9; Rom. 8:15). To them he gives his love (1 John 3:1), his fatherly provision (Matt. 7:7–11), and his fatherly discipline (Heb. 12:4–11).

In the description of the church as a household, the overseers of the church function as stewards (Titus 1:7; 1 Tim. 3:5 . . .), administering its affairs on behalf of the Father, who is head of the household.

Another use of family imagery is to describe the relationship of God with his people as that of husband and wife. The bridal imagery is appropriated in the New Testament as a description of Christ as the bridegroom and the church as his bride. The thought is anticipated in the analogy used by John the Baptist (John 3:29) and Jesus himself (Mark 2:19) concerning Jesus as the bridegroom. This teaching is most extensively developed in Ephesians 5:22–33, where the loving care and leadership of Christ is matched by his people’s response of submission and desire to please him. Reference is made to the nuptial bath and the wedding vows (Eph. 5:26) in order to bring out the purity of the church (Eph. 5:27). The relation of Christ and the church is presented as the model for human marriage. The bridal imagery is employed elsewhere to stress the church’s purity (2 Cor. 11:2) and her sense of expectation in preparation for the eschatological consummation of union with Christ (Rev. 19:7–8; 21:2, 9). The nuptial imagery expresses the lordship of Christ over the church, a lordship based on and expressed in love.

- 7. Christ is the Son of God, and Christians are the children of God. How does one become a child of God?**

Pages 31, 32: Jesus' people become children of God by the Holy Spirit, whether one thinks in the imagery of a natural birth ("born of the Spirit," John 3:3–9) or of an adoption ("the Spirit that makes us sons," Rom. 8:15; [NEB]). This sonship is accomplished by faith and declared at baptism, when the Spirit is received (Gal. 3:26–27; 4:6). The designation of Christians as children of God is not associated in the New Testament with natural birth, but baptism is a new birth (John 3:5), so the association of Jesus' sonship with his birth and his baptism is combined in the case of Christians with their baptismal new birth. Baptism is also a resurrection (Col. 2:12). Moreover, at the resurrection, Christians receive a status more literally of "sons of God." This was one of the designations of angels in the Old Testament (Job 1:6; Ps. 29:1); to be known as "sons of God," therefore, is an indication of the exalted status of those who are in Christ. In explaining life in the resurrection, Jesus says that those resurrected "are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:34–36). Just as the baptismal new birth is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, so the resurrection will be by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11; cf. 8:23 where the resurrection is likened to an adoption). Thus the experience of Christians parallels that of Christ.

8. In Matthew 12, who did Christ say is his brother and sister and mother?

Page 33: Jesus declared that his true family was not his mother and brothers according to the flesh, but "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother" (Matt. 12:46–50). This is an important declaration concerning his spiritual family and an important description of what characterizes that family. Human children have the nature of their parents and tend to imitate them. The same is true of the spiritual family. "To do the will of the Father in heaven" is to express his nature (1 John 2:29; 3:2, 9; 5:1–2, 18) and to imitate his love (Eph. 5:1–2).

9. In what way is Jesus “the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom. 8:29)?

Page 34: Christ in his status as “Son of God” had the rank of firstborn in relation to all of God’s creation (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:6). The title “firstborn” is applied to him especially in relation to the resurrection, “the firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5; cf. the imagery of firstfruits in 1 Cor. 15:20).

CHAPTER 3: THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

1. Does the church have a collective ministry?

Pages 37, 38: The work of the church is what Christians do collectively as an expression of their Christianity. It is what they do together “because they are Christians.” The New Testament does not make a sharp distinction between individuals and the church. Letters are addressed to churches but talk about individual acts (1 Corinthians) or are addressed to individuals and talk about the assembly (1 Timothy and James). The church is the community of the saved, and in New Testament usage the church exists and one is a part of it whether it is assembled or not. The church is the corporate expression of Christianity; it is an inescapable part of being “in Christ.” Worship may be done in private or in the assembly. Similarly the work of the church may be viewed as an individual activity or as the collective activity of the Lord’s people.

The individual should join the work undertaken by the congregation, but he is not thereby released from the obligation to minister on his own as a Christian individual; and the congregation cannot escape its responsibility on the pretext that ministering to the needs of others is the private responsibility of its members.

2. What three main categories for the work of the church have been used? Are they somewhat artificial?

Page 39: It has been customary to classify the work of the church under three broad headings—evangelism, benevolence, and edification. These types of ministry are mutually interdependent, and the distinctions are somewhat artificial, but are useful in showing how the ministry of the church is rooted in Jesus.

3. Does Jesus serve as an example regarding all the different parts of the ministry of the church?

Page 39: The kind of person Christ was and the kind of ministry he performed determine all Christian ministry. He took our human condition fully upon himself—all for a redemptive, re-creating purpose. As the church derives its nature from Jesus, even so, the Lord of the church determines the nature of the church's ministry.

4. What activities were included within Jesus' benevolent work? What may legitimately be included within the service of the church?

Page 40: Jesus' ministry may be summarized as doing good to others—Matthew 4:23; 11:4f; Acts 10:38. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, and released men from bondage to demons. Such acts were a demonstration that the Messianic Age was being inaugurated (Luke 4:18ff.). Jesus instructed his disciples similarly to care for those in need (Luke 10:29ff.; Matt. 25:31ff.). The early church proved itself responsive to human needs (Rom. 12:13; 15:25ff.; 2 Cor. 8—9; James 1:27). "Visitation" of the sick, imprisoned, and destitute in Biblical language did not mean a "social call," but a ministering to needs.

The New Testament church relieved human distress wherever it was found and the opportunity presented itself and not just within its own fellowship. The teachings of Jesus are clear—Matthew 5:43–48; 7:12; Luke 10:25–37. The instructions to the churches also involve this same kind of love for all men—1 Thessalonians 3:12; 5:15; Romans 12:9, 14, 20; Galatians 6:10. No restrictions are placed on the exercise of Christian charity by the church.

A love (Matt. 19:12) that stopped short of assisting one in need would be "in word" but not "in deed and truth" (1 John 3:18; cf. James 2:14–17). One could hardly pray "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11) and exclude others from the petition.

This assistance will include all human needs—such was the example of Jesus and such is involved in the teaching of Matthew 25:31–46. Human needs may include the necessities of life, illness, or mental and emotional problems. There

seems no way to say that the church may clothe the naked but may not care for the sick, or to say that it may feed the hungry but may not nurture emotional maturity or counsel in marital problems.

5. Are all Christians ministers? If so, in what way?

Page 43: It is appropriate that . . . “ministry” (*diakonia*, service) should be used of everybody in the New Testament: Christ (Rom. 15:8), apostles (Matt. 20:26ff.), evangelists (1 Tim. 4:6), Christians (John 12:26), civil magistrates (Rom. 13:4), waiters (John 2:5, 9), and an office in the church (Phil. 1:1). It is . . . a word which signifies not preeminence or power but simply humble service and was the same word used of Christ’s service to men and of the service owed by every Christian to God, to Christ, and to his fellows.

6. How must the church treat those to whom she ministers?

Page 41: The church itself is needy and lives by the grace and gifts of God. It, therefore, cannot be patronizing toward those to whom it preaches or whom it helps. Whatever blessings the church bestows come not of itself. The church treats each person as a person, for it sees Christ in them (Matt. 25:35ff.).

7. Whose is the only essential ministry in the church?

Pages 41, 42: The essential ministry in the church is that of Jesus. He is called a “deacon,” servant or minister (Rom. 15:8). He came to serve, or minister, and he offered that ministry as a pattern for his followers’ ministry (Matt. 20:25–28). The truly essential work he performed was offering his “life as a ransom for many.” This priestly ministry of atonement and mediation was performed once for all (Heb. 8:1–6; 9:11–14; 10:12–22; 1 Tim. 2:5f.). He still offers the eternal sacrifice and continues to intercede for his brethren, therefore there is no provision for a successor to Jesus’ priestly ministry and no need for any functionaries to continue his

priestly and sacrificial work.

8. What is the path to greatness in the kingdom of God? How does this contrast with human standards?

Matthew 20:25–28—But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” This is the opposite of what humans believe is the path to greatness.

9. What does the word “deacon” mean?

Page 43: “Deacon” (*diakonos*) means servant.

10. Does the Christian have a place for pride in his or her attainments and abilities? If so, in what way?

Page 43: Moreover, what we may regard as natural abilities (note the list in Rom. 12:7f.), . . . are viewed as grace-gifts bestowed by the Lord on the church. Whatever man has there is no cause for boasting and no basis for pride. . . . “What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?” (1 Cor. 4:7). Every function is a gift of grace.

11. On what is leadership in the church based?

Page 44: Leadership is then based on the services rendered. Notice the following passages: “. . . They have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men. . . .” (1 Cor. 16:15f.); “. . . Esteem them very highly in love because of their work. . . .” (1 Thess. 5:13); “Obey your leaders . . . for they are keeping watch over your souls. . . .” (Heb. 13:17). Submission is offered not because

of some office held but because of the service performed. Such men who labor for the Lord naturally become leaders, and one gladly follows those who demonstrate their ability, their concern, and their service. Jesus, the Son of God, was an example in not accrediting authority to himself.

12. How is the word “apostle” used in the New Testament?

Page 45: The word apostle means “one sent,” especially one sent with authority as the delegate of another. Jesus Christ was God’s Apostle, the one sent by God (Heb. 3:1; John 13:20). The twelve were Jesus’ apostles, the ones sent by him. “Apostle” was also used of messengers of the churches (2 Cor. 8:23) and of missionaries (Acts 14:4; 1 Cor. 9:5f.; Rom. 16:7). The background of the New Testament usage is probably to be found in the Jewish legal institution by which one could appoint an “apostle” who was as the sender himself and had full powers of attorney. “A man’s *shaliach* (Hebrew for “one sent”) is like to himself,” the Mishnah says.

13. Do the apostles have a permanent place in the church?

Page 45: The church rests on the apostolate (Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14), which required witness of the resurrection (Acts 1:21f.). As the witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, . . . the twelve became the foundation of the church. Not only did they call the church into existence by their preaching of the word, but they also gave authoritative instruction to the new converts and set in order the churches (Acts 6:1–6; 14:23).

CHAPTER 4: THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD

1. **What was the difference between the Christian elements of worship and the Jewish or pagan elements of worship (i.e., the altar, temple, priesthood, and sacrifice)?**

Pages 47, 48: Judaism and pagan religions included a physical temple, altar, priesthood, and sacrifice. None of these things was visible in Christianity, so Romans had difficulty recognizing Christianity as a religion, a factor that complicated the church's relations with the government. In transforming these ideas associated with religion Christianity was not altogether an innovator, but Christianity did consistently spiritualize these ideas and synthesize them in a way that pagan philosophers and Jews did not.

2. **How is Christ connected to all four elements of worship listed in question one?**

Pages 48–50: (1) Concerning the altar, Hebrews 13:10 declares, "We have an altar from which those who officiate in the tabernacle have no right to eat." The exact reference in this statement is not clear. It may refer to Christ himself (Heb. 13:12–13), to his [sacrifice] on the cross (Heb. 13:11–12), or to the heavenly altar where he metaphorically officiates (cf. Heb. 9:11–14). The book of Revelation speaks of an altar in heaven (Rev. 6:9; 8:3). At any rate, the Christian's altar is not a literal, material altar but is associated with the work of Christ.

(2) Concerning the temple, . . . the Gospel of John identifies Christ himself as a temple. John 2:19 quotes Jesus' saying, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews understood this of their temple in Jerusalem, but John, from the perspective of a post-resurrection standpoint, can explain in verse 21, "He was speaking of the temple of his body." So Christ's body was itself a temple. It was killed, but after three days it was raised again. The resurrection was the foundation of a new community, a spiritual temple.

(3) Now for the priesthood: . . . Hebrews . . . presents Christ as the high priest who ministers in the heavenly sanctuary. The author says, chapter 7, verses 26–27: “For it was fitting that we should have a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself.” The passage continues in chapter 8, verses 1–2: “Now the main point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that the Lord, and not any mortal, has set up.” Christ is our high priest, “the great priest over the house of God” (Heb. 10:21). He officiates in the heavenly tabernacle, not in an earthly holy place.

(4) Moreover, in regard to the sacrifice, Christ, in addition to being the priest who offers the sacrifice, is himself the victim that is sacrificed. Christ is the once-for-all atoning sacrifice for sin. Hebrews 9:26b says, “He has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself.” The author of Hebrews continues in chapter 10, verse 10: “And it is by God’s will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” and then in verse 12, “When Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.” All the sin offerings of the Old Testament reached their completion in Christ’s death on the cross. He offered his “blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:12; cf. 13:20). With his sacrifice the whole system of atonement in the Old Testament was brought to a close. As the perfect sacrifice, Christ made superfluous all the animal and other material sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation.

3. Since Christians are united with Christ, who or what is the temple of God?

Page 51: . . . even as Christ is the temple, so Christians, the church, are called a temple. First Corinthians 3:16 says,

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” First Corinthians 6:19–20 speaks of the bodies of individual Christians as temples of the Holy Spirit: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.” The predominant usage of the New Testament, however, is to speak as does 1 Corinthians 3:16 of the church as the temple. Ephesians 2:21–22 says, “In Christ the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.”

The temple is the dwelling place of God. Only that temple is not now a physical structure but a community of people. The church is where God’s presence is especially manifested in the world. He dwells in his people through his Spirit that is within them. Even as Christ was the temple of God among people, so now Christ’s people through their union with him become the temple of God in which he lives. The passage in Ephesians stresses that this occurs in Christ by saying twice that it is “in him” that the whole building is joined together and that we are [built] into God’s dwelling place.

4. Do Christians have holy days, sacred places, or a special class of priests?

Pages 52–54: Christians have no sacred place, no material temple or earthly altar. Jesus addressed this subject in talking with the Samaritan woman at the well, as recorded . . . in John 4:21, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem” and then in verse 23, “But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. “ In spite of churches that call their meeting places a sanctuary, which means a place that is sanctified or made holy, Christians have no special sacred space, no sanctuary. . . . [In addition, “Auditorium” may not

be a good term to describe our place of meeting.] It would be better to say simply “meeting house” for the building as a whole and “meeting room” or assembly hall for the specific place of gathering. In keeping with the same thought, there is no place for the language of altar for an item of furniture within the meeting place.

Christians are themselves the temple. The New Testament puts no emphasis on the place of meeting: It might be a house, a synagogue, the courts of the temple, or some other place. Wherever the community gathered, God was there. The holiness was in the people united with Christ, not in the place where they met, and their meeting at a place imparted no special sanctity to the place apart from the meeting itself.

Christians have no sacred times—no holy days or seasons. . . . Colossians 2:16 . . . : “Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths.” [Paul] refers to the three kinds of religious observances in Judaism—annual festivals, monthly new moons, and weekly sabbaths. Romans 14:5–6 probably refers to differences among Jewish and Gentile Christians in their estimate of the Sabbath: “Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord.” Galatians 4:9–11 considers the “observing special days, and months, and seasons, and years” to becoming enslaved again to “weak and beggarly elemental spirits.”

Christians do have a day of assembly, the first day of the week, made special by the resurrection of Jesus. But Sunday is not a holy day or a “Christian sabbath” as some have tried to make it. The Sabbath commandment to rest was not carried over and applied to a new day in the New Testament. It was not until the time of Constantine that Sunday became a legal holiday. Having a holiday on Sunday makes it easier for Christians to fulfill the exhortation to meet together, but the meeting on this day does not make it more holy than another day, any more than meeting in a given structure makes it more holy than other buildings. I would consider in my opinion that the observing of Thanksgiving or

Christmas or other days as civil or family celebrations, not as church celebrations, does not fall under these prohibitions.

Nor do Christians have a sacred class of ministers. As we read earlier, 1 Peter 2:5 and 9 identify the whole Christian people as a priesthood. The latter verse, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people,” is based on Exodus 19:5–6, where God promised to Israel that if they would keep his covenant they would be his “treasured possession out of all peoples” and “a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.” It is often argued that the whole nation of Israel had a priestly status in relation to the other peoples of the world, but that this was not inconsistent with there being a special class of priests within Israel, taken from the tribe of Levi, so the church could be a priestly people and yet have priests within it. This is correct so far as it goes, but it omits a crucial difference. In the Mosaic law there was express divine appointment of a special class of priests with detailed instructions about their choice, appointment, and duties. The New Testament, in contrast, is silent about a special class of priests. There is no appointment of priestly functionaries, nor a description of the leaders of the church in priestly terms. The development of priestly language for ministers is a post-New Testament development in the history of the church.

5. Since the whole body of Christ is a priesthood, what are five sacrifices that may be made by Christians to God?

Summary of Pages 55–57: Five sacrifices that may be made by Christians to God include praise to God, good deeds to other human beings, support for preachers, preaching itself, and the Christian life itself.

6. What does it mean for a Christian to present his or her body as a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12)?

Pages 57, 58: Romans 12:1 identifies the whole self as a sacrifice to God: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living

sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." The verb "to present" was commonly used in the Greek world for bringing a sacrifice to a deity. The animal was killed and offered to the deity. The Christian, however, does not bring the body of dead animals to offer to God. The Christian brings his or her own body and presents it as a living sacrifice, not a dead sacrifice. The decision to do this is an act of the reasoning, spiritual nature of a person. This is the "holy," "sanctified" offering that to God is "well pleasing," the same adjective as in Philippians 4:18 and in the verb form in Hebrews 13:16. This is a worship or service to God that comes from the rational part of a person's being and so represents the self that is offered to God. This rational nature is expressed by the word "mind" in verse 2. That verse adds the thought that the giving of the body in worship to God means not being conformed to the "world," or "to this age." The renewing of the mind enables one to discern and approve the "will of God" and so to live accordingly. This worship that is according to the will of God is "good," "pleasing" once again, and "perfect" or "complete."

7. Is it important for Christians to meet together, to be "in assembly"?

Pages 58, 59: Therefore, worship for the Christian is not confined to what is done in the church assemblies. However, those assemblies are an important part of the Christian's total service and worship to God.

The perspective presented in this lesson about spiritual worship does not make the assembly unimportant; rather it places it in a larger perspective. If we think of the church as a temple, then it is when we come together that we show forth the church as the true spiritual temple in which God dwells. Christians as a holy priesthood, who offer spiritual sacrifices, are also a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5). We demonstrate this corporate or community dimension of our existence as a "chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pet. 2:9) when we meet together. In assembly we show that we are a people, a community. The

very meaning of the word “church,” *ekklesia*, is assembly. To be a church, we must often be “in assembly.” That is what it is “to be church.”

For instance, notice some verses just in Acts about how frequently the Christians are described as meeting together: “All who believed were together” or “were in the same place” (Acts 2:44); “When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaking” (Acts 4:31); “For a whole year they were gathered together in church and taught a great multitude” (Acts 11:26); [Peter] went to the house of Mary...where many had gathered and were praying” (Acts 12:12); “And when they arrived, they called the church together and related all that God had done with them” (Acts 14:27); “When they gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter” (Acts 15:30); “On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them. . . . There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting” (Acts 20:7–8).

8. How is participating in the assembly part of our spiritual sacrifice?

Pages 59, 60: . . . participating in the assembly is part of our rational or spiritual sacrifice, the presenting of our bodies as living sacrifices to God, the presenting of ourselves, whose lives are not conformed to the world but transformed by Jesus Christ. While living in this manner, we look forward to the universal assembly of God’s people when Christ comes again.

CHAPTER 5: PURPOSES OF THE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY**1. What are seven reasons why Christians assemble together?**

Summary of All Major Points in Chapter: Christians assemble together to glorify and praise God, to exemplify the church, to edify one another, to express unity, to express fellowship, to impress outsiders, and to commemorate and proclaim salvation.

2. For Christians to glorify God in the assembly, what should they do? What should they not do?

Pages 62, 63: Since the assembly is to glorify God, it will reflect the nature of God. Since God is a God of order and peace, the assemblies of his people will reflect his nature and so be orderly. This is but one example of how the nature of God serves to regulate activities in the assembly. Other aspects of the nature of God similarly will govern conduct in the Christian assemblies: He is spirit (John 4:24); he is light in whom is no darkness (1 John 1:5, 7), referring to his moral qualities and perhaps more; he is love (1 John 4:8); he is holy (1 Pet. 1:15–16); he is a consuming fire to be approached with awe (Heb. 12:28–29); he is a living God (Heb. 9:14). These qualities of God are used in the respective passages to say something about how he is to be worshipped and served. They certainly speak to the attitudes and manner with which he is approached in the assemblies of the church.

Never, so far as I am aware, are human nature and human needs made a basis for activities in the assembly.

3. What does the word *ekklesia* literally mean?

Page 63: The word *ekklesia*, translated “church” in our modern English versions, means literally “assembly,” or as it was rendered in some of the early English translations, “congregation.” Hence, it is in assembly that the church shows itself to be what it is. The church is the gathered people of God, those called into the presence of God to meet with one

another and to meet him who is their Creator. If we are a church, we must meet. Not to meet is to deny that we are a church.

4. What does “edifying” or “edification” mean?

Pages 65, 66: To edify is to build up, strengthen, improve. The meaning of the word is suggested by those words with which it is associated: “encouragement and consolation” (vs. 3), “benefit” (vs. 6), “reproved and called to account” (vs. 24). Particularly notable is the association of “edify” or “build up” with intelligible speech so that understanding and instruction take place.

Edification means that the first concern is other people, not the self. It means the mind must be involved (vss. 14–15). It means that the speech must be intelligible to those present. And it means that spiritual welfare takes precedence over other interests.

5. How does the church promote unity when it meets together?

Page 67: The Lord’s supper creates and promotes unity. As 1 Corinthians 10:17 says, “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.” Sharing together in the bread and the cup makes us one body in Christ. Coming together in church is intended to demonstrate unity and not division.

The congregational assembly is, moreover, a way of creating and building unity. Joint participation in any activity draws people closer together. Frequent meeting together in church enhances the sense of belonging and being truly one people.

The meetings then in turn express this sense of unity. It defeats one purpose of the assembly if in our seating arrangements and associations we maintain cliques or in other ways avoid certain persons or groups. The congregational meetings are to be a time of building a common spirit and providing a context for the development of interpersonal rela-

tionships. Meeting together shows the unity of the body of Christ.

6. What is a definition of fellowship? What are some ways Christians fellowship when they assemble together?

Pages 67–69: Closely related to the idea of unity is the idea of fellowship. Fellowship means the condition of being fellows, to be joint participants in something. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42). . . . fellowship may not be limited to sharing in financial matters but may include the community life.

The association of the assembly with unity and with fellowship places an emphasis on joint participation as over against individual activities.

Christians must be together frequently in order to sustain faith and spiritual living. Hebrews 10:23–25 says, “Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Meeting together provides the opportunity to encourage one another and to spur one another on in the practice of the Christian life, and so it strengthens hope. Failure to meet together deprives one of this encouragement from others and deprives one of the opportunity to encourage others. When one neglects the assembly and when this encouragement does not occur, the fellowship is weakened. Meeting together strengthens the fellowship and shows that we hold a common confession and share a common life.

This “one another” aspect of Christianity puts a premium on mutual reconciliation. If the congregational assembly is to exemplify unity and fellowship, then there must be an emphasis on reconciliation of the members who meet together. The community dimension of being church requires us to work diligently on personal relationships so that we

bring harmony and mutual concern to our meetings.

7. Should Christians allow the interests of unbelievers to determine what they do in the assembly? Why is it important for the church to be concerned about the impression they make on those who are not members?

Page 69: Paul thus contemplates the presence of non-believers in meetings when the whole church came together. That situation provided an opportunity to convict them of sin and open doors for evangelistic outreach.

Other purposes of the assembly have priority over this one, but the meeting of Christians provides opportunity for giving testimony to non-Christians. The attitudes and reactions of outsiders do not determine what Christians do in the assembly, but Christians will be sensitive to the effects their meetings have on outsiders and will be eager for the opportunity to show them what the church truly is. The interests of outsiders will not determine what is done in the Christian assembly; that is determined by the will of God. But their interests will influence how things are done. The impression on outsiders functions in a negative way, as it does in 1 Corinthians 14; it does not say what is to be done, but it may say something about things not to be done. The impact and influence on non-believers will be one factor taken into consideration in the assembly.

8. How does remembering and proclaiming salvation help Christians to accomplish other purposes in the assembly?

Page 71: This remembering and reaffirming of our salvation contributes to accomplishing the other purposes of the assembly. Declaring what God has done for us in Christ is a way to glorify God; it shows what the church is, a people called together by the gospel who exist to proclaim God's mighty deeds (1 Pet. 2:9); it edifies believers by building them up in the most holy faith (Acts 20:32; Jude 20); it unites them and strengthens their fellowship; and it calls outsiders to faith.

CHAPTER 6: MISUNDERSTANDINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY**1. How does James define worship? How does Romans 12:1 define worship?**

Page 74: James 1:26–27 uses a common word for “religious service,” the outward expressions of worship in this way: “If any think they are religious [worshipful], and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion [worship] that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” . . . Romans 12:1 . . . has perhaps the most striking definition of Christian worship: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

2. What are the three instances in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 that Paul distinguished a church activity from a home activity?

Summary of Pages 76–78: Paul distinguished between the Lord’s supper and other meals, between a private religious exercise and the public assemblies of the church, and between women being silent in the church vs. speaking outside of the church.

3. Christians may believe they can worship better in an environment other than in a worship service. While it is important to pray, read the Bible, and meditate outside of the assembly, what are some benefits of worshipping God with others?

Page 80: The very idea of the assembly is the corporate experience of being together and being concerned for one another. Notice what is said in Hebrews 10:24–25 concerning what is accomplished in meeting together: “. . . Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but

encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." I may worship God while alone at the lake, but there are some things I cannot do there. I cannot share the experiences of my brothers and sisters, rejoicing and weeping with them, comforting them and being comforted by them, exhorting them and being exhorted by them.

4. Is "to feel good" a valid reason for worship?

Summary of Pages 80, 81: He found that one problem is that focusing on feeling good is putting the emphasis on oneself rather than on God and other fellow believers. Worship is not all about feeling good. Worship should include praising God by remembering his deeds and focusing on his character. We should focus on building others up. Emotional satisfaction and spiritual well-being are a by-product of praising God and seeking the welfare and edification of others.

5. If a spiritual gift or talent does not build others up or fulfill the spiritual purposes of the assembly, should it be used in the assembly?

Pages 82, 83: If the gift does not contribute to edification, it has no place in the assembly.

Even those gifts that are useful in the assembly—such as preaching, singing, and praying—are not to be used for display. They are to be used for leadership. Those gifts are placed at the service of the congregation and are to help it in its understanding and in expressing its thoughts. The [assembly] is collective action, not "I" action. My "I" is to be hidden in the collective congregational action. If these gifts are exercised in such a way as to call attention to themselves or to interfere with the congregational activity and participation, then they have defeated their purpose. The gifts used in the assembly are subordinate to the spiritual purposes of the assembly.

6. What are the tasks of the preacher and prayer leader in the

assembly?

Page 84: The preacher's task is to bring God's message to the people[,] not to entertain the listeners. Prayer too is our joint offering to God. The prayer leader does not say, "I pray," as if he is voicing an individual prayer that other people overhear. He might speak as an individual in his private prayers, but this is a corporate or community prayer being expressed; he says, "We pray," for he is speaking for the community that is gathered. Nor is it a congregation's privilege to hear what a beautiful prayer he prays. The prayer leader's function is [to] give voice to the prayers of the whole congregation. As the preacher brings God's word to the people, the prayer leader brings the people's words to God. He is their spokesman before the throne of God, a responsibility second only in seriousness to the task of the person who brings God's word to the people.

7. If singing in the assembly is not for entertainment, why are Christians to sing in the assembly?

Page 84: The singing is our joint expression of praise to God and instruction to others.

The goal of the assembly is not what pleases me or even the people as a whole. Rather the goal is to contribute to the spiritual maturity in Christ of everyone (Col. 1:28). For that to occur all must participate. We are not present simply to listen to the music, to listen to the prayers, to listen to the preacher. Even when listening, the people are to have their minds engaged, to be thinking along with the preacher or prayer leader, to be making the thoughts and words his or her own; in other words, to participate, not to be entertained.

CHAPTER 7: THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

1. When is the church most truly itself?

Page 87: The church reveals itself as it really is in worship.

2. What determines the nature of worship?

Page 88: The doctrinal understanding of worship must be grounded in God. Worship is determined by the nature of God. One of the most profound descriptions of worship is found in John 4:21–24. Since God is Spirit, worship must be in spirit and in truth, that is, it must be spiritual and real (the Greek word for “truth” here suggests “reality”).

3. Name an attitude with which one must come before God in worship.

Page 88: Worship must be genuine and true. Since God is the creator and sustainer of life, the creature must come before God on God’s terms. The basic attitude must be one of humility.

4. How has Christ transformed worship?

Pages 88–90: Redemption has given a new relationship with God and a new motivation for worship. Thus Christian worship is distinctively related to the “name of Christ.”

The outward acts, or avenues, through which worship is expressed, are offered to God through Jesus Christ. It is “in his name,” “with respect to him,” “out of worship for Christ” that these things are done. In the central and distinctive act of the church’s worship, the Lord’s Supper, . . . the relationship to Jesus is obvious. Jesus instituted this act of thanksgiving (Mark 14:22ff. and parallels). The repetition is a memorial of Jesus, done with reference to him (1 Cor. 11:24, 26). The bread shares the same designation as does the church—his body (Matt. 26:26; Col. 1:18). Participation in the supper is thus a participation (fellowship) in Christ (1 Cor. 10:16f.). In

so honoring Christ the Christian honors God, and acknowledges God's action in Christ for his salvation.

The other actions of worship, which had been engaged in by God's people before the coming of Christ, now have a new focus in Christ, expressed by the formula "in his name." Thus prayer—whether of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, or supplication—is now offered "to God, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit," to summarize one of the formulas of the ancient church. (See 1 Tim. 2:1–5; John 14:13f.; Rom. 8:26f.) Prayer is an act of the whole congregation. When one speaks for the people to God, he assumes only a slightly less solemn task and should make little less preparation than the one who speaks for God to the people. The members of the congregation ratify the prayer as their own by the solemn pronouncement of the "Amen," which means "may it be so," "this is our prayer too" (1 Cor. 14:16).

Singing is also to God "in his name" (Eph. 5:19f.; Col. 3:16f.). "Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," although having slightly different connotations, appear to have been used without precise differentiation. Nevertheless, the songs chosen should conform to the spiritual nature of worship and emphasize the objective character of God's salvation.

Jesus is the motive and example in our giving (2 Cor. 8:9). The contribution is an offering, a sacrifice (Phil. 4:18; 1 Cor. 16:1–3; 2 Cor. 9:12). It is one of the principal expressions of fellowship in Christ. Thus it has important doctrinal associations, and it is noteworthy that Scripture does not appeal to practical considerations in encouraging one to give (in 2 Cor. 8 and 9 Paul does not even urge the fact that the Jerusalem Christians are poor and need help), but always places teaching on giving in a religious context.

Christ is the essential content of the Scripture readings and preaching of the church (Luke 24:44f.; Acts 8:35; and note the sermons in Acts). Christians read the entire Bible in terms of Christ. Their teaching is all related to him.

5. In what way may it be said that Christian worship is performed in spirit?

Page 90: The Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, inspires and guides Christian worship and presents that worship to God (1 Cor. 12:3b; 14:15; Rom. 8:26f.; Eph. 5:18f.). Worship is “in the Spirit.” This is what makes it spiritual. The Spirit unites believers in the one body of Christ and brings their worship to Christ and God.

6. What criterion of acceptable worship did Paul set before the Christians in Corinth?

Page 90: Paul makes edification of the group the criterion for determining what is acceptable in Christian worship and how it is to be carried on (1 Cor. 14:1–26).

7. Distinguish the acts of worship from the elements of worship.

Summary of Pages 90–92: Acts of worship have to do more with how to worship than what worship is. Elements of worship include praise (adoration), thanksgiving, remembrance, sacrifice (or offering), confession of sin, teaching, and making requests.

Elements of worship: Acts of worship that may include these elements:

<i>Praise</i> (adoration)	Reading Scripture, praying, preaching, singing hymns of praise
<i>Thanksgiving</i>	Reading Scripture, praying, singing songs of thanks, participating in the Lord’s supper
<i>Remembrance</i>	Reading Scripture, preaching, participating in the Lord’s supper
<i>Sacrifice</i> (offering)	Singing, praying, participating in the Lord’s supper, contributing money/goods

<i>Confession of sin</i>	Reading Scripture, praying, singing, making individual verbal statements
<i>Teaching</i>	Reading Scripture, singing, preaching
<i>Making requests</i>	Reading prayer Scriptures, praying, singing prayer songs

CHAPTER 8: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH

1. What is the meaning of the original Greek that is translated “fellowship”?

Page 93: Fellowship translates the word *koinonia*, which means joint participation, having in common, communion, sharing, mutuality. The prominence of this concept in the New Testament is indicated not only by the group of words related to *koinonia*, but by the large number of compounds formed with the preposition “with,” which suggests a close association (these are especially frequent in Philippians). A noteworthy class of these compounds are those nouns translated in English “fellow worker,” “fellow servant,” “fellow disciple,” “fellow citizen,” and the like.

2. How is fellowship in Christ based on a proclamation?

Page 94: This fellowship [in Christ] is based on a proclamation. God calls through the Gospel in order that one may obtain the glory of Jesus (2 Thess. 2:14; cf. 1 Thess. 1:4f.). In its essence the message through which God in Christ calls men has Jesus himself as its very content (1 John 1:1–4). One not only learns of Christ, but in the message is to learn Christ himself (Eph. 4:20f.). In this way it is still Christ himself who calls men to himself (John 12:32).

3. How does the use of the word “fellowship” in the New Testament differ from secular ideas of fellowship? What is the doctrinal basis of fellowship?

Pages 94, 95: Basically, Christian fellowship is God given, not man chosen.

God has already established the fellowship with other believers; it is a part of that which is “given” on entering into fellowship with Christ. One’s task is to work out in a practical way this God given fellowship, to maintain the “unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). Human fraternity is based on liking each other and choosing to be

together. Christians are already together in Christ, therefore they choose to like each other. They become united together by their life in the Lord. They are a community that comes into existence and continues to exist by virtue of its relationship with Christ. In sharing the fellowship of Christ we submerge relationships that would ordinarily alienate men from each other (Philem.; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11).

The basis of fellowship in the church thus is found in a common salvation by the same Savior, and in a common loyalty to one Lord (Eph. 4:4f.).

4. Name some of the joys and blessings jointly shared by Christians. Can you extend the list given in the lesson?

Summary of Pages 95, 96: Some things jointly shared by Christians include the following:

- A common salvation by the same Savior
- A common loyalty to one Lord
- All spiritual blessings
- Sharing of faith
- Joint partakers of the Holy Spirit and Christian unity
- Baptism, and fellowship of the church with God
- Continual cleansing
- Community
- Christ's love he showed for us
- Life in Christ and participation in Christ through the Lord's Supper
- Sharing in the gospel
- Sharing of possessions

5. How is the contribution to the Lord's church an expression of fellowship?

Page 96: Fellowship is also expressed through the use of the Christian's possessions. The attitude expressed by the author of Hebrews 13:16 is one basic to the whole New Testament: "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Thus the needs of the saints provide an opportunity to have fellowship with

them (Rom. 12:13; 2 Cor. 8:4). It is not only an opportunity to alleviate hardship, but becomes an occasion by which God may be glorified (2 Cor. 9:13). For this practical meeting of needs to become true fellowship, it must not only be given in the right manner, but it must also be received as an act of fellowship (Rom. 15:26, 30f.). In the original the words for both “contribute” and “take a part” in the passages is *fellowship*.

6. When should the church refuse to fellowship with another Christian?

Page 97: Christians are not to share in others’ sins (1 Tim. 5:22). By accepting into its fellowship someone who does not have God in his life the church would share in his wicked work (2 John 9—11). In her desire to share her communion with Christ with others, the church yet knows that she cannot share in the unfruitful works of darkness, but that she is to expose them (Eph. 5:11). For that reason she is on her guard against iniquity and darkness, refusing to become like them by having fellowship with them (2 Cor. 6:14).

7. Which individuals are subject to disfellowship, according to the New Testament?

Pages 97, 98: Such a person is one who refuses to submit himself to the life of Christ, whether in his moral life (1 Cor. 5), or by his rejection of Christ’s teachings (Rom. 16:17f.; cf. 2 Thess. 3:6–15), or by his general conduct in the body of Christ (Titus 3:10f.; 2 Thess. 3:11f.).

8. What are the reasons for the withdrawal of fellowship?

Pages 97, 98: Because her fellowship is an index of her real character, the church must also be concerned to withdraw herself from elements that are foreign to her. One purpose of withdrawing fellowship is, therefore, to preserve the church’s identity (1 Cor. 5:6–8, 12f.).

The second purpose for withdrawal is to discipline the

one withdrawn from (1 Cor. 5:5; 2 Thess. 3:14). Being made up of concerned brethren, the church can punish, and also forgive and comfort (2 Thess. 3:15; 2 Cor. 2:6f.).

[Christ] not only commands that withdrawal take place and explains how it is to be done (Matt. 18:15–19), but he is himself present to lend his authority to it when it is being affected (Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Thess. 3:6, 12). The church is acting for Christ in this endeavor. As God through Christ calls us to this fellowship, he continues to determine its character.

CHAPTER 9: MUSIC IN THE ASSEMBLY

1. **Jesus sang a hymn with his disciples at the last supper. How did this affect the practice of early Christians?**

Pages 101, 102: At the last supper of Jesus with his disciples, the meal closed with the singing of a hymn: Matthew 26:30, "When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." The Jewish Passover celebration included the singing of the Hallel Psalms, Psalms 111—118, so the reference in Matthew is probably to the last of these, Psalms 115—118, that were sung at the close of the meal. This practice of Jesus with his disciples, especially since it is noted by Matthew and Mark, likely accounts for the practice of early Christians singing when they came together to take the Lord's supper.

2. **What does the word "hymn" mean?**

Page 102: The very word "hymn" means a song of praise.

3. **Singing is a way to praise God. According to 1 Corinthians 14:15, Christians are to sing praise with _____ and _____.**

Page 102: Paul personalizes his directions concerning singing in the assemblies of the Christians at Corinth, 1 Corinthians 14:15 says, "What should I do then? I will pray with the spirit but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also."

4. **How are Christians looking forward to the future by singing praise to God?**

Page 103: When we sing God's praises, we are sharing in a heavenly activity. Moreover, we are anticipating the end-time activity. By sharing in what the heavenly beings do, we also anticipate our own participation in the praise of God in our future heavenly existence.

5. According to Colossians 3:16–17, what attitude should Christians have when they sing?

Page 103: Colossians 3:16–17 says, “. . . With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

So song is directed to God. But it is offered to God through Christ and in his name (that is, with reference to him and as an act of worship to him). Song proceeds from the heart and is accompanied by the attitudes of the heart, especially the attitude of thanksgiving. Singing expresses thanksgiving.

6. Since singing preaches Christ, what is the reason that Christians sing?

Page 103: Christ’s saving work on behalf of humanity is the reason why Christians sing.

7. Singing expresses the word of Christ and the Spirit that lives in Christians. This is why it is so important to know Christ’s teaching. Should the Spirit and the word be set against each other, or do they belong together?

Page 104: Singing expresses the indwelling Spirit and word of Christ. Ephesians 5:18–20 and Colossians 3:16–17 make parallel statements with interesting variations. Ephesians 5:18–19 says, “. . . Be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves . . .” Colossians 3:16 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; . . . and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.” I deliberately put these two statements together. The Spirit and the word are often set against each other. I believe that Biblically they belong together. It is not necessary to interpret one of these statements in terms of the other, so that the word of Christ really means the Spirit or the Spirit really means the word. They belong together.

The indwelling word of Christ, the teaching of Christ laid up in the heart, and the filling with the Spirit, who also dwells within the believer, will result in vocal expressions—psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. In order to express the Spirit of Christ and the word of Christ, the songs must be spiritual and in accord with Christ's teaching.

8. How do Christians help each other when they sing together?

Page 105: . . . singing as well as the praying is to build up others mentally and spiritually. Hence, . . . [1 Corinthians 14:26] says, "...When you come together each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." Singing is to be edifying, and, therefore, we should keep this in mind in choosing songs and in determining the manner in which they are sung. The teaching of 1 Corinthians coincides, therefore with Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. As those verses say, the singing is a speaking to one another, as well as being a thanksgiving to God in the name of Christ, is a teaching and an admonishing of one another.

9. How can singing exemplify the unity of the church?

Pages 105, 106: Singing exemplifies the unity of the church. Romans 15:5–6 exhorts, "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Clearly, one of the purposes of the congregational assembly is to exemplify the unity of the church. Joint participation in song is a wonderful way of building this unity and expressing it.

The phrase "one voice" was frequently used in the literature of the time to describe harmonious agreement and united action. . . . authors often commented on the difference between the voices of male and female and young and old, making the point that their blending together created

a sweeter harmony. This kind of unity is what Paul wanted of the Roman Christians and indeed what God wants of all Christians.

CHAPTER 10: BIBLICAL AUTHORITY AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. What are the three steps that the author used in studying the observance of the Lord's Supper?

Page 109: This approach involves three steps: (1) assembling the New Testament passages on the subject under discussion; (2) examining the testimony of early Christian history for the extracanonical evidence on Christian belief and practice—this is done as a control against an unhistorical understanding or an individualistic peculiarity in interpretation; (3) consideration of the doctrinal significance in order to determine if the practice has any real significance or is only a cultural or accidental phenomenon.

2. What five events in the New Testament give special importance to the first day of the week, Sunday?

Summary of Pages 110, 111:

(1) Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week (Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20, Matthew 28).

(2) Christ met with his disciples after the resurrection on the first day of the week (John 20:19, 26).

(3) Pentecost came on the first day of the week (Lev. 23:15f.).

(4) The New Testament church assembled on the first day of the week (Acts 20:6–7).

(5) The Lord's Supper was observed on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 11, Acts 20).

3. Several early church sources note the frequency of the Lord's Supper. Based on these evidences, on what day and how often should Christians partake of the Lord's Supper?

Summary of Pages 112–114: The several early church sources stress that Christians observe the Lord's Supper on the first day (Sunday) every week.

4. Why were Gentiles not required to keep the Sabbath?

Page 115: That the old covenant was abolished, and the Sabbath as part of it, is taught in many New Testament passages (Rom. 7:1–7; Gal. 3:23–25; Col. 2:16f.).

The Sabbath had a doctrinal purpose for Israel. Its significance was a remembrance of the day of deliverance from Egypt. As such a remembrance, the Sabbath was given to the Jews only, and had significance to Jews only. The Sabbath has no significance to Gentiles, who did not come out of bondage in Egypt and become the chosen nation at Sinai. The Sabbath carries no doctrinal significance to Gentile Christians today.

5. Why is Sunday significant for Christians?

Pages 115, 116: . . . the first day of the week does have doctrinal significance for Christians. It is the day of our deliverance. It is a remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus, the great act by which we were delivered from sin and made God's people. This day is of foundational significance for the church. We meet on the first day because we are conscious of Christ's presence in our midst on the day of the resurrection, the day on which the Spirit came and the church had its beginning as a gathered people. The first day of the week is connected with the reason why there is a church (the resurrection) and with its actual coming into being as a distinctive community (the events of Acts 2). For these reasons the church observes Sunday with an assembly.

. . . the adjective "of the Lord" or "Lord's"—that which pertains to the Lord—occurs only twice in the New Testament: once for the supper (1 Cor. 11:20), and once for the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10). These two things are peculiarly the Lord's and they belong together: his day and his supper.

. . . the first day of the week . . . is a day with meaning, because of its importance in the history of salvation.

6. What are Christians proclaiming when they partake of the Lord's Supper?

In the Lord's Supper, we proclaim our faith in his death until he comes (1 Cor. 11:26), so we are also confessing faith in the resurrection.

7. What are Christians to remember as they observe the Lord's Supper?

The resurrection of Christ gives certainty to our desires and longings (1 Cor. 15:12, 20–23). Since he is raised, his people (those who belong to him) will be raised.

The Lord's Supper looks forward to Christ's coming again (1 Cor. 11:26; 15:51–53). The Christian attitude toward the future is described in 1 Thessalonians 1:10—to wait in eager expectation for God's son from heaven.

The communion is a way of sharing our hopes for the future.

8. Is the Lord's Supper a community activity by nature?

The Lord's Supper is an expression of love for the Lord and for one another. We meet together out of love.

He loved us and gave himself up for us (Gal. 2:20). To eat at his table is a way of showing our responding love for the Lord. We erect memorials out of love and respect for others. The Lord's Supper is a memorial tribute to him and what he did out of his great love (1 Cor. 11:24–25). Love requires expressions of itself. A love not expressed dies.

The Lord's Supper is a demonstration that Christianity cannot be individualistic. Christianity must include others. The Lord's Supper is a communion with brothers and sisters. The church is a communion of love. It is a community born of love and showing love. We show our love for one another by wanting to be together around a common table.

CHAPTER 11: OBSERVING THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. Is it correct to speak of the Lord's Supper as "the central act of Christian worship"?

Pages 120, 123: The Lord's Supper is the church's great act of thanksgiving for all that pertains to its life in the Lord.

The Lord's Supper as the church's central distinctive act of worship is its great moment of self-sacrifice to the God who has redeemed it.

2. Name one aspect of the Lord's Supper that relates to the meaning of the church.

"Thanksgiving" Summary on Page 120: Breaking the bread and drinking the cup signify the church's thankfulness to God.

Page 121: [Remembering Jesus' death means] we bring the benefits of his death once more into our lives. We participate in his sacrifice (1 Cor. 10:16).

"Covenant" Summary on Page 121: Jesus' blood is the blood of the new covenant between God and man, so the church is the people of the new covenant which excludes all other religious loyalties (1 Cor. 10:21).

Page 122: Communion shows one's participation in the church, for the church is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12).

"Messianic Banquet" Summary on Page 122: The church's participation in the Lord's supper is part of their looking forward to end times when they will get to participate in God's banquet for his people.

Page 123: Christ has made his sacrifice once for all (Heb. 10:10). The church is a living continuation of that sacrifice.

"Sacrifice" Summary on Page 123: The Lord's supper is the church's sacrifice of worship, praise, and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Page 124: The special meaning of the first day as the day of the resurrection gives doctrinal significance to it as the day of worship and celebration of the Lord's Supper.

3. How does the Lord's Supper show the nature of the church?

Page 119: The New Testament uses the word "body" in reference to Jesus in four different senses: (1) the physical body of his incarnation (Heb. 10:5; Luke 23:52); (2) the glorified body of his resurrection (Phil. 3:21); (3) the spiritual body of his church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:23); and (4) the bread of the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26). Each of these usages has bearing on the nature of the church. The Son of God became flesh and blood (cf. John 1:14; 19:34; Heb. 2:14) so that by his death and resurrection he might redeem a new people of God (Col. 1:18–20; Phil. 2:5–10; Acts 20:28). These people will some day share the likeness of his glorification (Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:44; 1 John 3:2). Paul unites concepts (3) and (4) when he declares that by partaking of the one bread Christians become the one body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16–17). But first the Spirit at baptism must incorporate them into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Receiving spiritual nourishment from the Lord (John 6:35–40, 47–58, 63), they are transformed into his glory (2 Cor. 3:18).

4. What does the word *eucharist* literally mean? What does *anamnesis* mean? What does *koinonia* mean?

Pages 120, 121: At the institution of the Lord's Supper Jesus "gave thanks" (the verb form of *eucharistia*, thanksgiving).

Paul cites Jesus' words of institution as containing the command "do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24, 26). The phrase is literally "do this memorial (*anamnesis*) of me."

The Lord's Supper is also called by Paul a fellowship or communion (*koinonia*) with the body and blood of the Lord (1 Cor. 10:16f.).

5. What Old Testament concepts and practices help us to understand the Lord's Supper?

Pages 120–123: It was the customary Jewish practice at the beginning of a meal to take bread, say a prayer, and break

it. Jesus had often done this in his meals with his disciples (Mark 6:41) so that Jesus was recognized by his characteristic manner of doing this (Luke 24:30, 35). Thus the Lord's Supper was known in the early church as the "breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42; 20:7). At the Jewish Passover there was also a "cup of blessing" (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16) as part of the meal in commemoration of the escape from Egypt. Jesus took these familiar gestures and on the night of the Last Supper endowed them with a new meaning.

When we repeat Jesus' actions we also "give thanks" to God.

The commemorative aspect of the Lord's Supper is made clearer by reference to Jewish practices. Jesus' words "This is my body" may be related to the words of Exodus 12:11, "It is the Lord's Passover." When the Jews celebrated the Passover memorial (*mnemosunon*) (Ex. 12:14), there was more than just a remembrance of a past event. Each Jew who celebrated the Passover became himself a participant in the Exodus event. The Mishnah enjoined, "In every generation a man must so regard himself as if he came forth himself out of Egypt." The deliverance from bondage became his own experience. Thus, instead of calling the past to mind, the past was brought into the present and its benefits made operative.

Paul further says that in raising this memorial of Jesus we are "showing forth his death" (1 Cor. 11:26). In the Lord's Supper there is a portraying, a showing forth, a reenactment. Here another Old Testament concept will be helpful in appreciating the significance of what Jesus did at the Last Supper. In likening the familiar actions of breaking bread and pouring out the fruit of the vine to his body and blood Jesus was establishing a point of prophetic symbolism. Jesus' flesh was broken and given for mankind (John 19:34; 20:25ff.; 1 Cor. 11:24) and his blood was poured out for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28). Since the symbol partakes of the reality being enacted, when we repeat the action of Jesus, we bring the benefits of his death once more into our lives. We participate in his sacrifice (1 Cor. 10:16).

The Old Covenant was inaugurated by sacrifice, the

sprinkling of the blood of the covenant, and the eating of a covenant meal (Ex. 24:3–11). For Christians the eating of the Lord's Supper is an act of renewing covenant allegiance to the Lord. This is a relationship which excludes all other religious loyalties (1 Cor. 10:21). The covenant relationship is one of close communion with the Lord. The church is the people of the new covenant, who have a new meal.

Table fellowship was full of rich associations of closeness in the Biblical world. Jesus is spiritually present when his people meet in his name.

Worshippers ate of the sacrificial animal in Old Testament times. In the Lord's Supper there is a spiritual participation in Christ's body and blood and the benefits of that sacrifice (1 Cor. 10:16ff.).

The Jews kept the Sabbath in memory of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Deut. 5:13–15). For Christians the first day of the week has special meaning and significance: it is their day of deliverance from the bondage of sin.

6. Is there an appropriate way in which the Lord's Supper may be spoken of as a sacrifice?

Page 123: Not only do we continue a participation in the Lord's sacrifice. We make our own offering here. All worship is an act of sacrifice—the rational sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15). The Lord's Supper as the church's central distinctive act of worship is its great moment of self-sacrifice to the God who has redeemed it.

7. What does the Greek word *kuriake* mean?

In modern Greek the word for Sunday is *kuriake*.

Page 123: . . . the Greek adjective derived from the word for Lord (*kuriakos*, meaning “of or pertaining to the Lord,” from *kurios*) occurs in the New Testament only twice—in reference to the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20) and the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10). The early church met on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7). This continued to be the practice of the ancient church, and one of its

usual designations for the first day continued to be Lord's Day. The Lord's Supper and the Lord's Day belong together. Both are peculiarly Christ's, and that which unites them is the resurrection.

CHAPTER 12: LEADERSHIP IN CHRIST

1. What five ways were women involved in the early church?

Summary of Pages 125–127:

- (1) Prophesying (Joel 2:28–29, 1 Cor. 11:5).
- (2) Teaching (Acts 18:26, Titus 2:3–5).
- (3) Advancing the Gospel (Philippians 4:3).
- (4) Working on behalf of the church in unspecified ways (Romans 16:6, 12).
- (5) Various serving capacities including financial support, good works, acts of charity, hospitality, providing home as a place of meeting for the church, etc. (Luke 8:1–3; Acts 9:36, 39; Romans 16:1–2; Acts 16:15, 40).

2. As Christians, what are women to do in the assembly?

Summary of Page 128: Women do the things commanded of each Christian, including singing (Ephesians 5:18–20), joining in the congregational “Amen” accompanying prayer (1 Cor. 14:16), giving (1 Cor. 16:2), participating in the group activities of the congregation. What the whole congregation does together includes women.

3. What are Paul’s four arguments in 1 Corinthians 14 for why women are not permitted to speak and are to be submissive in church?

Pages 132, 133: First, the practice of the churches—1 Corinthians 14:33, “as in all the churches of the saints.” One of the major problems with the Corinthian Christians, an expression of the pride and individualism of some, was their inclination to go their own way. Hence, the strength of Paul’s rebuke, verse 36, “. . . Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?” The church at Corinth needed to follow the practices Paul had instituted in the other churches. This is a lesson that churches in our own time who want “to do their own thing” may need to heed.

Second, there is God's law at creation mentioned in verse 34. Women, he says, should "be subordinate, as the law also says." Genesis 3:16 is the verse most often referred to and is likely what Paul has in mind, ". . . Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." This lends some support to seeing the references to "men" and "women" in 1 Corinthians 14 as referring to "husbands" and "wives," but Adam and Eve stood for men and women and not only "husbands" and "wives."

Third, shame as stated in verse 35: ". . . For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church." This would be a cultural consideration.

Fourth, the command of the Lord in verse 37: "Anyone . . . must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord." This statement is part of Paul's conclusion to the whole passage on tongue speaking, prophecy, and disorders in the meetings at Corinth, but it applies to all that he has written in chapter 14, including his words about women.

4. In Christ many things are renewed and different. Why is this not the case with male and female distinction?

Page 133: If the appeal in argument two to the "law" is indeed to Genesis 3:16 and so to the law governing male-female relations since the fall, then this argument has to do with the natural order and is not subject to cultural changes. It is true that in Christ many things are renewed and therefore are different, but the distinctions of male and female are not cancelled so far as life in this world is concerned.

5. How do Paul's writings in 1 Corinthians 11 explain that head coverings for women are cultural, while their silence in the church is not optional?

Pages 134, 135: The hierarchical order of male and female rests on a divine ranking given in 1 Corinthians 11:3, namely, God, Christ, man, woman. This was established at creation and is intended to promote mutuality (vss. 8–9,

11–12). How this order and male-female distinctions are expressed in a given situation, however, are determined by cultural norms. And so Paul’s arguments for the head covering by the women as a way of reflecting the glory of her husband and their absence on men as a way of reflecting the glory of the Lord are all cultural: (1) Honor or shame comes to the man this way—[1 Cor. 11:4–5] . . . ; (2) disgrace comes to the woman this way [1 Cor. 11:5–6] . . . ; (3) what is accepted as representing authority is expressed in this [1 Cor. 11:10] . . . ; (4) what is “proper” or “suitable” is being taught . . . [1 Cor. 11:13]; (5) what is regarded by human beings as natural (that is, according to one meaning of the word, what is the constitution, outward form, or appearance of something, or even as John Chrysostom interpreted the word here, a generally recognized or firmly established custom)—[1 Cor. 11:14–15] . . . ; (6) the practice of the churches is indicated in this [1 Cor. 11:16].

Paul’s manner of argument is quite different from what he employs elsewhere. Observe that all of these considerations are culturally relative conditions, having to do with honor, shame, or disgrace, what indicates authority, the natural or customary, and the practice of others. Where something is not considered a matter of honor or shame, has no symbolic significance, is not regarded as natural, then the specific expression has no force. These arguments are unlike the doctrinal affirmations in 14:34 and 37 about the law and the command of the Lord. The distinction of male and female and observing that distinction are absolute and rest on creation; how that distinction is expressed is culturally conditioned.

- 6. At the end of the section about 1 Corinthians 14, what distinction is made about whether women are to pray in the public assembly versus outside of the assembly?**

Pages 137, 138: Something may be “public” but not be a meeting of the church. The matter of eating meals is an obvious illustration provided from the context, both before and after 1 Corinthians 11. Moreover, something may be a

group activity of Christians, or a group of Christians may be together on some occasion, and an assembly for worship not be involved. The assembly was not the only place where prophecy was delivered. In Acts 21:8–12 the prophet Agabus delivered a prophecy to quite a large group. Yet this was not a “church,” not an assembly of the church even though all present were Christians. There could be public occasions of prayer and prophecy where women were the spokespersons but not be the times when “the whole church comes together” envisioned in 1 Corinthians 14 (note vs. 23). That distinction removes any contradiction between 1 Corinthians 11 and 14. On this explanation there were occasions that were not an assembly of the whole church when women prayed and prophesied in public.

CHAPTER 13: THE VALIDITY OF THE RESTORATION PRINCIPLE

- 1. The Restoration Movement has focused on what the author calls the “biblical ideal.” Does this mean trying to be just like the church in the first century or taking the apostles’ teaching in the New Testament seriously as a guide and model?**

Pages 140, 141: The church in the first century had as many problems as anybody—false teaching, personal rivalries and misunderstandings, division. No one—not even contemporary charismatics, I presume—wants to restore exactly the church at Corinth. The plea to be the New Testament church today meant to take the apostolic teaching about the church as found in the New Testament as a guide and model.

At any rate, the appeal was to the biblical ideal rather than to the first-century church as it actually was with all its marks of imperfection involved in historical existence.

- 2. The Restoration Movement has attempted to seek unity (not union or uniformity). What is the kind of unity that has been sought?**

Page 141: *Further, the biblical ideal is to practice the denominational unity of the church.* This unity was understood as neither union nor uniformity. Union would be a federation in which there is an agreement to disagree. Uniformity would be an agreement in opinions and all details. The unity envisioned was to be a solidarity in fellowship, an organic brotherhood. It was to be not just any kind of unity, but unity in Christ, yet a refusal to recognize the present denominational divisions as the proper condition of the church.

- 3. What is the ultimate goal of the Restoration Movement?**

Pages 141, 142: The biblical ideal is also to restore human beings to the image of God. Alexander Campbell saw this as the aim of the plea and the grand design of the Chris-

tian system. Restoration was not the goal but the means to the goal. The ultimate goal was the restoration of humanity to fellowship with God. Restoration, therefore, involved more than just forms, institutions, externals. These things had their place, and in their place were important, but had to be kept in perspective. They served a larger design and purpose. Persons must be redeemed; they must be brought into a right relationship with God. One was to mature spiritually for eternal fellowship with God. Unless these things were achieved, all else was in vain.

4. What does the Restoration Movement take as the pattern for church life today?

Page 142: . . . the restoration plea properly understood means to take the canon (as enshrining apostolic teaching and authority) as authority; it takes not the churches described but the church revealed in the New Testament as the pattern for church life today.

5. Some religious organizations have their own charters or doctrines to follow. What should be the charter of the Church?

Pages 143, 144: [Ferguson quotes from pages 20–21 of J.G. Machen’s book *Christianity and Liberalism*:] “. . . the Christian movement at its inception was not just a way of life in the modern sense, but a way of life founded upon a message. It was based, not upon mere feeling, not upon a mere program of work, but upon an account of facts. In other words it was based upon doctrine.”

Machen’s argument . . . exactly fits the appeal to the Bible as the charter of Christianity.

6. According to the “restoration” mentality, what should be our religious authority?

Pages 145, 146: A doctrine of revelation also accords with the “restoration” mentality. If God has spoken to human

beings, this is religious authority for them. The restoration plea is grounded theologically in the doctrine of revelation.

7. Is the restoration theme unique to the Restoration Movement?

Page 146: The restoration or restitution of the New Testament church has been a recurring motif in church history.

A.T. DeGroot assembled an astonishing number of religious groups having a wide variety of types of restoration emphasis in his book *The Restoration Principle*. Donald Durnbaugh's better focused study, *The Believer's Church*, has identified a particular church type that can be traced in later medieval movements, the Anabaptists, Puritans, Pietists, and Restorationists. Common emphases include, besides the motif of restitution, believers' membership, separation from the world, discipline, the Great Commission, religious liberty, and mutual aid. The restoration theme can be traced earlier in Christian history, as for example, in monasticism.

One does not have to make the claims of Broadbent's *The Pilgrim Church* to assert that a certain understanding of the nature of the church, its organization, its style of life, and its worship very similar to the Campbell-Stone movements have been recurring features of Christian history. There seems indeed to be something about the nature of Christianity that nurtures the restitution motif among its adherents and something about the nature of the biblical record that produces churches of the same general type when the effort is made to take it as normative for church life.

8. What has happened throughout history when people take the New Testament alone as a guide in church life (even without knowledge of the American Restoration Movement)?

Pages 147, 148: This plea has been found capable of practical application all over the world. It has been implemented independently by people around the world without knowledge of the American Restoration Movement. Both isolated

individuals and whole groups have been involved. They have not come to conclusions on the peculiarities that have conditioned the American historical development—for instance, they have not had controversies over Bible classes or methods of cooperation—but on the nature of biblical message, human response to it, how to organize the church, and how to worship there has been a basic similarity.

[People have found] practicality [in] taking the New Testament alone as a guide in church life.

10. What are some ways that the Restoration Movement is unifying?

Page 148: The restoration plea occupies ecumenical ground. [The plea] was presented as a uniting concept. And so it can be. The churches of the restoration in their basic positions stand on the undivided ground of historic Christianity. Even the “distinctives” that are most characteristic of the movement are not really distinctive.

Take the practice of immersion—virtually all Christians agree that immersion is valid baptism; none regard it as wrong.

Or, consider vocal music in worship. No one has said a cappella singing is wrong. . . . The common ground, universally accepted, is vocal music.

The weekly communion is not considered wrong in Christendom. Instead of stressing such practices as divisive, the “distinctives” are more properly uniting concepts.

ADDENDUM: WHAT ABOUT INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC?

1. **Are Christians under the Mosaic covenant? Does the presence of instrumental music in the Old Testament automatically approve its use in the church?**

Page 152: When the sacrificial system of the Old Testament was abolished by the perfect sacrifice of Christ, its accompaniments ceased too—a physical temple and altar, a separate class of priests, burning incense, and other material offerings. It would have taken an express authorization from God to carry over any aspect of the temple ritual into the New Testament. We have that authorization for singing but not for playing on instruments. Moreover, Christians are under the new covenant, not the Mosaic covenant. There were many activities that God approved, or even commanded in the Old Testament that were not continued in the covenant of Christ. So the presence of something in the Old Testament does not automatically approve its use in the church.

2. **What is the difference between the noun *psalmos* and the verb *psallo*? How did authors in the New Testament use these words?**

Pages 153, 154: The noun *psalmos* meant the plucking on strings and then the sound made by plucking on a string instrument, and the verb *psallo* meant “to pluck,” usually with reference to plucking on a string instrument (with the fingers, not with a plectron). The lexica do not cite the noun or verb as referring to “playing” on other kinds of instruments. In some Jewish works before the beginning of the Christian era, however, *psallo* is used of singing, at first to the accompaniment of an instrument but then without accompaniment, and *psalmos* is used for the songs sung, preeminently the book of Psalms in the Bible. This vocal usage is reflected in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, and in apocryphal and pseudepigraphal works.

Christian usage of these words was uniformly in ref-

erence to vocal music. We may note the pairing of *psallo*, “to sing praise,” with “to pray” in 1 Corinthians 14:15 and James 5:13. *Psalmos* is uniformly used for the Psalms of the Old Testament or songs of a similar nature. This is the consistent usage of Christian authors after the New Testament and continues into modern Greek, which uses *psallo* to mean “to sing.” Vocal music alone, therefore, is being referred to in Ephesians 5:19 and other passages using these words.

3. How can instrumental music in worship hinder singing?

Page 154: The general experience of religious bodies is that the presence of an instrument works against congregational participation in the music. The emphasis shifts from active involvement to passive listening, from accompanied singing to playing only.

4. What are some things vocal music accomplishes that instrumental music cannot?

Page 155: Instruments may be used to praise God, but the New Testament references to praise, both in church and in heaven, have to do with vocal praise. Instrumental music may express deep emotions, but the meaning must be interpreted by words. On the other hand, instruments cannot express thanksgiving to God. Instruments cannot preach Christ, confess faith, or be a non-material, spiritual sacrifice. They cannot express the indwelling word of Christ. They cannot edify in the sense of giving intelligible instruction, encouragement, or consolation (1 Cor. 14:3, 26). Instrumental music cannot exemplify the unity of the church. The spiritual nature of Christian worship is lowered when something mechanical or material competes with the vocal, mental expressions of the activities in the assembly.

5. What are the purposes of the assembly? Can instruments carry out these purposes? Can singing?

Page 155: *Instrumental music does not fit the purposes of*

the assembly. These purposes . . . closely correspond to what song accomplishes, but are outside the realm of what instruments can do. We found the purposes of the assembly to be to glorify God, to exemplify the church, to edify Christians, to express unity, to express fellowship, and to commemorate and proclaim salvation. Singing does these things. Instruments do not.

6. Why is the silence about instruments in the New Testament significant?

Page 156: *There is no apostolic authorization for the use of instruments of music in the assembly.* One should not divide the church over what has no apostolic authorization. There is ample support for singing, but no indication of the presence of an instrument. Here we are brought to the question of silence, and what its implications are. There are many circumstances in which silence speaks with a powerfully negative voice. The prominence of instruments in the environment in which early Christianity arose makes the silence of the New Testament about their presence in the assemblies of the church impressive and significant. When options are available, the designation of one option and silence about the others constitutes a prohibition of the items about which there is silence. When a choice has been made, it is unnecessary, and indeed redundant, to list all the items that are excluded or forbidden.

7. How long did vocal music last in the church? What does early church history teach about a cappella music in the early church?

Pages 156, 157: *The evidence of church history is decisively against the presence of instrumental music in early Christian assemblies.* The earliest Christian documents outside the New Testament are like the New Testament in referring to song in the assemblies but making no mention of instruments. Authors in the fourth and fifth centuries began to take notice in their writings of this difference between Christian

vocal music and the instruments employed in the Old Testament and in pagan religion and offered explanations for the superiority of singing over instrumental music. This vocal only music in the church lasted for about a thousand years. When organs were employed in the western church, it was before and after the liturgy proper, so that it was some time later before instruments accompanied singing. The eastern churches have continued to use only vocal music.

Only in the present context of the western world does the *a cappella* practice of churches of Christ seem unusual or out of step. Instruments did not become a common feature of Protestant church worship, outside of Lutheran and Anglican circles, until the nineteenth century, and then it provoked opposition not only in our churches but also in the Reformed and Mennonite circles. If we take a broader look, the historical sweep across the centuries and a more worldwide perspective in the present, the position of churches of Christ on this issue is more nearly a majority view, certainly not the minority view it might appear on the current scene in the United States.