

ENGLISH

BOOK OF ACTS

***GOD'S CHURCH MANUAL
TO FULFILL
THE GREAT COMMISSION***



THE GOSPEL
to Every Creature under Heaven

2026

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INTRODUCTION

There are those who teach that the **Book of Acts** is a transitional book from the Gospels to Paul's Epistles. They say that it is not wise to get doctrine or church procedures from the **Book of Acts**. They also say that the **Book of Acts** is not for us in the "church age." I wholeheartedly disagree!

The Early church was given a "Great Commission" by our Saviour Jesus Christ. They were told to "preach the Gospel to every creature under Heaven." They did exactly that within approximately 30 years' time. The **Book of Acts** explains how they did it. If we would follow their example, we would do the same thing in our generation. To this end is the writing of this manual.

May this be a great source for the readers as they desire to fulfill the "Great Commission" of our Lord in our generation!

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CHAPTER 1

*Acts 1:1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given
commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:*

*3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them
forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

*4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from
Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.*

*5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days
hence.*

*6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time
restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

*7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in
his own power.*

*8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto
me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

*9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him
out of their sight.*

*10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in
white apparel;*

*11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is
taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

*12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath
day's journey.*

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

*14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the
mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

*15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names
together were about an hundred and twenty.)*

*16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth
of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.*

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

*18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder
in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.*

*19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper
tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.*

*20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein:
and his bishoprick let another take.*

*21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and
out among us,*

*22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be
ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

*24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these
two thou hast chosen,*

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that

he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

The Bible is not only a Book of divine **Message**, but it is also a Book of divine **Methods**. The way the church in the Book of Acts operated and functioned is exactly what we need to pattern today. We will study the Book of Acts in detail so we can know what to do.

1. WE NEED TO BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. (ACTS 1:4-5)

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

32 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

What does it mean to be baptized with the Holy Ghost?

- a. It means to be immersed with the Holy Ghost of God with a complete outpouring upon oneself.
- b. It means to be totally yielded to the Holy Ghost in every area of one's life.
- c. It means to be dedicated to living your life in the way God wants you to live.
- d. It means to be empowered by the Holy Ghost to perform tasks for the kingdom of God.

A) The baptism of the Holy Ghost will result in a fruitful field.

Isaiah 32:15 Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

B) We need to thirst for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

Isaiah 44:3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

C) An outpouring of the Holy Ghost will give you a new heart.

Ezekiel 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

D) A baptism of the Holy Ghost is necessary to get the Gospel to the whole world.

Acts 1:4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*

7 *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

E) A baptism of the Holy Ghost is for all believers.

Acts 10:44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

45 *And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

2. WE NEED TO BE WITNESSES FOR THE LORD EVERYWHERE WE GO AND TO ALL THE PARTS OF THE EARTH. (ACTS 1:8)

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

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

We need to make the Great Commission the most important function of our church. This is the main thing!

This means that we should be soul winners at home and abroad all at the same time. We should support soul winning missionaries, and mission works all around the world through a vibrant world-wide missions program!

3. WE SHOULD NEVER GAZE UP INTO HEAVEN WAITING FOR JESUS TO RETURN. (ACTS 1:9-11)

God wants us to be busy serving the Lord. There is no time to waste! If the world is going to be reached with the Gospel, we need to get started now. The longer we put it off, the longer it will take to do what God wants us to do.

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

12 *He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.*

13 *And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

The word “occupy” means to busy oneself with, to be useful in labor.

Too many churches are guilty of “gazing up into Heaven” when there is a world that needs to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

4. WE SHOULD BE CONSUMED WITH PRAYER. (ACTS 1:12-15)

God’s house was to be called a house of prayer! We need to unite for diligent prayer.

Matthew 21:13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye

have made it a den of thieves.

5. WE NEED QUALIFIED PEOPLE TO SERVE IN THE MINISTRY. (ACTS 1:15-26)

As the ministry grows, there will be a need for more people to be involved. What everyone needs to do now is to get yourself in a position to be used of God in ministry. There are certain requirements one needs to meet. These requirements are Bible-based and important in serving the Lord. Serving the Lord should never be based on talent but rather based on spirituality!

Below is an example of standards and expectations a church could have for its workers:

WORKER'S STANDARDS

*It is important to note that these requirements are not for church members in general but are for the workers in visible positions of the church who serve as role models to others. We need to live as spiritual examples if we are to be effective in ministry and not regarded by others as hypocrites. *

1. All workers must be saved and scripturally baptized after being saved.
2. Be faithful to attend all the regular church services and special meetings such as revival meetings, soul winning conference, missions conference, etc.
3. Be faithful to support the church with your tithes (10% of all your increase) and offerings. If you are going to stop giving, let the pastor know and you should take a break from ministry. If you struggle temporarily and plan to get caught up, let the pastor know and you may continue to serve in ministry.
4. Be loyal and submissive to the pastor and his God ordained authority and to any other leadership that God has placed in this church.
5. Be daily walking with God in Bible reading and prayer.
6. Be separated from all worldly activities and dress so as not to bring reproach in any way upon the name of Jesus Christ or the church. This means to abstain from all forms of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, pornography, movie theaters, renting any "R" rated or worse movies or any movie that disgraces Christianity, mixed swimming, gambling of any form, worldly music, bars, sinful TV, and any other questionable activity. You should dress in such a way to reflect godliness and the standards of the Bible. Wear modest clothing and attire that represents your gender as stated in the Bible. No "gang" attire will ever be tolerated for leaders in the church. Men's hair length should be short, off the collar and ears, and women should have long hair, that at least covers the neck and ears in length. Always remember that you are a walking billboard for Christianity and you should want to represent your Saviour well!

7. Be pure in morals. Abstain from all sexual sins. Any worker being found to commit fornication, adultery, sexual abuse on a child, rape, homosexuality, or any form of sexual sin that is stated in the Bible will immediately be removed from ministry. Restoration will be attempted and if the worker is fully restored in the faith, an opportunity to serve in ministry may be available at a later time.
8. Be faithful to the Lord in your speech. No gossip, slander, criticism, or disloyalty to any of the leadership in the church will ever be permitted. The Bible clearly teaches that a house divided will fall and that unity among the church is a must if we are to be victorious in our endeavors.
9. Be faithful to weekly soul winning and be actively spreading the Gospel by way of church tracts.
10. If there ever comes a time that you do not wholeheartedly support these standards and the leadership of the church, you will willingly resign your position in ministry so as not to be a hindrance to the cause of Christ and the reaching of lost souls.

CHAPTER 2

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of

his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

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

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

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

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

This chapter describes the first of many exciting and great events that took place for the church in Jerusalem. We can have similar results if we do what they did to get the results in the first place!

We will look at the results of the early church when there was **Bible preaching** accompanied with the **power of the Holy Ghost**. We will look at what happened in the days and weeks afterward. This will be very informative and reveal to us how different our churches really are in our time from the early church!

1. BE IN ONE ACCORD AND IN ONE PLACE. (ACTS 2:1)

This is a point that is very important and necessary if churches are going to do great things for God.

Accord (def) agreement, harmony of minds, opinions and wills

Place (def) church, assembly– the day of Pentecost was a Sunday!

Matthew 12:25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Romans 15:5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

Philippians 2:1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

2. BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. (ACTS 2:2-4)

There is a way that we can be filled with the Holy Ghost. We should be filled daily.

~ How to be Filled with the Holy Ghost ~

- a. Yield your will to the Holy Spirit's will. (Romans 6:11-19)**
- b. Ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)**
- c. Sing and listen to the right kind of music. (Ephesians 5:18-21)**
- d. Be thankful always for all things. (Ephesians 5:18-21)**
- e. Live for others. (Ephesians 5:18-21)**

3. THE PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD SHOULD TAKE PRECEDENT DURING CHURCH SERVICES. (ACTS 2:14-41)

There is nothing more important at church than the preaching of the Word of God. Never avoid preaching, sleep during preaching, be inattentive during preaching, or miss preaching. The only time you should willfully miss the preaching during a church service is when you are serving the Lord in the ministry of the church that requires you to be somewhere else during that time! Bible preaching accompanied with the Holy Ghost's power changes lives!

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

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

~ What is the result of Bible preaching accompanied with the power of the Holy Ghost? ~

- a. Conviction (vs. 37)**
- b. Salvations (vs. 41)**
- c. Baptisms (vs. 41)**
- d. Dedications (vs. 41)**

4. THE PEOPLE CONTINUED STEADFASTLY. (ACTS 2:42)

Steadfastly (def) to be earnest towards a thing, to persevere, to be constantly diligent

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

2 Timothy 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

2 Peter 3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

~ In what did they continue steadfastly? ~

- a.** The Apostle's doctrine - instruction given by the men of God
- b.** Fellowship - they were together more than just church services
- c.** Breaking of bread - they ate together
- d.** Prayers - they prayed together

5. THEY WERE TOGETHER IN ALL THINGS. (ACTS 2:44)

6. THEY WERE SACRIFICIAL GIVERS. (ACTS 2:45)

They were not Christians who just did the minimum in giving. The need they gave to was the needs of the ministry.

7. THEIR CHRISTIANITY WAS A DAILY PRACTICE NOT WEEKLY PRACTICE. (ACTS 2:46-47)

- a. One accord - in mind, goals, desires, etc.
- b. In public and in private - consistent living
- c. They had gladness - joy attracts others who do not have it
- d. They cared deeply about each other – love is the fulfilling of the law
- e. They praised God - in word and deed
- f. They behaved well in front of the unsaved - a good testimony in the world
- g. They won souls daily - they were not just involved in a one-hour weekly soul winning time!

CHAPTER 3

Acts 3:1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God:

10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

16 And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

We will look at some basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1. CARE FOR THE POOR AND NEEDY. (ACTS 3:1-11)

The poor and needy will always be among us. We should be a church where “common people” feel loved and are welcome! We should do all that we can to help those who are in need!

~ Some things to consider concerning the poor and the needy ~

a. God will bless you if you consider the poor.

Psalm 41:1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.

b. We should deliver the poor and needy.

Psalm 82:3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

c. God will honor those who have mercy on the poor

Proverbs 14:31 He that oppreseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

d. You will be happy if you care about the poor.

Proverbs 14:21 He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.

e. If you help the poor, God will repay you.

Proverbs 19:17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

f. If you do not listen to the poor, God will not listen to you.

Proverbs 21:13 Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

g. If you help the poor, your needs will always be met.

Proverbs 28:27 He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

h. You are either righteous or wicked by your relation to the poor.

Proverbs 29:7 The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.

i. Plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Proverbs 31:9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

j. The poor will always be around so there will always be people to help.

Mark 14:7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

Deuteronomy 15:11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

k. God wants us to preach the Gospel to the poor.

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Luke 7:22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

l. God has chosen the poor of this world, but most people despise the poor.

James 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

m. God wants us to call the poor and bring them to church.

Luke 14:12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

2. ALWAYS GIVE GOD THE GLORY FOR WHAT HAPPENS. (ACTS 3:12-18)

We need to be very careful not to make God mad. One of the things that will make God mad is when we give ourselves the glory for what God does!

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Psalms 2:10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Psalms 50:22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.

Acts 12:20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.

23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

3. ALWAYS KEEP THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING. (ACTS 3:19-26)

Never forget why we are here as a church. We are here for the purpose of fulfilling the

“Great Commission.” Everything else takes second place! If we do everything else but the main thing, we will lose the blessing of the Lord on our church!

CHAPTER 4

Acts 4:1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it.

17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done.

22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1. WE SHOULD PREACH THE TRUTH AND NOT STOP, NO MATTER WHO GETS MAD. (Acts 4:1-3)

Persecution is never wanted but should be expected when Christians are godly and stand for the truth! We should resolve not to waver under attack. It is sad but sometimes people get mad from within as well as from without!

a. Biblical preaching will accomplish one of three agendas:

2 Timothy 4:2... *reprove, rebuke, exhort ...*

Reprove (def) to convince of fault or to make it manifest; to **Convict**

Rebuke (def) to keep in check; to restrain; to **Correct**

Exhort (def) to persuade by words; to advise; to **Convince** to do good deeds

b. Biblical preaching should be done a certain way.

2 Timothy 4:2... *with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

Longsuffering (def) long endurance; not easily agitated; **Patient**

Doctrine (def) teaching by knowledge; **Instruction**

c. Biblical preaching should always use sound doctrine.

2 Timothy 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*

1 Timothy 1:8 *But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;*

9 *Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,*

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

Sound Doctrine (def) instruction that is right, correct, well-founded and free from error

2. GOD WILL REWARD AND BLESS US WHEN WE STAND FOR TRUTH. (Acts 4:4)

There are more people saved in this verse than were saved on the day of Pentecost. There were about 5,000 men (besides women and children) who are mentioned here as getting saved. What an incredible event.

This kind of event can happen in our day. The power of God can fall and multitudes can be saved! This is the kind of miracle ministry we should desire!

3. WE NEED TO SPEND A LOT OF TIME WITH JESUS. (Acts 4:5-14)

The closer we get to Jesus, the more we will become like Him. The more time we spend with Jesus, the more power and boldness we can possess.

How much time do you spend with Jesus daily?

- a. Sit with Jesus (**Mark 2:15**) - Bible
- b. Talk with Jesus (**Mark 9:4**) - Prayer
- c. Go with Jesus (**Luke 7:11**) - Church, soul winning, ministry, etc.

4. WE MUST OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MAN. (Acts 4:15-22)

When it comes to obedience, it is always important to keep in mind the proper chain of command. God is our highest authority and if any authority below God steps out of line, we are to still submit to God!

5. WE ALL NEED TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. (Acts 4:23-31)

Once again, we see the importance of being filled with the Holy Ghost. Too many Christians are filled with the spirit of the devil or the spirit of the world, and this is why we are not effective as a church!

Luke 9:51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

6. GOD WILL MOVE UPON A CHURCH THAT IS UNIFIED IN HEART AND SOUL. (Acts 4:32-37)

1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one

body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

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

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

7. INGREDIENTS OF A GREAT CHURCH.

- a.** Great Power (**vs 33**) to witness and preach
- b.** Great Grace (**vs 33**) sacrificial giving
- c.** Great Fear (**Acts 5:5, 11**) respect for God, afraid of God's judgment
- d.** Great Persecution (**Acts 8:1**) the devil always fights the church that is engaged in God's kingdom
- e.** Great Lamentation (**Acts 8:2**) caring, heart
- f.** Great Joy (**Acts 8:8**) joy of the Lord
- g.** Great Number (**Acts 11:21**) souls saved and lives changed

CHAPTER 5

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

30 *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.*
 31 *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*
 32 *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*
 33 *When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.*
 34 *Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;*
 35 *And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.*
 36 *For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.*
 37 *After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.*
 38 *And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:*
 39 *But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.*
 40 *And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.*
 41 *And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*
 42 *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) FINANCIAL SACRIFICE OF THE CONGREGATION (Acts 4:34-37/ 5:1-2)

There really is no other way to invest in the kingdom of God than to financially sacrifice for that cause. The early church did it and it was placed in the Bible for us to follow as an example.

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

2 Corinthians 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

*** Five categories of giving mentioned in the Bible - See Appendix I ***

2) GREAT FEAR OF GOD (Acts 5:3-11)

The problem was that these two people were not taking the kingdom of God seriously. They did four things that were wrong:

- a. They let Satan fill their hearts.
- b. They lied to the Holy Ghost.
- c. They kept back what God gave them to give to the work of God.
- d. They agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord.

We should never mess with God. We need to have a proper fear of God in our lives!

3) RESPECT FOR GOD'S MEN (Acts 5:12-16)

This is in the Bible as an example for us as a church. The pastor and pastoral staff of the church are God's leaders. This is how He has set it up. He wants our relationship to God's men to be proper.

~ THERE ARE DIFFERENT NAMES GOD USES IN REFERENCE TO GOD'S MAN ~

a. Pastor - Shepherd

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

b. Bishop - Overseer

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

c. Elder - Counselor, Guide

Titus 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

d. Angel - Messenger

Revelation 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

e. Minister - Servant

1 Timothy 4:6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

2 Timothy 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

f. Preacher - Proclaimer of the Word

2 Timothy 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

g. Star - A rank in God's army, to shine on God's behalf

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

h. Ambassador - Representative

2 Corinthians 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Ephesians 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

i. Anointed - Consecrated to an office

2 Corinthians 1:21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

~ A CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO GOD'S MAN ~

a. Remember them

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

b. Obey them

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

c. Magnify them

Acts 5:13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

d. Do them no harm

Psalm 105:15 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

e. Honor them

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

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

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

f. Follow them

1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

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

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

Philippians 3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

4) FILL OUR COMMUNITIES WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST (Acts 5:17-32, 42)

We see the importance of daily taking the Gospel and witnessing everywhere in our community. It is not just the pastor's responsibility; it is all of ours!

5) PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROBLEMS AND TRIALS (Acts 5:33-41)

It is always important that we have a joyful spirit. Have a proper attitude when going through trials and the end of the trials will be better because of your joy!

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

1 Peter 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

CHAPTER 6

Acts 6:1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

11 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) WHEN GOD'S WORK IS GROWING, THE DEVIL WILL TRY TO STOP THE WORK FROM WITHIN. (vs 1)

Luke 11:17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

Murmuring and complaining is never an effective way to handle issues and problems. God has never responded favorably to complaining, especially complaining of God's leaders.

Numbers 14:1 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

2 And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!

3 And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

4 And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children

of Israel.

6 And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes:

7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.

8 If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.

9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.

10 But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?

12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.

2) THE DEVIL WILL TRY TO GET US SIDETRACKED. (vs 2)

In life and ministry, we have many choices that can be categorized:

EVIL———SIN———GOOD———BETTER———BEST

The devil will always try to tempt us to go one step in the wrong direction. He does not always tempt us with sin or evil!

3) WE NEED TO STAY FOCUSED ON WHAT IS BEST TO REALLY GROW. (vs 3-4)

Since God's Word is our final authority in all our faith and practice, let us follow the pattern in this chapter!

PREACHERS - give yourselves continually to prayer and ministry of the Word

- a. Prayer time
- b. Bible reading and study
- c. Sermon preparation
- d. Biblical counseling
- e. Soul winning
- f. Discipleship
- g. Ministry work relating to church growth and spiritually helping

people

CHURCH WORKERS - free up the men of God by doing the business of the church

- a. Honest report
- b. Full of the Holy Ghost
- c. Full of wisdom

We believe that these seven men were the first elected deacons of the church. However, even if one is not on the deacon board, the principle of being a help to free up the men of God is good for all.

Exodus 17:8 Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

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

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

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

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

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

4) WHEN THIS BIBLICAL PATTERN IS FOLLOWED, GOD WILL BLESS OUR EFFORTS. (vs 7)

5) GOD CAN USE CHURCH MEMBERS IN A GREAT WAY. (vs 8)

6) ALWAYS MINISTER IN WISDOM AND IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MINISTRY. (vs 10)

Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

CHAPTER 7

Acts 7:1 Then said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

13 And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers,

16 And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.

17 But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

19 The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

21 And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?

27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

28 *Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday?*

29 *Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.*

30 *And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.*

31 *When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,*

32 *Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.*

33 *Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.*

34 *I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.*

35 *This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.*

36 *He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.*

37 *This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.*

38 *This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:*

39 *To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,*

40 *Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*

41 *And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.*

42 *Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?*

43 *Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.*

44 *Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.*

45 *Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;*

46 *Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.*

47 *But Solomon built him an house.*

48 *Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,*

49 *Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?*

50 *Hath not my hand made all these things?*

51 *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

52 *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:*

53 *Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.*

54 *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.*

55 *But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,*

56 *And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.*

*57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,
58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.*

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) WE NEED TO KNOW THE BIBLE WELL. (vs 1– 50)

- a. Know what the Bibles says.
- b. Understand the meaning.
- c. Apply the Word of God to our lives.
- d. Teach others the mind of God through the Word of God.

2) PREACH POINTED AND POWERFUL SERMONS. (vs 51-53)

3) RESPOND PROPERLY TO PEOPLE. (vs 54-60)

- a. Be full of the Holy Ghost (vs 55)
- b. Always look up (vs 55-56)
- c. Call upon God (vs 59)
- d. Forgive easily (vs 60)

CHAPTER 8

Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

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

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

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

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

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

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

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) EXPECT GREAT PERSECUTION TO COME. (vs 1– 3)

2 Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

2) BE COMMITTED TO WINNING LOST SOULS TO CHRIST. (vs 4)

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

1 Peter 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

3) OUR CHURCH SHOULD HAVE GREAT JOY. (vs 8)

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Nehemiah 8:10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

4) NEVER TRY TO GAIN GOD'S POWER FOR IMPROPER INTENTIONS. (vs 14-24)

2 Chronicles 25:1 Amaziah was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart.

2 Chronicles 25:14 Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.

15 Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet,

which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?

16 And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

5) ALWAYS OBEY THE LEADING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. (vs 26-29)

Galatians 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

6) GUIDE OTHERS TO CHRIST. (vs 30-35)

7) BAPTIZE THOSE WHO ARE SAVED IMMEDIATELY UPON SALVATION OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (vs 36-40)

It is important to note that EVERYONE who was recorded as being baptized in the Scriptures was baptized the SAME DAY they were saved. Nobody was required to take classes, be confirmed, be questioned before a committee, wait until a certain age, or fulfill any other obligations. All they had to do was believe in Jesus Christ to be saved!

CHAPTER 9

Acts 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

21 But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

23 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:

24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the

name of Jesus.

28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.

30 Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

31 Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.

33 And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) GOD CAN SAVE EVEN THE CHIEFEST OF SINNERS. (vs 1– 22)

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

A) Pray for it.

B) Be willing to be used of God for it.

C) See people's potential not just what they are or what they have done in the past.

2) TAKE NEW CONVERTS INTO OUR CHURCH FAMILY WITH OPEN ARMS. (vs 23-30)

It is so important that we do this immediately when they visit!

3) WE NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON EDIFYING THE BELIEVERS AT CHURCH. (vs 31)

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

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

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Building a strong base will help to multiply our church.

4) WE NEED GOD TO TURN MANY TO HIMSELF THROUGH HIS MIGHTY POWER. (vs 32-43)

CHAPTER 10

Acts 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.

3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what

intent ye have sent for me?

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) LEADERS SHOULD DEVOTE TIME TO PRAYER. (vs 9)

Matthew 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Luke 6:12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

2) FOLLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LEADING. (vs 19-20)

Obey right away. Remember that the Holy Spirit will never lead in violation to the Scripture!

3) REACH ALL PEOPLE. (vs 28, 34-36, 43)

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

Matthew 22:1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

This principle covers three groups of people.

- a. All nationalities
- b. All classes
- c. All ages

CHAPTER 11

Acts 11:1 And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

*2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,
3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.*

4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me.

12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) NEVER TRY TO WITHSTAND GOD. (vs 17)

Job 9:12 Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?

13 If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.

14 How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him?

Job 33:13 Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.

Job 40:2 Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

8 Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

Daniel 4:34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Romans 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

2) THE HAND OF THE LORD WITH US WILL BRING GREAT RESULTS. (Vs 21)

Nehemiah 2:6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

Luke 1:64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.

66 And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

We need to always have the hand of God upon us!

3) WE SHOULD CLEAVE UNTO THE LORD TO SEE GREAT THINGS HAPPEN. (vs 22-24)

Deuteronomy 10:17 For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

18 He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

19 Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

21 He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

Joshua 23:6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;

7 That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them:

8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.

9 For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

10 One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

4) WE SHOULD CARE ABOUT OTHER CHURCHES AND CHRISTIANS IN THEIR TIME OF NEED. (vs 27-30)

If we do, God will care for us in our time of need!

Philippians 4:14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER 12

Acts 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.

19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judaea to Caesarea, and there abode.

20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.

23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took

with them John, whose surname was Mark.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 24) This is what we want for our church!

There is a formula for the kind of results found in this chapter.

1) PRAY. (vs 5, 12)

A. Without ceasing for dire situations.

B. Together with other church people.

Matthew 18:19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2Corinthians 1:11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

2) PERSIST. (vs 13-16)

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 11:5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

3) PERFORM. (vs 25)

1 Chronicles 22:11 Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12 Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

Colossians 4:17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

Performance, n. Execution or completion of anything; a doing; as the performance of work or of an undertaking; the performance of duty. Action; deed; thing done.

a. We should perform what we say.

Deuteronomy 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

Matthew 5:33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

2 Corinthians 8:10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.

b. Put away any hindrances that will interfere with you performing what God wants.

2 Kings 23:24 Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the LORD.

c. Never lie, cover up, or blame others for your lack of performance.

1 Samuel 15:12 And when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and, behold, he set him up a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed

the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

27 And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent.

28 And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

d. Find a way to get the job done.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

God does not want you to try; He wants you to “do it.”

CHAPTER 13

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

20 And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21 And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

23 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there

cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

30 But God raised him from the dead:

31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44 And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 44) This is the result we want for our church!

There is a formula for the kind of results found in this chapter.

1) BE BUSY IN THE WORK OF THE LORD. (vs 2)

God never blesses laziness!

1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

2) FAST AND PRAY. (vs 3, 9)

This is necessary to obtain the power of God and to make proper decisions for the Lord's work!

Mark 9:28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

3) INCORPORATE TEAM CONCEPTS IN MINISTRY. (vs 2-5)

This is not just a biblical pattern for missions but also for ministries in general. Adapt this concept in church about what happens in ministry!

Ecclesiastes 4:9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

4) BIBLE PREACHING IS WHAT CHANGES LIVES! (vs 14-41)

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

5) WAX BOLD IN THE FACE OF OPPOSITION. (vs 46)

There will always be critics and opposition. We need boldness from the Lord!

Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Ephesians 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

**6) PUBLISH THE WORD OF THE LORD THROUGHOUT ALL THE REGION.
(vs 49)**

Once again, we see the necessity of working hard. Nothing ever gets accomplished by laziness. As a church family we must dedicate ourselves to work hard to spread the Word of God!

Published means to transport and toss about. We must be the ones who carry the Word of the Lord around our region and publish it everywhere.

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

CHAPTER 14

Acts 14:1 And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

6 They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:

7 And there they preached the gospel.

8 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

9 The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

24 And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL THE REGIONS NEARBY. (vs 7, 21)

We must realize that we are responsible for everyone who lives within driving distance of our church. We need to saturate this region with the Gospel!

2) PREACH TO TURN FROM VANITIES UNTO THE LIVING GOD. (vs 15)

As pastor, I am commanded of God to preach what He wants. I should preach against vanities so that people can be closer to God!

Acts 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

3) CONFIRM THE SOULS OF OUR DISCIPLES. (vs 22)

Confirming (def) to support further, to strengthen

Disciples (def) learners

This is why it is so important to get our converts to church, so they can become “learners.”

Acts 15:32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

Acts 15:41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

Acts 18:23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

*1 Corinthians 1:7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Blameless (def) above reproach

1 Thessalonians 3:12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Unblameable (def) faultless, above reproach

Holiness (def) this is a pure quality of Christian living

1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

God does not want us to stop once people get saved. He wants us as a church to “confirm” our converts. We need to have a good “support group” for people and a good “strengthening in the Word” program.

Jesus is coming again. We need to help people prepare for His return!

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

CHAPTER 15

Acts 15:1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our

beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle:

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

33 And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

34 Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

35 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;

40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

1) TESTIMONIES OF CONVERSIONS WILL CAUSE GREAT JOY AND INCREASE OUR EFFORTS IN SOUL WINNING. (vs 3)

Psalms 111:1 Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

Psalms 109:30 I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude.

Words are powerful. We can praise God with our words and encourage the saints with testimonies of souls being saved! It is exciting to be around something that is happening for God!

2) KEEP THE GOSPEL PURE AND SIMPLE. (vs 1-2, 6-11)

Galatians 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

There are many prayers that people pray for salvation, but in my experience, it is best to

keep to the point. Never dilute it or add extras that are not necessary. Some examples are:

- Ask Jesus into your heart
- Invite Jesus into your life
- Commit your life to God
- Ask for forgiveness of all your sins
- Repent of your sins
- Tell Jesus that you will live for Him
- Ask Jesus to help your situation

*Always remember that God answers specific prayer specifically. When a person truly gets saved, he needs to specifically deal with his sin and Hell. What a person is asking Jesus to do for them is of utmost importance when getting saved. *

The basic understanding of one getting saved must be these four things:

- I admit that I have sinned.
- I understand the penalty for sin is death and Hell.
- I believe that Jesus Christ paid my sin debt for me and that only He can get me to Heaven.
- I call upon the Lord and ask Him to save me from going to Hell, putting my trust in Him to get to Heaven.

Without covering these four truths, one is not really getting saved.

3) ONCE SAVED, WE SHOULD TEACH OUR CONVERTS THE IMPORTANCE OF A PURE LIFE. (vs 28-29)

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

Ephesians 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

4) THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS THE ONLY CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING RECORDED IN SCRIPTURE.

Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

The bylaws of the church represent our faith and give us guidelines of operations in the

business aspect of our church. It is and has been my intent to follow this document completely and accurately concerning the affairs and business of our church.

This study will help all to understand the business of a church, how God expects us to operate, and for what intent and purpose. Many Christians misunderstand the business of a church. Many think the church is just coming to hear the preaching from God's Word and to do what you can for God while attending the services. There really is so much more than that and we will see what that is according to the Bible.

1. OUR PURPOSE AS A CHURCH IS TO FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

This will always be our main focus and everything we do should point directly or indirectly to the Great Commission. Many churches get sidetracked and therefore lose their right to be called a church by God's standard, which is the only standard that counts.

Revelation 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

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

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

2. EVERY MINISTRY IS TO HELP THE CHURCH TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL.

In other words, each ministry of the church is to support the church as a whole to fulfill the Great Commission. No ministry of the church was ever established to stand alone or to detract from the church. This philosophy is like that of a carriage wheel. The hub is the church and the spokes are the different ministries of the church. As the church rolls ahead, it will lean upon different ministries but all for support of the church as it rolls forward in reaching the world for Christ.

3. ALL PAID AND VOLUNTEER STAFF HAVE BEEN HIRED TO HELP THE CHURCH IN ITS MISSION.

Our bylaws state...

SECTION 4.07—PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

(A) Subject to appropriate budgetary allowance, and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire associates and assistants to assist him in carrying out his God-given responsibilities.

- (B)** All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to dismiss the same. No employee or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

Their job is to help the church fulfill the Great Commission.

4. THE BIBLE SETS THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH AS A PASTOR LED CHURCH AND FAITHFUL MEN TO ADVISE THE PASTOR.

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

BISHOP (def) An overseer; a spiritual superintendent, ruler or director.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

The Pastor is ordained by God to lead the church. The faithful men, deacons or staff men, are to be an advisory board in the affairs and business of the church. The Pastor and advisory board are not dictators nor do they make decisions solely by themselves. They recommend action to the church.

5. THE ENTIRE CHURCH FAMILY, 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER WHO ARE IN GOOD STANDING, HAS A VOTE IN ALL BUSINESS MATTERS OF THE CHURCH.

Our bylaws state...

SECTION 3.03—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- (A)** Only members at least eighteen years of age, and who are faithful in attendance, tithing and serving, shall be entitled to vote who are physically present at a duly

called meeting of the church. Proxy or absentee voting is allowed if it is submitted by the date of the called meeting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.

- (B)** This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board of deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.

Acts 15:12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

6. THE FINANCIAL ASPECT OF THE CHURCH IS HOW GOD SET UP THE CHURCH TO CARRY OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

There are four main categories of giving as stated in the Scriptures:

A) Tithes - for the operations of the local church.

B) Offerings - for specific designations such as missions, GECH, bus ministry, HBA, etc.

C) Sacrificial - for specific actions and directives of the church.

D) Alms - for the poor and needy as God leads us to help.

7. THERE ARE THREE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE FINANCES OF THE CHURCH.

1. The core church families obeying the Bible in tithes and offerings and giving sacrificially as they are able. (This is not counting on visitors or those who occasionally attend, but on the core families.)

2. Proper expenditures of the finances received so that the Great Commission can be maximized in production. (The problem often arises when leading with the heart and not the head. The advisory board can help the pastor's heart's desires become a reality with the head knowledge of how best to pursue those desires.)

3. The growing of the church attendance of adults and families so the offerings can increase and more can be accomplished in reaching the world for Christ. (This is accomplished through soul winning and outreach ministries.)

8. ALL CHURCH SERVICES SHOULD BE CENTERED AROUND BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES TO BEST ACCOMPLISH THE TASK OF THE CHURCH.

9. THE BIBLE SHOULD ALWAYS BE THE FINAL AUTHORITY OF OUR FAITH AND PRACTICE CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF OUR CHURCH.

We will always and emphatically be PEOPLE OF THE BOOK!

10. MORE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED FOR THE CAUSE OF CHRIST WHEN THE CHURCH FAMILY IS IN UNITY.

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread,

and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

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

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

*** Example Church Bylaws and Statement of Faith - See Appendix II ***

CHAPTER 16

Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:
2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.
3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.
4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.
5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.
6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,
7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.
8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.
9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.
10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.
11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;
12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.
13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.
14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.
15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.
16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:
17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.
18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.
19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,
20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,
21 And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.
22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.
23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:
24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.
25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.
26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.

38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 5) is the goal. We want to increase in number **DAILY**.

1) WE NEED TO BECOME STRONG IN THE FAITH. (vs 5)

Established (def) solidified, to make strong

Faith (def) persuasion, system of doctrine and practice

Before we can grow, we must become strong in the faith!

There are some things that the Bible teaches will make us **WEAK** in the faith. We should avoid these things and not practice them!

a. Living by the flesh.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Mark 14:38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

b. Being hopeless.

Romans 4:18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

Hope (def) expectation and confidence

c. Being judgmental or spiteful.

Romans 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

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

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

There are two wrongs mentioned in this chapter.

WRONG #1 - Judging others for that which you do not have the faith to do.

WRONG #2 - Despising those who do not share your faith.

Both are destructive to the faith and hurtful for the cause of Christ!

d. Having a weak conscience.

1 Corinthians 8:7 Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

Weak conscience (def) not having the ability to judge right and wrong accurately, having a moral compass that is faulty

Strive for a good conscience!

Acts 24:16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

e. Accepting anything as true.

2 Corinthians 13:3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

To avoid this mistake, you should:

1. Study

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

2. Try (Prove)

1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

f. Living by the traditions of men.

Galatians 4:8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

If we are established in the faith, we will increase in number daily!

2) YIELD TO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LEADING. (vs 6)

a. Be in tune with the Holy Spirit's goals and desires. (Word of God)

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

b. Do not be distracted by the things of the world. (Worldly activities and noises)

1 Corinthians 7:35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

c. Have a quiet time daily for you and God alone. (Close walk with God)

Psalms 4:3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

Matthew 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

d. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you several times a day. (Be filled with Holy Spirit)

Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

3) UNDERSTAND YOUR CALLING. (vs 10)

2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

Always remember that there is a big difference between a "calling" and a "burden." Not all burdens are a calling from God. Not all open doors are from God.

4) FIGHT THE BATTLES THAT ARE WORTH FIGHTING. (vs 18)

This may not have been necessary for Paul to fight. He wound up in prison for it. Make sure that the battles you fight are worth the outcome. Many fight needless battles and we get taken away from the purpose of the kingdom of God!

5) NEVER STOP PRAYING AND SINGING PRAISES TO GOD NO MATTER WHAT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE. (vs 25)

This may be the only thing that keeps you in the will of God during your darkest hours of life!

Psalms 22:3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Psalms 50:14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

*Psalm 34:1 I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.
3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.
4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.
5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.
6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.
7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.
8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.
9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.
10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.
11 Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good?
13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.
14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.
15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.
16 The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
17 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.
18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.
19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.
20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.
21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.
22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.*

6) NEVER FORGET WHAT OUR MAIN GOAL IS. (vs 28-34)

The reason Jesus started the church was to propagate the Gospel. We need to always be mindful of the lost souls all around us who need to be saved. We are wasting God's time if we do not see people saved because of what we do!

CHAPTER 17

Acts 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.

17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth

not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 12) is the goal!

1) KNOW THE SCRIPTURES WELL. (vs 1-4, 11)

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

It is so important to **KNOW** the Bible. In so doing, you will **KNOW** God!

2) OUR GOAL IS TO TURN OUR WORLD UPSIDE DOWN FOR CHRIST. (vs 6)

We can make a real impact and we should!

*** The Gospel to Every Creature under Heaven - See Appendix III ***

3) HAVE A STIRRED SPIRIT WITHIN FOR THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY. (vs 16)

Stirred (def) to move to action, to agitate, to excite

Exodus 35:21 And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the LORD'S offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.

Exodus 35:26 And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair.

Exodus 36:1 Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded.

2 And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:

Psalm 39:3 My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue,

Jeremiah 20:7 O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

8 For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.

9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

Haggai 1:14 And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

2 Timothy 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2 Peter 3:1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

CHAPTER 18

*Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;
2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.
3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.
4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.
5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.
6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.
7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.
8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.
9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:
10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.
11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.
12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,
13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.
14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:
15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.
16 And he drave them from the judgment seat.
17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.
18 And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.
19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.
20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;
21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.
22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.
23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.
24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.
25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.
26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.
27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:*

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 8) is the goal!

1) SPEND YOUR TIME WITH THOSE WHO WANT TO BE SAVED AND WHO WANT HELP. (vs 1-4, 11)

Be wise about your time. Be a wise investor; God is!

Daniel 2:20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

21 And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

*Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,
16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Redeeming (def) to rescue from loss

Colossians 4:5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

Matthew 7:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

2) MINISTER IN CONFIDENCE. (vs 9-10)

3) STRENGTHEN EACH OTHER. DO NOT HURT OR HINDER EACH OTHER. (vs 23)

James 3:13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

4) BE FERVENT IN SPIRIT CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (vs 24-28)

Fervent (def) earnest, excited, zealous, passionate

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Galatians 4:17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

CHAPTER 19

Acts 19:1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:

27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of

the Ephesians.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

35 And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 10, 20) is the goal!

WHAT IS NEEDED?

1) HOLY SPIRIT CONTROLLED CHRISTIANS. (vs 6)

A. Spirit controlled mind, controlled body.

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

This is when the Holy Spirit influences the mind. The mind controls the body, which is character. Thus, the Holy Spirit controls the mind and the body! This is a spiritual Christian

B. Spirit controlled body, controlled mind.

This person is saved but unproductive. He has no self-discipline. This is the average Christian!

C. Body controlled spirit, controlled mind.

This person is probably saved but their religion is all about emotion and the physical. They are probably very charismatic in their faith.

D. Mind controlled spirit, controlled body.

This person is religious but probably not saved. They will not accept what their mind does not understand. His mind determines his religion. They are more concerned about figuring God out, not believing Him. This is most of our main line denominational Christians.

E. Mind controlled body, controlled spirit.

This person usually has character and is very successful in life. They work hard and are decent citizens, but they are not saved. He excuses his lack of faith because of the lack of character he sees in Christians. He will probably go to Hell because of the poor testimonies of others.

F. Body controlled mind, controlled spirit.

This is probably the worst person of all six categories. They believe that anything goes. They live to satisfy their physical desires and are very immoral in their lifestyle and treatment of others. They have little to no use for God, the Bible or religion. Many of these are atheists and agnostics.

2) MAGNIFY THE NAME OF JESUS. (vs 17)

Magnify (def) to make great, to extol

Philippians 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

3) ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL HOUSE CLEANING. (vs 19)

Deuteronomy 18:9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13 Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.

14 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

The Word of God will grow mightily and prevail! (vs 20)

CHAPTER 20

Acts 20:1 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.

*2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,
3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.*

4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

5 These going before tarried for us at Troas.

6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.

14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,

21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

34 Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.

37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him,

38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

(vs 28, 32) The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth but the SPIRITUAL growth of the church. The way to accomplish this is:

- a. **FEED** the church
- b. **BUILD** the church
- c. **GIVE** a future inheritance

HOW TO ACCOMPLISH THIS

1) THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE PREACHING. (vs 7-12)

Isaiah 58:1 Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

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

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

2 Corinthians 4:1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*

4 *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

2) THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE TEACHING. (vs 17-21)

Matthew 11:1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

Matthew 5:19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Matthew 22:16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.*

26 *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.*

27 *And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:*

28 *For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.*

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

3) THE IMPORTANCE OF FINISHING WHAT GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO DO. (vs 24)

2 *Chronicles 8:16 Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was perfected.*

Nehemiah 6:15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.

Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

29 *Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,*

30 *Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.*

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

4) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD. (vs 27)

Isaiah 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

11 Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Jeremiah 23:22 But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

5) THE IMPORTANCE OF WARNING OF ENEMIES FROM WITHIN. (vs 28-31)

The church of Jesus Christ cannot be defeated from **WITHOUT** but it can be defeated from **WITHIN!**

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 12:25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

CHAPTER 21

Acts 21:1 And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara:

2 And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.

3 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden.

4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.

6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.

7 And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

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

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

16 There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

18 And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.

19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

22 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.

23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;

24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people.

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

37 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?

38 Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

39 But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth but the ability to SUSTAIN the growth that has taken place. It is one thing to grow, and it is an entirely different thing to sustain growth.

1) FAMILIES SERVING GOD TOGETHER. (vs 8-9)

Joshua 24:14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Genesis 18:19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Lasting growth is sustained because the family is on the same page together. We are not interested in temporary growth. We want generational growth if the Lord carries His

return. If that is to be accomplished, we need to serve God together as families. The children need to “buy into” our faith and serve God themselves when they become adults. The church family is made up of individual families. If the families are strong spiritually, the church will likewise be strong spiritually.

2) PREPARE FOR ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING. (vs 13)

Romans 1:15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

1 Samuel 7:3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroath from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

Proverbs 24:27 Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

Isaiah 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Amos 4:12 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

There are certain things for which we must prepare in order for our church to sustain growth.

A. Prepare for problems before they come.

Anticipate them and you will be better able to deal with them.

B. Prepare for Satan’s attacks.

You do this by being alert and always having on the armor of God!

2 Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

C. Prepare for days of famine.

This is the “Joseph Principle.” He prepared seven years for the seven years of famine and they survived.

D. Prepare your heart for disappointment.

This is so that **disappointment** will not turn into **discouragement**, which will inevitably turn into **despair**, and then lastly into **disqualification**.

E. Prepare for God to do a great work in case he wants to.

God has a prepared place and a prepared job for the prepared person and the prepared church!

Luke 19:17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

CHAPTER 22

Acts 22:1 Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)

3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,

13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;

18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou

doest: for this man is a Roman.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.

29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) USE YOUR TESTIMONY FOR GOD. (vs 3-21)

a. Your testimony is the greatest tool, outside of the Bible, to use when leading others to Christ.

John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

b. Use your testimony of dedication and service to encourage others to be as well.

Acts 2:40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Acts 26:4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;

5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

2 Corinthians 11:22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.*

24 *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.*

25 *Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

26 *In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;*

27 *In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*

28 *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*

29 *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?*

30 *If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*

31 *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.*

32 *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:*

33 *And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.*

2) SURRENDER TO THE LORD'S CALLING FOR YOUR LIFE. (vs 17-21)

Galatians 1:13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

14 *And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.*

15 *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,*

16 *To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:*

17 *Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.*

18 *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.*

19 *But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.*

20 *Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.*

21 *Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;*

22 *And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:*

23 *But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.*

24 *And they glorified God in me.*

a. God has a unique calling for your life.

b. Let God use you for how He made you to be used.

CHAPTER 23

Acts 23:1 And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

2 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?

4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest?

5 Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.

10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me?

20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me.

23 And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Caesarea,

and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night;
24 And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor.
25 And he wrote a letter after this manner:
26 Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting.
27 This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman.
28 And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council:
29 Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.
30 And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him. Farewell.
31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris.
32 On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle:
33 Who, when they came to Caesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.
34 And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia;
35 I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) GOD WILL STAND BY US IF WE TESTIFY OF HIM BEFORE OTHERS. (vs 11)

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

Isaiah 43:1 But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

2 When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

3 For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

Psalms 119:46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

Matthew 10:27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 *Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.*

32 *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*

33 *But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

2 *Timothy 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

7 *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

8 *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;*

9 *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*

2) NO MATTER WHO TRIES TO STOP THE WORK OF GOD, THEY WILL NOT PREVAIL. (Vs 12-24)

Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

11 *Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.*

12 *Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.*

13 *For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.*

14 *Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.*

Jeremiah 1:17 Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

18 *For, behold, I have made thee this day a fenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.*

19 *And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.*

Jeremiah 15:20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

21 *And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.*

Jeremiah 20:11 But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

CHAPTER 24

Acts 24:1 And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.

2 And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence,

3 We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words.

5 For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:

6 Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.

7 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands,

8 Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.

9 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.

10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

11 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.

12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.

20 Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

22 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.

23 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

26 He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a

pleasure, left Paul bound.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) WE NEED TO WORSHIP GOD ACCORDING TO WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE SCRIPTURES. (vs 14)

Worship (def) to minister to God, to serve

Matthew 4:10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Luke 2:37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

Romans 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

Hebrews 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

*Hebrews 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:
29 For our God is a consuming fire.*

2) WE NEED TO ALWAYS LIVE WITH THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD IN MIND. (vs 15)

*Job 19:25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:
26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*

Daniel 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

2 Corinthians 5:6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

3) TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH THE LOST. (vs 24-25)

*Romans 1:14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.
15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.*

1 Peter 3:14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

CHAPTER 25

Acts 25:1 Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3 And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.

4 But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly thither.

5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

6 And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all.

9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.

13 And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus.

14 And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix:

15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.

16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.

17 Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth.

18 Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed:

19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

20 And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.

21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar.

22 Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

23 And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

24 And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer.

25 But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write.

27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) LIVE ABOVE REPROACH. (vs 7-8, 10-11)

Reproach (def) to have fault, to have blame, shame, disgrace

A) The pastors need to live blameless and above reproach.

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Blameless (def) without fault, innocent, guiltless

B) The leaders of the church need to live above reproach.

1 Timothy 3:8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

C) Certain corporate sins will bring reproach upon a church.

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

This verse is in reference to sins of a nation or corporate body of people. In other words, the sin of abortion is a reproach to our country. Likewise, the sin of gossip would be a reproach to a church family.

D) Certain sins bring reproach.

Proverbs 6:32 But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it

destroyeth his own soul.

33 A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

Proverbs 19:26 He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

E) Our good should never be “evil spoken of.”

Romans 14:16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

F) Our only reproach should be that we are associated with Christ.

Luke 6:22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Hebrews 13:12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

1 Peter 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

*** The requirements for the offices of pastor and deacon - See Appendix IV ***

*** Biblical names for the man of God and a Christian's relationship to God's man - See Appendix V ***

CHAPTER 26

Acts 26:1 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:

3 Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;

5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:

7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them:

31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) ACCEPT CORRECTION. (vs 13-18)

Psalm 141:5 Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Proverbs 3:11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: 12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Proverbs 15:10 Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.

Proverbs 15:32 He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

Jeremiah 5:1 Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

2 And though they say, The LORD liveth; surely they swear falsely.

3 O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2) BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR HEAVENLY VISION. (vs 19)

Isaiah 50:4 The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

5 The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

Jeremiah 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

Jonah 1:1 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.
3 But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

4 But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

3) CONTINUE ON FOR GOD. (vs 20-23)

1 Samuel 12:14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:

15 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Acts 13:43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Romans 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Colossians 1:22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

1 Timothy 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

2 Timothy 3:14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

CHAPTER 27

Acts 27:1 And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

2 And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

3 And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.

4 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.

5 And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;

8 And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.

14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat:

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

18 And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;

19 And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26 Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;

28 And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.

29 Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and

wished for the day.

30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34 Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.

37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) RECEIVE THE COUNSEL OF GOD'S MAN. (vs 13-18)

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

God calls the pastor the **Elder** to describe one of his roles. The title elder means "one who is to guide the flock by counsel and instruction."

It is very dangerous to go against the counsel of God's man. It is very prosperous to receive that counsel.

2 Chronicles 20:20 And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

2) BELIEVE THAT GOD WILL DO AS HE HAS SAID. (vs 22-25)

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath

he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Romans 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

2 Timothy 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

3) STAY IN THE “SHIP.” (vs 31)

Never leave a ship during a storm. Never let circumstances and the storms of life cause you to “abandon ship.” Don’t be a “flee-er” but rather be a “stay-er!”

Nehemiah 6:1 Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

10 Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.

11 And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

13 Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

15 So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.

16 And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

4) GOD WILL BRING US THROUGH OUR STORMS. (vs 44)

2 Timothy 4:16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER 28

Acts 28:1 And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita.

2 And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

8 And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

9 So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed:

10 Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary.

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.

12 And landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days.

13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:

14 Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word,

Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

We will look at some more basic truths that need to be practiced if we are to have the blessing of God upon our ministry.

The Goal of this chapter is not NUMERICAL growth as a church but the ability to be used of God as an INDIVIDUAL in His kingdom.

1) BE KIND TO EVERYONE, NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH YOU FIND YOURSELF. (vs 1–10)

People should think well of you after you leave their presence. You should be kind to everybody because everybody is having a tough time. Don't let your negative circumstances cause you to treat others negatively.

1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

2 Samuel 9:1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.

3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.

4 And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of

Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar.

5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.

6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

2) UNDERSTAND THAT OUR FAITH WILL BE SPOKEN AGAINST EVERYWHERE. (vs 22)

1 Peter 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1 Peter 3:16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

3) KNOW THE BIBLE WELL ENOUGH TO TEACH OTHERS THE WAY OF GOD. (vs 23-31)

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

1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

APPENDIX I

~THERE ARE FIVE CATEGORIES OF GIVING MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE~

1) TITHING

A. God commands us to bring His tithe to His house.

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

B. Abraham tithed before Moses wrote the law.

Genesis 14:18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

C. In the law, God tells us that the tithe is the Lord's.

Leviticus 27:30 And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.

D. We should tithe the "first fruits" of all our increase.

Proverbs 3:9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

E. Jesus told people not to leave the tithe undone.

Matthew 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

F. We will tithe in Heaven.

Hebrews 7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

It is foolish to think that somehow in the church age God doesn't expect us to tithe when people tithed before the church age and we will tithe for all eternity in Heaven, after the church age.

2) OFFERINGS

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

The first 10% of all that we have belongs to the Lord. The 90% left over is at our disposal to do with as we wish (never anything sinful.) This is where the offerings come from. This should be given of our free will.

Ezra 7:16 And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem:

3) SACRIFICIAL

A. All your living (paycheck)

Mark 12:41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

B. All of what you sell or donate

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

4) ALMS

Matthew 6:1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

This is giving privately to those who are in need.

5) GRACE GIVING

2 Corinthians 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves;

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

This is giving to your ability to give and beyond your ability to give as the Lord enables.

APPENDIX II

THE BYLAWS OF THE HOPEWELL BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

LONGMONT, COLORADO

Adopted April 27, 2022

ARTICLE 1 NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1.01—NAME

This congregation of believers shall be known as HOPEWELL BAPTIST CHURCH. It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of COLORADO.

SECTION 1.02—PURPOSE

- (A) This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country, the building, maintaining and operating of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, day care centers, camps, nursing homes, and cemeteries, and any other ministries that the church may be led of God to establish.
- (B) The church shall also ordain men and license men to the Gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; educate believers with a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, in Sunday, weekday schools of Christian Education, and in our Bible Institute; maintain missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country; and engage in any other ministry that the church may decide, from time to time, to pursue in obedience to the will of God.
- (C) The church, now and in the future, shall not become officially connected with any convention or association of churches, but shall remain as independent, self-governing body which conducts its business in accordance with the Word of God, (but may choose to fellowship with churches or pastors of like faith).

ARTICLE 2 STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH

- (A) **The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Old and New Testament Scriptures are the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God and have been perfectly preserved in the King James Version of 1611. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and are, therefore, the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the pastor. The King James Version of the Bible shall be the official and only translation used by the church. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Ps 12:6-7)

- (B) **Dispensationalism.** We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life that define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the law, the church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture. (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6)
- (C) **The Godhead.** We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, coequal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Cor. 13:14)
- (D) **The Person and Work of Christ.**
- (1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8)
 - (2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His shed blood and death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5)
 - (3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2)
- (E) **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.**
- (1) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14)
 - (2) We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)
 - (3) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the church to do the work of the ministry. (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12)
 - (4) We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing, had a particular purpose in their time but are still available for us today but not in the way most are carrying them out today. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or the filling if the Holy Spirit and that ultimate deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Cor. 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

- (F) **The Total Depravity of Man.** We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19)
- (G) **Salvation.** We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the payment of our sins. We must of our own free will call upon the Lord to save us from going to Hell. We do not believe that God predetermined who would go to Heaven and Hell. (John 1:12; Rom. 10:9-10, 13; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 22:17)
- (H) **The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.**
- (1) We believe that once a person is saved, he is kept by God's power and remains secure in Christ forever. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1; 38-39; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; 1 Pet. 1:4-5)
 - (2) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)
- (I) **The Church**
- (1) We believe that the local church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again believers. (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27)
 - (2) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
 - (3) We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or controls, and any affiliations, societies, organizations, associations, or agencies this church affiliates with to further the objectives stated in the Purpose Statement are not authoritative in matters of church practice or belief. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)
 - (4) We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)
- (J) **Separation.** We believe that believers should maintain a godly testimony and live in such a way that their lives do not bring reproach upon their Saviour. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and to refrain from all immodest and immoderate appearances, piercings, and bodily markings. We stand against any and all worldly philosophies that seek to destroy or undermine the truth of Biblical Christianity. (Lev. 19:28; Rom. 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11)
- (K) **The Second Coming of Christ.** We believe in that *blessed hope*, the personal, imminent return of Christ, Who will rapture His church prior to the seven-year Day of the Lord. At the end of the Day of the Lord, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom, which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; 1 Thess. 1:10, 4:13-18, 5:1-4; Tit. 2:13; II Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

- (L) **The Eternal State.**
- (1) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matt. 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13)
 - (2) We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6)
 - (3) We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15)
- (M) **The Personality of Satan.** We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10)
- (N) **Creation.** We believe that the Genesis account of creation is neither allegory nor myth, but a literal, historical account of God's creation of the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11)
- (O) **Civil Government.** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. (Matt. 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14)
- (P) **Human Sexuality.**
- (1) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. Any employee of the church becoming pregnant or causing pregnancy as a result of consensual intercourse, outside of the marriage relationship, shall be terminated from employment as well as any employee engaging in any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, or pornography. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5,13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4)
 - (2) We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one naturally-born man and one naturally-born woman for life. (Gen. 2:24; Rom 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23)

(Q) Family Relationships

- (1)** We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12)
- (2)** We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including Scriptural corporal correction. (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)
- (R) Divorce and remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. Although divorced and remarried persons or divorced persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor or deacon. (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6)
- (S) Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)
- (T) Euthanasia.** We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28)
- (U) Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward those who are not believers, those who oppose us, and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge, or the threat or use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such sinful actions. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 John 3:17-18)
- (V) Lawsuits Between Believers.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17).

- (W) **Missions.** We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:20)
- (X) **Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to financially support his local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

SECTION 2.02—AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

SECTION 2.03—COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of our Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the truth of God's Word; to seek the salvation of our families, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid backbiting, tattling, excessive anger, and all gossip or secretive meetings regarding personal issues of church members, church leadership or practice; to abstain from such worldly amusements as watching ungodly movies, gambling, rock music, and dancing; to be free from all oath-bound secret societies and partnerships with unbelievers; to abstain from the abuse of drugs and the sale or use of pornography, intoxicating drink or tobacco in any form; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure reconciliation without delay.

We moreover engage, that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.01—QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein; and who enter into the church covenant contained herein; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- (A) By baptism (immersion) at this local church following a profession of faith as a believer in Christ Jesus as personal Saviour;
- (B) By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
- (C) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion in another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice; or
- (D) By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

SECTION 3.02—DUTIES OF A MEMBER

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the covenant contained in Section 2.03, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize his authority in the spiritual and day-to-day affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church.

SECTION 3.03—PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- (A) Only members at least eighteen years of age, and who are faithful in attendance, tithing and serving, shall be entitled to vote who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church. Proxy or absentee voting is allowed if it is submitted by the date of the called meeting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons.
- (B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board of deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.

- (C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor, (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons), be treated as a trespasser.
- (D) A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church and committee meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date. Minutes from deacon board and discipline committee meetings are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy.
 - (1) A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of the church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church.
 - (2) The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

SECTION 3.04—DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

- (A) There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastor and the board of deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the church covenant. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The pastor and deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- (B) Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders the spiritual growth and testimony of an individual in the local church or the body as a whole, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- (C) If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or the pastor, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- (D) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives Biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
- (E) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action. The member subject to disciplinary action is not entitled to vote on his/her own discipline.

- (F) No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
- (G) If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, members of the church should have no social contact with him, and any contact from that point forward (except by family members) must be for the sake of restoration. Persons placed under church discipline must immediately return any property belonging to the church.
- (H) The procedures provided in this section are based on Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

SECTION 3.05—TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.04 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.

SECTION 3.06—AUTOMATIC TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- (A) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular service of the church in the preceding six months. Excluded from this termination provision are such persons as college students, military personnel, shut-ins, missionaries, evangelists or others who are legitimately unable to regularly attend services. Upon good cause being shown to the pastor, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastor.
- (B) No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.
- (C) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the deacons or pastor become aware of a member's open and unrepentant involvement in any sexual misconduct described in Section 2.01(P) or if a member files a lawsuit in violation of Section 2.01(V).
- (D) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member openly and unashamedly disagrees with any provision found in the Statement of Faith.
- (E) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in a spirit of dissension actively engages in secretive discussions and/or intentionally organized, secretive meetings in a concerted effort to overthrow the pastor or present church leadership.
- (F) The membership of an individual will automatically terminate upon his or her death.
- (G) No provision contained in this section shall be subject to or governed by the procedures regarding discipline of members set forth in Section 3.04.
- (H) A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor.

SECTION 3.07-- AFFILIATED CO-LABORER

Those desiring fellowship, accountability and opportunities for service with this assembly on a temporary basis but who maintain active membership in a like body of believers outside this city, may be granted affiliated co-laborer status with this church. The affiliated co-laborer may be eligible to serve in certain capacities determined by the pastor and deacons, and may attend fellowship events granted for members. In no way, however, does this affiliation grant membership or the rights of membership to the individual(s) so granted. Affiliated co-laborers shall not be entitled to hold any office, vote in or have any say in any church matter, and shall not be counted for quorum purposes. A person wishing to become an affiliated co-laborer with this assembly must request so of the pastor, who will, in consultation with the deacons if necessary, decide if affiliated co-laborer status may be granted to the individual. If the pastor so determines, the person may be granted such upon a majority vote of the church membership at any public service or church administration meeting.

**ARTICLE 4
OFFICERS**

SECTION 4.01—CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are pastor, deacon, church secretary, financial secretary (or minister of finance) and church treasurer. One person may hold two or more offices, except that the church treasurer and financial secretary may not be the same person. Officers of the church must be elected by a majority of the present, voting membership at a regular church administration meeting. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to a majority confirmation vote by present, voting church members at any regular or special church administrative meeting.

SECTION 4.02—DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation and as secretary of the corporation. The pastor and board of deacons shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation.

SECTION 4.03—GENERAL ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL OFFICERS

- (A) The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith set forth in Article 2. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith.
- (B) All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices.
- (C) Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position. Affiliated co-laborers with this ministry are not eligible for such election or appointment.
- (D) Upon termination of membership any officer of the church shall immediately forfeit his position and return any church property to the church.

SECTION 4.04—TERMS OF OFFICE

- (A) The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular or special church administration meeting by following the procedures outlined in 6.04, provided notice of the meeting shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to the meeting. A two-thirds majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required

to sever the relationship between the pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01(D).

- (B) The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor, shall be one year, at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- (C) A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting by a majority vote of present members.
- (D) All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.
- (E) Members of the board of deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of deacons.

SECTION 4.05-- CALLING A PASTOR

Upon the resignation, death or dismissal of the Pastor, the church shall seek a candidate who subscribes to the Statement of Faith, the Covenant and bylaw provisions of this church, and whose life aligns with the qualifications of a pastor as described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The church shall abide by the following guidelines for calling a pastor:

- (A) The deacons shall select a pulpit committee to consist of all deacons and up to five other members elected by a simple majority of the deacons. The pulpit committee shall interview potential candidates and will only consider men who completely subscribe to the Statement of Faith and Covenant contained herein;
- (B) Prior to being announced to the congregation as a formal candidate, any man being considered for pastoral candidate must preach at least one Sunday service. Thereafter, upon a majority vote of the deacons, the pulpit committee may formally announce the candidate to the church, after which the candidate must preach at least two regularly scheduled services and be available for a church-wide question/answer time prior to being voted upon by the congregation;
- (C) Notice from the pulpit must be given 2 consecutive Sundays prior to a formal candidate's preaching services, and 2 consecutive Sundays prior to the church congregational vote;
- (D) The candidate must be elected as Pastor by a two-thirds vote of qualified, present voting members. The pulpit committee will only present for consideration to the church one candidate at a time, and an up or down vote must be cast prior to consideration of other potential candidates.

SECTION 4.06—ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of January at the annual church administration meeting. The Pastor and Deacons shall serve as a nominating committee for all general elections.

SECTION 4.07—PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

- (A) Subject to appropriate budgetary allowance, and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire associates and assistants to assist him in carrying out his God-given responsibilities.
- (B) All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to dismiss the same. No employee or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

**ARTICLE 5
DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS**

SECTION 5.01—THE PASTOR

- (A) The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.
- (B) The pastor shall appoint the members of the various committees at the annual church administration meeting or, in the case of a vacancy or newly created committee, at other duly called special meetings. He shall serve as the president of the corporation. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the function and responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and shall perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry God has given him.
- (C) All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated appointments, shall be under the control of the pastor, who shall be able to determine the appropriateness of practices as well as persons permitted to use the church property.
- (D) The pastor shall be responsible to fill the pulpit for each regularly scheduled church service as well as any special services. In the event of his absence, he (or the chairman of the deacon board in the case of a vacancy in the office of pastor or where the pastor is ill and unable to perform his duties) shall be responsible to invite speakers from within the membership or outside the church to preach in a manner consistent with the beliefs articulated in the Statement of Faith.
- (E) The pastor shall be responsible, in coordination with the deacons, to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs involving minors.

SECTION 5.02—THE BOARD OF DEACONS

- (A) The board of deacons shall assist the pastor, in such manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the church services, and in performing all other work of the church. The deacons are responsible for making preparations to observe church ordinances and shall, if requested by the pastor, consider applications for church membership and affiliated co-laborers. They shall disburse the benevolence fund in cooperation with the pastor, and shall assist him in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The board of deacons shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries. They shall provide the pulpit supply and choose a moderator for church meetings if the pastor is unavailable or the office of pastor is vacant. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the board of deacons may appoint a pulpit committee.

- (B) Immediately following the annual church administration meeting, the board of deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman who shall be vice president of the corporation, a vice chairman, and a secretary.
- (C) The pastor and the board of deacons shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation. The board of directors shall exercise only the following specific powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present at a duly called church administration meeting:
 - (1) To purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church;
 - (2) To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges; and
 - (3) To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.
 - (4) All powers of the directors, (whether deacons or other appointed group) shall be compatible with the laws of the state of Colorado.

SECTION 5.03—CHURCH SECRETARY

The church secretary shall:

- (A) Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the bylaws, minutes of meetings, the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination and license; and deliver such documents to successor upon leaving office;
- (B) Keep minutes of all church administration and deacon meetings (unless a separate secretary of deacons has been elected or appointed), including the time and place of holding, the notice given, and the names of those present (unless a church-wide meeting), and an accurate record of all church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as a permanent record of the church and shall be made available at all reasonable times to proper person on terms provided by law and pursuant to these bylaws.
- (C) Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law; see that reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed;
- (D) See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. (In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the chairman of the board of deacons.);
- (E) Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year;

- (F) Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office; and
- (G) Serve as the secretary of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

SECTION 5.04—FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The financial secretary shall:

- (A) Count, along with other persons so appointed, and record in a permanent record all the monies received in offerings for the church. This shall be done following each service or day of services of the church.
- (B) Convey in a timely manner all funds received to the treasurer for verification and deposit in the bank, including moneys received from outside sources, and shall provide the treasurer with a record of all monies received, specifying the distribution into various funds as designated. A copy shall be provided to the pastor each week or upon request.
- (C) Maintain a permanent weekly record of individual giving for all donations, offerings, contributions and gifts, and shall guard said records confidentially as a sacred trust. The financial secretary shall issue an official receipt to each contributor quarterly and at the end of the fiscal year.
- (D) The chairman of the deacons may assume the duties of the financial secretary in the absence of a financial secretary, unless already serving in the capacity of the treasurer.

SECTION 5.05-- TREASURER

The Treasurer shall:

- (A) Keep in the church office an accurate and permanent record of all financial transactions of church funds. Make reports of itemized disbursements and the financial condition of the church as requested by pastor and deacons, and for annual, quarterly or otherwise special or regular administration meetings; deliver such records to successor upon leaving office;
- (B) Verify all funds received from the church financial secretary, and deposit these and all other funds received in appropriate amounts at an approved banking facility or trust company as shall be selected by the pastor or board of deacons.
- (C) Write, sign, record, and mail checks in payment of church bills and routine expenses approved by the pastor and/or deacons as well as disburse funds and salaries as directed by the church or the budget adopted by the members of the Church at the annual Church administration meeting.
- (D) At least two directors of this corporation shall be authorized to sign church checks in the treasurer's absence. No expenditures of the church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) shall be made by cash.
- (E) Serve as treasurer of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

SECTION 5.06—ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, the associate pastor(s) of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church.

SECTION 5.07—DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

- (A) All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual church administration meeting and shall surrender all records in their possession to the church clerk at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.
- (B) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the pastor, and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the un-expired term.

SECTION 5.08—INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

A public installation service in which all newly elected officers of the church are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of newly elected deacons shall be held at a public church service following their election at the annual church administration meeting.

**ARTICLE 6
MEETINGS**

SECTION 6.01—MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the church shall meet each Sunday for public services both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer.

SECTION 6.02—MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

- (A) The annual church administration meeting, for the election of officers and the transaction of other business, shall be held in January. A quorum shall consist of the members present. Public notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.
- (B) The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. The following order shall be observed at the regular church administration meetings:
 1. Regular church service has concluded
 2. Reading of minutes
 3. Report of officers and or committees
 4. Unfinished matters if any
 5. Election of officers
 6. New matters
 7. Adjournment
 8. Prayer
- (C) For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the

disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 3.03(C) and treat the person as a trespasser.

SECTION 6.03—SPECIAL MEETINGS

- (A) The pastor (or deacons if the office of pastor is vacant or the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Sections 4.04(A) and 4.05.
- (B) Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.

SECTION 6.04—MOTIONS

Members who desire that a certain motion be made or subject matter be discussed during an annual, regular, or special business meeting must file a written recommendation with the pastor and deacons two weeks prior to the set meeting. The church leadership will then consider the proposal and proceed according to their conscience and what they understand to be in the best interests of the church. All other motions will be presented by the pastor and/or chairman of the board of deacons (or other moderator if the office of pastor is vacant) unless the pastor and/or deacons has delegated authority to another member and/or officer to raise certain motions.

SECTION 6.05—FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

SECTION 6.06—EXTRA-BUDGET EXPENDITURES

The treasurer may, in the ordinary course of his duties, make or authorize the making of any expenditure or obligation in any amount not exceeding One Hundred dollars (\$100). The pastor and board of deacons may make or authorize the making of any expenditure or obligation in any amount not exceeding Five Hundred dollars (\$500). The membership may make or authorize the making of any expenditure or obligation in any amount whatsoever.

SECTION 6.07—EMERGENCY EXPENDITURES

The pastor and the board of deacons may, in an emergency situation, make or approve the making of any expenditure or obligation exceeding the limit imposed on them in Section 6.06 under the following conditions:

- (A) The pastor and the board of deacons, by a majority vote, must determine that the matter is of such urgency that it cannot wait until the next regular meeting of the membership or until a special meeting can be held.
- (B) Before making any decision, the pastor and the board of deacons shall make a good faith effort to obtain the opinions of as many of the members as can be reached. The actual decision shall then be taken at a meeting of the pastor and the board of deacons, any action requiring the approval of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the board.
- (C) The pastor shall report the action taken by the pastor and the board of deacons to the next meeting of the members for approval. If the members refuse to approve, the action shall be reversed insofar as possible, but the pastor and the board of deacons shall not be personally liable

for such action, provided that they have, in good faith, followed the procedures set forth in this section.

SECTION 6.08—VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Should any circumstance require, the pastor (or chairman of the deacons if the office of pastor is vacant) may choose to hold any annual, regular, or special meeting through virtual means (including but not limited to videoconferencing and/or telephonic methods). The chosen means of holding the meeting can vary depending on need and availability but must provide for simultaneous aural communication of all participants at all times.

The pastor (or chairman of the deacons if the office of pastor is vacant) retains the exclusive right to authorize virtual attendance at any annual, regular, or special meeting as needed. Virtual attendance is not automatically permitted at annual, regular, or special meetings unless specifically authorized.

If a virtual meeting is authorized, notice of said virtual meeting will be sent via e-mail to all members not less than ten days prior to the meeting date. This notice will include not only the date and time of the meeting, but the method via which the meeting will be held and any information necessary for every member to virtually attend and participate.

If the virtual meeting is held, each member will be solely responsible to obtain the necessary equipment and technology to participate in the virtual meeting, including but not limited to a stable internet connection. If a member fails to keep a stable connection to the virtual meeting for any reason that is not in the control of Hopewell Baptist Church, if a member fails to provide a current email address for notice, or if a member fails to obtain all that is needed for their virtual access to meetings, then said failure(s) acts as a voluntary forfeit of the member's right to participate in any fashion in the virtual meeting, including the forfeiting of voting privileges.

Virtual meetings will be held to the same rules of procedure set forth for in-person meetings in Article 6, including the rules for quorum and the authority of the moderator (including the ability to exclude any member present from the virtual meeting who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive for any reason). No recording of any type of any virtual meeting is allowed without express written consent from the pastor (or chairman of the deacons if the office of pastor is vacant). All virtual meetings are to be attended by members only, unless a nonmember is specifically invited by the pastor (or chairman of the deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

ARTICLE 7 EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

SECTION 7.1—PURPOSE

The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To help fulfill this responsibility of imparting biblical truth and furthering the Great Commission, this church shall establish and maintain an educational program for the purpose of winning souls to Christ, and teaching Bible doctrine, godly worship, and biblical Christian living. In order to assist the church's families with their obligations to Biblically train their children, the church shall operate a Sunday school program, a Christian Day school and a Bible Institute in keeping with the following dictates.

SECTION 7.2—PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit non-church

members to participate and enroll their children in the church's educational programs, including the Christian Day school, or other courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

SECTION 7.3—STAFF MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, staff, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis. The pastor may secure the services of other Christians from other ministries to teach or preach in the Bible Institute.

SECTION 7.4—AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT OF FAITH

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full agreement with the Statement of Faith of this church. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith or who adopts or lives a lifestyle inconsistent with the beliefs and practices of Statement of the Faith, whether in or out of the classroom.

SECTION 7.5—UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.

SECTION 7.6—TEACHING

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

SECTION 7.7—HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY

- (A) The pastor shall be the final authority on all matters relating to the educational ministries of the church, including any decisions or recommendations by the board of deacons.
- (B) All staff shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to hire, appoint, or dismiss the same. Subject to budgetary allowances and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming duties, the pastor may hire administrators, principals, teachers and support staff to assist the pastor in carrying out the ministry of education. Those who teach in our Bible Institute from other ministries do not have to become a member of this church in order to receive allowances.
- (C) The board of deacons shall assist and advise the pastor on all matters relating to the ministry of education, including the creation and recommendation of school policies consistent with the provisions herein. The board of deacons shall act as the school board and Bible Institute board and shall hear all matters and disputes which may arise out of the ministry of education and shall advise the pastor accordingly. All recommendations of the board of deacons shall be submitted to the pastor for final approval prior to becoming effective.

ARTICLE 8 ORDINATION AND LICENSING

SECTION 8.01—ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

- (A) Any male member who meets the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be considered for ordination as a minister of the Gospel. Candidates for ordination must be members of this local assembly or one of its mission churches. No other persons may be ordained by this church.
- (B) The candidate must have an experience of conversion, a divine call to the ministry, a consistent Christian walk, a vital concern for the souls of men and for the edification of the church at home and abroad.
- (C) The candidate must affirm his unequivocal adherence to the Statement of Faith set forth in Article 2 of these bylaws. His doctrinal position on matters not specifically addressed in the Statement of Faith must be based on the Scriptures as the Word of God.
- (D) Graduation from a four-year Bible college, or its equivalent, or our local Bible Institute is recommended. Any uncertainty as to his calling or other obvious disqualifications should bar a man from ordination regardless of educational attainments.
- (E) All persons licensed or ordained by this church must be Baptists who accept the historic Baptist distinctives in all matters pertaining to church order and practice.
- (F) A Bible college or seminary graduate should spend at least one year after graduation engaged exclusively in preaching and pastoral work before being considered for ordination. Exceptions to this rule will be made when the candidate has had adequate pastoral experience before and during his formal biblical education, or when he must seek early ordination to satisfy requirements for pastoral service of a mission church, missionary service or chaplaincy.

SECTION 8.02—ORDINATION PROCEDURES

- (A) Upon a majority vote at a duly noticed church administration meeting, the church may call an ordination council for the purpose of considering the qualifications for the ordination candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers of like faith invited by the pastor to participate in the examination of the candidate.
- (B) After organizing itself the council will examine the candidate with respect to his spiritual experience, call to the ministry and view of Christian doctrine and Baptist distinctives. The council should take its responsibility seriously and examine the candidate carefully. The outcome of the examination will be a recommendation to the church whether or not to ordain. If the council recommends ordination, the church shall vote to adopt or reject the council's recommendation at a duly noticed church administration meeting.
- (C) If the candidate is recommended for ordination by the council and the church adopts the recommendation, the pastor and the chairman of the deacons shall arrange for the ordination service. The following parts are usually included in the ordination service: Introduction consisting of the reading of Scripture relating to the qualifications for ordination, prayer, special music and reading of the determination of the examining council; Ordination charge to the

church; Ordination prayer accompanied by laying on of hands by the council; Charge to the candidate; Benediction by the newly ordained minister.

SECTION 8.03—REVOCATION OF ORDINATION

- (A) Should a minister ordained by the church be found living a life unbecoming a servant of the Lord or preaching and teaching contrary to the Word of God, the pastor may call a council to hear the charges and the minister's defense.
- (B) The reviewing council shall consist of the board of deacons and ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the hearing of the charges and the minister's defense.
- (C) Upon a recommendation by a majority vote of the council, the church will then revoke the minister's ordination certificate.

SECTION 8.04—LICENSE

- (A) Those who desire to prepare for the gospel ministry may be issued a license to preach by this church after the pastor and board of deacons have examined the candidate's divine call and qualifications.
- (B) The pastor and the board of deacons may license an associate or assistant pastor as a preliminary step to ordination at a later date.
- (C) A license to the ministry shall be considered the equivalent to ordination, but shall be considered probationary in nature. It is expected that the licensed minister will be considered for ordination within four years of being licensed but it is not a requirement for licensure.

ARTICLE 9 INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 9.01—ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

- (A) The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful.
- (B) The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

SECTION 9.02—EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent that a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses,

including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

SECTION 9.03—LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 9.01. This determination of good-faith intent shall be made (a) by a majority vote of the quorum consisting of pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

SECTION 9.04—TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of deacons in the specific case, so long as the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent agrees to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

SECTION 9.05—EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

SECTION 9.06—INSURANCE

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 10 COMMITTEES

SECTION 10.01—STANDING COMMITTEES

The pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant) shall appoint standing committees as he deems appropriate and shall designate a chairperson and the membership for each standing committee except when otherwise specifically provided in these bylaws.

SECTION 10.02—SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The board of deacons, in its discretion, may create special committees to provide the board with advice and information regarding matters submitted to the committee by the board for consideration. The committee shall have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. Nominations for special committee members shall be made by the pastor or such persons as he shall appoint to make such nominations. The members of the committee shall be chosen by a majority vote of the board of deacons

and shall serve solely at the pleasure of the board of deacons. The special committee shall be subject to the control and direction of the board of deacons at all times.

SECTION 10.03— ACTIONS OF COMMITTEES

Committees, whether standing or special, have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. Their primary function is to research and recommend. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the pastor or deacons, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee. Each committee shall have a secretary that keeps minutes of each meeting and shall timely submit the minutes to the pastor and church clerk to be filed with church records. If deemed appropriate by the pastor and deacons, the committee secretary, in conjunction with the chairman, shall submit an annual report to the church of the decisions and plans of the committee.

**ARTICLE 11
DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS**

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. All contributions to these funds shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature and shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the board of deacons. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of its tax-exempt purposes stated in Section 1.02.

**ARTICLE 12
BINDING ARBITRATION**

SECTION 12.01—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

SECTION 12.02—NOTICE OF ARBITRATION

- (A) In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians and in accord with Matthew 5:15-17.
- (B) To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution.
- (C) If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 12.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 12.04, below.

SECTION 12.03—LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS

- (A) Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline, as outlined under Section 3.04, were followed.

- (B) Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Sections 4.04, 4.07, or 5.07 were followed.

SECTION 12.04—ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and the board of deacons.

~EXHIBIT~

SECTION 1—SCOPE OF ARBITRATION

The parties must, prior to the selection of arbitrators, agree to the scope of the matters to be considered by the arbitrators. In doing so the parties must conduct themselves with the utmost courtesy as befits believers in Jesus Christ. If the parties cannot agree upon the scope of the dispute for arbitration, the scope shall be determined by the arbitrators.

SECTION 2—SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

- (A) The parties, as Christians, believing that lawsuits between Christians are prohibited by Scripture, and having agreed, according to Article 12 of the church bylaws, to submit disputes to binding arbitration, and to waive any legal right to take the dispute to a court of law, will refer and submit any and all disputes, differences, and controversies whatsoever within the agreed scope of arbitration to a panel of three arbitrators, to be selected as follows:

- (1) All arbitrators must be born-again Christians of good reputation in the community who affirm the church's Statement of Faith in its entirety.
- (2) Each party shall submit a list of three proposed arbitrators to the other party, and the other party will choose one of the three proposed arbitrators to serve on the panel.
- (3) The third arbitrator will be selected by mutual agreement of the other two arbitrators.
- (4) In selecting the arbitrators, each party shall act in good faith in choosing Christian arbitrators who have no prior knowledge of the facts leading up to the dispute, are not related to or close friends with the selecting party, and who will act impartially and with fundamental fairness.
- (5) No arbitrator may be an attorney.
- (6) No arbitrator may be employed or ever have been employed by, or under the authority of, either party or any other arbitrator.
- (7) The arbitrators will be selected as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after the parties have agreed to the scope of the arbitration.
- (8) The arbitration will be held at a neutral site agreed to by the arbitrators.

- (B) The arbitrators shall, subject to the provisions of these procedures, arbitrate the dispute according to the terms of these procedures, the Bible as interpreted by the church's Statement of Faith, and any applicable church documents.

- (C) Each party may be represented by counsel throughout the process at the party's own expense. Discovery will be allowed as needed, as determined in the discretion of the arbitrators. Formal rules of evidence shall not apply.

SECTION 3—TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ARBITRATION

- (A) The arbitrators shall have full power to make such regulations and to give such orders and directions, as they shall deem expedient in respect to a determination of the matters and differences referred to them.
- (B) The arbitrators shall hold the arbitration hearing as soon as possible, but no later than thirty (30) days after the selection of the third arbitrator.
- (C) There shall be no stenographic record of the proceedings, and all proceedings shall be closed to the media and any other individuals not directly involved in the proceedings.
- (D) Normally, the hearing shall be completed within three (3) hours. The length of the hearing, however, may be extended by the arbitrators in their discretion or an additional hearing may be scheduled by the arbitrators to be held promptly.
- (E) There will be no post-hearing briefs.
- (F) The arbitrators are to make and publish their award, in writing, signed by each of them concerning the matters referred, to be delivered to the parties no later than 48 hours from the conclusion of the hearing, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. The arbitrators may, in their discretion, furnish an opinion.

SECTION 4—CONDUCT AND RULES OF HEARING

- (A) The arbitrators may, in their absolute discretion, receive and consider any evidence they deem relevant to the dispute, whether written or oral, without regard to any formal rules of evidence.
- (B) The parties and their respective witnesses must, when required by the arbitrators, attend and submit to examination and cross-examination under oath as to all or any of the matters referred to in the proceedings and to produce and deposit with the arbitrators any or all evidence within their possession or control concerning such matters.
- (C) If a party defaults in any respect referred to in subsection 4(B), above, the arbitrators may proceed with the arbitration in their discretion as if no such evidence were in existence, insofar as it may be favorable to the party in default.
- (D) All presentations shall be controlled by the arbitrators. Any disputes regarding procedure shall be decided solely by the arbitrators.

SECTION 5—DUTIES OF ARBITRATORS

- (A) The arbitrators are to receive all evidence, prayerfully consider such evidence in an impartial manner, and render a decision which, based upon Scriptural principles, is fair to all parties.
- (B) The arbitrators have full power to order mutual releases to be executed by the parties, and either of the parties failing, such orders shall have the effect of a release, and may be duly acknowledged as such.

- (C) In the event that either party or a witness for either party shall fail to attend the arbitration hearing, after such written notice to such party as the arbitrators shall deem reasonable, the arbitrators may proceed in the absence of such party or witnesses without further notice.

SECTION 6—DECISION OF ARBITRATORS

- (A) It is preferred that the arbitrators reach a unanimous decision, but if a unanimous decision cannot be obtained, a majority decision will be accepted. The written decision of a majority of the arbitrators shall be final and binding on all parties, and judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrators may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof. There is no appeal from the decision of the arbitrators.
- (B) The decision of the arbitrators is to be kept confidential by all parties for a period of one year. For purposes of these procedures, the church membership may be informed of the decision if the church or any church pastors, officers, directors, employees, or board members were a party to the proceeding.
- (C) Should any party commence legal proceedings against another party with respect to the agreed scope of the dispute or the binding decision of the arbitrators, with the exception of an action to enforce the decision of the arbitrators, that party shall pay to the other party all expenses of said proceedings, including reasonable attorneys' fees. In the event it becomes necessary for one party to commence legal proceedings to enforce the decision of the arbitrators, the non-prevailing party must bear all of the costs of said proceedings, including reasonable attorneys' fees.

SECTION 7—PARTIES TO COOPERATE

No party shall unreasonably delay or otherwise prevent or impede the arbitration proceedings. No party will involve the news media in the dispute in any way. No party shall publicize the dispute in any way to anyone not a party to the proceedings, except as permitted by the arbitrators and except that a party may disclose the proceedings of this arbitration to his or her spouse, legal counsel, accountants, insurance carrier, and as otherwise required by law.

SECTION 8—COSTS AND EXPENSES

Each party shall pay his or her own costs and expenses related to presenting the party's case to the arbitrators. The costs of the arbitration, including any fees for the arbitrators is to be shared equally by both parties.

SECTION 9—AMENDMENTS

These Procedures for Arbitration may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the board of deacons present and voting at any regular board meeting.

SECTION 10—ADOPTION

- (A) These Procedures for Arbitration were adopted by a majority vote of the board of deacons on November 2, 2012.
- (B) These Procedures for Arbitration supersede any other Procedures for Arbitration previously adopted by the board of deacons, if any exist.

ARTICLE 13 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

SECTION 13.01—PURPOSE

The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect the church's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the church or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

SECTION 13.02—PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the tax-exempt purposes of the church.

SECTION 13.03—DEFINITIONS

- (A) **Interested Person:** Any director or officer who has a direct or indirect financial interest.
- (B) **Financial interest:** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
- (1) An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the church has a transaction or arrangement,
 - (2) A compensation arrangement with the church or with any individual or entity with which the church has a transaction or arrangement, or
 - (3) A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the church is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
 - (4) A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the board of directors decides that a conflict of interest exists.
- (C) **Compensation:** Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.
- (D) **Board:** The term "board" refers to the board of directors of the church.

SECTION 13.04—PROCEDURES

- (A) In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- (B) After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, including any presentations by and discussion with the interested person, he shall leave the board meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest involving the transaction or arrangement is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists by a majority vote.

- (C) An interested person may make a presentation at the board meeting, but after the presentation, he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
 - (1) The chairman of the board shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
 - (2) After exercising due diligence, the board or committee shall determine whether the church can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
 - (3) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the best interests of the church, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.
- (D) If the board has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- (E) If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the board determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

SECTION 13.05—RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

- (A) The minutes of the board shall contain the names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the board's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- (B) The minutes of the board also shall contain the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

SECTION 13.06—COMPENSATION

A voting member of the board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the church for services rendered may not vote on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

ARTICLE 14 POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No substantial part of the activities of Hopewell Baptist Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The amount of time devoted by both compensated and volunteer workers to lobbying must average 5% or less of the annual activities of the church, and the amount of money expended by the ministry for the lobbying activity must average 5% or less of the annual revenues of the church to not be considered substantial.

To constitute an attempt to influence legislation, the activity must refer to specific legislation, reflect a position for or against the legislation, and include a “call to action.” If any one of these three aspects is missing, the activity is not considered an attempt to influence legislation. Hopewell Baptist Church shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

Political campaign intervention is prohibited. While this means that Hopewell Baptist Church cannot take sides with respect to candidates for elective political office, it does not mean that Hopewell Baptist Church cannot speak to political issues. In fact, it is essential that the members be taught what the Scriptures have to say about the political issues of our time. Hopewell Baptist Church may take positions on public policy issues, including issues that divide candidates in an election for public office. Hopewell Baptist Church, however, must avoid engaging in issue advocacy that functions as political campaign intervention.

Simply because a person holds a position of authority in Hopewell Baptist Church or is a member of it does not mean that the activities of the individuals are considered actions of the Hopewell Baptist Church. Campaigning by the pastor, or any member, on his own time and by his own initiative is not attributable to the Hopewell Baptist Church as long as the pastor's actions, or member's actions, are not endorsed or funded by Hopewell Baptist Church.

ARTICLE 15 MORALITY CLAUSE

The membership of Hopewell Baptist Church, in accordance with its governing bylaws, resolves to protect the Bible-based moral values of this ministry. The following policies represent the ministry's commitment to preserve Scriptural morals in the face of outside societal influences seeking to degrade the Biblical family, pervert the moral values of our nation, and intimidate God's people from speaking God's truth in love.

SECTION 14.01—STAFF TRAINING

All volunteers or staff that have contact with the general public on behalf of the ministry are perceived to be speaking on behalf of the ministry. These positions include, but are not limited to, receptionists, ushers, greeters, and anyone else who has contact with the general public as a representative of the ministry. All staff with contact with the general public are required to exhibit the utmost display of Christian character. Use of abusive or pejorative language of any kind is strictly prohibitive and shall be grounds for discipline. No staff member shall ever be disrespectful to any person for any reason.

- (A) **Ushers** are required to conduct their activities with decorum and respect. Any conduct that an usher observes that may be distracting to the activities of the ministry should be brought to the attention of the pastor immediately. An usher should never touch any person in an effort to remove that individual from the premises except when absolutely necessary to prevent the individual from injuring himself or others. If directed by the pastor, an usher may contact the authorities to respond to the scene in an effort to remove the individual(s) causing the disturbance and restore order.

- (B) **Receptionists** are responsible for greeting anyone who contacts the ministry by telephone or visits the ministry. Receptionists are not official spokespersons for the ministry. As such, any questions regarding the Scriptural position or activities of the ministry should be directed to the

pastor for further handling. Prospective participants in the ministry should be given an information packet. Receptionists shall not answer questions regarding the position of the church in matters of faith, practice, or policy over the phone or to persons unknown to the ministry. Answering such questions shall be grounds for immediate removal from the position including termination of employment.

SECTION 14.02—CHURCH ATTENDANCE/SERVICES

Attendance in the general worship services of this church shall be open to the general public subject to the standards and expectations contained in this resolution and other applicable ministry policies.

SECTION 14.03—BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

In all services and programs of this ministry, reasonable standards of decorum and order shall be maintained at all times. As such, no one shall, by appearance or behavior, be permitted to draw attention to themselves in contravention to the ministry's purposes. Any individual who, in the sole discretion of the pastor or ministry leadership, is found to be in violation of this policy shall be removed from the ministry premises immediately.

SECTION 14.04—SPECIAL CLASS DESIGNATIONS

Where appropriate, the pastor, in his sole discretion, shall designate specific assignments and qualifications for various special classes or group activities. Such assignments and qualifications shall be enforced for all individuals who wish to attend the ministry function. Individuals who do not meet the qualifications for a specific class or activity, in the sole discretion of the pastor, shall not be allowed to participate in the designated activity.

**ARTICLE 16
EXEMPT ACTIVITIES CLAUSE**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, Hopewell Baptist Church shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

**ARTICLE 17
DISSOLUTION CLAUSE**

Upon the dissolution of Hopewell Baptist Church, after paying or making provision for payment of all its liabilities, Hopewell Baptist Church shall dispose of all of its remaining assets to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

SECTION 16.01—DISSOLUTION

Any action to dissolve Hopewell Baptist Church must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the church present at a meeting called to specifically consider such action, for which meeting written notice has been issued to all members in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws.

SECTION 16.02—DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS

Assets may be distributed only to organizations that agree with the Hopewell Baptist Church's Statement of Faith.

**ARTICLE 18
AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit for at least two consecutive Sundays, and at least fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

Proposed amendments or changes must be made available to voting members for review at least one week prior to the meeting at which the vote to amend the bylaws will be taken.

ADOPTION

These bylaws were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present on April 27, 2022.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of Hopewell Baptist Church.

APPENDIX III

The Gospel To Every Creature Under Heaven

The Lord wants us to get the Gospel to everyone in the world. Jesus commissioned us to do so. When something is mentioned in the Bible, it is important. When something is repeated in the Bible, God is emphasizing it.

The **LAST** command Jesus gave should be our **FIRST** priority!

The “Great Commission” appears five times in the Scriptures with each time giving us a different meaning.

1. GO TO EVERY NATION.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

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

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

God wants us to go to **EVERY** nation teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Backslidden preachers say that this verse teaches to reach every nationality. This is not what Jesus was saying.

2. GO TO EVERY CREATURE IN EVERY NATION.

Mark 16:14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

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

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

3. START IN YOUR CITY AND THEN SYSTEMATICALLY REACH OUT INTO ALL THE WORLD.

Luke 24:45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

*47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name **among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem**.*

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

4. GO SEEKING OUT THOSE WHO WANT TO BE SAVED LIKE JESUS DID.

John 20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad,

when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: **as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.**

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

5. SPREAD THE GOSPEL “BOTH” LOCALLY AND WORLDWIDE AT THE SAME TIME.

*Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me **both** in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto **the uttermost part of the earth.***

Jesus would have never commanded us to do something we could not do. He literally expected the early church to get the Gospel to **EVERY** creature under Heaven. They did exactly that in approximately 30 years!

*Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of **the gospel**, which ye have heard, and **which was preached to every creature which is under heaven**; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

The early church started with:

A) 12 Leaders – The Apostles. (*Acts 1*)

B) 120 Core Members – Those in the upper room praying for 10 days. (*Acts 1*)

C) 500 Church Members – Those who were gathered at Mount Olivet as Jesus ascended into Heaven. (*I Corinthians 15:6*)

1) In two years' time they filled all of Jerusalem with the Gospel.

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

46 And they, **continuing daily with one accord** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church **daily such as should be saved.**

Acts 5:27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, **ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine**, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

*Acts 5:42 And **daily** in the temple, and in every house, **they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.***

Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God **increased**; and the number of the disciples **multiplied in Jerusalem greatly**; and

a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

2) Then, they carried the Gospel to all Judaea and Samaria. (2 Year Marker)

*Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad **throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria**, except the apostles.*

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

*4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad **went every where preaching the word.***

3) Then, starting with Peter and continuing with Paul, they carried the Gospel to the entire Gentile world. (8 Year Marker)

Acts 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

*Acts 11:1 And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that **the Gentiles had also received the word of God.***

Acts 11:12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

Acts 15:6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

*7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that **the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.***

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

*2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, **Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.***

*3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, **they sent them away.***

(12 Year Marker)

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting

life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be **a light of the Gentiles**, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of **the Lord was published throughout all the region.**

Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone **throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia**, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to **go into Macedonia**, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to **preach the gospel unto them.**

(20 Year Marker)

Acts 17:5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, **These that have turned the world upside down** are come hither also;

(23 Year Marker)

Acts 19:8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that **all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.**

(30 Year Marker)

Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of **the gospel**, which ye have heard, and **which was preached to every creature which is under heaven**; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

The Great Commission was given to **ONE** church, and they fulfilled the command of Jesus within 30 years' time. There were approximately 300 million people in the world during the time of Christ. That would be approximately 1/30 of the world's population today. We need just 30 churches to do the same today!

The early church had only two things at their disposal to carry out this task:

A) The Power of the Holy Ghost

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive **power**, after that **the Holy Ghost is come upon you**: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and **they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them

that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

*33 And **with great power** gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

B) The Word of their Testimony

*Acts 5:42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, **they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.***

*Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went **every where preaching the word.***

The early church had no New Testaments, Gospel tracts, Bible college training, modern forms of transportation, radios, televisions, internet, printing press, social media, computers, etc. We have so much more at our disposal and yet we are failing miserably where the early church succeeded!

The reason we are failing is because the church in our time does not have the power of the Holy Ghost nor do we use the word of our testimony like the early church did. Our soul winning programs are not daily, and our discipleship programs are faulty. We have a one-hour per week church-wide soul winning time when we should be soul winning every day and everywhere we go. Our discipleship programs focus mainly on behavior when it should focus on teaching Bible doctrine accompanied with hands-on training.

On our website, gechworldmissions.com, we have uploaded a guide to soul winning and Bible doctrine books as free online materials that can be translated into any language of the world. I have committed to traveling the world over the next 30 years to win lost souls to Christ, train national pastors/workers, and support Gospel-centered churches worldwide.

The **Book of Acts** is God's church manual for the New Testament church. It is a "how-to instruction book" to fulfill the Great Commission in our generation. If we would get back to what they did, **Bible-based Christianity**, we would likewise accomplish what they did.

*Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, **according to the power that worketh in us,***

*Matthew 19:26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, **With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.***

*Mark 9:23 Jesus said unto him, **If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.***

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

**We would get the Gospel to every
creature under Heaven in the
next 30 years if:**

- 1. Churches would take the Great Commission personally.**
- 2. Pastors and church members get the power of the Holy Ghost in their lives and in their churches.**
- 3. Share the Gospel everywhere in your local community.**
- 4. Support aggressive soul winning missionaries and soul winning mission works.**
- 5. Go on missions trips annually.**
- 6. Start churches in every country.**
- 7. Train national pastors and workers on effective soul winning methods and discipleship.**
- 8. Invest enough time and money to fulfill the Great Commission completely.**
- 9. Pray and fast on a regular basis for God to move in our world.**
- 10. Do not stop until the last person has heard a clear presentation of the Gospel.**

APPENDIX IV

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE OFFICE OF PASTOR

- 1) **Blameless** - unrebukable, not meriting censure; this does not mean without sin
- 2) **Husband of one wife** - cannot be married to more than one woman based on biblical parameters
- 3) **Vigilant** - watchful, attentive to discover and avoid danger
- 4) **Sober** - sound in mind and of self-control
- 5) **Of good behavior** - orderly and appropriate
- 6) **Given to hospitality** - fond of guests, able to take care of people, kind and generous
- 7) **Apt to teach** - instructive, able to convey knowledge to others
- 8) **Not given to wine** - not under that which impairs judgment or is of a sinful influence
- 9) **No striker** - not a quarrelsome man
- 10) **Not greedy of filthy lucre** - not one who has an appetite for gain by vile means
- 11) **Patient** - mild especially in expectations of others
- 12) **Not a brawler** - peaceable, does not instigate fights
- 13) **Not covetous** - not eager to obtain that which he doesn't possess
- 14) **One that rules well his own house**— one who maintains his home well
- 15) **Children in subjection with all gravity** - children who are properly subordinate to authority with honesty and seriousness; does not mean their children can never do wrong
- 16) **Not a novice** - not newly planted and not a new convert
- 17) **Good report of them not in the church** - a good record and reputation of those in the community

~SOME OBSERVATIONS~

- a. For young men to desire to be a pastor is a good thing.
- b. These requirements are to be taken seriously.
- c. All leadership positions in the church come with requirements.
- d. Preachers and teachers of God's Word have the greatest responsibilities.
- e. Do not focus on what others are doing; rather make sure you are fulfilling your responsibilities.
- f. Since this is God's house, ultimately, we will stand before God for these requirements.
- g. God will demand them of you if you are a leader in His house.
- h. One can become disqualified to lead.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE OFFICE OF DEACON

- 1) **Grave** - honorable and honest
- 2) **Not double-tongued** - not telling a different story to different people. This also implies loyalty to the pastor and to God.
- 3) **Not given to much wine** - not under that which impairs judgment or is of a sinful influence
- 4) **Not greedy of filthy lucre** - not one who has an appetite for gain by vile means
- 5) **Have a pure conscience** - clean morals
- 6) **Be first proved** - approved by passing a test
- 7) **Blameless** - unrebukable, not meriting censure; this does not mean without sin
- 8) **Wives be grave** - honorable and honest
- 9) **Wives be not slanderers** - not false accusers nor spreading negative tales about others
- 10) **Wives be sober** - sound in mind and of self-control
- 11) **Wives be faithful in all things** - supportive of all the programs of the church which are appropriate for ladies. Supportive of their husband in all that he does for the work of God.
- 12) **Husbands of one wife** - cannot be married to more than one woman based on biblical parameters
- 13) **Ruling their children and houses well** - one who maintains his house well and has children who are properly subordinate to authority with honesty and seriousness; does not mean his children can never do wrong

~SOME OBSERVATIONS~

- a. Deacons who use their office well purchase a good degree (grade of dignity).
- b. Deacons who use their office well purchase great boldness in the faith.
- c. These requirements are to be taken seriously.
- d. The office of a deacon is not about a title; rather about helping in the kingdom of God.
- e. Deacons can become disqualified.
- f. The church should be thankful for our deacons and all they do for the work of God.
- g. Deacons should be treated with respect.
- h. The church should hold the deacons and their families up in prayer.
- i. Deacons should understand that the devil will come after them and their family to try to hurt the work of God.
- j. The office of deacon is a spiritual position and should be looked upon as such.
- k. The deacons were given to the church to help assist the pastor in the daily administrations of the church
- l. The deacons are not to run the church.
- m. The deacons are not to have authority over the pastor.
- n. The deacons can be a great blessing or a great hindrance to the work of God.

APPENDIX V

THERE ARE DIFFERENT NAMES THAT GOD USES IN THE BIBLE IN REFERENCE TO GOD'S MAN

1) PASTOR— Shepherd

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

2) BISHOP— Overseer

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

3) ELDER— Counselor, Guide

Titus 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

4) ANGEL— Messenger

Revelation 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

5) MINISTER— Servant

1 Timothy 4:6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

2 Timothy 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at

his will.

6) PREACHER– Proclaimer of the Word

2 Timothy 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

7) STAR– A rank in God’s army, to shine on God’s behalf

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

8) AMBASSADOR– Representative

2 Corinthians 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Ephesians 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

9) ANOINTED– Consecrated to an office

2 Corinthians 1:21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

A CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO GOD'S MAN

1) REMEMBER THEM

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

2) OBEY THEM

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

3) MAGNIFY THEM

*Acts 5:13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.
14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)*

4) DO THEM NO HARM

Psalms 105:15 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

5) HONOR THEM

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

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

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

6) FOLLOW THEM

1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

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

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

Philippians 3:17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: