

A black and white photograph showing a person's hand pouring water from a white ceramic pitcher into a white ceramic bowl. A person's foot is submerged in the water in the bowl. The scene is set against a dark background. The text "The Christian Church in Ministry" is overlaid in the center in a large, bold, blue font with a white outline.

The Christian Church in Ministry

The Christian Church in Ministry

by **Jesse Miranda**

AN INDEPENDENT-STUDY TEXTBOOK

*Developed in Cooperation with
the Global University Staff*

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First Edition 1980

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S4141E-90-1ed
ISBN 978-0-7617-0000-0

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THE ICI CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROGRAM



This is one of 18 courses (subjects) that make up the ICI Christian Service Program. The symbol at the left is a guide for order of study in the series, which is divided into three units of six courses each. *The Christian Church in Ministry* is Course 4 in Unit I. You will benefit by studying the courses in the proper order.

Study materials in the Christian Service Program have been prepared in a self-teaching format especially for Christian workers. These courses provide a student with Bible knowledge and skills needed for practical Christian service. You may study this course in order to receive credit toward a certificate, or for personal enrichment.

ATTENTION

Please read the course introduction very carefully. It is important that you follow these instructions so you can achieve the goals of the course, and be prepared for the student reports.

Address all correspondence concerning the course to your ICI instructor at the address stamped on the copyright page of this study guide.

Course Introduction

The Church in Action

Did you know that the church has an active part in fulfilling God's redemptive plan for the world? Perhaps you thought that the redemptive plan ended with Christ's death on the cross. But Jesus Himself passed on His ministry of redeeming the world to His church.

In this course you will learn that the Great Commission given by Christ is the church's authority to act for God. The church has not been left to carry on the work alone, for Christ sent His Holy Spirit to be our Helper. He works in and through us to fulfill the redemptive plan of God.

The church's ministries are directed three ways: to God, to itself, and to the world. All of these ministries are a response to God's redemptive work. We worship Him because of who He is and what He has done for us. We minister to one another because of the love and unity that binds us together in Christ. We minister to the world with the love of Christ because we are indebted to Him for our own salvation, and we do not want anyone to perish without an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Savior.

As you study this course, allow the Holy Spirit to show you ways that you can be more actively involved in the ministries of the church. Let Him produce in you the character of Christ and the spiritual gifts which will give you an effective ministry. The fulfillment of God's redemptive plan is now your responsibility, as a member of the body of Christ, His church!

Course Description

The Christian Church in Ministry is a practical course of study of the church and the men and women who make it a reality. Attention is given to the church's redemptive ministry and the need for the believer to actively participate in this ministry.

The course is designed to help you in three ways: 1) It will help you understand the importance of the church in God's plan for the world; 2) It will give you better understanding of the importance of the Christian's role in Christ's plan for the church; 3) It will help you to see how you can become personally involved in doing God's will through ministry in the church.

Course Objectives

When you have completed this course, you should be able to:

1. Understand the importance of the church in God's plan for the world.
2. Understand the importance of the Christian's role in Christ's plan for the church.
3. Discover ways of becoming personally involved through ministry in the church.
4. Explain God's plan and the purpose of Christ's ministry.
5. Describe the church's ministry to God, to itself, and to the world.
6. Appreciate the ministry as the function of all the people of God.
7. Understand the necessity for personal involvement in church ministry.

Textbooks

You will use *The Christian Church in Ministry* by Jesse Miranda as both the textbook and study guide for the course. The Bible (*Today's English Version*) is the only other textbook required. Most of the Scriptures quoted in this course are from *Today's English Version* (TEV). In a few instances we have quoted from the *King James Version* (KJV) or the *New International Version* (NIV) where those versions seemed to give a clearer translation of the original Hebrew or Greek text in which the Bible was written.

Study Time

How much time you actually need to study each lesson depends in part on your knowledge of the subject and the strength of your study skills before you begin the course. The time you spend also depends on the extent to which you follow directions and develop skills necessary for independent study. Plan your study schedule so that you spend enough time to reach the objectives stated by the author of the course and your personal objectives as well.

Lesson Organization and Study Pattern

Each lesson includes: 1) lesson title, 2) opening statement, 3) lesson outline, 4) lesson objectives, 5) learning activities, 6) key words, 7) lesson development including study questions, 8) self-test (at the end of the lesson development), 9) answers to the study questions.

The lesson outline and objectives will give you an overview of the subject, help you to focus your attention on the most important points as you study, and tell you what you should learn.

Most of the study questions in the lesson development can be answered in spaces provided in this study guide. Longer answers should be written in a notebook. As you write the answers in your notebook, be sure to record the number and title of the lesson. This will help you in your review for the unit student reports.

Do not look ahead at the answers until you have given your answer. If you give your own answers, you will remember what you study much better. After you have answered the study questions, check your answers with those given at the end of the lesson. Then correct those you did not answer correctly. The answers are not given in the usual numerical order so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question.

These study questions are very important. They will help you to remember the main ideas presented in the lesson and to apply the principles you have learned.

How to Answer Questions

There are different kinds of study questions and self-test questions in this study guide. Below are samples of several types and how to answer them. Specific instructions will be given for other types of questions that may occur.

A *MULTIPLE-CHOICE* question or item asks you to choose an answer from the ones that are given.

Example

- 1 The Bible has a total of
- a) 100 books.
 - b) 66 books.
 - c) 27 books.

The correct answer is *b) 66 books*. In your study guide, make a circle around *b)* as shown here:

- 2 The Bible has a total of
- a) 100 books
 - b) 66 books.
 - c) 27 books.

(For some multiple-choice items, more than one answer will be correct. In that case, you would circle the letter in front of each correct answer.)

A *TRUE-FALSE* question or item asks you to choose which of several statements are TRUE.

Example

- 2 Which statements below are TRUE?
- a The Bible has a total of 120 books.
 - b The Bible is a message for believers today.
 - c All of the Bible authors wrote in the Hebrew language.
 - d The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible.

Statements **b** and **d** are true. You would make a circle around these two letters to show your choices.

A *MATCHING* question or item asks you to match things that go together, such as names with descriptions, or Bible books with their authors.

Example

3 Write the number for the leader's name in front of each phrase that describes something he did.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| ... ¹ a Received the Law at Mt. Sinai | 1) Moses |
| ... ² b Led the Israelites across Jordan | 2) Joshua |
| ... ² c Marched around Jericho | |
| ... ¹ d Lived in Pharaoh's court | |

Phrases **a** and **d** refer to Moses, and phrases **b** and **c** refer to Joshua. You would write **1** beside **a** and **d**, and **2** beside **b** and **c**, as you see above.

Ways to Study This Course

If you study this ICI course by yourself, all of your work can be completed by mail. Although ICI has designed this course for you to study on your own, you may also study it in a group or class. If you do this, the instructor may give you added instructions besides those in the course. If so, be sure to follow his instructions.

Possibly you are interested in using the course in a home Bible study group, in a class at church, or in a Bible school. You will find both the subject content and study methods excellent for these purposes.

Unit Student Reports

In the back of your study guide are located the unit student reports and answer sheets. These are to be completed according to the instructions included in the course and in the instructions in the unit student reports. After you have completed the answer sheets, send them to your instructor for grading and suggestions regarding your work.

Certificate

Upon the successful completion of the course and the final grading of the unit answer sheets by your ICI instructor, you will receive your Certificate of Award. Or, if you prefer, you may study this course for personal enrichment without receiving a certificate.

Author of This Course

Dr. Jesse Miranda is an ordained minister with a rich background in church ministries. He has served as pastor, teacher, school principal, college-seminary president, district secretary-treasurer, district assistant superintendent, and district superintendent for his church organization. He is currently Professor of Urban Ministries and Associate Dean for Urban and Multi-Cultural Affairs, C. P. Haggard School of Theology, Azusa Pacific University.

Dr. Miranda has also served on the Board of Directors for the Greater Los Angeles Sunday School Association and for *Latinos Para Cristo* in Los Angeles. He was chairman of the Hispanic Association for Theological Education for three years, and he was chairman of the Hispanic Advisory Committee at Fuller Seminary for four years. He is listed in the 1974 edition of *Who's Who in Religion*.

Dr. Miranda received a ministerial diploma from Latin American Bible Institute; a B.A. in biblical studies from Southern California College; a M.R.E. from Talbot School of Theology, Biola University; a M.Ed. from California State University; and a D.Min. from Fuller Theological Seminary.

Your ICI Instructor

Your ICI instructor will be happy to help you in any way possible. If you have any questions about the course or the unit student reports, please feel free to ask him. If several people want to study this course together, ask about special arrangements for group study.

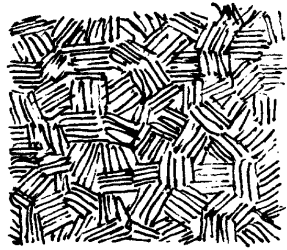
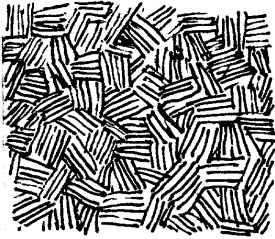
God bless you as you begin to study *The Christian Church in Ministry*. May it enrich your life and Christian service and help you fulfill more effectively your part in the body of Christ.

Additional Helps

Other materials are available for use with this Individual Study Textbook, including supplemental audio cassettes, video cassettes, an Instructor's Guide, and an Instructor's Packet (for instructor's use only). Consult the Evangelism, Discipleship, and Training Manual.

Unit One

The World: God's Purpose for Action



Lesson 1

A Universal Problem

This is the first of three lessons about The World: God's Purpose for Action. All three lessons treat some big ideas. People feel safer starting with small ideas and moving slowly. Not so with God. He starts big. His work is bigger than the world. He moves fast. His are matters of life and death.

You see, God's place of action is the entire world. God's plan includes the salvation of a dying world. The church, His people, is a world-wide community rescued from sin, and commissioned to assist in the rescue of others from sin.

What does this have to do with you? First, you are living in this sinful world. God and His Son, Jesus, have taken action to save the world. Second, you are a part of this action.

In this lesson you will discover how sin came into the world, and how it affects our world today. God's solution for the sin problem was to give His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. And we have been given the privilege of taking this message of salvation to those who are still in bondage to sin. We are included in God's great plan for redeeming the world!



lesson outline

Discovering the Problem

Understanding the Problem

Solving the Problem

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to:

- Discuss the problem of sin and its effects upon the world.
- Identify examples of the spirit of the age as it is demonstrated in present-day society.
- Explain the effect of God's redemptive plan upon the problem of sin.

learning activities

1. Carefully read the introduction section in this study guide.
2. Study the lesson outline and lesson objectives. These will help you identify the things you should try to learn as you study the lesson. Read all Scripture references given in the lesson development as you come to them.
3. Study the lesson content and do the exercises as you come to them. Try to give your own answers before you check the answers we have given at the end of the lesson.
4. Look in the glossary at the end of this study guide for definitions of any key words you do not understand.

- 5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers with those given at the end of the study guide. Review any items you answered incorrectly.

key words

Understanding the key words we have listed at the beginning of each lesson will help you as you study. You will find key words listed in alphabetical order and defined in the glossary at the back of this independent-study textbook. If you are in doubt about the meaning of any of the words on the list, you may look them up now or when you come across them in your reading. Please take time to learn the definitions of any new words, since they are important for a complete understanding of this course.

bondage	marred	sacrifice
carnal	rebellious	universal
covenant	receptive	
dispute	reconciliation	
independence	redemption	

lesson development

DISCOVERING THE PROBLEM

Objective 1. *Describe the origin, nature, and extent of sin in the world.*

The Sin Problem

The Bible is a record of human sin and a loving God who wants to rescue men from sin. In the beginning, God created a sinless world. Man was his unique creation. Man stood out among God’s other creatures. Man was created in God’s image, with intelligence, with a free will, and with emotions to respond. Man was created to have fellowship with his Creator.

1 We will be studying many Scripture passages in these lessons to learn truths taught in the Bible. Find Colossians 1:16 in your Bible now, and explain what this verse means to you.

.....

The Bible also records that Satan is the agent by whom sin and evil entered God's creation. Adam and Eve broke God's laws. They were holy laws, because God is holy. Man broke God's laws and was separated from God (Genesis 3). This separation from God's communion and fellowship meant that man was lost. Because of the first man's sin (Adam), the world was cursed by sin. Since that time, man has been born into sin (Romans 5:12-18).

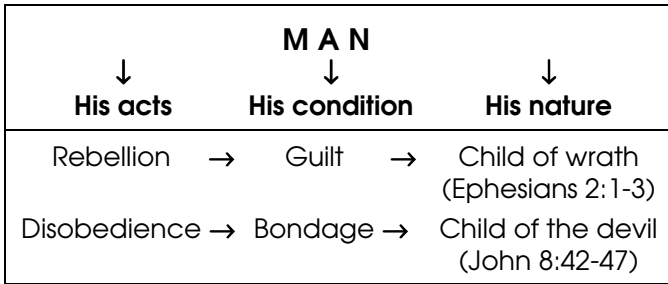
Let us look at three ways of describing sin. The Bible describes the sin of man as:

1. *Acts of rebellion.* A *rebellious* person is one who refuses to do what another commands. Man refused to obey God. He refused to obey any other voice than his own. Man refused to bend to any other will but his own. He refused to recognize God as Creator and Father of the world. "They know God, but they do not give him the honor that belongs to him, nor do they thank him. Instead, their thoughts have become complete nonsense, and their empty minds are filled with darkness" (Romans 1:21).

2. *Acts of disobedience.* "God's anger is revealed from heaven against all the sin and evil of the people" (Romans 1:18). God's laws were holy and made to be obeyed. God made an agreement with man (Genesis 2:15-17), but man disobeyed. It was a binding covenant, or agreement, but man failed to recognize the God of the covenant. Lawlessness stirs God's anger toward man (John 3:36).

These acts have created a *condition* in man. Not only does man commit acts of sin, but he is a sinner by his very nature. Sin consists not simply in deeds, but in a condition, a condition common to all men who are *by nature* dead in sins and trespasses and are children of wrath (Ephesians 2:1-3).

3. *A condition of bondage.* One that is sold is a slave. "I am carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7:14 KJV). Being sold under sin is to be under the control and power of sin. The person becomes the property of the one in control. In this case, it would be Satan. Service is also rendered to this master. Sin has made man a slave and has taken away his freedom. He has lost the freedom that he once had. He is in bondage and is a prisoner of sin.



2 Match the three ways of describing sin with their definitions. Write the number for your choice in each blank space.

- ... **a** Man refused to listen to God's instructions.
- ... **b** Man did not keep his covenant with God.
- ... **c** Man was controlled by sin.
- 1) Condition of bondage
2) Act of rebellion
3) Act of disobedience

The Scope of the Problem

Man's basic sin was the denial of the nature and qualities of God. Man failed to recognize God as Creator and Father of the universe. Let us look at the scope, or extent, of his sin.

1. *Sin began with one man.* The story concerning the nature of sin in man's life is found in Genesis 3. The origin of sin in the human race began with Adam and Eve. They disobeyed God's command. They doubted the rightness of God's order not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. They were created with a free will and they had a choice. They chose to disobey God, and they suffered the consequences. The result of the first sinful act was guilt and a feeling of nakedness before God.

2. *One man's sin was passed on to all men.* The penalty of death is passed on to the human race which came from Adam and Eve. Because of the first man's choice, all men have been born separated from God. Men do not have in them just the *tendency* (leaning) to sin when they are born—they are born in sin, with a sin nature, in a state of sin. Unless he is renewed by the grace of God, man must suffer the penalty for his sin.

Sin, by its very nature, involves two personalities. It involves the one who sins, and it involves the one against whom the sin is committed. Although one may also sin against one’s neighbor, man’s greatest sin is against God.

God’s nature is holy and just. His laws are holy and unchanging. He will punish those who break these laws. But His nature is also that of a loving father. As Creator and Father of the world, He moves toward man and his sin problem. His is the driving force that brings the sinner into communion with Himself through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Now in your own words, explain when sin came into the world, and the effect it has had upon the world.

.....
.....

The Problem-Solver

Objective 2. *Explain the three aspects of the fatherhood of God.*

Everything that belongs to the world—what the sinful self desires, what people see and want, and everything in this world that people are so proud of—none of this comes from the Father; it all comes from the world. The world and everything in it that people desire is passing away; but he who does the will of God lives forever (1 John 2:16-17).

God’s will in this changing and sinful world is that man recognize and accept Him as Creator and Father. Man’s sin has been against the nature and qualities of God. To be restored in fellowship will mean that man must know God for what God is.

God is the Creator

God is the God of all the world. At the beginning, in the center, and at the end of everything, there stands an eternal God. He is the Creator of the universe and of mankind. He is the only and absolute God. He is very jealous, in that he wants to be recognized in those terms.

4 Read these Scriptures and state how each one describes God: Nehemiah 9:6, Acts 15:18.

.....
.....

Not only is God the Creator of physical things, but He is also the Creator of the moral order for the world.

1. God has established laws of right and wrong.
2. God’s laws are the highest standards of morality.
3. God insists that the laws be obeyed.
4. God brings punishment when His laws are broken.
5. God sent Jesus to help us obey God’s laws.

God is the Father

God’s creative acts must be recognized. God’s saving acts must also be accepted. He is the God of salvation.

5 Read Exodus 14:13; 15:2; 2 Samuel 22:3, 47; Psalm 18:46; 38:22; Acts 28:28. How do they speak of God?

.....

God willed salvation for the world. It was His choice and desire. These actions of God reveal God’s love for His children as the Heavenly Father of creation.

There is a fatherhood of God by creation which is universal to all mankind. Then there is a fatherhood of God by relation that only His Son, Jesus Christ, enjoys. And finally, there is a fatherhood of God by redemption which is for all who accept the sacrifice of His son for their sins.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD		
THE FATHER	“MY FATHER”	OUR FATHER
of the world by creation	of Jesus by relation	of all believers by redemption
An earthly time and space	From eternity to eternity	From now to eternity

6 Describe the two ways in which God is the Creator.

.....
.....

7 Explain what these statements mean:

a God is the father of the world by creation.

.....

b God is the father of all believers by redemption.

.....

c God is the father of Jesus by relation.

.....

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

Objective 3. *Identify aspects of change in modern society which present opportunities for ministry.*

Here is an amazing story of modern times: Two Japanese soldiers were found in the jungles of an island in the Pacific Ocean. They had been hiding since World War II, a period of more than 35 years. They were surprised to hear the news that the war was over. They were also surprised to see the great changes as they entered the modern cities.

They were amazed, and certainly they had reason to be. Our world is changing rapidly. Some people are afraid of what is happening and others cannot understand it. We must face the world.

The Lord wants us to be in the world and understand it. It is important that we are aware of the strong forces that are forming society. The world is changing, but the force of sin is still present. Our sinful world presents opportunities for ministry that perhaps no other generation has experienced.

8 Whom has God chosen for this ministry to the world?

.....

The Climate of the City

The number of people is increasing all over the world. Many people are being attracted to the cities. They are leaving their small villages and towns to find better conditions in the cities.

9 Make a list of changes in your town or city in the past ten years.

.....
.....

It is said that three out of every four persons in the world live in cities. Small towns change and grow also, but cities are suffering the results of change the most. This is where people are affected most by the changing society.

As the number of people increases, so do their needs increase. These needs are physical, social, and economic. The rate of increase causes an imbalance and creates social problems. Poverty (the state of being very poor), poor housing, lack of jobs, and even beggars on the street are all examples of the strain of change.

But the cities are also opportunities for ministry. People in need are fertile soil for the “gospel of the poor” to be preached.

10 Read Matthew 9:35 and explain where Jesus ministered.
.....

11 Read Luke 4:18. Describe the people of the city.
.....

A changing society also indicates changing values. New places, new circumstances, and new neighbors are involved in our move to a new home. New forms and patterns of living are accepted. New friends and new churches are found. Cities represent all of these things.



CITIES—A MISSION FIELD

Change can affect a person very deeply, and usually does. Not only do cities represent new values, but new problems also. The feeling of being cut off from family and friends can result in loneliness. A new freedom is experienced that a small community never gave one. Just like the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, who went out to find a new freedom, this independence draws people away from things that are right.

12 Read Luke 15:11-16 and James 4:13. In what way are both verses the same?

.....

13 Choose the two best completions of this statement: (Draw a circle around the letter in front of your choices.) Cities become opportunities for ministry because

- a) they represent more unreached people.
- b) the people in them are mostly comfortable and happy.
- c) there is little change in large cities.
- d) cities produce fear and insecurity.

Cities have become very important in our day because of their size and their effect upon modern society. Jesus said,

“A city built on a hill cannot be hid” (Matthew 5:14). Christians must pay special attention to them for ministry. For example:

- 1. Jesus ministered in cities (Matthew 9:35).
- 2. Jesus saw them as centers of sin (Matthew 11:20).
- 3. Jesus noticed receptive people there (Matthew 10:11).

The Spirit of the Age

Cities are special areas for ministry not only because of the many people, and the changes that are taking place, but also because they reflect (show) the spirit of the age. In this day and age there are certain thoughts and ideas that are very popular. Through these can be seen the age-old sin of selfish human nature. The cities represent 1) a desire for material things over the spiritual; and 2) the desire for self and human life over God and His rightful place as Creator.

To illustrate this, I have given special names to two “movements” or attitudes of man and one movement of God toward man. They are:

1. *The “Canaan Movement”* (Exodus 3:8). The spirit of the age seems to be one of looking for the land of “milk and honey.” The desire is to move ahead in life. There is a desperate search for a better life. Man is driven to seek the comforts in life. The world is saying, “Today or tomorrow we will travel to a certain city, where we will stay a year and go into business and make a lot of money” (James 4:13).

14 Read Deuteronomy 8:17 and James 4:13.

- a** What do they have in common?
.....
- b** What is wrong with this way of thinking?
.....
- c** Read Matthew 6:33. What is the right way of thinking?
.....

2. *The “Tower of Babel Movement”* (Genesis 11:1-9). Not only does the world today want to get ahead in life, but it also wants to move upward. These are not the same thing. To move ahead is to want more possessions. To move upward is to obtain a higher position. Man wants to be over and above, rather than under someone else. He is seeking to be his own boss and master. Wanting to be a god unto himself was man’s original downfall (Genesis 3:5). He still continues to want to make a name for himself. He is still running away from God’s wrath and punishment. Not only does he leave God out, but now he wants to put himself in God’s place.

3. *The “Bethlehem Movement”* (Luke 2:4-7). The Canaan and Babel movements have not satisfied the world. Generation after generation of men have tried to move ahead and move upward in different ways. Man has failed and is still lost and unhappy.

The Bethlehem movement is God coming down through Jesus Christ. He came to pick man up since man could not pick himself up. The Son of God appeared in the form of man to unite with man’s need. It is by divine grace and love that this has taken place. Man is now able to reach God through Jesus Christ. Man obtains a better and eternal life.



Fame and riches do not make a person happy and right with God. God’s way of salvation is not discovered nor earned by man. It comes to him by revelation. This must be preached to him from the Word of God. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (See Romans 10:8-17, KJV.)

Man is lost, but he preserves a marred (damaged) representation of God's image in which he was created. The Holy Spirit creates the right time for response and makes people responsive so that they may regain this likeness through salvation.

15 Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements concerning changes and attitudes seen in people in this present age.

- a** The world is changing from day to day.
- b** Because the world is so sinful, the effort to reach it with the gospel is not so strong.
- c** Cities suffer more from changing society than do small towns.
- d** People want to have more things and higher positions today.
- e** Jesus Christ has provided the only way man can be truly happy and right with God.
- f** The changes a person faces when he moves to the city usually turn him to God.

SOLVING THE PROBLEM

Objective 4. *Explain how God made it possible for man's fellowship with Him to be restored.*

It was God's will that the world be saved. A third Person was brought into the dispute (disagreement) between man and God. God the Father sent His Son, Jesus, as the solution to sin (John 3:16). Jesus' ministry was made necessary because of the problem of sin in the world. If there were no sin there would have been no need for Jesus to be born a man. Without sin there would be no need for Jesus to die on the cross. Without sin there is no need to restore to man something he has lost.

What has man lost? His freedom and fellowship with God. His awareness of God the Creator and the Father. Read in Luke 15 the story of a restored relationship between a son and his father. This will help you to understand the God-to-man relationship.

16 Luke 15 is the *Lost and Found* chapter in the Bible.

a What three things were lost and then found?

.....

b Which of the three is the most valuable?

.....

c State why it is so important.

.....

d Describe the celebration.

.....

e How does this compare to a sinner coming back to God, or being found?

.....

How did God restore man's fellowship with Him? He did it through the life and acts of Christ. Christ came to this earth and died on the cross. Through these acts of Christ God offers four things:

1. *God offers reconciliation.* To *reconcile* means "to bring two things together correctly." Man became an enemy of God because of his rebellious acts. Christ came to amend (repair) the differences between man and God. His love is the power that draws God and man together.

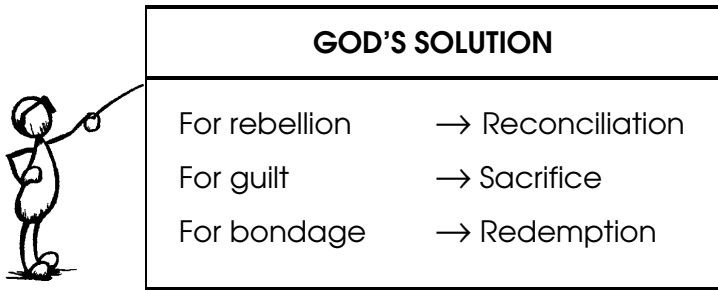
2. *God offers a sacrifice.* God's anger against man was because man broke His holy laws. God is a righteous God and He requires that His laws be obeyed. Since man could not obey these laws, Christ came to obey them for man. Now God's anger was satisfied. Christ was able, through his sacrifice on the cross, to pay the price. We must remember that not only did God ask for a price but He also *gave His Son* as that price.

3. *God offers redemption.* This is Christ paying the price to make the sinner free from sin's bondage. It means the sinner is rescued, delivered, and saved. He is the slave who is bought for a price to take him from his old master and to set him free. This free slave may be so grateful to the gracious person who has bought his freedom that he offers himself for service to that

person. This is the story of the Christian. This is shown to us in the following Scriptures: Mark 10:44, Galatians 3:13, Romans 3:23-24, and Ephesians 1:7.

17 Read 1 Peter 1:18-19 and write in your own words what this Scripture means to you.

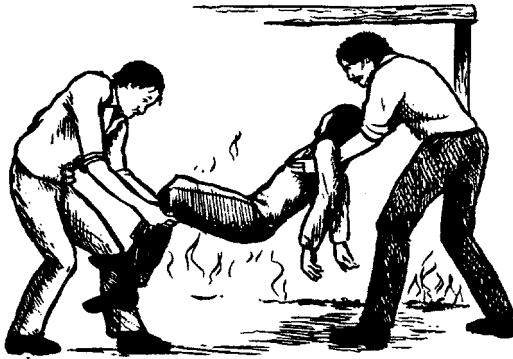
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4. *God offers participation.* All of the above aspects of salvation are made available by God. The Father willed it and the Son acted in behalf of man's salvation. But man is offered a part in the solution to the sin problem. Man must 1) turn away from sin and turn to God, and 2) turn to the world with the *good news*.

Conversion is man's first step toward a restored fellowship with God. Repentance and faith are the two basic aspects of conversion. *Repentance* is the act of turning from sin and feeling sorrow for sin through looking at the cross. *Faith* speaks of the positive activity of man when he turns to God. He sees God the Father as one who loves and cares. He trusts his whole life and destiny to God.

The picture now is of one who was in the world, doomed for eternal punishment, but who is rescued from destruction. Once rescued he senses the responsibility for others who are doomed as he once was. So he turns to their rescue.



RESCUED

This is the picture of the church. The church is a chosen body of people called out from the world to be a special people, and to take the message of salvation to the world.

The church is commissioned by God to make His redemption known to the world. It must believe that the world without Christ is lost, and that Christ is man's only hope. If the world is to know about Christ it will be through His church, the believers. These have all been called to witness and will give account to God for what they have done at the time of Jesus' return.

18 *Reconciliation* gives us the *why* of salvation. Explain why reconciliation was necessary.

.....

19 *Christ's sacrifice* gives us the *how* of salvation. Explain how this was done.

.....

.....

20 *Redemption* gives the *results* of salvation. What are these results?

.....

.....

21 *Participation* describes man's involvement in God's redemptive plan. Describe the two ways man is involved.

.....
.....

self-test

After you have reviewed this lesson, take the self-test. Then check your answers with those given in your student report. Review any questions you answered incorrectly.

SHORT ANSWER. Answer these questions in your own words.

1 How did Adam and Eve’s sin affect the whole world?

.....
.....

2 Put an **X** in front of the words below which describe the spirit of the age in which we live:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| ... Change | ... Bondage |
| ... Problems | ... Disobedience |
| ... Peace | ... Selfish values |
| ... Security | ... Happiness |
| ... Rebellion | ... Independence |
| ... Sacrifice | ... Sin |
| ... Loneliness | ... Fear |

3 What three words in the list above describe the spirit of the redeemed person?

.....

4 In what way are the cities a good place to minister and tell people about God’s redemptive plan?

.....
.....

5 How did God’s redemptive plan affect the problem of sin?

.....
.....

6 Whom has God chosen to take the message of salvation to the lost and dying world?

.....

answers to study questions

These answers have been mixed so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question before you write your own response. Please do not look ahead, but write your own answer to each question before comparing it with the one we have given. This will help you to remember what you have studied.

- 11** The poor, the prisoners, the blind, and the oppressed were among the people in the city.
- 1** My answer would be: God created me, and He created me for Himself.
- 12** James talks about the spirit of freedom, and the verse in Luke talks about the son's acts in searching for freedom.
- 2 a** 2) Act of rebellion.
b 3) Act of disobedience.
c 1) Condition of bondage.
- 13 a)** they represent more unreached people.
d) cities produce fear and insecurity.
- 3** Sin came into the world when Adam and Eve sinned. Because of their sin, all men are born in sin.
- 14 a** They both speak of man wanting more things and getting the credit for obtaining those things when they get them.
b They leave out God.
c If we put God's kingdom first, He will take care of our needs.
- 4** He alone is God. He created all things. He knows all things.
- 15 a** True.
b False.
c True.
d True.
e True.
f False.

- 5** As the one who saves; as the Savior.
- 16 a** A sheep, a coin, a son.
b The son.
c The fellowship between father and son was restored.
d The father gave his son clothes and food. There was much music and joy.
e There is also joy in heaven.
- 6** He is the Creator of the physical universe and all that is in it. He is the Creator of moral order, or laws.
- 17** It was not with money that God paid the sacrifice to set me free from sin, but it was with His own Son that He paid it.
- 7 a** We are His children because He made us.
b We are His redeemed (saved) children because Jesus became our sacrifice for sin.
c Jesus is His Son who was born a man to save us from sin.
- 18** Because man lost fellowship with his Creator.
- 8** His redeemed people, the church.
- 19** Christ's death on the cross met God's demand, and Christ took God's anger upon Himself.
- 9** The list may contain whatever physical, social, moral, or spiritual changes you can think of.
- 20** Man is free from the law of sin, and he is no longer a slave to sin.
- 10** Christ's ministry was in the cities (towns) for the most part.
- 21** When man sees his need for salvation through Christ he repents. Then he takes the message of salvation to other lost men and women.

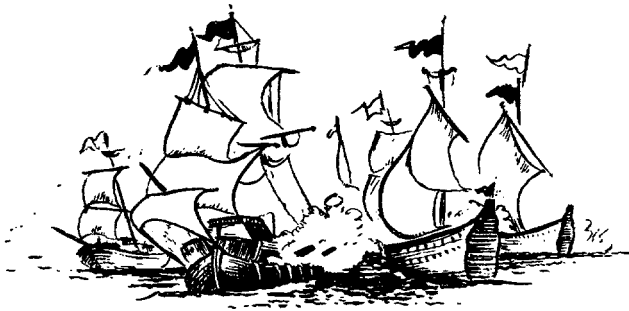
Lesson 2

A Universal Plan

In 1588, Philip II, king of Spain, planned an invasion of England. He had made his plans carefully. He sent forth his famous Spanish Armada, which had 130 ships and 8000 sailors, and he was sure of victory.

But things did not go according to the plans. The infantry that was to give support by land to the navy did not arrive on time. The British fought off the Spanish navy. A strong wind blew, which prevented the Spanish Armada from retreating, and sent their ships into the hands of the enemy. The king's plans had failed and the battle was lost.

In this lesson we will continue our discussion of how God has a plan for the salvation of the world. The redemptive plan shows the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit going out in war against sin. It is exciting to see that God's plan is going on according to His schedule in order to bring man into fellowship with Him. God's plan has not failed.



lesson outline

A Redemptive Plan

A Redemptive Act

A Redemptive Mission

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain the plan of redemption and why it was necessary.
- Understand and explain the role of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the church in the plan of redemption.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson following the procedure given in Lesson 1. Be sure to read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer each study question before checking your answer.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

captive

climax

deliverance

eternal

incarnation

origin

penalty

ransom

restoration

resurrection

salvation

lesson development

A REDEMPTIVE PLAN

Objective 1. *Explain the difference between the words redemption and salvation.*

The Meaning of Redemption

The words *salvation* and *redemption* are much alike. It is not easy to understand the difference between these two words. Both are very important words to the believer, but there is a small difference in their meanings.

The word *salvation* is the more popular of the two words and has a more general meaning. It carries the idea of being saved from a possible danger. To Christians this means that, because of sin, man is in danger of eternal punishment and death (Romans 3:23).

The word *redemption* also means “salvation,” but it means something more specific as well. It speaks of the *way* and the *means* by which this salvation is secured. It also refers to the *price* and *payment of ransom* for that salvation. The idea is that of buying something back that is rightfully yours but which was lost for one reason or another (see Leviticus 25:25-27, 47-54). It can refer to deliverance, such as when Israel was delivered from Egypt (Exodus 6:6, 15:13) and from Babylon (Jeremiah 31:11, 50:33-34).

1 In 1 Peter 1:18-19 and Mark 10:45 we find the way and the means by which our salvation or redemption was made possible. Explain in your own words what these Scriptures mean to you.

.....
.....

Man fell into sin by disobedience of God’s law. Man failed to recognize the God who established the laws. The result was that man lost his fellowship with God. So it has been God’s will and eternal purpose to bring man back into fellowship with Him. He has chosen to redeem man through the sacrifice of His own Son.

2 Explain in your own words the difference between the words *salvation* and *redemption*.

.....
.....

3 Which of these reasons explains why man needed to be redeemed?

- a) Man was created in a sinful condition which kept him from fellowship with God.
- b) Man became sinful through disobedience to God, and he lost his fellowship with God because of sin.

The sinner, captive in the bondage of sin, must recognize God’s redemptive plan as being 1) divine in origin, and 2) human in design. In other words, he needs to understand the source and the purpose of God’s plan. We will look at both of these concepts.

Divine in Origin

Objective 2. *Identify statements which correctly explain the origin and purpose of redemption.*

Redemption is of God. Redemption reveals the nature of God in its deepest levels. Redemption is *of* Him because of what He is. He is the eternal God acting in man’s favor. He is the Heavenly Father acting out of pure love for His creation.

God is love. Love is part of His very nature. Love is the force behind redemption. He does not redeem us because He feels it is His duty to do so, but because He loves us. Therefore, it is not surprising that He would pay a high price—His only Son—as our ransom. A gracious Father out of kindness chose to act in favor of man as an undeserving expression of love. Truly He is the God of salvation, “our father who . . . rescued us” (Isaiah 63:16).

Redemption is from God. Salvation comes from the God of action, the Creator. The first line of the first book of the Bible shows a God in action: “In the beginning, when God created the universe” (Genesis 1:1). Redemption has its beginning and end in God.

Redemption is God in action. He is not only a loving and good God, but He is a living and concerned God. God willed redemption for man, and He *provided*, or put into action, His redemptive plan.

How has He done this? He has taken action against man’s enemy, and He plans to rescue man from the bondage of sin.

4 Read the Scriptures given below, and complete each sentence to show the action God has taken in carrying out His redemptive plan.

- a** In Genesis 3:15 He has promised
.....
- b** In John 1:29 He has provided
- c** In John 3:17 He has proposed
- d** In 1 Corinthians 15:22-28 He has planned

Human in Design

Redemption is for man. Man needs to be rescued. He has given himself to sin and has lost his fellowship with his Creator. He is in a state of rebellion, refusing to obey God. His condition is the reason God’s redemptive plan was necessary. His condition is one of separation. This does not mean simply that the sinner is not permitted to come into God’s presence. What a frightful thought! It also means that there is a positive and certain punishment to the sinner who refuses God’s acts of grace. This punishment is eternal damnation, “for sin pays its wage—death” (Romans 6:23).

Redemption is by the Son of Man. At the heart of redemption stands the *incarnation*. By *incarnation* we mean that the Son of God became flesh (man) and lived among men. It is a deep mystery that took place in time and human history. Jesus Christ came to earth in the form of a man to pay man’s penalty. He was truly man’s substitute to satisfy God’s anger and His judgment of death upon the sinner.

Christ became man to rescue man. “Christ was without sin, but for our sake God made him share our sin in order that in union with him we might share the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).



HE PAID
IT ALL!

The value of Christ taking man’s place lies in the fact that He was also God. Jesus *is* God, and not just a form or likeness of God. Jesus is Himself God, the second Person of the Trinity. God became flesh, that is, one person in two natures—divine and human. He was not born as the result of a union between man and woman, but as the result of a union between Deity and humanity. The human agent in His birth was His mother, Mary, who conceived by a creative act of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:34-35).

Therefore, redemption shows the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit acting in judgment upon sin and in salvation for all mankind.

5 Match the words in the right column with their definitions in the left column.

- | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------|
| a | The price paid to redeem something | 1) Redemption |
| b | To save by buying something back that was once yours | 2) Salvation |
| c | To save from a possible danger | 3) Incarnation |
| d | God taking the form of a man | 4) Ransom |

6 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the *origin* of redemption?

- a When we say that redemption is *of* God we mean that it is His very nature to want to redeem us.
- b Because God made us, He has a duty to redeem us.
- c Man deserves the love God showed through His redemptive plan.
- d When we say God redeemed man we mean God paid the price to bring man back to fellowship with Him.
- e When we say redemption is *from* God we are speaking of the action of God in providing redemption.

7 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the *purpose* of redemption?

- a The design or purpose of redemption is to rescue man from his sinful state.
- b A sinful man must be redeemed before he can approach God (come into His presence).
- c Incarnation means that Jesus was not divine.
- d Even though Jesus came to earth as a man living among men, He was at the same time the divine Son of God.
- e The reason Jesus became man was so He could be man's substitute to pay the penalty for sin.
- f God the Father and God the Holy Spirit were not actively involved in the redemptive plan.

8 Man's sinful condition is one of separation from God. What are the two results of this separation?

.....

.....

A REDEMPTIVE ACT

Objective 3. *Explain the concepts that Christ's role in redemption was planned, personal, and completed.*

Christ is central to God's redemptive plan. The salvation of mankind comes not through a good philosophy or way of life. It comes through the person of Jesus Christ.

God's highest purpose for man, and man's highest activity for God, is fellowship (Revelation 4:10-11). The loss of

fellowship with God when he sinned was man’s greatest loss. But God has provided a way to restore His fellowship with man. It is through His own Son, Jesus Christ.

Christ’s role was to restore God’s fellowship with man by dying on the cross. Christ’s sacrifice meant that God could turn toward man, because His demands were met—the sin barrier had been removed. Christ’s death also meant that man could turn toward God, because his ransom was paid.

Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was the main purpose of His birth, His life, and His ministry (Mark 10:45). Christ’s death was that part of God’s redemptive plan that made it possible for man to understand God’s love. For this reason, Christ’s redemptive act on the cross was 1) carefully *planned*, 2) put into effect in a *personal* way, and 3) *completed* in the resurrection.

9 Explain how Christ’s death on the cross makes it possible for man to return to fellowship with God.

.....
.....

A Planned Act

God saw ahead of time the pitiful downfall of the human race. He had a plan for our redemption and restoration to fellowship with Him. The Son of God became “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8 KJV). His role in redemption was:

1. Planned by God (Ephesians 1:4-6, 11)
2. Promised by God (Genesis 3:15)
3. Prophesied by the prophets (Isaiah 53)
4. Partially realized in the Old Testament (Micah 4:1-4)
5. Preached by the apostles (Acts 2:23, 4:28)

As you read these Scriptures you will see that Jesus was always a part of God’s plan of redemption for lost mankind.

A Personal Act

Salvation is centered on a person, Jesus Christ. Christ *is* salvation. To experience redemption is to experience Christ. He gave Himself to redeem us. The redemptive sacrifice was Christ's own life.

Salvation is not a matter of a set of beliefs and practices, or a way of life. It is Christ being given by God, for all of us (John 1:12, 1 John 5:12). He was sent by the Father, but on the other hand He came voluntarily (by His own choice) into the world. He plainly stated:

The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do (John 10:17-18).

To put into effect God's redemptive plan, the Son of God was made in the likeness of human flesh. "The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us" (John 1:14). Christ, the Word, put into flesh and bone God's thoughts and will for mankind. Christ in person was God's purpose in action. The Word is not merely a message proclaimed, but it is Christ Himself!



The redemptive act was personal because Jesus personally made the sacrifice. It was also personal because it was being made in behalf of persons. Even today Christ's sacrifice can redeem any person from these things:

1. Acts of disobedience of God's laws
2. Acts of rebellion that remove God from the center of life
3. A destroyed divine image
4. A loss of original innocence and holiness

10 Describe in your own words your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

.....
.....

A Completed Act

The resurrection of Christ deserves special mention at this point. Together with the death of Christ, the resurrection is one of the most important truths of the Christian faith. Rarely did Jesus speak of His death without mentioning His resurrection. It was the theme of the apostles' preaching. It is given more space in the New Testament than any other basic doctrine, with the exception of the death of Christ. Both are acts which have to do with the redemption of man. "For Christ died and rose to life in order to be the Lord of the living and of the dead" (Romans 14:9).

The resurrection of Christ is important for these reasons:

1. It establishes that Christ is God.
2. It reveals that Christ has power over death.
3. It proves the reality of Christ's truths.
4. It confirms Bible prophecies.
5. It destroys the security of false religions, which make no claims that their founders have been resurrected from the dead.

The resurrection of Christ was the climax and conclusion of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It was the fulfillment of Christ’s mission. “God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ” (Ephesians 1:9).

11 To review this section, complete the following sentences in your own words.

- a** When we say that redemption of lost mankind was a *planned* act we mean that
-
- b** The two ways that redemption is a *personal* act are
-
-
- c** When we speak of Christ’s resurrection we mean that He
-
- d** When we say that redemption was a *completed* act we mean that.....
-

Aren’t you glad that the plan of redemption was a completed act? Because the work has been finished, we have the eternal hope of unbroken fellowship with God!

A REDEMPTIVE MISSION

Objective 4. *Describe the activity of the Holy Spirit as He works through the church to carry out God’s redemptive plan.*

Like a Rushing Mighty Wind

The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, is also active in God’s redemptive plan. He shares the will and purpose of the Father and Son for the redemption of the world. This was so since the beginning of time.

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit's activity is emphasized. We know His nature by His actions. He is the agent in creation (Genesis 1:2; 2:7; Job 26:13). He also sustains what has been created (Psalm 104:30). The Spirit is also described as very active in the moral, intellectual, and spiritual lives of man (Exodus 28:3, Psalm 51:1, Joel 2:28).

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is the agent of the new creation (John 3:2). Jesus Christ is conceived by the Spirit (Luke 1:34-35, Matthew 1:18). The Holy Spirit is present and active in Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:13-17), in His ministry (Matthew 12:28, Luke 4:18-21), and He is also the "Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death" (Romans 8:11).

The last words of the resurrected Christ were an order and commission to "go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15) and to "make disciples" (Matthew 28:19-20). Although it was addressed to the disciples of Christ, this commission is given through the Holy Spirit. That is why it was not until these disciples waited for the gift and power of the Holy Spirit and received it on the Day of Pentecost that they were capable of fulfilling the Great Commission.

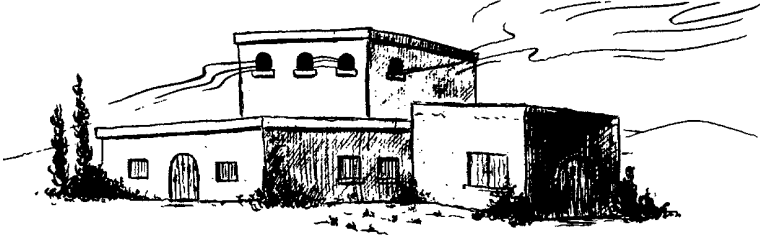
12 To whom was the Great Commission first given? (Read Mark 16:14-15, Matthew 28:16-20.)

.....

13 Read Acts 1:4, 8; 2:1-4. Who else was included in the Great Commission?

.....

The book of Acts says that there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the whole house where the believers were sitting (Acts 2:2). The Holy Spirit had come in the form of the strong wind to indicate the life and energy He was bringing to the church—the strength and power to obey God's commission.



THE SPIRIT GIVES POWER

The coming of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost “sealed” God’s possession. The plan of redemption had been completed by Christ’s resurrection. The Holy Spirit came to declare ownership to the redeemed for service (Ephesians 1:13). He came to verify Christ’s truths and promises (John 3:33).

The Holy Spirit is important in God’s redemptive plan. We are not to “make God’s Holy Spirit sad; for the Spirit is God’s mark of ownership on you, a guarantee that the Day will come when God will set you free” (Ephesians 4:30).

The apostles recognized the coming of the Holy Spirit as proof of the genuineness of God’s redemptive plan. Here are some Scriptures which summarize some of these truths that were made real to the early church by the coming of the Spirit:

1. God’s absolute will was at work (Acts 2:23).
2. The chain of events was a fulfillment of prophecy (Acts 2:16, 25).
3. Redemption was for all mankind (Acts 2:39).
4. God’s way is through repentance and faith (Acts 2:38).

The early church lived and worked with the presence of the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:24; 4:13). The Holy Spirit was the dynamic (powerful) force in their ministry. It was because they were filled with the Spirit that they did an effective and acceptable service for the Lord (Acts 1:8).

14 What else does the Holy Spirit do for the church? (See 1 Corinthians 12:1; Galatians 5:22.)

.....

15 When we say that the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost “sealed” God’s possession, we mean that He

- a) confirmed that Jesus is the Son of God.
- b) claimed the believers for His use in spreading the gospel to all the world.
- c) revealed Himself for the first time as God’s agent in redemption.

Like a Mighty Marching Army

On the Day of Pentecost the church was born. It was the Holy Spirit that gave birth to the church—through the church the Holy Spirit is to carry out the divine purpose of God. His coming indicated that the “day of salvation” had arrived. That is, all aspects of God’s redemptive act had been completed (Ephesians 4:30).

Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit had an active but *general* ministry. He was everywhere as God is able to be everywhere. He was there to help all mankind. But after Pentecost the Holy Spirit came with a more specific mission. One of His purposes in the world is to impress the sinner with his need for the gospel. The Holy Spirit’s ministry is directly related to bringing about man’s salvation through the preaching or sharing of the Word of God. First the Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin to sinful man (John 16:7-11). Then He gives new birth to those dead in sins (John 3:5, Hebrews 2:10).

The church represents all of those who have been redeemed by God’s plan. The church represents the temple as the habitation (dwelling place) of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22). God has fulfilled His eternal purpose of redemption for man.

But the Holy Spirit is now responsible to see that through the church God’s purposes reach all the world. The redemptive plan of God is incomplete unless those who have been redeemed take the message to the world. The Holy Spirit is gathering an army that will do battle against Satan. Have you become a part of that army?

In this lesson we have seen that the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—are actively involved in a redemptive plan. The plan is complete. There is hope for the world. Sin can be overcome. But those of us who have been redeemed must do our part. God is asking us to be a part of His redemptive plan.

16 Describe two ways the Holy Spirit has acted in each of these times:

- a** In the Old Testament:
.....
- b** In the life of Christ:
.....
- c** In the church since the Day of Pentecost:
.....

self-test

MULTIPLE CHOICE. There is one best answer for each question. Circle the letter in front of the answer you choose.

- 1** The plan of redemption was necessary because
 - a) people did not know how to please God.
 - b) man fell into sin because he was not obedient to God's law.
 - c) God did not choose to have fellowship with all men and women.

- 2** The word *redemption* describes God's way of
 - a) buying back that which was rightfully His and which had been lost to Him.
 - b) punishing men and women who disobey His laws.
 - c) keeping order in every part of His creation.

- 3** God's main reason for wanting to redeem people is that He
 - a) wants us to know how angry He is when we sin.
 - b) feels responsible for us because He created us.
 - c) loves us and wants to have fellowship with us.

- 4** Of equal importance with Christ's death on the cross in God's redemptive plan is the act of
 - a) His resurrection.
 - b) man's repentance.
 - c) the creation of man.

SHORT ANSWER. Briefly explain each of the following statements.

5 Redemption is:

a of God

b from God

c human in design

d a completed act.....

6 Explain how the Holy Spirit works through the church to carry out God's redemptive plan.

.....
.....

answers to study questions

- 9** It removed the sin barrier between man and God.
- 1** Your answer may include these explanations: God paid the price of our redemption with the blood of Christ. Christ's sacrifice was made for all mankind.
- 10** I hope you were able to say that He has forgiven your sins, redeemed you, and that He is Lord of your life.
- 2** (In your words) *Salvation* means to be rescued from danger. *Redemption* includes salvation along with the idea of paying a price to buy back something that has been lost.
- 11** (In your own words)
- a** even before Creation the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was in the plan of God to redeem fallen man.
 - b** that Christ made a personal sacrifice of His own life, and that He did this for all people.
 - c** rose from the dead, became alive again three days after His death.
 - d** Christ not only died to redeem us, He also rose again to confirm (prove) His power over sin and death.
- 3** b) Man became sinful through disobedience to God, and he lost his fellowship with God.
- 12** The eleven disciples.
- 4** Your answer should include these ideas in your own words:
- a** the destruction of the enemy.
 - b** a sacrificial offering.
 - c** a salvation for all people who believe in Him.
 - d** an eternal redemption for all those who follow Him.
- 13** All the believers.
- 5**
- a** 4) Ransom.
 - b** 1) Redemption.
 - c** 2) Salvation.
 - d** 3) Incarnation.

- 14** He gives gifts and produces fruit in believers. (We will explain this in a later lesson.)
- 6 a** True.
 - b** False. (He redeems us because He loves us.)
 - c** False.
 - d** True.
 - e** True.
- 15 b)** claimed the believers for His use in spreading the gospel to all the world.
- 7 a** True.
- b** True.
 - c** False.
 - d** True.
 - e** True.
 - f** False. (God the Father *sent* His Son to become flesh, and the Holy Spirit *performed* the creative act which made this possible.)
- 16** Any of these:
- a** In creation, sustaining (keeping) His creation, in moral, intellectual, and spiritual dealings with man.
 - b** Active in Christ's conception, in His baptism, in His ministry, in His resurrection.
 - c** He gives power for witnessing, He gives special gifts and fruit, He confirms spiritual truths, He brings conviction and gives the new birth.
- 8** They are: 1) sinful man is not permitted into God's presence, and 2) he faces eternal punishment for his sins unless he repents and accepts Christ's redemption.

For Your Notes

Lesson 3

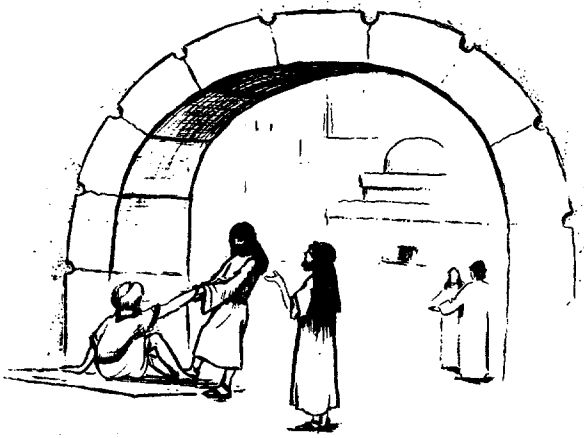
A Universal Church

The Italian artist Raphael painted the scene of the Transfiguration described in Matthew 17. It shows the Lord on a high mountain. His face is shining like the sun, and his clothes are dazzling white. Moses is on one side of Jesus and Elijah on the other. Three disciples are kneeling nearby in worship.

Raphael's painting shows a young epileptic boy at the bottom of the mountain against a dark background. A small crowd has gathered around the boy. His parents are there wanting the other disciples to heal their son. The disciples stand there helplessly while their enemies mock them.

This is the picture that many have of the church. Christ is far away on some mountaintop. He is surrounded by a few special people who have escaped from the valleys of life. At the foot of the mountain is a world sick and in great need of healing, with no one to help it.

This lesson will give you *another* picture of the church. The picture you will get is of a church which is very much involved in the world. It is a church that puts into action all of the Father's plan and Christ's purpose in the world. The Holy Spirit has made of the church a temple to dwell in the world to complete the redemptive plan of God.



lesson outline

God's Instrument

Christ's Purpose

The Church's Ministry

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain the nature and ministry of the church.
- Understand the terms *local* or *visible* and *universal* or *invisible* as they relate to the church.
- Describe the relationship of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit to the church.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson following the procedure given in Lesson 1. Read all Scripture texts, and answer all study questions before checking your answers.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.
3. Review Lessons 1-3, then answer the questions in Unit Student Report 1.

key words

clergy	manifestation
edification	ministry
edify	organism
invisible	purification
laity	synagogue

lesson development**GOD'S INSTRUMENT**

Objective 1. *Explain the meaning of the word church as it applies to the Christian.*

In Lessons 1 and 2 we discussed the redemptive plan of God. We also learned that God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all very much involved in the salvation of the world. Now we will talk about the church and how it fits into the redemptive plan.

First we will find out what the church *is*. We need to understand that the church is God's creation and His unique possession through Christ. Then we want to see what the church is supposed to do. Because of what the church *is*, it has a special purpose in the world. We will see what that purpose or mission is.

The Meaning of the Word *Church*

The word used in the New Testament for *church* is the word *ekklesia*, which means "to call out from" or "the called-out ones." It can also mean "called unto."

In the simplest terms *the church is God's people*. It is the believers who have been called out of the world by means of the gospel of Christ. These believers maintain a personal relationship with Christ by faith and are united to the body of believers by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

The church is the "gathering of God's first-born sons, whose names are written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:23). This means that experiencing the new birth is the first condition for becoming a part of the church. The second is the joining of one believer with

others into one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). These are the first steps in becoming a part of the church.

- 1** To experience the new birth means to
 - a) become sinless.
 - b) accept Christ as Savior and Redeemer.
 - c) die and be resurrected.
- 2** Which of these statements are TRUE?
 - a** The concept of being “called-out ones” indicates that the Christian has turned away from his old life of sin and has come into a new life in Christ.
 - b** The main purpose of the church is to separate the believer from the sinner.
 - c** The church unites the body of believers to fulfill its mission to the world.

The Bible speaks of the church in two ways. First, it speaks of a *universal* church. Christ said, “I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). He did not say “churches.” He was speaking of one church—those who have been born of the Spirit of God and who have by the same Spirit been baptized into the body of Christ (1 Peter 1:3, 22-25). The universal church represents believers and members of the body of Christ in all places and all ages. Some call this the *church invisible*, but actually the church has never been invisible, because it is people, real live people.

The Bible also speaks of a *local* church. In the local sense the word *church* is used of a group of believers in any one locality or place. The local church is the local expression of the universal church. Thus we read of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1, 11:22), the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:2, 2 Corinthians 1:1), or the church of the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:1). The local churches together ought to be a good example of the true church, the universal church.

The church at its very beginning sprang up in a most simple way. At first there was no organization, but merely a simple bond of love, fellowship, and cooperation. This quickly changed. It became more organized by the believers who felt a need to join efforts with others in making known the gospel of Christ to unbelievers.

At first there was but one local church in Jerusalem. The membership grew to 3000 and then 5000 as the Lord added to the church daily (Acts 2:47). More local churches became necessary elsewhere to meet the needs of other new members in the body of Christ. New churches were established wherever the gospel was preached, such as in Judea and Samaria (Acts 8).

From these early days of the church to the present, believers have seen that it is good to join fellowship with other members of the body of Christ. This has resulted in the local church. But it must not be forgotten that the *universal* church reveals itself in the visible, or *local*, church. The church is in existence wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ (Matthew 18:20).

3 From the list below select the correct ending for each sentence and write it in the blank space. Some endings will be used more than once.

- 1) new birth
- 2) universal church
- 3) gospel of Christ
- 4) uniting with other believers
- 5) local church

- a** The church is God’s people who have been called out of the world by means of the
- b** The two conditions for becoming a part of the church are the and
- c** Another term for the *invisible church* is the
- d** Another term for the *visible church* is the
- e** When believers join together in one place at specific times they are called the

f Believers from all places throughout all history make up the

.....

4 Are you a member of the universal church?.....

Are you a member of a local church?.....

Divine in Origin

Objective 2. Describe the divine nature of the church.

The church is a divine creation. It is unique because it is a special people called out by God. God has called everyone to repentance. The sinner who responds to God’s call becomes a new creature in Christ. The born-again believer becomes part of a new family—the family of God, or the church. The church is born of God, and not by the work of any man. The church is not *organized*—it is *born*. It is not the product of man’s efforts, but it is the product of man’s birth into the kingdom of God.

The church is a divine possession. The church is “God’s own people” (1 Peter 2:9). It belongs to God. He was the one who paid the price to purchase it through Christ (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The church belongs to God to be used by Him for His eternal purposes. This does not mean that it is a lifeless object or tool in God’s hand. The church has value to God because it is through the church that the “angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world . . . learn of his wisdom in all its different forms” (Ephesians 3:10). The church, in other words, is the living example to the world that God is able to redeem from sin. God, the Creator and Savior of the world, restores His people to fellowship with Him, and He enjoys a special relationship with them.



WE BELONG TO HIM

You will understand this special relationship better as you read the following Scriptures. These Scriptures will help you to know more about the nature and meaning of the church and its relationship with God.

5 Read each verse and write the name used for the church.

a Ephesians 2:19:

b Ephesians 2:21:

c 1 Timothy 3:15:

d 1 Peter 2:5, 9:

e 1 Peter 5:3-4:

6 Why is the church a divine creation?

.....
.....

7 Why is the church a divine possession?

.....
.....

CHRIST’S PURPOSE

Objective 3. Give four examples of how the church is involved in Christ’s redemptive purpose.

We have talked about the meaning and origin of the church. It was God’s will and design that brought the church into existence. In the plan of God, Christ was to redeem the world through His sacrifice. But Christ was not to accomplish the entire plan of redemption alone (Matthew 28:18-20). The plan calls for the members of His church to be the agents or messengers to accomplish Christ’s eternal purpose.

The plan of God may be stated simply in the following manner:

1. God the Father planned the redemption of mankind.
2. Jesus the Son of God revealed God’s plan and paid the price.

3. The Holy Spirit formed the church to accomplish the divine purposes of the Father and the Son.
4. The church fulfills the purpose of the Father and the Son by the ministry of its members, through the Holy Spirit, to the world.

Two things are brought up at this point. One is the special relationship between Christ and His church, that is, the unity or “oneness” of Christ and the church. The other is the means by which this unity takes place. The Holy Spirit provides the grace for the believers to be united in Christ, and He also makes effective the ministry of each member of the body of Christ (Romans 12:4-8). Here are some examples of these two ideas:

1. *The church is the body of Christ.* This means that Christ and the church are one, as the head and the body are one. There is a necessary and living relationship between Christ and His church. The apostle Paul uses the example of the body and says, “No one ever hates his own body. Instead, he feeds it and takes care of it, just as Christ does the church; for we are members of his body” (Ephesians 5:29-30).

The church, as a body, is the *visible manifestation* of Christ. This means the church shows to the world what Christ is like. The body of Christ is a fellowship of people who are united in a common faith, a common worship, and a common love. This faith, worship, and love are centered around the head of the church, which is Christ. The people who make up the church are bound together because of the work of Christ (Ephesians 2:21-22; 5:30; 1 Corinthians 12:27).

2. *The church is the bride of Christ.* The church has been compared to a bride awaiting her bridegroom. The church is waiting for the return of Christ, the Bridegroom (Mark 2:19-20, 2 Corinthians 11:2). Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). Christ is preparing the church during these days. He is to present it spotless at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19:5-10).

3. *The church is the community of the Holy Spirit.* The church was created on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit

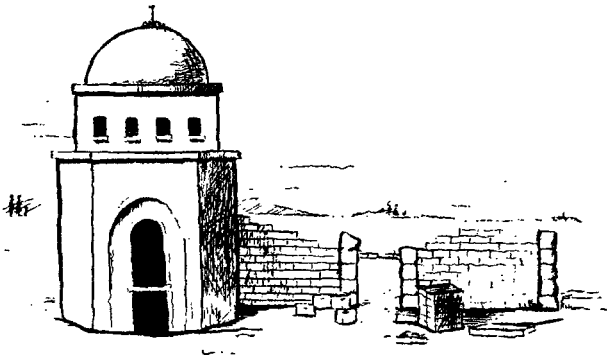
gave birth to the church in order to fulfill Christ's mission. The church has become the temple of the Holy Spirit that God might dwell on the earth. The Holy Spirit has acted and continues to act creatively. He was present at the creation of Adam, and He is present in the church, which is a new creation of God.

The creation of the fellowship for worship and service was the work of the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit brought all believers together. There was communion (Acts 2:43-47). There was unity and fellowship in the church as there is between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit brought a deep spiritual community in Christ among believers.

The Holy Spirit is actively adding members to the body of Christ. Through the church, He is reaching out to bring others into the community of believers. It was Christ's wish that none should be destroyed (2 Peter 3:9).

While the church is still in the world, the Holy Spirit will be actively baptizing believers into the body of Christ and He will be baptizing the members of the church for service. It is through the church that the Spirit carries out the eternal purpose of God.

4. *The church members are living stones.* It was mentioned before that the church is called the temple of the Holy Spirit. The living Spirit of God dwells in the total building. But the building itself is a spiritual building made up of living stones (1 Peter 2:5). *We are those living stones!*



The Holy Spirit gives life to the church and sustains or keeps it. The church is a living organism. The Holy Spirit is the living power of the church. The church is not made up of “dead stones” but live ones. There is community, unity, and the sharing of needs and blessings. The church is very much alive and moving when it is doing God’s will through the Holy Spirit.

8 Without looking back at the lesson, list the four steps in the plan of God. (Write this in your notebook.)

9 We have seen that the church is involved in Christ’s redemptive purpose. How is each of these descriptions of the church related to that idea?

a The church is the body of Christ.

.....
.....

b The church is the visible manifestation of Christ.

.....
.....

c The church is the bride of Christ.

.....
.....

d The church is the community of the Holy Spirit.

.....
.....

e The church members are living stones.

.....
.....

THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY

Objective 4. *Identify true statements which explain the meaning of the word ministry as it relates to the church.*

Ministry is the natural result of the character of the church. The ministry of the church is encouraged by the Holy Spirit. But more than that, the ministry of the church flows from within the character and nature of the church. Just as eating is natural to people, ministry is natural to the church.



One of the first things a newborn believer wants to do is to serve God. Because of the joy of salvation and our appreciation to the Lord for our salvation, we want to do something in return. This is very normal and natural, just as eating is natural to a baby. But the baby needs some training as to what to eat and how to eat it. So do believers need to know what is involved in ministry.

What Is *Ministry*?

The most common word used to define *ministry* is the word *service*. To minister is to serve. To do a service for someone is to minister to that person. This is ministry in the most general sense of the word. In a more specific way, the word *minister* includes several aspects which will help us to understand what the church is to do.

In the Old Testament, the word *minister* meant a domestic (household) servant (1 Kings 10:5). It could also refer to one who served in the temple. The idea is of someone who assists another person. Joshua was a minister to Moses (Exodus 24:13, 33:11).

Elisha assisted Elijah (1 Kings 19:21). The priests and Levites were ministers of God in the temple (Exodus 28:35; 1 Kings 8:11).

In the New Testament, the original Greek word used is *diakonos*. This word also has the meaning of “servant.” The minister of the synagogue in Nazareth was an attendant (Luke 4:20). John Mark was a minister to Paul and Barnabas, that is, their assistant. Jesus used the word when He said, “Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am” (John 12:26). As the church grew, its ministry was performed by various types of workers having several functions, but all were ministering servants of God (1 Corinthians 12:8-10). The term includes the idea of performing a spiritual service.

The church is called to the ministry of her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The minister is one called by God to a place of responsibility. Whose responsibility is it to minister?

Two Scripture passages will help us to find the answer. The first is 1 Peter 5:1-3:

I, who am an elder myself, appeal to the church elders among you. I am a witness of Christ’s sufferings, and I will share in the glory that will be revealed. I appeal to you to be shepherds of the flock that God gave you and to take care of it willingly, as God wants you to, and not unwillingly. Do your work, not for mere pay, but from a real desire to serve. Do not try to rule over those who have been put in your care, but be examples to the flock.

This Scripture refers to the leaders of the body, who have been called of God to give *all* of their time and effort to this ministry. They are sometimes called the *clergy*.

Now let us look at 1 Peter 2:9-10.

But you are the chosen race, the King’s priests, the holy nation, God’s own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light. At one time you were not God’s people, but now you are his people; at one time you did not know God’s mercy, but now you have received his mercy.

This Scripture refers to *all* believers. It includes those members of the body who earn their living in many types of occupations outside of the church. They are sometimes called the *laity*, or *laypersons*. Most of us make up this part of the body of Christ. But as part of God's church, we are all responsible to be involved in the ministries of the church. We are *all* "the King's priests . . . chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God."

10 Which of these statements are TRUE explanations of *ministry* as it relates to the church?

- a** One who ministers is a servant or assistant to others.
- b** The church's ministers are always members of the clergy.
- c** The very character of the church leads it into ministry.
- d** The laity is not expected to perform ministries in the church.
- e** God expects all believers to be involved in ministries.
- f** The term *ministry* includes the idea of performing a spiritual service.
- g** Each minister should be able to perform all of the ministries of the church.

How Do We Minister?

Objective 5. *Apply the principle of "servant" ministry to your ministry in the church.*

The Christian who ministers must devote himself to following the pattern of Christ. Christ came not to receive service but to give it (Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45). Christ Himself said, "I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you" (John 13:15). That is what Paul was talking about when he wrote to the church, "God in his mercy has given us this work [ministry] to do, and so we do not become discouraged" (2 Corinthians 4:1).

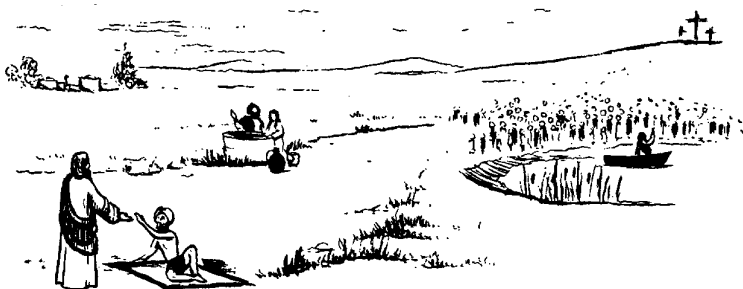
The minister of Christ, following the example of his Master, gives a humble but loving service to help other people who are in need. In His first sermon at His home synagogue in Nazareth, Jesus said:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim

liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people (Luke 4:18-19).

11 As the body of Christ, our ministry to the world should be like His. To help you remember how He saw His mission, memorize the Scripture given above. Put an **X** on this line when you have done so

Jesus announced publicly that He was taking the role of a servant. He never denied His services to needy people. In the streets He found the despised and the downcast and gave back to them their dignity as human beings in the sight of God. People brought their sick to Him, and He healed them in body and spirit. A publican needing to recover his self-respect—a beggar needing to recover his sight—a rich man worried about his soul—a fisherman worried about his luck—a leper crying “Unclean!”—or a woman who had sinned—whoever needed Jesus was not turned away. Many times His body was tired, as He spent Himself in service for others. But He kept giving of Himself all the way to the cross!



Jesus passed on His servant-ministry to His disciples. He showed them the road to greatness in the kingdom of God when He said, “Whoever wants to be first must place himself last of all and be the servant of all” (Mark 9:35). Again He said, “If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest” (Mark 10:43). Just hours before dying on the cross, Christ pointed out, “I am among you as one who serves” (Luke 22:27). To show what He meant, He washed everybody’s feet. He did this to show the role of a servant.

Here are four things which can be said about a servant:

1. He is someone who works in somebody else’s house.
2. He ministers to somebody else’s needs.
3. He works at somebody else’s convenience.
4. He does not expect to be thanked for what he has done.

So “it is the same with you; when you have done all you have been told to do, say, ‘We are ordinary servants; we have only done our duty’” (Luke 17:10). Christ was our example in His own ministry. We have been given the wonderful privilege of ministering as He ministered!

Jesus came to earth as a humble, obedient servant. But what did God think of Jesus? The apostle Paul gives the answer in Philippians 2:9-10:

For this reason God raised him to the highest place above and gave him the name that is greater than any other name. And so, in honor of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees, and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

To His obedient Son, God gave a glory greater than the world can ever give—the adoring worship of the whole universe. This could be a figure of what God has in store for an obedient, servant church.

12 Review this section and the four things which are said about a servant. How can you apply the principle of “servant” ministry to your ministry in the church?

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.....

What Is Our Ministry?

Objective 6. *Explain what is involved in our ministry to the Lord, to other members of the church, and to the world.*

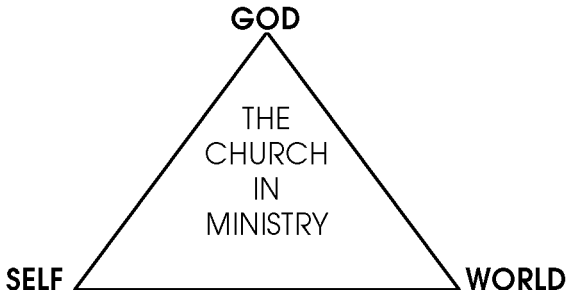
In general, the ministry of the church is divided into three parts: 1) it is called to serve God and worship Him; 2) it has a

ministry to its own members; 3) it has a ministry to the world of unbelievers. These three ministries of the church will be considered in more detail in later lessons. I will just give a brief explanation of each in this lesson.

1. *The church ministers to the Lord.* The term translated “While they were serving the Lord . . .” in Acts 13:2 means “worshiping the Lord.” True ministry to the Lord is true worship. This is the primary purpose of the church and its members (Romans 15:6, 9; Ephesians 1:5, 6, 12, 14; 3:21). God’s eternal purpose is to draw man closer to Him. In worship the redeemed man (in Christ) draws closer to God (Ephesians 2:13). When we worship we give God honor and reverence as the father of the universe. The words “Our Lord and God! You are worthy to receive glory, honor, and power” and other such expressions show us the central meaning of worship (Revelation 4:11).

2. *The church ministers to its own members.* The church has the responsibility and privilege to minister to itself. “It was He who gave gifts to mankind . . . He did this to prepare all God’s people for the work of Christian service, in order to build up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12). The church’s service is *inward* to herself in edification, purification, education, and discipline. This means the church has the responsibility to build up (edify) its members, to keep itself pure, to train, and to discipline the members of the body. The goal of God for the church is expressed in Ephesians 4:13: “And so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God; we shall become mature people, reaching to the very height of Christ’s full stature” (KJV).

3. *The church ministers to the world.* The church must move *outward* to the world in evangelization. The world is the earth and all its people. From the very beginning, since man fell into sin, it has been God’s plan to make salvation available to all mankind. The Great Commission, as spoken by the Lord in Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15, directs the church to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. The church is to evangelize *all the world*—beginning with its own community, and reaching out to include every person of every tribe and nation.



So we see that the universal church is God at work in people through the Holy Spirit. The church is the called-out ones whose lives are given in service for the glory of Jesus Christ. The church is alive and moving with a purpose to minister to the Lord, to the membership of the body, and to the world. The church acts for God in worship, in service, and in witness.

13 Explain briefly how the church ministers to the Lord.

.....
.....

14 List four ways the church ministers to its own members.

.....
.....

15 In what way can the church minister to the world?

.....

After you take the self-test for this lesson, review the material in Lessons 1 through 3. Then answer the questions in Unit Student Report 1 before you begin the next unit of study.

self-test

SHORT ANSWER. Answer these questions as briefly as possible.

1 Explain the relationship between the local church and the universal church.

.....
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2 Why is the universal church sometimes called the *invisible* church?

.....
.....

3 God's role in the establishment of the church can be described by saying that He

.....
.....

4 Christ's relationship to the church is

.....
.....

5 The Holy Spirit's involvement with the church is that He

.....
.....

6 Describe three ways in which the church ministers.

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.....

7 As a member of the body of Christ, have you ministered in any of these ways? Write the ways you have ministered.

.....
.....

8 Now write down any areas in which you would like to increase your personal ministry as a member of the body of Christ.

.....
.....

answers to study questions

8 God the Father planned how man was to be redeemed. Jesus revealed the plan and became the sacrifice (paid the price). The Holy Spirit brought the church into being to accomplish God's plan. The church fulfills the plan through ministry to the world.

1 b) accept Christ as Savior and Redeemer.

9 In your own words:

a As members of His body we are one with Him, we are united with Him. (We have a restored fellowship with God.)

b The church represents Christ to a sinful world. Christ's sacrifice binds us together.

c Christ is preparing the church for eternal fellowship with Him. The church is like a bride awaiting her bridegroom, to be presented spotless before God.

d The Holy Spirit gives the power and grace for the members of the body of Christ to work together in unity and fellowship to fulfill God's plan.

e As "living stones" which make up God's temple in the world, we have the Holy Spirit living within us to give us life and keep us. We do God's will through the power of the Holy Spirit

2 a True.

b False.

c True.

10 a True.

b False.

c True.

d False.

e True.

f True.

g False.

- 3 a** 3) gospel of Christ.
 - b** 1) new birth, 4) uniting with other believers.
 - c** 2) universal church.
 - d** 5) local church.
 - e** 5) local church.
 - f** 2) universal church.
- 11** Your answer. Aren't you glad the Lord trusts us to continue His ministry to the world?
- 4** If you have experienced the new birth, you are a member of the universal church. I hope you could answer *yes* to both questions.
- 12** Here is my answer: As a minister of God, I must remember that I am working in His house. I am ministering to the needs of other people. I do not work just when I want to, but when I am needed. I do not expect to be thanked for my service.
- 5** Your Bible translation may not use exactly these same terms. These are from *Today's English Version*:
- a** Family.
 - b** Building and temple.
 - c** Church of the living God.
 - d** Holy priests, the King's priests. (This means that each believer can have direct communication with God for himself and for others.)
 - e** Flock. (This compares the church to sheep who are cared for by a kind shepherd.)
- 13** The church ministers to the Lord primarily through worship. We give Him honor and glory because He is worthy of our worship.
- 6** Because it is made up of people who have responded to God's call and who have experienced the new birth. This new birth is made possible by Christ's sacrifice, and is not the work of any man, but of God.

- 14** The church edifies or builds up the members, keeps itself pure, and provides training and discipline where needed. (These concepts will be further explained in a later lesson.)
- 7** The church belongs to God because He paid the price to purchase it, and He has redeemed it through the sacrifice of His own Son.
- 15** The church's ministry to the world is mainly evangelization—spreading the good news about Jesus Christ to all people everywhere.

Unit Two

The Church: God's Plan for the World



Lesson 4

A History of Acting for God

Last summer my family and I took a vacation into northern New Mexico. During our trip we came to a high mountain pass. At the very top of the pass we stopped to eat lunch near a small creek. It was a very peaceful spot. Only the wind blowing among the trees and the sound of the creek could be heard.

Soon we started down the mountain. We noticed that the creek ran alongside the road. The narrow dusty road soon became a highway and the creek became a stream. Many miles farther down, the stream became the Rio Grande, a mighty river which empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

The life of the church is like a stream—it is a stream of continuous events. Sometimes it seems like a small stream of activities and at other times it is like a mighty river, rushing through time and space. This is the history of the church.

We have just seen how God has chosen the church to carry out His redemptive plan for the world. This lesson takes you through three important periods of the history of the church. You will see God acting through real and ordinary people as they represent the church. You will find that the history of the church is a history of living conflicts and victories through different times and ages.



lesson outline

Introduction

The Early Period—Living the Faith

The Middle Period—Joining the World

The Modern Period—Discovering Freedom

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson you should be able to:

- Recognize conditions in the church which would weaken its redemptive ministry to the world.
- Identify key persons and events in the three periods of church history discussed.
- Discuss changes which took place in the church which led to the Reformation.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson according to the procedure given in Lesson 1. Read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer all study questions before checking your answers.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

ambition	council	reformation
artificial	imperial	secular
basilica	oral traditions	temporal
cathedral	pagan	written traditions
complex	persecution	

lesson development**INTRODUCTION**

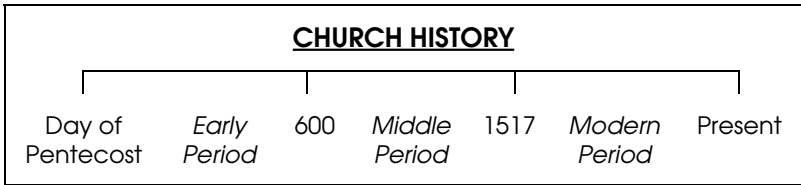
The history of the church is the story of men and women acting for God. It is the story of God's people continuing the ministry of Christ in the world. It includes the activities in the life of the church and the promotion of the Christian faith through time. It provides lessons for the present and directions for the future.

For our purposes in this lesson we will simply highlight some of the more general events of church history. It is our intention to briefly trace the practice and promotion of the Christian faith in the life of the church through worship, service, and witness. Of course, in such a brief study we will not be able to give a full history of the church. Perhaps you will want to study more about church history at another time.

To help you picture the action of the church during these periods we will use some charts. These will simplify the general ideas which will be presented.

Dividing history into periods seems very artificial, but it is necessary in order to get a clearer picture of events. You must understand that one period does not end suddenly, with another beginning the next day or the next year. History has a flowing movement, and like the wind it is difficult to know where one part ends and another begins. These movements of the church have been divided into three periods.

The Early Period	Day of Pentecost–A.D. 600
The Middle Period	A.D. 600–1517
The Modern Period	A.D. 1517 to present



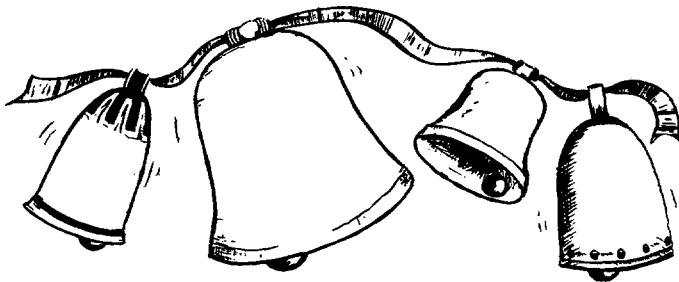
THE EARLY PERIOD—LIVING THE FAITH

The Church in Jerusalem

Objective 1. *Describe the condition of the church in Jerusalem from the Day of Pentecost to A.D. 64.*

The church began in Jerusalem. It rose out of the life and work of Christ. Soon after His death and resurrection, Christ gave the command to His disciples to go and preach the gospel to all nations. It was in Jerusalem that the disciples were to wait for the power which would help them carry out Christ’s command. The church came into existence through the work of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. You can read about this in Acts 2.

The early church was in continuous worship to its Lord. We read that Peter and John were going to the temple to pray, and on their way a lame man was healed through their prayer. “The people there saw him walking and praising God” (Acts 3:9). As a result, many believed. So did others who continually saw the mighty works of God through the disciples. The miracles have been called “bells to call people to worship.” Miracles were very common to the early church.



The early church enjoyed fellowship. There was a unity of spirit and a concern for the needy members of the body of Christ. The beliefs of the church were simple but strong concerning the person of Jesus Christ. A strong faith and testimony, a purity in character, and an attitude of love were present in the church daily.

At that time the church existed mainly in Jerusalem. It had not yet extended itself into Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth as the Lord had commanded. It was not until after Stephen was killed that the church began to spread into other areas to witness (Acts 7). Persecution broke up the church in Jerusalem and its members were scattered abroad. But wherever these members went, they preached and many believed. Even those who were not Jews were accepted into the church according to the agreement at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). The entire book of Acts is a history of the early days of the church, both in Jerusalem and in other areas. It covers the period up to approximately A.D. 64. This is also the date when the church came under heavy persecution from the Roman emperor Nero. This period of persecution continued under successive Roman emperors for nearly 300 years.

1 Place an **X** in front of each of these terms which describes the condition of the church in Jerusalem to A.D. 64.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| a Growth | h Spirit-led ministry |
| b Discouragement | i Selfishness |
| c Continuous worship | j Simple beliefs |
| d Few miracles | k Purity |
| e Many miracles | l Strong witness |
| f Strong fellowship
among believers | m Concern and love |
| g Lack of unity | n Fearful |

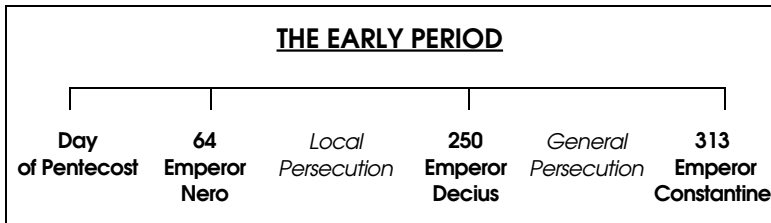
2 Which of these terms describes the condition of your local church?

.....

The Church Under Persecution

Objective 2. *Explain how the church was affected by events which tested its faith and unity prior to A.D. 312.*

Following the death of Stephen, persecution of the church increased. In fact, for nearly 300 years the unity of the church and the faith of its members were tested through persecution. In the beginning, these persecutions were mild and local, but at times they were very harsh. About A.D. 250, during the reign of the Emperor Decius, persecutions became more general, spreading throughout the Roman Empire. In spite of this, by the end of the period Christianity had spread throughout the empire into England, Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.



The forces which tested the unity and faith of the church during this period were:

1. *The deaths of the apostles.* The living voice and authority concerning what the gospel meant was stopped with the death of the apostles. The church was left with oral and written traditions to explain what Jesus had said and done. The leaders of the church held councils to make decisions and set down rules of faith.

2. *The false doctrines of some teachers.* False teachers threatened the church from the inside. Some teachers raised questions concerning the nature of God, the person of Jesus, and the doctrine of salvation. However, some great leaders defended the true teaching of Jesus. Early church leaders such as Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Augustine had much good influence on the thinking and beliefs of the church during its first 400 years.

3. *The persecutions by the state.* Persecution threatened the church from the outside. Persecution came when the church refused to worship the emperor. The church also rejected the gods that the Romans thought had brought greatness to Rome.

The persecutions failed to destroy the church. Instead, it continued to grow in spite of persecution. The faith of believers was strengthened and their dependence on their Lord was increased. Men, women, and children gave their lives for their Lord and Master.

3 How was the church threatened from the *inside*?

.....

4 How was it threatened from the *outside*?

.....

5 Why was the church persecuted?

.....

6 How did it react to persecution?

.....

.....

7 In what way were the deaths of the apostles a test of the unity and faith of the church?

.....

.....

The Church Recognized

Objective 3. *Analyze changes which took place in the church between the time of Constantine and A.D. 600.*

Constantine became emperor of Rome in A.D. 306, and in the year 313 he gave the church freedom to worship openly, own property, and govern itself. The church had received the favor of the Roman government.

This was the beginning of many changes in the church. So great were the changes in its worship, service, and witness that the church at the end of this period was very different from the early church. The following chart will help you to see the differences between the early church in Jerusalem and the recognized church in Rome.

THE EARLY PERIOD—A.D. 64-600		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>During Persecution</p> <hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black;"/> <p>64 250</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>After Constantine</p> <hr style="width: 100%; border: 0.5px solid black;"/> <p>313 600</p> </div> </div>		
THE CHURCH IN WORSHIP		
THE PLACE	A house	A basilica or cathedral
THE FORM	Inward and spiritual, practical	Outward and ceremonial, artistic
THE MESSAGE	Edifying and understood, Spirit-led	Ceremonial and complex, man-made
THE APPEAL	To all the people	To the upper class
THE CHURCH IN SERVICE		
THE CONCERN	Spiritual matters	Political matters
THE DOCTRINES	A simple theology	Council creeds
ADMINISTRATION	Matters settled by the church	Matters settled by the state and the church
THE CHURCH IN WITNESS		
STATUS	Clergy and laity equal	Clergy ranked on higher levels than laity
GOVERNMENT	Independence and self-government Local	Governed by the church council Imperial (under control of the emperor)

The church that began by the power of the Holy Spirit came to the end of this period with imperial power. The church had received acceptance by the Roman Empire. But changes were continuing to take place in the church.

8 Compare the two columns *During Persecution* and *After Constantine* in the preceding chart, and write a statement of your impressions concerning the changes in the church over these two periods, in the following areas:

a The church in worship:

.....
.....

b The church in service:

.....
.....

c The church in witness:

.....
.....

After A.D. 300 the Roman Empire slowly fell into decay. Political and social changes were common. But even during these years of spiritual weakness there were faithful leaders among the believers. They were great defenders of the Christian faith during this period. We will list only some of the most outstanding ones in the order they appeared in history.

1. Athanasius (A.D. 296–373), a great debater who became bishop of Alexandria.
2. Ambrose of Milan (A.D. 340–397), a bishop, writer, and defender of the faith.
3. John Chrysostom (A.D. 345–407), a bishop and perhaps the greatest preacher of the period. He did much to correct the faults of the church in the fifth century, and died for his faith.

4. Jerome (A.D. 340–430), the most educated in this list of great spiritual leaders. His greatest contribution was the translation of the Bible to common language.
5. Augustine (A.D. 354–430), the greatest writer on doctrinal matters of the faith during the period.

THE MIDDLE PERIOD—JOINING THE WORLD

Objective 4. *Identify conditions in the church which led to the Reformation.*



This period begins with Gregory I, who became pope of the church in the year A.D. 590. He introduces a time during which the church obtained great power as an institution. The period ends in A.D. 1517 with the Reformation, which corrected some of the abuses and reordered the affairs of the church in accordance with biblical teaching.

There are two important areas that we want to talk about in this period. Both areas are involved with the ministry of the church. The first is the union of the church and state. The other is the power given to the pope and church leaders.

A Worldly Church

During this nearly 1000-year period there were many political events that affected the church, which we do not have space to discuss here. The most important fact of the period as far as its effect on the church is concerned was the rise to power of the church and its union with the state. It also proved to be the period when the church lost its spiritual influence in the world. The world dominated the church, rather than the church transforming the world as Christ had commanded. For example, some emperors thought they had the right to settle church issues.

Between the fifth and seventh centuries A.D. there were no strong governments. The nations and their rulers were going through many changes. Western Europe had no permanent or strong leadership. The city of Rome had a weak civil government. Public services were badly neglected. The pope was the only representative of permanent government. The people and their rulers came to the church for help. The church began to voice its opinion concerning secular world matters. So it was that the church grew in power.

The Roman Empire and the church had united when Christianity was adopted as the religion of the empire. The church became universally accepted. It became known as a catholic (universal) church. For this period of nearly 1000 years the western (Latin) church had its seat of authority primarily in Rome. The church in some areas became supreme over the state during this time. This was the beginning of what is now called the Roman Catholic Church.

The church became a political machine. It neglected its mission to continue the redemptive plan of God. Its primary concerns were temporal or worldly matters, and it devoted little time to the more important matters of the Spirit. The church had failed to present a strong spiritual force.

9 Read John 18:36, Matthew 6:33, and Romans 14:17, and explain what the main purpose of the church is.

.....
.....

10 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the worldly condition of the church during the Middle Period?

- a** As the church rose to power its political involvement became greater.
- b** The church received help from the civil government.
- c** The spiritual strength of the church increased as it united with the state.
- d** The church became more and more involved with secular matters and less involved with spiritual matters.

An Earthly Leader

Along with the growth in power of the church grew the power of its leaders. This was especially true of the head of the church, the bishop of Rome, who was given the title of *pope*. He claimed authority over all the Christian world.

The tradition arose that Peter had been the first bishop of Rome. There is no evidence that this was true. Two texts used to claim this authority for Peter and his successors are Matthew 16:18-19 and John 21:16-17. As bishop, Peter is said to have been the first pope. As the chief of the apostles, Peter supposedly had authority over the whole church. The Roman church strongly supported this. The church in the eastern part of the world did not.

The church leadership became stronger. Even after the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century, the church remained strong. Its leaders became filled with personal ambition, but failed to give spiritual leadership. The church began to accept pagan superstitions and customs.

As the power of the church grew politically, the church grew weaker spiritually. Many years had passed since the time of the early church. Great changes had taken place in the worship, service, and witness of the church. Here are some of the changes within the spiritual ministry of the church:

The church in worship:

1. A formal religion replaced a spiritual one.
2. The worshiper was told he could not pray directly to God.
3. A priest had been placed between God and the worshiper.
4. The language of the church was no longer common to the worshiper.

The church in service:

1. The traditions of the church, not the Bible, were the rule of faith and practice.
2. The church claimed final authority in all areas of life.
3. The church was above the Bible in questions of faith.
4. The Bible was not to be read by the common people.

The church in witness:

1. The primary concern of the church was earthly.
2. Temporal matters were given more importance than spiritual or evangelistic efforts.
3. People were brought into the church who were Christian in name only.

The Monastery

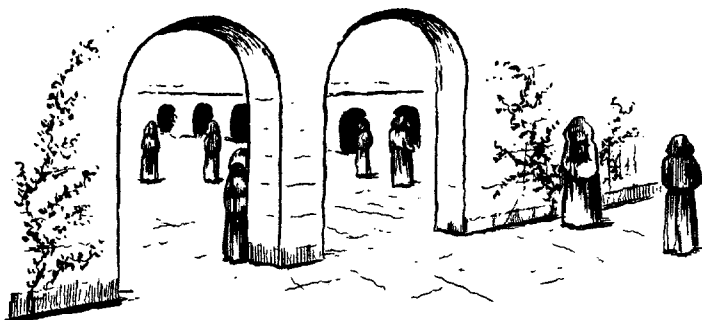
A force that helped fight the spiritual decline of the church was a movement toward the *monastic life*. By this we mean that some religious men called *monks* chose to separate themselves from all other people and live in special quiet places called *monasteries*. The *nuns* were religious women who lived apart from other people in places called *convents*. There were no monks or nuns in the early church. The Christians lived in families and remained as members of society. But the new conditions of the church and the world made many seek the monastic way of life.

Men became monks because they had a desire for salvation. In two ways the life of monks seemed a surer way of salvation than that of other men:

1. *By separation from the world.* It was a life separated from the world and free from those things which made Christian living difficult. The monks knew there was sin in the world and in the church. They believed that removing themselves from the general life of men would help them lead better Christian lives.

2. *By self-denial.* The monastic life gave them opportunity to seek holiness. They believed that to be holy they needed to refuse to satisfy the needs of the body. So they gave up their

possessions. They dressed and lived poorly. They did not marry. They ate very little and slept little. They put their bodies under much suffering.



The number of monks and nuns increased greatly. They formed communities throughout Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, organizing themselves in *orders* or groups. Four of the most famous orders during the Middle Period were 1) the Benedictines, 2) the Cistercians, 3) the Franciscans, and 4) the Dominicans. They were a benefit to society because they became centers to protect people during wars, and to receive tired travelers. They were also centers of agriculture and learning. Many monks and nuns were teachers and missionaries.

But these communities also had some evil results. They grew in wealth through the taxes of the people. They removed some of the best men and women from society. The monks and nuns were regarded as having a higher position before God than other believers had.

11 Read Matthew 5:13-16 and John 17:14-16, and explain the Christian's position in society.

.....
.....

Some of the significant church leaders during the Middle Period were:

1. Patrick (387?–461?), who took the gospel to Ireland
2. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), evangelistic leader of the movement to strengthen the monasteries
3. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), the most influential theologian of the period
4. Raymond Lull (1235–1315), evangelist to North Africa and to the Muslims

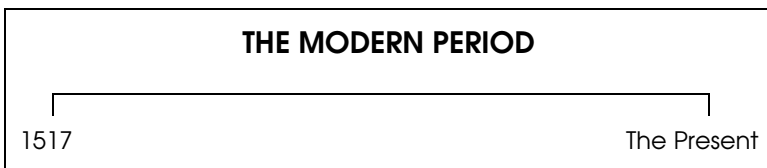
12 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning leadership in the church and its effect upon the church during the Middle Period?

- a** The pope considered himself the head over all of the Christian world.
- b** Peter was the first pope.
- c** As the leaders of the church gained political power, their spiritual effectiveness became weak.
- d** The church became more formal, and the believers were not permitted to pray directly to God or read the Bible.
- e** Monasteries and convents were established for religious people who chose to separate themselves from the world.
- f** Monks and nuns who practiced separation and self-denial were able to be better Christians than those believers who remained in worldly communities.

THE MODERN PERIOD—DISCOVERING FREEDOM

Objective 5. *Explain changes brought about by the Reformation, and their effect on modern church history.*

A Changing World



Formal worship and the repeating of a creed could not satisfy the spiritual hunger of the people. A political and worldly

church could not meet the needs of believers. The middle class wanted to stop the constant flow of money to Rome. People in the church wanted changes.

The most important reason for wanting a change was because the people did not accept the pope's claim to universal power. Many religious leaders saw sin in the lives of members of the clergy. They saw the decline of religion and the neglect of the people. So it was a religious movement called the *Reformation* that helped bring about the change.

The Reformation was a reform, not a revolt. The goal was to correct the abuses and errors of the church. It was also an effort to return to the Bible. The church had become the authority over the Bible. The reformers, like Martin Luther, believed that the Bible is the authority over the church. They believed that God's Word was the authority for the early church of the New Testament.

13 Read 2 Kings 18:1-8 and 23:4-22; Mark 11:15-18. How do these events compare with what took place during the Reformation?

.....
.....

During the Reformation there were two major changes in the church:

1. *There were changes in church government.* The Reformation meant the end of control by the Roman Catholic Church. Nations began to have their own church governments. National churches came into existence. They were independent of Rome, and they understood the needs of the people.

2. *There were changes in the teachings of the church.* Some of the teachings were not changed. For example, teachings concerning the Trinity, Christ, the Bible, the fall of man, original sin, and the need of a moral life for the believer were not changed. Some teachings that were renewed from New Testament times were:

- a. Salvation is by faith alone, that is, belief in Jesus Christ.
- b. The Scriptures are the only rule of faith and life.
- c. The believer can approach God directly without the need of a priest or church leader as a go-between.
- d. Salvation is by the grace of God, and not by works.

Freedom in the Church

The Reformation brought a new freedom. The power and authority that influenced the church for 1000 years was finally weakened. Uniformity had been replaced by freedom. It was a new world.

Along with freedom came variety. Freedom brought differences between church groups. Believers started opening their Bibles and reading. Differences of opinion about what the Bible really said led to different teachings. New groups of churches came into existence, which began to show a variety of ways to worship. These new groups, or *denominations* as they are called, gave themselves names such as *Methodist*, *Presbyterian*, and *Baptist*.

A *denomination* is a group of people or believers who hold a particular set of beliefs. Since the Reformation, denominations have multiplied. They are the result of the freedom of conscience to read the Bible and believe in a particular way. They are the results of God's people seeking for the truth. They are never free from the dangers of error in knowing what the Bible says. It is important that you know your group, however small, and the beliefs of your group.

14 Describe the group you meet with to worship. How does it compare with the New Testament church?

.....

.....

The Modern Period in church history is marked by freedom. This freedom has resulted in differences, both in some beliefs and in some forms of worship and church government. There is need for Christian unity within the body of Christ. We must

allow for freedom or differences, but at the same time seek Christian unity.

Here is a list of some of the changes within the church during the Modern Period:

The church in worship:

1. Much variety in forms of worship
2. Congregational participation greatly increased
3. Stress on personal morality of individual believers

The church in service:

1. Many inter-denominational service agencies such as hospitals and orphanages
2. Sunday schools started by many churches

The church in witness:

1. The development of the missionary movement
2. Large evangelistic campaigns in major cities
3. Much gospel literature distribution

It would be impossible in this brief space to list all of the church leaders who have had major roles from the Reformation to the present time. We will only mention several who represent the leaders of this period:

1. Martin Luther (1483–1546), German theologian who successfully led the Protestant Reformation
2. John Wesley (1703–1791), English preacher who founded the Methodist Church
3. David Livingstone (1813–1873), missionary explorer in Central Africa
4. Hudson Taylor (1832–1905), founder of the mission program to evangelize China
5. Billy Graham (1918– —), modern-day evangelist

15 Compare the condition of the church before and after the Reformation, and summarize the major changes in these three areas:

a In church government:

.....
.....

b In church teachings:

.....
.....

c In church freedom:

.....
.....

16 What were some of the results of these changes?

.....
.....

Future of the Church

Objective 6. *Compare the situation in your own part of the world with universal trends that affect the church.*

What about the future of the church? This is a great and exciting time that God has provided for the church. God is present in the body of Christ through His Holy Spirit. Ours is a world much like the world of the New Testament. Harold A. Snyder, in his book, *The Problem of Wineskins* (Intervarsity Press, Downer's Grove, Illinois, 1977, pp. 27-33) says the present world compares with the time of the early church in the following ways:

1. Populations moving to the cities
2. Unity bringing political peace
3. Spreading of one culture and language
4. International travel bringing better communication
5. A feeling that mankind is essentially one

6. Mixture of ideas and views about the world
7. Decline in morality of people

The redemptive plan of God can still be presented to the whole world. There is need for Christian unity to fulfill the eternal purposes of God. Many more people will be joining the body of Christ.

The signs also point to a renewal of the body of Christ. There are four movements which indicate that the church is moving forward in its mission for the Lord. These are:

1. The movement for personal evangelism
2. The movement for fellowship within the church
3. The movement to reach out to the world and make disciples
4. The movement for the renewal of spiritual gifts within the church

17 In your notebook, write a statement comparing the situation in your own area with the description outlined in the first list in this section. Do you agree with this description?

18 Now look at the list which describes renewal of the body of Christ. Are you experiencing the same thing in your church?

self-test

1 MATCHING. Match the descriptions to their period in church history.

- | | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| a | The Reformation brought changes in church government and teaching, and brought greater freedom in worship. | 1) The early church (to A.D. 64) |
| b | Unity and faith of the church were tested by the death of its leaders, false doctrines, and suffering from abuse. | 2) The church during persecution (A.D. 64–313) |
| c | The church became involved in political, worldly matters more than spiritual matters. | 3) The church after Constantine (A.D. 313–600) |
| d | The bishop of Rome was called the <i>pope</i> and he became head of the official church. | 4) The church in the Middle Period (A.D. 600–1517) |
| e | During this period the church came under the power of the emperor and its worship became ceremonial and formal. | 5) The church in the, Modern Period (A.D. 1517 to present) |
| f | The church experienced great growth, many miracles, strong fellowship, and a Spirit-led ministry with world-wide concern. | |

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Circle the letter in front of the one best answer to each question.

2 Which of these men was considered the greatest writer on doctrinal matters during the period A.D. 313–600?

- Athanasius
- Constantine
- Augustine
- Bernard of Clairvaux

3 What German theologian was the leader of the Protestant Reformation?

- a) John Wesley
- b) Ramond Lull
- c) Hudson Taylor
- d) Martin Luther

4 Thomas Aquinas was known as

- a) the first missionary to North Africa and the Muslims.
- b) the theologian who had the greatest influence during the Middle Period.
- c) a monk who started the first monastery.
- d) one who opposed the faith and persecuted Christians.

5 Persecution of the early Christians resulted in

- a) a weakening of the church which led its members back to sin and idolatry.
- b) the spread of Christianity to all parts of the world as Christians were scattered everywhere.
- c) a movement to limit the church to small secret meetings in Jerusalem.
- d) all of the leaders being placed in prison or killed.

TRUE-FALSE. Place a **T** in the blank space in front of each TRUE statement which describes a condition of the church that led to the Reformation. Place an **F** in front of each FALSE statement concerning this period.

.... **6** The world dominated the church, rather than the church ministering to the world.

.... **7** The Roman Catholic Church became the official Christian church.

.... **8** There was freedom for all believers to read and interpret the Bible for themselves.

.... **9** The doctrine of faith, rather than works, was emphasized by church leaders.

.... **10** The worshiper could approach God only through the priest.

- **11** The church claimed final authority in all areas of life.
- **12** The church's spiritual influence in the world was very strong.

answers to study questions

- 10 a** True.
b False.
c False.
d True.
- 1** You should have an **X** in front of **a, c, e, f, h, j, k, l,** and **m.**
- 11** The believer is to be an example in the world and influence the world for Christ.
- 2** I hope you were able to say that **a, c, e, f, h, j, k, l,** and **m** describe your local church.
- 12 a** True.
b False.
c True.
d True.
e True.
f False. (There were problems even in the monasteries and convents. Living in the world helps the believer to be an example and influence. Separation from other people or self-denial alone are no guarantee that one is a better Christian than others.)
- 3** By false teachers who did not teach the truth about Jesus Christ.
- 13** In 2 Kings the two kings removed from the temple all the abuses (evil practices or customs), and there was a renewal of worship. In Mark 11 Jesus removed the abuses from the temple. During the Reformation there was a removal of abuses and a renewal of worship. (It is important for you to see that God does want to clean up His house from wrongdoings.)
- 4** By persecution.
- 14** Perhaps you included the name of your group or denomination and its beliefs. Hopefully its teachings include the major teachings of the Reformation.

- 5** Because it refused to worship the emperor or gods of the Romans.
- 15** (Any of these)
- a** Many churches became independent of the church in Rome, and established their own church governments in their own countries.
 - b** The believer was given direct access to God, and freedom to read the Scriptures. Salvation was declared to be by faith alone, and by the grace of God, not works. The Scriptures became once again the only rule of faith and life, and not the church.
 - c** Because of freedom, people began to read the Bible. Freedom resulted in differences in some beliefs (because of different interpretations of what the Bible said), in forms of worship, and in church government.
- 6** The church grew, faith was stronger, and the believers learned to depend more upon the Lord.
- 16** More variety in worship forms; more stress on personal morality; Sunday schools; more service agencies; greater missionary outreach.
- 7** Their deaths left the church with no one who had actually seen or been with Jesus. They had to rely on oral and written traditions—reports that had been passed down from the apostles.
- 17** Your answer. Think about the effect of each of these trends on your own church.
- 8** Perhaps your answer is similar to this:
- a** The church changed from Spirit-led, simple worship by all the people to ceremonial, formal worship directed to the upper classes.
 - b** The church went from concern for the spiritual welfare of its members to a political and complex organization.
 - c** The church changed from a fellowship of believers totally involved in witness to a place of position and authority for a select few.

18 I hope you can see these things taking place in your church.

9 The main purpose of the church is to spread the gospel of the kingdom of God. (It is *not* the church's major purpose to bring solutions to economic, social, or political problems.)

Lesson 5

Ministering to God

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. He was sitting on his throne, high and exalted, and his robe filled the whole Temple. Around him flaming creatures were standing, each of which had six wings. Each creature covered its face with two wings, and its body with two, and used the other two for flying. They were calling out to each other:

*“Holy, holy, holy!
The Lord Almighty is holy!
His glory fills the world. ”*

The sound of their voices made the foundation of the Temple shake, and the Temple itself became filled with smoke.

—Isaiah 6:1-4

There can be no true worship unless the worshiper sees the Lord. When Isaiah saw the Lord in all His honor and glory, he sensed his own unworthiness and he bowed in humility before the Lord. Then the Lord took away his guilt and atoned for his sin. This is the result of true worship.

The Father is looking for true worshipers. The church is called to worship. This is its ministry to God. The church has three ministries—to God, to itself, and to the world. In this lesson we will discuss the church’s ministry to God—in worship, in submission, and in service.



lesson outline

Worship as a Ministry to God
The God We Worship
How the Church Ministers to God

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain why worshiping God is a vital part of our Christian experience.
- Describe who God is and what He has done in relation to His worthiness to be worshiped.
- Describe how the church and individuals minister to God.
- Evaluate your personal ministry to God and that of your church in terms of the principles taught in this lesson.
- Have a desire to inspire others to become more involved in the church's ministry to God.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson according to the procedures given in Lesson 1. Read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer each study question before checking your answer.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson. This self-test is a self-evaluation based on the lesson content.

key words

access	inspiration	submission
atone	perish	transformed
corporate	reverence	vital
illumination	sanctuary	worthiness

lesson development

WORSHIP AS A MINISTRY TO GOD

The Necessity of Worship

Objective 1. Give reasons why worship is necessary.

The church at worship is the truest picture of ministry. We were created to bring glory to God (Isaiah 43:7). As members of His church, we give Him glory through our worship. Worship is the church’s highest privilege and duty, and its most important service here on earth. Worship is also to be the church’s main function in heaven (Revelation 5:8-13).

1 Read Revelation 7:9-17. Who is the great multitude who has come out of great tribulation (testing)?

.....

2 Where did this great multitude come from?

.....

3 Why are they worshipping and serving the Lord day and night?

.....
.....

Let’s look at some reasons why worship is necessary as a ministry to God.

1. *Worship is necessary because God desires that we worship Him.* God created man to worship Him and enjoy fellowship with Him forever. We have already seen that Adam, the first man, enjoyed close fellowship with God. This is what God desired for all mankind. But when Adam sinned he lost his fellowship with God. His sinful nature was passed on to all mankind. But in a sense we might say that Adam also passed on to all mankind a memory of what it is like to be in fellowship with God. That is, Adam’s fellowship with God before he sinned gives an indication of what God wants to restore in our lives through Christ.

2. *Man is born with a deep desire to worship.* All men everywhere have a form of worship because they are all born with a desire to worship. But that does not mean that all forms of worship are correct. Those who are not Christians worship what they consider to be their gods. Many people believe that God and nature are one. To these people nature is God, so they worship it. Others have made themselves gods of many kinds. There are even those who believe in an “unknown God” (Acts 17:23). The result is that they worship ignorantly—they do not even realize how wrong they are. Their worship is empty. The Bible says, “Worship the Lord your God” (Matthew 4:10). Worshiping the Lord satisfies our longing to have fellowship with our Creator.

3. *God reveals Himself to us when we worship Him.* The true God who created man for worship and who desires worship has made Himself known. He has revealed Himself through His creation, through His Son, through His written Word (the Bible), and through the Holy Spirit. God wants to be revealed through

His church also. But to reveal God, the church must first have communion with Him and see His glory. “But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:16, 18 NIV).

- 4 Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statements below:
 - a God created us to have fellowship with Him and worship Him.
 - b The desire to worship God is something that cannot be developed until our later years.
 - c Man lost his fellowship with God when Adam sinned.
 - d It is not possible for the church to reveal the glory of God.
 - e When we turn to the Lord in worship and obedience, we become more like Him.

5 Now without looking back at this section, try to list three reasons why it is important and necessary for the Christian to minister to God in worship.

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What Worship Is

Objective 2. Describe the two-way communication involved in true worship.

The word *worship* means “to give worth.” When we worship we take notice of the worth or value of someone. Some people misuse the word *worship* to describe their feelings for someone. You may hear someone say, “I just worship my father,” or “He just worships his children.” What is really meant is “I love my father,” or “He loves his children.” But in both cases the value or worth given to someone is being described.

The word *worship* properly should be reserved for God alone. To worship God is to recognize His worth. His worth is beyond measure. However, His worth is not to go unnoticed. God’s worth is to be directly related to our worship. “Our Lord

and God! You are worthy to receive glory, honor, and power” (Revelation 4:11).

6 Think of reasons why you consider God to be worthy of your worship. Write these reasons in your notebook, and as you study this lesson and see other reasons, add them to your list.

Worship starts with God coming near. God always begins the action to start fellowship with man. God comes close enough to us that we may see His worth and splendor. John 1:18 says that no one has seen God at any time. We do not see God as we see natural things. Worship deals with the unseen and spirit world, for God is Spirit (John 4:24). But as we have already stated, we see God in Creation, through His written Word, and in Christ.

God has come near to man in many ways. He came to Moses in a cloud (Exodus 34:5-8). He came to Isaiah in the temple (Isaiah 6:1-6). But in these last days the writer of the book of Hebrews says that God reveals Himself in His Son, Jesus. Christ “reflects the brightness of God’s glory and is the exact likeness of God’s own being” (Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus said, “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). God made himself known to the disciples through Jesus. They saw Him, they touched Him, and they heard Him. They worshiped Him. But He did not come to stay on earth. He came to die on the cross to atone for our sins, and then He returned to the Father. He left this promise with His disciples: “In a little while you will not see me any more, and then a little while later you will see me” (John 16:16).

When Christ returned to the Father, He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us. Christ said, “The Spirit will take what I give him and tell it to you” (John 16:15). The Holy Spirit reveals God through His Son to the church. So through His Spirit, God is present in the church, and He draws us unto Himself. Jesus said,

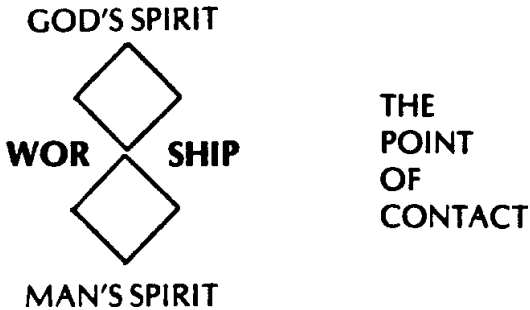
No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him to me; and I will raise him to life on the last day (John 6:44).

When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to me (John 12:32).

7 List three ways that we can “see” God.

.....
Worship is the believer’s response to God. As God comes near and we recognize Him, it causes us to love, reverence, adore, and praise God. God becomes real to us and our understanding of God’s worth results in worship. True worship is spiritual and total.

God is a Spirit, and Jesus said that our worship was to be “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24 NIV). Worship in its highest nature is inward and spiritual. It is not just the outward ceremony of believers. Our spirit has communion with the Spirit of God! This is the type of worship acceptable to God.



The worshiper’s response is with his total being. The Bible says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind” (Luke 10:27). The worshiper no longer needs to come before the Lord with animal sacrifices, but with a thankful heart (Psalm 50:7-15). Worship involves the feelings of the one who worships, as well as the understanding. The more we learn about God, and the better we know Him, the better we will be able to worship Him in truth. The Psalms show man worshipping God with his total being: “Praise the Lord, my soul! All my being, praise his holy name!” (Psalm 103:1). And in Psalm 95:6 the Psalmist says, “Come, let us bow down and worship him; let us kneel

before the Lord, our Maker.” The act of bowing down or kneeling before someone indicates an attitude of complete submission to that person.

8 Which of these is the best definition of *worship*?

- a) To love God
- b) To honor God because we recognize His worth or value
- c) To sacrifice animals to God

9 Which of these are TRUE statements concerning worship?

- a** When we worship God our feelings or emotions are involved.
- b** It is not possible to worship God until we “see” Him or know Him.
- c** God reveals Himself today only through His Son, Jesus.
- d** True worship is our natural response when God draws near to us and we recognize His worth.
- e** True worship is possible when our spirit has communion with the Spirit of God.

10 Luke 10:27, Psalm 103:1, and Psalm 95:6 show what attitude of worship by the believer?

.....

11 In your own words, describe briefly the two-way communication which takes place in true worship.

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THE GOD WE WORSHIP

Who He Is

Objective 3. Give examples which illustrate the relationship between the names of God and His character.

In the time of the Old Testament, names were often given to people to describe their character. As we read the Old Testament we read many names for God, and these names describe His personality and character. His names tell us who He is and what He does. They help us to understand Him better.

God's names answer to the needs of His children. When we ask God for something in our prayers, we communicate with Him in a real way—but this is not worshiping. However, God's goodness to answer our prayers and meet our needs produces the grateful hearts with which we worship Him. The names we use as we worship Him are often related to who God is and what He has done for us.

We cannot list all of the names for God given in the Bible, but here are a few of them:

God of Heaven	James 1:17
God of Hosts	Psalm 80:7
The Holy One	Job 6:10
The Living God	Deuteronomy 5:26
<i>Jehovah</i> —The Lord	Exodus 6:3
<i>Jehovah-Jireh</i> —The Lord Will Provide	Genesis 22:14
<i>Jehovah-Nissi</i> —The Lord My Banner	Exodus 17:15
<i>Jehovah-Shalom</i> —The Lord Who Sends Peace	Judges 6:24
<i>Jehovah-Shammah</i> —The Lord Is There	Ezekiel 48:35
<i>Jehovah-Rapha</i> —The Healing Lord	Exodus 15:26
<i>Jehovah-Tsidkenu</i> —The Lord Our Righteousness	Jeremiah 23:6
<i>El Shaddai</i> —The Almighty God	Genesis 17:1
<i>Immanuel</i> —The Almighty God With Us	Matthew 1:23

As you read these names of God, did they remind you of God's character? Have you experienced in your own life the aspect of God revealed in any of these names? Has He sent peace to your heart? Has He provided healing? Do you feel His presence? How can we do anything but worship and praise our Almighty God!

12 In addition to the names of God given in the Bible, there are many names given to His Son and to the Holy Spirit which describe their character. Look up the following Scriptures and write down the names given to Christ in each of them:

- a Matthew 1:21
- b Matthew 1:23
- c Matthew 2:4
- d Luke 1:32
- e Luke 1:69
- f 1 Timothy 6:15
- g Isaiah 9:6

13 Now look up these Scriptures and write down the name given to the Holy Spirit in each of them:

- a John 14:16
- b Zechariah 12:10
- c Romans 8:2

Now let’s look at three names which describe God’s relationship to His church in His redemptive act:

1. *God our Creator.* The Bible begins with God in action—He is the God who acts! The first verse in the Bible tells us that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). The world did not come into existence by chance. Our God is a God of purpose, and there is a definite purpose and design in all of His creation. We worship Him for His creation. Psalm 19:1 says “How clearly the sky reveals God’s glory! How plainly it shows what He has done.”

14 Read Psalm 104. Why is the Psalmist worshiping and praising the Lord in this Psalm?

.....

Man is God’s special creation. In Psalm 8:5-6 the Psalmist is praising the Lord for His creation of man: “You made him inferior only to yourself, you crowned him with glory and honor. You appointed him ruler over everything you made; you placed him over all creation.”

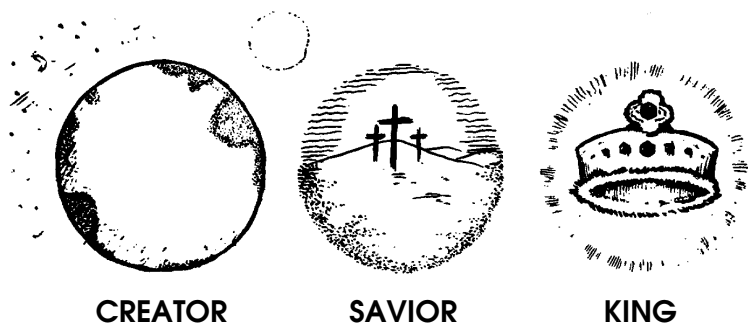
2. *God our Savior.* The God of Creation has planned for the redemption of the world which He created. Ever since man fell into sin, God's actions have been directed toward his salvation. God sent Jesus Christ into the world for man's redemption, to be his Savior. He saves the individual but He has also promised the redemption of the whole world (Ephesians 1:10). All who will call upon His name will be saved.

The Savior is called the Lamb of God because He has been offered as a sacrifice for the salvation of the world. He is to be worshiped for His salvation. Every creature of all the universe will sing in praise “. . . to the Lamb, be praise and honor, glory and might, forever and ever!” (Revelation 5:13).

3. *God our Eternal King.* “To the eternal King, immortal and invisible, the only God—to him be honor and glory forever and ever! Amen” (1 Timothy 1:17). We praise and worship God because He is eternal. “O Lord, you have always been our home. Before you created the hills or brought the world into being, you were eternally God, and will be God forever” (Psalm 90:1). His time has no beginning and no end—He is the first and the last (Revelation 1:8; 21:6).

The rule of the eternal King includes all men—the church and the world. The rule of the King will come as Christ overcomes all spiritual rulers, authorities, and powers. Then He will hand over the Kingdom to God the Father. Christ will continue to rule until all enemies are destroyed. Then God's eternal Kingdom will become a reality:

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. There shall be no more night, and they will not need lamps or sunlight, because the Lord God will be their light, and they will rule as kings forever and ever (Revelation 22:3-5).



15 Illustrate the relationship between the names of God and His character, write in your notebook five names of God or His Son or the Holy Spirit, and explain in what way each name reveals something about the character of God. Does this exercise help you to see more clearly that God is indeed *worthy* of our praise?

What He Has Done

Objective 4. *Explain several ways in which God has provided for all of our needs.*

1. *God has redeemed us.* Not only did God create man, but He has also provided the way to redeem us. It is His desire that no one perish, but that we all live forever. God planned our redemption to save us for Himself. God wants all men and women to be saved so that we will bring honor to Him. All of God's purposes for us are to bring Him honor and glory. Isaiah 43:7 says, "They are my own people, and I created them to bring me glory." He has provided our redemption so that we might worship and glorify Him.

2. *God has given us access to Himself.* In the Old Testament the person who would not be cleansed was cut off. He could not come close to the Lord. (See Numbers 19.) In Exodus 30:18 the bronze basin or laver is described. The priests were to wash their hands and feet at the laver to cleanse themselves before they could enter into the presence of God. In 1 Peter 2:9 we read that now we are all made priests. This means that we can come to God directly in the name of Christ. We have been cleansed by Christ's blood and God's Word, so that we have access to God (Hebrews 10:19-22).

3. *God provides for our needs.* God supplies everything for His children. Psalm 23 has brought much comfort to many people. “The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need” (v.1). The God who gave us life also provides for us while we are on earth. He is not a God of the soul alone, but of the body also. God “gives food to every living creature” (Psalm 136:25). In Matthew 6:25-34 Jesus informed His disciples that God cared for them, saying, “Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things.” We worship Him because He provides all that we need.

4. *God has prepared a place for us.* The believer’s hope is that in eternity he will enjoy a new heaven and a new earth in the presence of God (Revelation 21:1; John 14:1-3). At that time the kingdom of God will be forever established. The rule of God over all the universe will bring all things in heaven and on earth under the Father. Then the believer will live in an eternal home in an everlasting fellowship with the Father. There we will worship Him forever!

16 How did God provide for our redemption?

.....

17 What is necessary before we can have access to God?

.....

18 What proof do we have that God is concerned about our material needs?

.....

19 What is the final and most important need of man that God has provided for?

.....

We have seen many reasons why the church ministers to God in worship and praise. Now we will turn our thoughts to *ways* we minister to God.

HOW THE CHURCH MINISTERS TO GOD

Objective 5. *Describe important aspects of the church’s ministry to God and how they are put into practice.*

In Public Worship

The church was born on the Day of Pentecost during a public celebration. The Bible records that the believers met daily and broke bread together. They met in homes or in the temple. They praised God continually, and all the people respected them (Acts 2:41-47). This was their service of worship to the Lord. It was a simple outward expression of their everyday inward communion with Christ.

Where two or three people are gathered in the name of the Lord, there is a church. They may meet in a home or in a hall. The church may be two or three families meeting for prayer or service, or it may be thousands of people gathered in a beautiful building. During a worship service we, the church, show by visible and spoken signs that we live in fellowship with the Lord.

God’s people in the Old Testament met in a temple which was built especially for worship. God talks about His people coming to worship:

“They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge” (Ezekiel 44:16 KJV).

20 This verse of Scripture (Ezekiel 44:16) is referring to the Old Testament priests, who alone were allowed to enter the sanctuary and minister unto the Lord. How can we apply this to our own experience of ministry in public worship?

.....
.....

We minister unto God in public worship. This ministry takes place in the sanctuary. It is a place of goodness, truth, and beauty. David sang, “Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his

name: bring an offering, and come before him; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chronicles 16:29 KJV).

A worship service is a call to worship. The *minister* leads believers in worship of their Lord. Believers are called to receive in thankfulness God’s gift of fellowship with Him. A Christian worship service contains these elements:

Inspiration

1. *Music.* Music is a vital part of our expression of worship to the Lord. Glance through the book of Psalms in your Bible and notice the many references to singing praises unto the Lord, or praising Him with musical instruments. When we lift our voices together in songs of praise we are making a joyful noise unto the Lord, and He is pleased with our worship.

2. *Prayer.* God desires that our prayers include worship and praise. “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven: May your holy name be honored; . . .’” (Matthew 6:9). “Come, praise the Lord, all his servants, . . . Raise your hands in prayer in the Temple, and praise the Lord!” (Psalm 134:1-2).

3. *Testimony.* The Psalms are filled with testimonies of the goodness of God. When we publicly share what God has done for us, the entire body of believers is led to worship the Lord and to believe Him for their own needs.

4. *Offering.* Giving back to the Lord a part of the material blessings He has given to us is an act of worship. We give out of a heart filled with thanksgiving because of His goodness to us. It is a privilege to give our offering unto the Lord.

Illumination

5. *The preaching of the Word.* “Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105). “I solemnly urge you to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it . . . to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience” (2 Timothy 4:1-2). When we gather together and listen to the preaching of the Word, our hearts are drawn to God in love and worship.

EXPRESSIONS OF WORSHIP



MUSIC-PRAYER-TESTIMONY-OFFERING-PREACHING

21 Explain in your own words how these elements of public worship are a ministry of the church unto the Lord.

.....

.....

Here are some guidelines to help you create the conditions for meaningful worship of the body of Christ during the worship service:

1. *Plan and prepare before the worship service.* It is the minister's responsibility to lead the church in worship. He should prepare his own heart through prayer, and plan the various parts of the service to enable God's people to enter into worship.

2. *Allow for the Holy Spirit to move.* There are few experiences in life that compare with worshipping God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24 KJV) A good worship service releases the spirit of man toward God. God meets His people during times of worship. There should be liberty in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, like the wind which blows where it wills, is not subject to man's order. Be sensitive to His direction as you worship. There is never disorder when the Spirit is in control.

3. *All members of the body should participate in worship.* The worship service should be a *corporate* worship—or worship as a body of believers. The Lord is pleased when the church is

worshipping together: “How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God’s people to live together in harmony!” (Psalm 133:1). The body participates in music, in prayer and praise, in testimony, in giving, and in responding to the message from God’s Word. Many times in a worship service members of the body are led to minister to one another.

True worship should be *sincere*. Sincere worship comes from the heart. It should be *uplifting* and *inspiring*. It lifts up the Lord, and it draws men to Him. Worship should be *reverent*. There should be a deep sense of respect and honor towards God. When the church joins together in ministering unto God in worship, there is dignity and a holy, reverent atmosphere.

22 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the church’s ministry to God in public worship?

- a** From the time of the early church, believers have joined together in public worship.
- b** A believer should consider his worship a personal matter which he cannot share with others.
- c** Some parts of a public worship service cannot really be considered part of worship.
- d** The most important ministry to God is that of praise and worship.
- e** The worship service should be so carefully planned that nothing will be allowed to change the plan.
- f** When the Holy Spirit is allowed to move in a worship service, there is both liberty and order.
- g** Corporate worship provides opportunities for the body to participate in many ways.

In Daily Submission

The believer does not worship only in the company of others. The church’s ministry to God depends upon each believer’s personal commitment to the Lord. Our daily life must be submitted to the Lord. He must have first place in our lives.

It will be natural for you to want to worship the Lord privately. Here are some things to keep in mind as you minister to Him personally, and submit to His will:

1. *Worship God with faith.* “Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Hebrews 11:6). It is by faith that we come near to our Lord. Believe that He is the God of Creation and the God of your salvation. Trust in His promises to provide for you all that you need.

2. *Worship with real meaning.* “Do not use my name for evil purposes, because I, the Lord your God, will punish anyone who misuses my name” (Exodus 20:7). As we call upon the name of the Lord we must sincerely believe in the power of that name. We have seen how the names of God reveal His very character. If we say to others “I am a Christian” (which means “Christ-like”) and then behave in a way that brings dishonor to His name, we are misusing His name. We can worship with real meaning when we are obedient to His Word and honor and respect His name in all our actions.

3. *Worship with joy.* Psalm 33:1 says “Shout for joy for what the Lord has done; praise him, all you that obey him.” Can you see how true worship depends upon our obedience? When we obey Him we please Him, and He fills our hearts with joy, which we express in our worship.

4. *Worship with freshness.* Psalm 33:3 says to “sing a new song” unto the Lord. God our Creator is pleased when we create new expressions of love and gratitude to Him. New experiences with the Lord will result in new “songs” for the Lord.

5. *Worship with hope.* God is our comfort and security. Let us “put our hope in the Lord; he is our protector and our help. We are glad because of him; we trust in his holy name” (Psalm 33:20). In your daily trials and problems, remember that God is the Lord over all the forces of nature, over time, and over every other power. He has given us victory in every situation. We will rejoice in His victory. There is nothing too difficult for God.

23 In what way does the church's ministry to God depend upon the individual Christian?

.....

In Service to Others

Another important way the church ministers to God is through its service to others. We worship God by serving others in the name of the Lord. Jesus said,

Whoever welcomes you welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. You can be sure that whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of these my followers because he is my follower, will certainly receive a reward (Matthew 10:40, 42).

The apostle Paul also said, "Let love make you serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

To serve one another can be a physical or material service, but it can have the spiritual purpose of glorifying Christ. A cup of water in His name is a spiritual service. Christ gave an example of service when He washed the disciples' feet. He fed the multitudes bread, rather than sending them away hungry.



A SPIRITUAL SERVICE

God has given special gifts to the church for the purpose of ministry and service to others (1 Corinthians 12:7). The particular gift or gifts we receive are dependent on God's place for us in the body, but each gift is given that we might use it in service to other members of the body. We will be talking more about the gifts in the next lesson. Let us be good managers of God's gifts. The apostle Peter wrote these words concerning our service to others:

Above everything, love one another earnestly, because love covers over many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. Whoever preaches must preach God's messages; whoever serves must serve with the strength that God gives him, so that in all things praise may be given to God through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and power forever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 4:8-11).

24 In your notebook, list the ways that you or other members of the body have ministered to God through service to others. Can you see how your service is truly a ministry unto God?

25 We have talked about three ways the church ministers to God. List each of the ways in your notebook without looking back at the lesson, and then write what you feel is the most important way to put each one into practice in your church. Do not rush through this exercise, but do it prayerfully, and ask God to help you learn how to minister to Him more fully, as a member of the body of Christ.

26 Before you take the self-test which concludes this lesson, I would like for you to examine the way you, yourself, are involved in ministry to God, and the way your local church ministers to Him. Put an X in the squares that most closely describe these ministries at the present time.

YOUR WORSHIP EXPERIENCE:	Always	Usually	Some- times	Not Often	Never
a Do you take time daily to worship the Lord?					
b Do you worship Him in song?					
c Do you worship Him in praise and testimony?					
d Do you worship Him regularly in giving?					
e Are you inspired to worship Him through regular study of His Word?					
f Do you practice obedience of His Word so that you will not dishonor His name?					
g Is your life a good testimony of who God is and what He has done?					
h Do you minister to the Lord through service to your church or to members of the body?					
i Do you make a personal total commitment of yourself to God daily?					

YOUR CHURCH'S MINISTRY TO GOD:	Always	Usually	Some- times	Not Often	Never
a Is the song service truly a time of worship?					
b Is the sanctuary a place of order, beauty, and reverence?					
c Is time given for corporate worship in praise and testimony?					
d Are members of the body encouraged to minister to one another as part of their worship?					
e Is the offering given in a spirit of worship?					
f Is the Holy Spirit allowed freedom to lead the worship?					
g Can you recognize that the minister has carefully prepared and planned the service as a time of worship?					
h Does the prayer time begin with worship of the Lord and recognition of His worthiness to be worshiped?					

27 In your notebook list the ways you plan to improve your personal worship of the Lord.

28 List ways you would like to see your local church improve its public worship of the Lord.

29 Has this lesson made you more aware of God's worthiness to be worshiped?..... In what ways? (Write them in your notebook.)

self-test

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Select the one best answer to each question.

1 Worship can be defined as

- a) the way we atone for our sin.
- b) a recognition of the worth of God, and our response to that recognition.
- c) a feeling of love for someone or something.
- d) the act of bowing down or kneeling before someone.

2 God's desire that we worship Him, our own desire to worship Him, and the fact that He reveals Himself to us when we worship are all reasons why

- a) worship is not the only way to show we are Christians.
- b) we are not worthy to worship God.
- c) serving others cannot really be considered as worship.
- d) worship is necessary as a part of our ministry to God.

3 Worship starts with

- a) God coming near to man.
- b) man approaching God.
- c) service to others.
- d) telling God our needs.

4 The most clear way that God has revealed Himself to man is through

- a) nature.
- b) the prophets.
- c) His Son Jesus.
- d) miracles.

5 Worship in its highest nature is

- a) seen in our outward ministry.
- b) expressed by singing.
- c) inward and spiritual.
- d) possible only for angels.

- 6** Which of these is NOT true of sincere worship?
- It depends on following a certain ritual or ceremony.
 - It is a response of man's total being.
 - It involves the feelings of the one who worships.
 - It is an attitude of complete submission before God.
- 7** To worship God in spirit means that
- worship is not something we *do*, but something we *feel*.
 - prayer is the only effective way of worship.
 - our spirit must have communion with His Spirit.
 - we cannot understand worship with our minds.
- 8** Understanding the names of God is important to worship because
- His names reveal who He is and what He has done to be worthy of worship.
 - His names are too holy to be spoken aloud.
 - it is the only way He will meet our needs.
- 9** The name *Immanuel* means
- the living God.
 - the Almighty God is with us.
 - the healing Lord.
 - the Lord will provide.
- 10** Which name of Jesus most fully describes His part in God's redemptive plan?
- Counselor.
 - Prince of Peace.
 - Immanuel.
 - Savior.
- 11** The most important need of man that God has provided for is our need for
- material blessings in this life.
 - fellowship with other Christians.
 - fulfillment in our work.
 - unbroken fellowship with Him.

12 Which of these statements best explains the place of public worship in the life of a Christian?

- a) Public worship is good for those Christians who need to be around other people in order to worship, but it is not as important as private worship.
- b) Public worship is important for all Christians as an outward expression to the world of an inward communion with Christ. As all members participate together in worship, they are brought into closer fellowship with each other and with the Lord.

answers to study questions

- 14** Because He is the Creator who provides all that is needed for His creation.
- 1** The church (the body of Christ).
- 15** Check your answer with the examples we have given in this section.
- 2** From every tribe, nation, people, and language.
- 16** Through the sacrifice of His Son.
- 3** Any of these reasons: Because they love Him; because He is their Creator; because He redeemed them; because they will never again hunger or thirst or suffer in any way.
- 17** We must be cleansed by Christ's blood so that we are worthy to come before Him.
- 4** **a** True.
b False.
c True.
d False.
e True.
- 18** Your Answer. The Bible provides proof (Psalm 23:1, 136:25; Matthew 6:25-34), and we also *experience* His provision day by day.
- 5** (In any order) God wants us to worship Him. Man is born with a desire to worship. God reveals Himself to us when we worship Him.
- 19** Our need for unbroken fellowship with Him, which we will have in the eternal home He has prepared for us.
- 6** Your answer. Compare your list to our discussion of why we worship God, as you continue with this lesson.
- 20** Through Christ we are all made priests, and we have direct access to God in our public worship.

7 (Any of these) Through Creation, through the Word (Bible), through Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, through the church.

21 Your answer. I would say that they are ways that the church recognizes the worthiness of God to be worshiped and responds to His worthiness.

8 b) To honor God because we recognize His worth or value.

22 a True.

b False.

c False.

d True.

e False.

f True.

g True.

9 a True.

b True.

c False.

d True.

e True.

23 In order for the church to fulfill its ministry to the Lord, each member of the body must submit himself fully to God in obedience. He must spend time in private worship and his life must honor the Lord.

10 An attitude of complete surrender of his total being to God.

24 Your answer. You may have listed ways of serving in the church by teaching, cleaning the sanctuary, caring for small children, singing in the choir, etc. Or perhaps you have visited the sick, those in prison, helped the aged, encouraged someone who was suffering, etc. All of these are ministries to the Lord if they are done with the purpose of giving Him glory, and not to glorify ourselves.

11 (In your words) Worship takes place when God comes near to the believer, and the believer responds. It is the communion of God's Spirit with man's spirit.

25 Check your answer by reviewing the section *How the Church Ministers to God*. We minister in public worship, in personal daily submission, and in service to others.

- 12 a** Jesus.
b Immanuel (God Is With Us).
c Messiah.
d Son of the Most High God.
e Savior.
f King of kings, Lord of lords.
g Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

26-29 Your answers. I trust that you will put into practice the truths given in this lesson. Thank God for the great privilege He has given us, His creation, to have fellowship with Him through our worship!

- 13 a** Comforter, Helper.
b Spirit of Grace (Mercy).
c Spirit of Life.

For Your Notes

Lesson 6

Ministering to One Another

Have you ever watched a symphony orchestra perform, or listened to its music? Recently I heard a beautiful symphony, which seemed to my ears perfect in every way. The balance between the stringed, wind, and percussion instruments was exceptional. The composition was played with feeling and style. There was perfect harmony and timing. It was obvious that the conductor had complete control. All of the instruments were in tune, and each member of the orchestra did his part to contribute to the perfection of the total performance. Whether they had a large part to play or a small one, all of the members worked together to achieve a beautiful symphony of sound, which lifted the hearts of those who heard it.

The church in ministry can be compared to a symphony orchestra. We do not all play the same instrument, but a variety of instruments is necessary to achieve the desired results. Some of the instruments have a larger part to play, but even those with a less important part would be missed if their sound was not heard. Our conductor, the Holy Spirit, must have complete control, and all of the instruments must be in tune, or there will be discord and lack of balance. When each member of the church is totally involved in the ministry God has given to him, there is a beautiful harmony and unity which edifies all who experience it.

In our last lesson we talked about the church's ministry to God. The natural result of ministry to God is a desire to reach out to others. In this lesson we will see how the church is equipped to minister to itself, so that it can be prepared to reach out to the world in a redemptive ministry.



lesson outline

Necessity of Body Ministry
Edifying One Another in the Body
Building Character in the Body
Exercising the Body

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of the ministry of the church to itself.
- Describe the fruit of the Spirit and how it is produced in the life of the Christian.
- Understand the purpose of the gifts of the Spirit in the ministry of the church to itself.
- Have a greater desire for spiritual maturity including the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson according to the procedure given in Lesson 1. Carefully read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer all study questions before checking your answers.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

community	moderation
cornerstone	purity
humility	temperance
longsuffering	uniformity
meekness	unity

lesson development

NECESSITY OF BODY MINISTRY

Objective 1. *Identify reasons why it is important for the members of the church to minister to one another.*

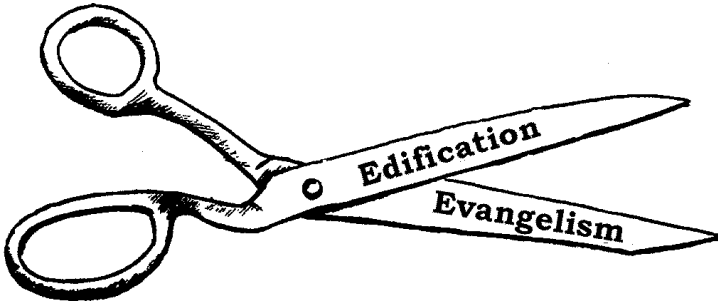
The church is a redeemed community of believers. This redeemed community is formed because of 1) what Christ has done for it; 2) who it is in Christ; and 3) what it is to do for Christ. Each member must accept a full share in the common life and purpose which unites all the believers. The believers must share what Christ has done for them. They must encourage and build each other up in the Lord.

What is God's will for the redeemed community—the church? Why does such a community exist? The Bible has not left us without an answer. Jesus Christ, before going to the Father, told His disciples:

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:19-20).

These words of the Lord are known as the *Great Commission* to the church. They are words of action. They instruct the church to do two things: 1) make *disciples* and 2) *teach*. Making disciples is called *evangelism*, and teaching is called *edification* (building up).

Evangelism and edification go hand-in-hand. Both are necessary to fulfill the Great Commission. God's plan is incomplete without both of them. Their relationship to each other can be compared to the two blades of a pair of scissors. The task cannot be accomplished with only one blade. Both are necessary.



Evangelism is the ministry of the church to the world. It is the church going out to witness to unbelievers. We will be discussing this in our next lesson. But in this lesson we will discuss the ministry of the church to itself, which includes edification. It is the church building itself up as a redeemed community.

- 1** Why is the church called a redeemed community? (Choose the correct answer.)
- a) It is made up of people who have completely separated themselves from the world so they can spend all their time thinking about the things of God.
 - b) It includes all believers who have been saved from the power of sin and who have been called out by God to fulfill His redemptive plan for the world.

The church has been called the body of Christ. Thus, we can refer to its ministry to itself as *body ministry*. We have chosen to talk about the body ministry of the church before discussing its ministry of evangelism. Why? Because the world will believe our words only if it sees the believer's testimony reflecting love, unity, and godly living. Each believer, and the entire group of believers, must be an example in order to win others for Christ. A spirit of Christian community within the church is essential for effective witness to the world.

The church accomplishes God's purpose by what it *is* (a redeemed community) and by what it *does* (a redeeming community). The church *is* before it *does*. The church has value in what it *is*. "Christ loved the church and gave his life for it" (Ephesians 5:25). The church was chosen by God Himself (Ephesians 1:11). The church is not just a *tool* in God's plan—it is the *object* of God's love! It must then be concerned about itself for the glory of God.

2 Circle the letter in front of each TRUE reason why it is important for the members of the body of Christ to minister to one another.

- a** Their ministry to each other fulfills all of God's plan for them.
- b** They have a responsibility to encourage and build each other up in the Lord.
- c** This is a fulfillment of the *edification* part of the instruction to Christians in the Great Commission.
- d** A spirit of Christian community within the church is the example needed to win the unbeliever to Christ.
- e** As the object of God's love, the church has great value, so it has a responsibility to itself in order that God may be glorified.

EDIFYING ONE ANOTHER IN THE BODY

Objective 2. *Explain how the Holy Spirit makes it possible for the church to edify itself.*

The church's ministry to itself causes the members to grow spiritually mature. The church is to be a community of believers

in fellowship. The idea of *community* includes the idea of sharing, of fellowship, and of showing love and concern. Each believer in the community of the church must become a responsible member. “So when each separate part [individual] works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love” (Ephesians 4:16).

A person becomes a Christian the moment he expresses true, saving faith in Christ. This is when the foundation of faith in Christ is laid. Then throughout the rest of his life he must build upon that foundation. Each Christian has a responsibility to build his own life in Christ, and also to help others build theirs. As we build, our Christian character is developed.

The task Christ gave to the church to edify itself is not an easy one. But Christ sent the Holy Spirit to help us obey His command. He is called the divine *Comforter*, the *Helper*, one who is called to help and give service (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7).

What kind of help does the Holy Spirit offer? For the edification of the church He provides two things:

1. *The fruit of the Spirit.* The Spirit produces in us the qualities of Christ. The fruit has to do with our Christian character. It is necessary within the church in order to equip us for witness and service. The fruit reveals the degree of our growth and development in the Lord.

3 Study Galatians 5:22-23, then list from memory the fruit of the Spirit given in these verses.

.....
.....

4 If it is the Spirit who provides the fruit of the Spirit, what is our part in developing the fruit in our lives?

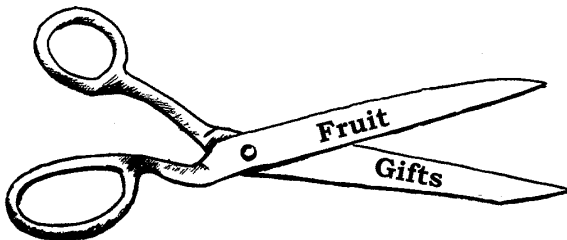
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2. *The gifts of the Spirit.* The Spirit gives spiritual gifts to the church for the purpose of giving service to the members of the body and to carry out the particular ministries to the body. Before going on, read about the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. How many of these gifts have you seen in the ministry of your own church?

5 This Scripture tells us that it is the Holy Spirit who gives the various gifts to the members of the body. What, then, is our part in receiving the gifts?

.....

The Holy Spirit has provided the *fruit of the Spirit* to develop in us the Christ-like *character* we need in order to fulfill God’s plan. The Spirit has also provided the *gifts of the Spirit* so that we will have the *ability* we need to fulfill God’s plan. Just as edification and evangelism must go hand-in-hand, so must the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit go together. The Corinthian church was “not lacking in any gift” (1 Corinthians 1:7 KJV). Yet it was an immature church, because it did not have the character of Christ which results from having the fruit of the Spirit. That is why the apostle Paul revealed to the church in 1 Corinthians 13 that the fruit of love is greater than the gifts of the Spirit. Without the fruit of the Spirit, the gifts are lacking. Both are necessary for effective body ministry.



6 Describe the two kinds of helps the Holy Spirit gives to the church so that the body of Christ can build itself up in the Lord.

.....

7 How do these helps make it possible for the church to edify itself?

.....
.....

BUILDING CHARACTER IN THE BODY

Objective 3. *Recognize qualities of character which are produced by the fruit of the Spirit in the life of a believer.*

Christ is the measuring rod for the church. He is the cornerstone upon which we, the living stones, are laid. The apostle Paul told the Ephesians:

You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. He is the one who holds the whole building together and makes it grow into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord. In union with him you too are being built together with all the others into a place where God lives through his Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-22).

All believers are members of the family of God (Ephesians 2:19). Spiritual growth occurs best within a caring family. Spiritual growth will take place when the church is in close fellowship. Each believer must feel that he is a part of God’s family. He must spend time sharing with others in the family. There must be a strong desire for communion and involvement with other believers.

Spiritual character develops through communion. As we become involved with each other we become aware of the need for Christ’s love in our relationships with others. All of the other fruits are a result of the love that we have for one another in Christ.

It is the Holy Spirit’s desire that all believers become like Christ. “Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son . . .” (Romans 8:29). So you see that God’s interest in us as redeemed individuals is centered in what we *are*, rather than what we *do*. What we *do* is a *result* of what we *are*. For example, a loving person shows love. A caring person acts in a caring way towards others. We know that Christ loved us because He showed His love

for us when He gave His life for us. The model of what we should be is Christ. We are to reproduce Christ's image before the world. We are to be like Christ.

How do we become like Christ? The most important way to take on the character of Jesus is to spend time with Him through the Spirit. The Holy Spirit's ministry is to impart Christ's nature to the believer. As we spend time with Him in prayer, and in reading His Word, we have a greater desire to be like Him. Christ's character in Peter and John was seen by others, who were amazed as they realized that these men had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

We also become like Jesus as we spend time with other members of the body of Christ. To do this is to obey the apostle Paul's advice: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19, KJV); "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16, KJV). As we spend time with one another, we have opportunities to practice the qualities which are the fruit of the Spirit.

The character of Christ in the believer is a product of the fruit of the Spirit. Let us see how this fruit was demonstrated through the life of Christ.

1. *Love*. Read the definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. This is the kind of love Jesus showed in His life on earth. But His love is even greater than that.

8 Read John 15:13 and 1 John 3:16.

a What was the greatest expression of love that Jesus showed to us?

.....

b How can we show the same kind of love?

.....

2. *Joy*. In John 17:13, as Jesus was praying for His disciples, He talked about His joy: "I say these things in the world so that they might have my joy in their hearts in all its fullness." What was His joy? We read more about it in Hebrews 12:2:

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. He did not give up because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right side of God’s throne.

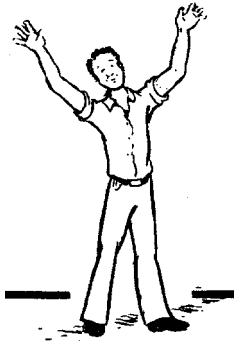
As we fix our eyes on Jesus, we can have the same joy that He had, even when we go through times of difficulty, because of the joy that is waiting for us when we go to be with Him in heaven. There we will have perfect communion with Him on whom our faith depends! Joy is the result of being with the one we love!

3. *Peace*. Jesus has given us His peace! In John 14:27 we read His words: “Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid.”

9 Read Isaiah 26:3 and Philippians 4:7. How do we obtain the peace of Christ?

.....

Joy and peace flow out of our love relationship with Christ. They can be described as fruit directed *upward* to God.



**FRUIT IN RELATION
TO GOD**

**LOVE
JOY
PEACE**

4. *Patience* (longsuffering). Jesus revealed His patience many times during His ministry. When Peter came to Him asking “Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?” Jesus replied, “No, not seven

times . . . but seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21-22). Often the disciples became impatient with the crowds who followed Jesus, and wanted to turn them away, but Jesus patiently taught the disciples by His own attitude to develop a servant ministry. The attitude of Jesus to the world is one of patience: “The Lord is not slow to do what he has promised, as some think. Instead, he is patient with you, because he does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all to turn away from their sins” (2 Peter 3:9). As we become more like Christ, the fruit of patience or longsuffering is produced in our lives in our relationships with others.

5. *Kindness* (gentleness). Jesus showed much kindness, or gentleness, in His relationships with people. When the woman charged with adultery was brought to Him, He dealt with her and her accusers in a gentle way, then told her, “Go, but do not sin again” (John 8:11). When Peter denied Him at Jesus’ trial, Jesus simply turned and gently looked at Peter (Luke 22:61). When Isaiah prophesied Jesus’ death he compared Jesus to a gentle lamb: “He was treated harshly, but endured it humbly; he never said a word. Like a lamb about to be slaughtered, like a sheep about to be sheared, he never said a word” (Isaiah 53:7). Do you react in this same gentle way when people accuse you wrongly, or when they disappoint you in some way? Are you able to be kind even when the other person is unkind? As we spend time with Jesus, we can grow in kindness or gentleness.



FRUIT IN RELATION TO OTHERS

**PATIENCE
KINDNESS
GOODNESS**

6. *Goodness*. “Because the Lord is righteous and good, he teaches sinners the path they should follow” (Psalm 25:8). “The Lord is good; he protects his people in times of trouble; he takes

care of those who turn to him” (Nahum 1:7). “He was put to death for the sins of our people. . . even though he had never committed a crime or ever told a lie” (Isaiah 53:8-9).

Goodness includes purity—one who is good is pure. A bad spot on a piece of fruit will spoil the whole thing. Jesus is the perfect example of goodness. In 2 Corinthians 5:21 we read, “Christ was without sin, but for our sake God made him share our sin in order that in union with him we might share the righteousness of God.” It is only through Him that we can be made good. The results of goodness are seen in our actions. In Acts 10:38 we read that Jesus “went everywhere, doing good . . .” Can this be said about you?

Patience, kindness, and goodness are all attitudes or characteristics that relate to other people. They can be described as fruit directed *outward* to others.

7. *Faithfulness* (faith). One who is faithful is full of faith. Jesus demonstrated His faith in the Father by His obedience.

10 Read the following Scriptures and write down the attitude of Jesus expressed toward His Father in heaven, as seen in each of these verses:

- a John 5:30:
-
- b Matthew 6:10:
-
- c Luke 22:42:
-

Our faith is shown by our obedience to do the will of the Father. A faithful person is reliable; he can be depended upon. An attitude of faithfulness is essential to carry out the ministries of the church.

8. *Gentleness* (meekness). We have already talked about Jesus’ kind, gentle spirit. These words are very similar in meaning, but in this aspect of the fruit of the spirit the idea is one of humility. A humble person is not proud or boastful. He has an attitude of submission, of self-denial of giving way to others. Christ expressed

this attitude throughout His arrest, trial, and crucifixion. The apostle Peter, speaking to believers, said, “Your beauty should consist of your true inner self, the ageless beauty of a gentle [meek] and quiet spirit, which is of the greatest value in God’s sight” (1 Peter 3:4).

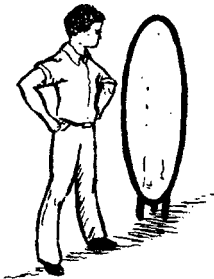
9. *Self-control* (temperance). Self-control means ruling our desires or passions and bringing them in subjection to the Spirit’s control. Jesus gave us an example of perfect self-control when He was tempted by Satan. (Read Matthew 4:1-11.) In Hebrews 4:15 we read these words about Jesus, our High Priest:

Our High Priest is not one who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. On the contrary, we have a High Priest who was tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin.

Self-control means there is balance in everything we do. It includes moderation—limiting ourselves to that which is adequate to meet our needs. It is allowing the Spirit to take control of every thought, every desire, every action. It is summed up in Romans 12:1-2:

Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer. Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect.

Faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are all characteristics that develop within us. They can be described as fruit directed *inward* to ourselves.



FRUIT IN RELATION TO OURSELVES

**FAITHFULNESS
GENTLENESS
SELF-CONTROL**

For a more complete study of the fruit of the Spirit we recommend the ICI course on the subject which is a part of the Christian Service series you are now studying.

11 Beside each description below write the spiritual quality which it describes:

	Quality
a Since John became a Christian he has changed from a complaining, unhappy person to one who seems to be happy in every situation.
b Mary has learned to be quiet and not try to defend herself when someone is critical.
c James has found that he can resist sinful desires and have a disciplined life by allowing the Spirit to rule his entire life.
d Since Ruth became a Christian, she tries to find ways to help those in need, and encourage those who are weak in the Lord.
e Robert is an unselfish, caring person who always seems to be more concerned about others than he is about himself.
f Paul is the kind of person who always keeps his promise. He can be depended on to do what he says he will do. He is regular in attendance at church services.
g Sarah's quiet, calm spirit even in fearful circumstances reveals her complete trust in the Lord.
h Martha is known for her high standards of conduct and the beautiful way she ministers to those who have needs.
i David is always willing to give people another chance, even when they seem to make the same mistake over and over again.

12 Put an **X** beside those fruits of the Spirit that need to be developed more in your life. Allow the Holy Spirit to produce these fruits in you as you minister to others.

In contrast to the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:19-21 describes the fruit of a sinful life. Can you see how there is no room for sinful fruit to grow in your life when you are controlled by the Spirit?

EXERCISING THE BODY

Objective 4. *Explain the relationship between unity in the church and the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit.*

The church, as a living and active body, has order and structure. God is a God of order and beauty. But He is also a living God who acts. The church is Christ's body, created to carry out God's redemptive acts to the church itself and to the world.

The church is a united body of believers. The strength of the church's action comes from the unity of believers. The unity comes from within, and is a spiritual grace (gift). The *unity of the Spirit* gives strength to the members of the church and makes them an effective witness to the world.

The church must have the fruit of the Spirit to maintain the unity. A believer with the character of Christ will not seek his own interest, but will seek the interest of the body of Christ. The apostle Paul said that this unity of the Spirit is preserved (maintained) by lowliness, or humility, gentleness, and patience (Ephesians 4:2). These are graces given by the Spirit for the cooperation of the body. Unity is the very essence of the body—the body is unity: Paul describes it as one body, one Spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all mankind (Ephesians 4:4-5).

This unity is not uniformity. It does not mean that all members of the body are exactly alike. But it means that all members work together in harmony, each doing his part, for the good of the whole. Unity comes from within each believer as he walks in the Spirit in one accord with his brothers and sisters in the body.

One reason the church has been compared to a human body is to show the unity the church should enjoy. The principal idea is that we are not separate units, but “we are all members together in the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:25). On the one hand we are individuals, each with his personal relationship to Christ. On the other hand we blend together to form a spiritual body which has a relationship to Christ, but also responsibilities to one another.

What are the church’s responsibilities to the members of the body? We discussed them briefly in Lesson 3. They are:

- 1. Edification—building itself up
- 2. Purification—keeping itself pure, righteous living
- 3. Education—training and teaching of the members
- 4. Discipline—correction of those who fall into error

We have already seen that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to the church so that it will have the ability to minister to the body. Now we will briefly consider those to whom He gives the gifts.

13 Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 and Ephesians 4:11-12 and answer the following questions:

- a** To what part of the body are the gifts given?
.....
- b** Why are the gifts given?
.....
.....
- c** List the titles or gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:27-31.
.....
.....
- d** What other titles are given in Ephesians 4:11?
.....
.....
- e** How many of these ministries have you seen in your local church? List them.
.....
.....

Can you see how these gifts are given to the church for its edification, purification, education, and discipline? When all of the gifts are operating in the church and there is a spirit of love and unity, the church is truly a *redeeming community*.

We do not have space here to fully discuss the gifts of the Spirit. You will want to study this subject by taking the ICI course *Spiritual Gifts* which is also a part of this series of courses.

In the body of Christ each member has something to do. Some of the members are given greater responsibility than others, but every task is important. The pastor has the responsibility to lead the body, to preach the Word, and to teach Christian principles. He can also have other gifts of ministry to the body.

Some members of the body are given administrative ability. Some have a ministry to pray for the sick, to encourage those who are troubled, to give of their time, talents, or money.

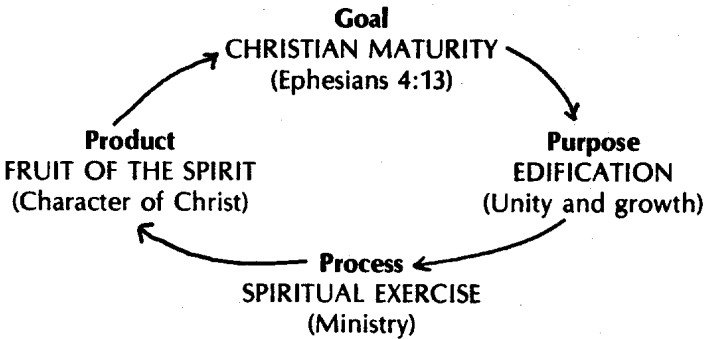
Some are called to be teachers. In many churches there are Sunday school training classes or other Bible study classes, youth group activities, women's groups, and others. Teachers and leaders are needed for all of these. Some are given a ministry in music. Others are led of the Spirit in a visitation ministry. One of the gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 is "those who help others." A helping ministry may go unnoticed by many people, but it is a gift that all members of the body can possess. We can help by praying for others, showing hospitality, cleaning the church building, helping someone who is sick or aged, visiting members of the body who need encouragement, and in many other ways.

Recently I heard about a faithful man who had a ministry that was not even known by most of the people in the church. Every Sunday morning he would get up early, put on his working clothes, and go to the church. He would go through every room in the church, making sure all the lights were

working, all the chairs were in place, and everything was in readiness for the hour of Bible study and the worship service. Because of his ministry, the church building was always in order and ready for use.

We are encouraged in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to “Set your hearts, then, on the more important gifts.” We do this by an attitude of willingness to receive whatever gifts the Holy Spirit chooses to give us, and to use them for the glory of God and the unity of the church. Sometimes this attitude is expressed in the way we fulfill the ministries that may seem less important.

The result of every member working together with the other members in unity, each doing the part God has given him to do, is a mature church. It is a church that is prepared to reach out to the world in fulfillment of the redeeming ministry God has entrusted to it.



14 What two things are necessary for the church to have unity?

.....
.....

15 What should be the attitude of the believer who has received a gift from the Holy Spirit?

.....

16 What are the four areas of ministry to the body?

a

b

c

d

17 What is the result when the gifts are functioning in the church and there is a spirit of unity and love among the members?

.....

self-test

TRUE-FALSE. Read each statement below. If the statement is TRUE, write **T** in the blank space. If it is FALSE, write **F** in the blank space.

- **1** The church is a redeemed community called to make disciples and teach.
- **2** Some local churches are called to evangelize, and others are called for edification.
- **3** It is important for the members of the body to minister to one another so that they are equipped to minister to the unbeliever.
- **4** *Doing* is more important than *being*.
- **5** There is nothing we can do to have the fruit of the Spirit because it is the Holy Spirit who chooses whether we should have it.
- **6** To help us minister to one another in unity, the Holy Spirit has given us two things: the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit.
- **7** The fruit of the Spirit is the characteristics of Christ which are produced in our lives through our relationships with others.
- **8** The gifts of the Spirit develop our Christ-like character, and the fruit of the Spirit give us the ability to minister to the body.
- **9** If we exercise the gifts, the fruit will naturally develop in us.
- **10** God has given many gifts to the church, and all of them are important and necessary for spiritual maturity.
- **11** We become like Christ by spending time with Him and with members of His body.
- **12** Patience, kindness, and goodness can be described as fruit in relation to others.

- **13** A believer who has received a gift from the Holy Spirit should receive special honor because he was chosen for the gift.
- **14** When there is unity and love in the church, and the gifts of the Spirit are being exercised, the result is maturity and growth.
- **15** The purpose of the gifts of the Spirit is to edify the church and provide discipline, training, and purification.

answers to the study questions

- 9** By putting our trust and faith in Him.
- 1 b)** It includes all believers who have been saved from the power of sin and who have been called out by God.
- 10 a** Jesus was not trying to do what He wanted to do, but what His Father wanted Him to do.
- b** Jesus desired that the will of the Father be done on earth.
- c** Even when He was facing suffering and death, Jesus wanted most of all that the will of His Father be done.
- 2 a** False.
- b** True.
- c** True.
- d** True.
- e** True.
- 11** Your answer may not be exactly like mine, as some are related to others, but I would answer like this:
- a** Joy.
- b** Gentleness (meekness).
- c** Self-control.
- d** Kindness (gentleness).
- e** Love.
- f** Faithfulness.
- g** Peace.
- h** Goodness.
- i** Patience.
- 3** Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control (TEV).
- 12** Your answer.
- 4** We must allow the Holy Spirit to have complete control of our lives so that He can produce the fruit in us.

- 13 a** All the members of the body may receive gifts.
- b** To prepare all members for Christian service; to build up the body.
- c** The *Today's English Version* lists these: Apostles, prophets, teachers, those who perform miracles, those who are given power to heal, those who help others, those who direct others, those who speak in strange tongues.
- d** Evangelists, pastors.
- e** Your answer.
- 5** We must accept the gift or gifts that He chooses to give us, and exercise (use) them for the glory of God. We can show a desire to receive the gifts by being open to the Spirit and exercising the gifts received.
- 14** The church must possess the fruit of the Spirit, and each member must use the gift or gifts the Holy Spirit has given to him.
- 6** He has given the fruit of the Spirit, which produces in us the qualities of Christ. He has given the gifts of the Spirit to meet the needs of the body.
- 15** He should humbly use the gift for the glory of God as a ministry to the body.
- 7** They give us the Christ-like character we need so that our lives are an example to others, and they give us the ability to minister to others.
- 16** (In any order)
- a** Edification.
- b** Purification.
- c** Education.
- d** Discipline.
- 8 a** He gave His life for us.
- b** By giving ourselves for others. (This may not require that we die in someone else's place, but it is a willingness to consider another person's needs before our own.)
- 17** The result is maturity and growth.

For Your Notes

Lesson 7

Ministering to the World

We live in a beautiful world of sunshine, smiles, and changing seasons. But sometimes we get so used to the beauty around us that we don't even notice it any more. As the saying goes, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Many times what we do begins with what we see—and how well we see it!

Your eyes are like a camera. Both the eye and the camera have an opening for light to enter, a lens system, and a screen for registering an image of what you see. When your eyes do their job properly, you can appreciate and react to your surroundings. When they don't, you lose your vision.

So it is with your *spiritual* eyes. Just like your human eyes, they need to be able to see objects far away as well as nearby. Through your spiritual eyes you must see not only the needs of those nearest you—those within the church—but you must also see the needs of those in the world beyond. The church's ministry to the world begins with a vision of its spiritual needs.

This lesson will help you open your eyes to the greatest need of the world. Your spiritual vision comes from God. God's vision is the salvation of the world. To do God's work, we must have God's vision. May you see the world as God sees it, and respond with a heart of love and compassion, as He did.



lesson outline

The Great Commission

The Specific Task

The Ministry of Evangelism

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe what is involved in fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ.
- Discuss the work of the believer and the Holy Spirit in evangelism.
- Understand the conditions and directions for evangelism.
- Have a greater determination to be personally involved in Christ's commission to the church.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson according to the directions given in Lesson 1. Be sure to read all Scripture texts and answer all study questions.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.
3. Review Lessons 4, 5, 6, and 7, then take the unit student report for this unit.

key words

commission	participation
debtors	persuasion
doctrine	presence
evangelize	priesthood
generation	proclamation
mediator	urgency

lesson development

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Christ's Call

Objective 1. *Identify what is involved in the Great Commission given by Christ.*

The church is a chosen body of people called by God *to* take the message of salvation to the people of the world. It is a community of God's people that worships, fellowships, and has a mission to fulfill. This mission is given in the words of Jesus which we call His *Great Commission*, and which we discussed briefly in Lesson 6: "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples" (Matthew 28:19-22).

It is the responsibility of every generation to declare the truths of God in its own time and situation. The unchanging truths of the gospel must be shared with people of every language of the world. It is the task of the church to show the world that the Bible has meaning for our present day.

Go is an active verb, a commandment to action. It signifies the church going out from itself to evangelize the world. To do this is to follow Christ's example. Christ did not wait for the world to come to Him. His mission was to seek and find those who were lost. These were His words to Zacchaeus, the tax collector: "The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Christ came to fulfill

His Father’s will. He went about doing good, and healing all who were bound by the devil.

1 Look up the Scripture verses listed in the first column below, then answer the questions in the next two columns:

SCRIPTURE	WHOM DID JESUS FIND AND WHERE?	WHAT WAS THE RESULT?
a Luke 19:1-10		
b Luke 5:1-11		
c John 4:5-10, 25-30, 39		

Jesus’ ministry on earth was very short—only three years. At the beginning of His ministry He chose 12 men who became His disciples. For three years He carefully taught these disciples how to share the good news of salvation. At the end of the three years, Christ was nailed to the cross by His enemies. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the suffering of death, because it was impossible for Him to be held in death’s power. But before Christ returned to heaven, where today He is at the right hand of God, He appeared again to His disciples. To this group of followers, and to all believers who came after them, Christ said, “Go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind” (Mark 16:15). These disciples became the original church. They were given the task of establishing the church.

- 2** Choose the best answer: Christ’s instructions to go throughout the world and preach the gospel were given to
- a) the 12 disciples alone.
 - b) the early church which they established.
 - c) all believers from that day to this present time.

During Christ’s time the people had many religions and worshiped many gods. Each community or nation had its own gods. Even Judaism was mainly limited to the Jews. But Christ came preaching a universal gospel. He came inviting “whosoever will” to accept His gospel.

The gospel of Christ is universal in nature, and the task of the church is also universal. John 3:16 says, “For God loved *the world* so much that he gave his only Son, so that *everyone* who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.”

Notice in this Scripture that I have emphasized the words *the world* and *everyone*. The gospel goes beyond racial or national boundaries. It is for *everyone* who believes, regardless of race, color, social, or economic position. The apostle Paul said that the gospel is “God’s power to save *all* who believe, first the Jews and also the Gentiles” (Romans 1:16).

Unless we have the vision that the gospel is for the *whole world*, the church cannot fulfill Christ’s commission. As long as there is even one person in the world who does not know Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, the task of the church continues.

3 Draw a circle around the letter in front of TRUE statements concerning what is involved in the Great Commission given by Christ.

- a** When we say the Great Commission is universal we mean that all believers are to go to the world with the gospel, and they are to go to *all* people in the world.
- b** Jesus showed the need for training those who go with the gospel by carefully teaching His 12 disciples for three years.
- c** Only selected people have been chosen to go with the gospel.
- d** The main purpose for the church is that people will come to it to find out about Christ.
- e** Christ taught by His own example that we are to go out and actively look for those who are lost in sin.
- f** Our generation has the same responsibility to share the gospel as the generation before us.

The Believer’s Response

Objective 2. *Explain why the believer should respond willingly to Christ’s command in the Great Commission.*

For I have an obligation to all peoples, to the civilized and to the savage, to the educated and to the ignorant. So then, I am eager to preach the Good News to you also who live in Rome (Romans 1:14-15).

When the apostle Paul wrote these words to the Romans, he was a missionary in Corinth. He had a real concern for Corinth, but his vision was broad enough to include other places as well.

It is natural for us to feel our first responsibility is for those who are closest to us—our family, our neighbors, our friends, our community. But we must have a burden for the total work of God. We must minister to the lost in every part of the world.

We are a people who are in debt. Paul acknowledged this debt, or obligation, and wanted to do something about it. He was willing to discharge, or pay, his debt to the grace of God by taking the gospel message to others.

We must never forget that we are debtors, that we have an obligation. We have been saved by God's grace.

For it is by God's grace that you have been saved through faith. It is not the result of your own efforts, but God's gift, so that no one can boast about it (Ephesians 2:8-9).

In seeking to pay our debt to grace, we must respond by going out with the spirit of grace to tell lost men and women in every walk of life of the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

When Isaiah saw the Lord sitting high and exalted on His throne, he saw himself as a man with unclean lips. He saw his own unworthiness, and said, "There is no hope for me! I am doomed" (Isaiah 6:5). But the Lord sent a flaming creature to touch Isaiah's lips with a burning coal from the altar, saying, "Now your guilt is gone, and your sins are forgiven" (Isaiah 6:7).

Then Isaiah heard the Lord say, "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" Isaiah immediately answered, "I will go! Send me!" (See Isaiah 6:1-8).

We, too, are unworthy of the grace of God. But He has included us in His plan of redemption. Now our guilt is gone, and our sins are forgiven, through Christ's sacrifice. Like Isaiah, we can only respond to the Great Commission with a grateful heart, "I will go! Send me!"



“I WILL GO”

4 What does the apostle Paul’s example teach us about *where* we should take the gospel?

.....

.....

5 Why should we consider it a privilege to obey Christ’s command to preach the gospel to all people?

.....

.....

THE SPECIFIC TASK

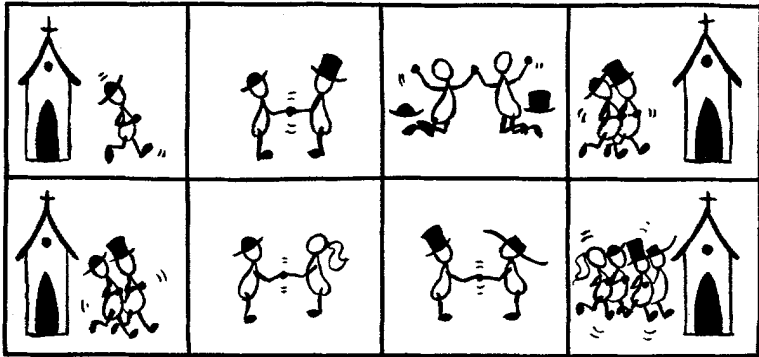
The Work of Evangelism

Objective 3. *Define evangelism and relate it to the believer’s task.*

Jesus won souls. He called men to Himself, and they heard and answered His call. The multitudes sought Him and heard Him gladly, but He sought individuals, and those individuals sought others and brought them to Him. John the Baptist brought Andrew, and Andrew brought his brother Simon. Christ found Philip who found Nathaniel. This is *evangelism*.

In the work of evangelism, the believer presents Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to people, so that they have a desire to give their lives to Him. Those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior are then brought into the fellowship of a local church, where

they, too, become involved in the world-wide redemptive work of the gospel.



**EVANGELISM . . .
FOR A GROWING CHURCH**

Evangelism is the communication of the good news of God’s redemptive acts. The purpose of evangelism is that lost men and women can be set free from sin and have new life in Christ. Evangelism is God’s people in action and obtaining spiritual results in faithfulness to God’s command. They proclaim Christ, and persuade unbelievers to become His disciples and responsible members of His universal church.

Every believer has a part in carrying on God’s redemptive purpose for the whole world. Every effort is made to give every person in the world a chance to say *yes* to Jesus.

6 Explain in your own words what *evangelism* is.

.....

.....

7 What does Jesus’ example teach us about our individual responsibility in evangelism?

.....

.....

8 What is the greatest goal in evangelism?

.....

The Holy Spirit in Evangelism

Objective 4. *Identify two activities of the Holy Spirit in evangelism.*

After Jesus returned to heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent to continue God's redemptive mission to the world. The Holy Spirit was active in the life and ministry of Jesus. Now He is active in the church, giving power for service, and bringing men and women to conviction and repentance.

1. *Power for service.* The presence and power of the Holy Spirit make it possible to win people to Christ. The secret to winning the lost is not in a particular plan or project, but in the person of the Holy Spirit. Our plans and programs will be effective only if they reflect the will of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Christ made it very clear to His disciples that they were to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit. He made this promise:

But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

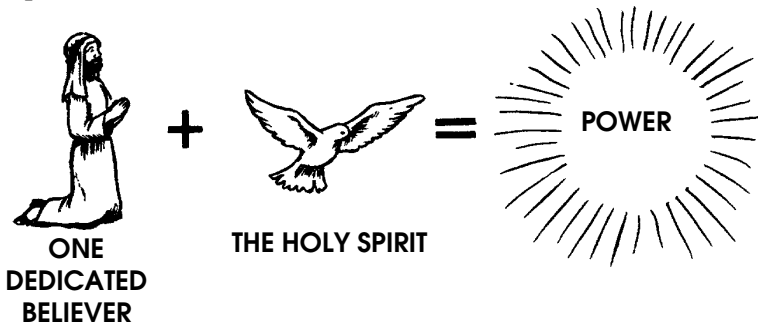
The book of Acts gives the results of the Holy Spirit's power in the lives of the disciples. The Holy Spirit gave them the ability to face opposition and win the lost. He changed their lives and gave them the ability to change their world for God.

The Holy Spirit prepares us to be better witnesses, with joyful and successful service. The two important words in the Lord's promise of Acts 1:8 are *power* and *witness*. The baptism of the Holy Spirit transformed (changed) the disciples. They became brave persons. The Holy Spirit also changed the effectiveness of their testimony: there were greater results because they spoke with power.

What does the coming of the Holy Spirit mean to us today? It means that the power of the Holy Spirit is not something special which ended with the early church. Nor is it for a select group of people. Just as salvation is for all who want to receive it, the Holy Spirit and His power are available to all who will receive. Peter spoke on the Day of Pentecost to the crowd that had gathered, saying:

For God's promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away—all whom the Lord our God calls to himself (Acts 2:39).

From a human point of view, the task of reaching the world for Christ seems impossible. Just as the disciples did, we feel helpless. However, the Lord has promised to be with us. He has sent His Holy Spirit to give us the power to do what He commanded us to do. Since the Day of Pentecost, all Christians have the right to claim the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.



When we live in the power of the Spirit and know His leadership, that in itself is an assurance of joyful and successful service. The Holy Spirit desires to witness through each believer, and through the church as a whole.

2. *Preparation of the unbeliever.* Not only does the Spirit anoint the words of the believer and give him a powerful witness, but He also works in the heart of the unbeliever, preparing him to receive the message. It is the Holy Spirit who brings conviction of sin to the unbeliever and leads him to repentance.

9 Read the following Scriptures and describe the work of the Holy Spirit in each Scripture:

- a John 6:44:
- b John 16:7-8:
- c Romans 8:13:
- d Romans 8:14-15:
- e 2 Corinthians 3:5-6:
- f Revelation 22:17:

God in His love and grace has provided everything that is necessary to bring men to Himself. Man has only to make the choice to accept what God has freely offered.

How, then, shall we escape if we pay no attention to such a great salvation? The Lord himself first announced this salvation, and those who heard him proved to us that it is true. At the same time God added his witness to theirs by performing all kinds of miracles and wonders and by distributing the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will (Hebrews 2:3-4).

10 Now in your own words, briefly explain the two main activities of the Holy Spirit in the work of evangelism.

.....

.....

THE MINISTRY OF EVANGELISM

The church is the agent of the Holy Spirit. The specific task of the church is to carry out God’s mission—to go into the world and make disciples of all nations.

The word *mission* comes from the Latin *missio* which means to *send*. As we use it the word refers to the Father sending His Son Jesus Christ, and the Son sending the disciples. Both are sent to fulfill God’s redemptive purpose for humanity. Mission is the church’s action on earth. Evangelism is the specific task of

mission. The success of the mission of the church to evangelize the world depends on its divine conditions and directions.

Conditions for Evangelism

Objective 5. *Recognize the necessary conditions for evangelism.*

1. There must first be an *attitude of worship*. The church is a “spiritual temple” and a “holy priesthood” responsible for the offering of “spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). The church is called to serve (or worship) God through its service to those in need. Evangelism is a sacrificial service to God. The church’s mission is an act of worship—indeed, it is probably the greatest expression of worship the church gives to God.

2. The church should also perform a *priestly function*. In the Old Testament the priest was a *mediator* (a go-between) between God and man. He represented God to the people, and the people to God. The temple was never without worship, and there was never worship without a sacrificial offering. Now the relationship of the church with Christ, our *High Priest*, has made the church the “King’s priests” (1 Peter 2:9). We read in Hebrews 9:11-12:

But Christ has already come as the High Priest. . . When Christ went through the tent and entered once and for all into the Most Holy Place, he did not take the blood of goats and bulls to offer as a sacrifice; rather, he took his own blood and obtained eternal salvation for us.

Jesus’ one-time sacrifice of Himself in behalf of all men has made it possible for the church to become His royal priesthood, the mediator between God and men. Now the *church* represents God to the world, and represents the world before God. Not only do we take God’s message to the unbeliever, but we also have the ministry of intercession (prayer) for the lost, as well as for other members of the body. James 5:13-20 is an inspiring encouragement to the Christian concerning the power of prayer. Read this Scripture, and note especially verses 16, 19, and 20:

So then, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you will be healed. The prayer of a good person has a powerful effect.

My brothers, if one of you wanders away from the truth and another one brings him back again, remember this: whoever turns a sinner back from his wrong way will save that sinner's soul from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

3. The church must have divine *power*, or enablement, for the task. The disciples were told: "But you must wait in the city [Jerusalem] until the power from above comes down upon you" (Luke 24:49). The apostles and disciples of the Lord were not qualified for testimony and service without power from Him. We have seen that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to give us the power we need to witness. The church today most surely needs the divine help that comes by the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

4. The final condition for evangelism is that of *faith*. We can have faith in God's promise that He will bless the speaking forth of His Word. In Isaiah 55:10-11 we read this promise from the Lord:

My word is like the snow and the rain that come down from the sky to water the earth. They make the crops grow and provide seed for planting and food to eat. So also will be the word that I speak—it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do.

The one who proclaims God's message must have no doubt about the results, knowing full well that "we can trust God to keep his promise" (Hebrews 10:23).

11 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the conditions for evangelism?

- a** As God's representatives to the world we have a responsibility to take the message to sinful man.
- b** As the world's representatives before God, we have a duty to pray for those who are lost in sin.
- c** Our worship of God is not affected by whether or not we are involved in evangelism.
- d** We have been given the same power for service that the early disciples had.

- e To win souls, all we need is faith in our ability to present the message to them.
- f All of the conditions must be met if we are to fully obey Christ's command to evangelize the world.
- g When we faithfully present the Word of God, we can trust God to give us results.

Directions for Evangelism

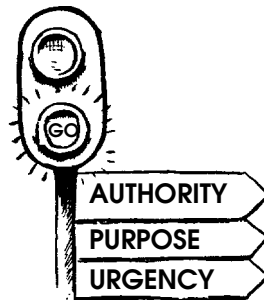
Objective 6. *State what should be the basic content of the church's message to the world.*

The church has been given clear directions for evangelism. First, it must *go with authority*. The Lord Himself has given the church the authority to go into all the world and tell the good news to everyone. The field is the world, and the good news is for every man.

The church must also *go with a purpose*. The church's purpose is to preach the gospel with the intention of making disciples, baptizing them, and teaching them (Matthew 28:19-20).

Third, the church must *go with a message*. It has no message of its own, but it is the Lord's message that the church is to proclaim. The apostle Paul instructed Timothy to "do the work of a preacher" (2 Timothy 4:5), "to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it . . . with all patience" (2 Timothy 4:2). Preaching correct doctrines, or truths, is necessary for evangelistic success. But what are the doctrines? What should be the content of the church's message?

THE MESSAGE



ALL SIGNS SAY "GO"

1. The church should have a *Christ-centered message*. Paul gave credit for his success among the Corinthians to the fact that he preached nothing except “Jesus Christ and especially his death on the cross” (1 Corinthians 2:2). The simple message of Christ’s death, resurrection, and return should be the heart of the church’s doctrine.

2. The church should have a *Bible-centered message*. The Word of God is the heart and core of Christian truth. Truth is not invented by man, nor can it be found in him. The Bible is the source of all truth. The Bible can be related to every experience of man and is a guide for every step that we take.

3. The church should have an *eternity-centered message*. All men must face eternity: “Everyone must die once, and after that be judged by God” (Hebrews 9:27). All of life is really just a preparation for eternal life. The church’s message must reflect this lasting value of salvation. Titus 2:11-13 reminds us of the eternal value of life in Christ:

For God has revealed his grace for the salvation of all mankind. That grace instructs us to give up ungodly living and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this world, as we wait for the blessed Day we hope for, when the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ will appear.

The coming of Christ to the earth brought a new age. His life, death, and resurrection were a direct fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. The return of Christ, as Lord and King, will also mark a new age. Christ will return in glory to judge the living and the dead (Acts 3:19-23; 10:42). This is reason enough to call all the people of the world to repentance.

Finally, the church must *go with a sense of urgency*. Jesus told His disciples, “As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me; night is coming when no one can work” (John 9:4). When Jesus sent out 70 men to the towns around them, to preach the good news, He told them, “There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest” (Luke

10:2). Notice that immediately after telling these disciples to pray for workers, His next word to them was “Go!” (Luke 10:3). When we pray for the Lord to send out workers, we should not be surprised if we are the ones he sends! What is to be done must be done very soon. Churches must be established in every nation and among every language group of the world!

12 What is our *authority* to go with the message?

.....

13 What is our *purpose* when we go with the message?

.....

.....

14 Why is there an *urgency* in preaching the gospel?

.....

.....

15 State briefly in your own words what should be the basic content of the church’s message to the world.

.....

.....

Fulfilling Evangelism

Objective 7. *Identify the four steps in bringing about evangelism.*

How is the church to establish its evangelistic work? Melvin Hodges, a veteran missionary, gives us these four key words which define how to do the work of the Lord: *Presence, Proclamation, Persuasion, and Participation.*

1. *Presence.* This means simply that Christians evangelize just by being there. The Christian’s life is a testimony, especially when it is filled with acts of love. The church witnesses to the community through the Christ-like character of its members. What the Christian *is* speaks louder than what he *says*. We have already seen that what he *is* he reveals by his

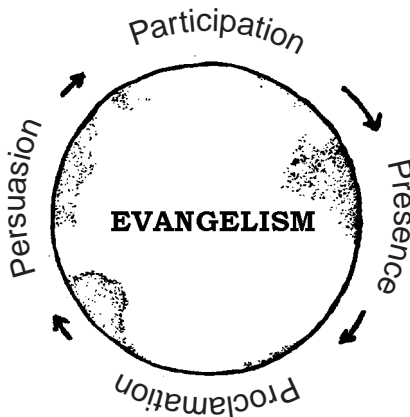
Christian service. His very nature makes it possible for him to minister to others in their need, whatever that need may be.

2. *Proclamation.* A chief purpose of the Christian mission is to proclaim Jesus Christ as the divine and only Savior. The gospel must be *lived* among unbelievers, but it must also be *proclaimed*. To proclaim means “to herald, to tell forth.” The proclamation centers on the person of Jesus, is directed to the needs of all people, and calls for a decision.

3. *Persuasion.* The ministry of the church is more than simply communication. The church seeks to persuade, or convince, the unbeliever of God’s message. It calls for a decision—it asks the unbeliever to change his course of life and turn in faith and obedience to Jesus Christ. The church seeks to persuade unbelievers to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

4. *Participation.* The end result which the church seeks is for men and women to become active participants in the body of Christ. Effective evangelism must lead to change away from wickedness and sin, and toward God and His people. The new convert must become a part of the church. For the new Christian, the church becomes a family where he can have fellowship and communion with other believers.

Once they have become a part of the church, new converts then must be taught to be involved in the spread of the gospel to the world.



16 Match the four steps in evangelism (right column) to their definition (left column). Write the letter of your choice in each blank space.

- | | | |
|---------------|--|------------------|
| a | Calls for the unbeliever to make a decision against the world and for Christ | 1) Presence |
| b | To tell the message of Christ to those in need | 2) Proclamation |
| c | The testimony of a faithful Christian life | 3) Persuasion |
| d | Active involvement in the work of the church by converts | 4) Participation |

In this unit of study, we have seen that the ministry of the church is three-fold: It is called to minister to God in worship, to its own members in fellowship and edification, and to the world in evangelism. All three ministries are important, and together they complete the ministry of the church as Scripture presents it. Has your own ministry been enriched in these three areas?

After you have taken the self-test, review Lessons 4 through 7, then take Unit Student Report 2 before going on with the next lesson.

self-test

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Choose the one best completion for each statement.

- 1** The Great Commission of Christ was that we should
 - a) pray that someone will take the gospel message to far-off lands.
 - b) take the message of Christ to the unbeliever, baptize him, and train him.
 - c) expect unbelievers to come into our church services, hear the message, and accept Christ as Savior.

- 2** The Great Commission is universal. This means that
 - a) everyone who hears the gospel will be saved.
 - b) all Christians are to take the message to all the world.
 - c) if we don't obey the command of Christ, somebody else will do it in our place.

- 3** We have an obligation to obey the Great Commission because
 - a) it is the only way we can have eternal life.
 - b) our church will not grow if we disobey Christ's command.
 - c) God in His grace redeemed us even though we were not worthy.

- 4** The work of the Holy Spirit in evangelism is to
 - a) prove that Jesus Christ really was the Son of God.
 - b) force Christians to fulfill the Great Commission.
 - c) select the most capable men and women to be God's witnesses to the world.
 - d) give all believers power for service, and prepare the hearts of unbelievers.

- 5** When we say that the church performs a priestly function we mean that it
 - a) acts as a go-between or mediator between God and the unbeliever. This involves praying for the person who does not know Christ.
 - b) presents sacrifices to God as an atonement for those who are in sin.

6 By *presence* we mean that the believer's testimony is based on what he

- a) *is*.
- b) *says*.
- c) *does*.
- d) *believes*.

TRUE-FALSE. Write **T** in the blank space if the statement is TRUE. Write **F** if the statement is FALSE.

.... **7** Christ's example was to seek out individuals who needed to hear His message of eternal life.

.... **8** *Proclamation* means the testimony of a faithful Christian life.

.... **9** The Holy Spirit has an active part in persuading an unbeliever to accept Christ.

.... **10** The reason there is a sense of urgency in taking the gospel is that there are so many workers someone else may take the message before we do.

.... **11** When we pray for the Lord to send out workers, we should not be surprised if He sends us.

.... **12** Our authority to go with the message is the command of Jesus.

.... **13** The purpose of our present life is to prepare us for eternal life.

.... **14** The doctrines that we preach cannot be understood by the ordinary man.

.... **15** If the message we take to the unbeliever is Christ-centered and Bible-centered, we know it will be effective.

answers to study questions

- 9 a** The Father draws men to Christ—He does this through His Holy Spirit.
- b** The Holy Spirit proves to men that they are wrong about sin (conviction).
- c** The Spirit helps men to stop their sinful actions.
- d** The Spirit makes us children of God.
- e** The Spirit enables us to obey Christ; He gives life.
- f** The Spirit calls men to Christ.
- 1 a** He found Zacchaeus in a tree. The result: Zacchaeus repented of his sin and found salvation.
- b** He found Simon Peter, James, and John on the shore of the lake. The result: They left their boats and became His disciples.
- c** He found a Samaritan woman at a well. The result: Because of her testimony, many people believed in Jesus.
- 10** (In your words) He gives the believer power to witness about Christ. He prepares the heart of the unbeliever (convicts of sin, helps him turn away from sin, draws him to Christ, makes him a child of God).
- 2 c)** all believers from that day to this present time.
- 11 a** True.
- b** True.
- c** False.
- d** True.
- e** False.
- f** True.
- g** True.
- 3 a** True.
- b** True.
- c** False
- d** False.
- e** True.
- f** True
- 12** The command of Jesus.

- 4** That we have a duty to take the gospel to those near us as well as to those far away.
- 13** To preach the gospel and make disciples, baptize them, and train them.
- 5** Because God in His grace redeemed us and we owe a debt of love to Him for what He has done for us. We want to tell others about His love for them so they, too, will be saved.
- 14** Because the time will come when men no longer have the opportunity to hear the gospel or be saved from judgment,
- 6** Your answer. It should be similar to this: Evangelism is presenting the gospel message to lost men and women so they will accept Christ as their Savior.
- 15** (In your words) The message should center around Christ and His redemptive work—His death, resurrection, and return. It should be based on the Word of God. It should prepare men for eternity.
- 7** Jesus did not wait for the lost to come to Him. He went out and found them.
- 16 a** 3) Persuasion.
b 2) Proclamation.
c 1) Presence.
d 4) Participation.
- 8** That everyone have a chance to accept Jesus.

Unit 3

THE MINISTRY: CHRIST'S PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH



Lesson 8

The Person in Ministry

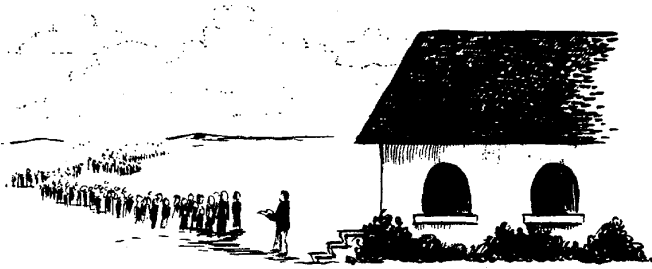
Once I read a poem that spoke to me about the importance of a personal ministry to others. It went something like this:

*I thought I heard the voice of God,
And climbed the highest steeple;
But God declared, "Go down again,
I dwell among the people."*

— Author Unknown

The ministry of the gospel is done by the people of God. It is the noblest of all callings. God has meant it to be very personal. He could have called upon angels or other heavenly beings to carry out His work on earth. Instead, He chose to use you and me.

In our last unit of study we saw how the church as a whole is involved in ministry to God, to itself, and to the world. Now we are going to see how the individual has a personal responsibility for ministry. The purpose of this lesson is to show how God's plan and action are fulfilled through *you* as a person. *You* are to fit into God's plan. The world needs *you*. The church needs *you*. But above all, God needs *you*. He gives you a personal invitation to get personally involved in His redemptive purpose. *You*, as a redeemed person, are the key to God's plan.



lesson outline

A Personal Call
Personal Qualifications
Personal Preparation

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain what is meant by God's general call and His specific call to ministry.
- Recognize Christian qualities which are necessary for an effective ministry.
- Understand principles of discipleship and heart attitudes which are involved in personal preparation for ministry.
- Analyze personal needs with regard to developing Christlike qualities and practicing discipleship for commitment to Christ's call.

lesson activities

1. Study the lesson according to the procedure given in Lesson 1. Read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer all the study questions. After you have answered a question check your answer with the one we have given at the end of the lesson.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

character

commitment

conduct

consecration

discipleship

presbyter

progressive

lesson development

A PERSONAL CALL

Objective 1. *Distinguish between God's general call to ministry and His specific call.*

A General Call

The Bible reveals that God has called all men and women to serve Him. Many people in the Old Testament were called of God to fulfill His plan. He called Abraham to be the father of the chosen nation Israel. He gave Moses a divine call to lead his people out of Egypt and into the land of promise. Deborah was called to be one of Israel's judges (Judges 4). The Old Testament reveals how God called many individuals to fit into His plan for their moment in history.

The same is true of the New Testament. The Lord called Peter, Andrew, James, and John, the fishermen, to become His fishers of men. Later, He chose about 70 men to take the gospel message into the villages (Luke 10). Saul of Tarsus was called in a dramatic and unusual way (Acts 9). Saul, who later was known as Paul, did not claim to be the only one called of God. Read his words in 1 Corinthians 1:26-27, and 2 Timothy 1:8-9.

1 What principles do these two Scriptures teach us about God's call? Circle the letter in front of each statement below that agrees with these verses of Scripture.

- a** We all have a part in sharing the good news about Christ.
- b** God has only chosen the powerful and wise men to preach the gospel.
- c** God calls us because of who we are or what we have done, so that the world will not be ashamed of us.
- d** God has chosen to call the simple, the weak, and the lowly to show His power to the world.
- e** God calls us as we are, and He gives us His strength to do the work.

The ministry of the church is made possible by persons who believe that God has given a divine call to all believers. The church has a high calling. To believe this is to understand the nature of God's call and ministry. To believe this is to see the call to the ministry as the highest of callings in life. To accept God's call involves a total consecration to the carrying out of His redemptive purpose in the world.

In a sense, all Christians are called to proclaim the gospel through their personal witness. It is a divine call even when it is not made in a dramatic fashion as was the call to Saul of Tarsus. The command to evangelize the world, which came to the first disciples from the lips of Jesus, was to be transferred or passed on by them to every person willing to receive it. As their remote followers, we, too, have been divinely called to "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15, KJV). The call has been passed through the centuries from one believer to another, until it has reached us.

When Jesus prayed for those who had become his disciples he included this: "I pray not only for them, but also for those who believe in me because of their message" (John 17:20). We are reminded in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that we have all been baptized into the body of Christ by one Spirit. We are all one in Christ, and we are all to share His love for lost souls and share equally the desire to bring them to Him.

All believers may receive of the Spirit the same authority and power to do the work of God. Signs follow those who believe (Mark 16:17). The promise is as true for us today as it was for the early disciples. The Holy Spirit gives us His anointing so that we can fulfill the divine call to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth.

2 The first 12 disciples were ordinary men: fishermen, a tax collector, and other common men. One of them, Judas, did not continue to follow and obey Jesus. What could have been the result for us if all of them had returned to their former lives instead of preaching the gospel as Jesus commanded? (Choose the best answer.)

- a) What they chose to do would not have affected us in any way, because they lived almost 2000 years before us.
- b) We might never have heard the gospel, since the message was passed from believer to believer until it reached us.

Did you first hear about Christ from a friend or a member of your family? If the person who brought the message to you had not done so, would you now be a Christian? How important it is for us to see that God's call includes *all* of us! There are people who may never hear the message unless *you* take it to them!

A Specific Call

There is also a specific call to preach. God hand-picks some members of the body for a definite service. Although all Christians are called, yet some are called to specific assignments to full-time ministry. They are called in a special sense to preach the gospel.

In Exodus 31 we read that Aholiab and Bezaleel were called by name and filled with the Spirit of God to do the skilled manual labor in building the tabernacle. Paul and Barnabas were ministering in Antioch when they were called out by the Holy Spirit for a specific work (Acts 13).

The minister of the gospel who is called specifically is given a number of names and functions in the Bible. These names give us a picture of the work and responsibility of each.

1. *A man of God* (1 Timothy 6:11). This title indicates that a minister is God's representative in a special way. It implies that he is full of God, and sent by God to do His special work.
2. *A messenger* (Malachi 2:7). The duty of the messenger is to carry God's message to men. He is to be a witness of the things he has seen or heard of God.
3. *A pastor* (Ephesians 4:11). The pastor is one who is called to serve. He is compared to a shepherd, who feeds, leads, protects, and assists his sheep. The pastor of a local church has a special call.
4. *A bishop or overseer (church leader)* (1 Timothy 3:1; Acts 20:28). This is one who supervises the work of others in the church. He may be called a *presbyter* or *superintendent*. He has great responsibility over the specific area that God has assigned to him, and the people whom he oversees to do the work.

Other titles are also given, such as *elder*, *evangelist*, and *teacher*. Each title describes a specific type of ministry which may be a full-time responsibility, or a more limited type of involvement. All involve a commitment to the call of God.

3 Read the following descriptions (left column) and decide whether they apply more to a *specific call*, a *general call*, or equally to both. Write the letter of your choice in each blank space.

- | | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| a | A mother who teaches Bible stories to her children and neighbor children | 1) General call
2) Specific call
3) Either general or specific call |
| b | A missionary who leaves his own home and takes the gospel message to a distant place | |
| c | A student who talks to his classmates about Christ at every opportunity | |
| d | A businessman who teaches a Bible study class and helps his pastor in visitation | |
| e | A pastor of a small church, who finds it necessary to earn part of his living in a secular job | |
| f | A district church leader who has the oversight of several pastors and churches | |
| g | A dedicated Christian who is willing to do whatever God directs him to do | |

Whether you are called in the sense that all Christians are called, or have received a specific call to a special ministry, your calling involves personal dedication and personal qualifications.

Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. Whoever preaches must preach God's messages; whoever serves must serve with the strength that God gives him, so that in all things praise may be given to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 4:10-11).

PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Objective 2. *Describe the relationship between a person’s Christian character and his effectiveness in ministry.*

Christian Character

No matter what we are doing or where we may be, we are in the process of forming our character. A person’s character may very well determine his worth to God for service. A person is worthless to God if he is without the image of Christ in his life. But he who is Christlike in his character is rich in himself, and useful to God.

Character is the measure of a man’s spiritual power. It is possible to be able to control governments, and yet have no power with God, and no power over the souls of men to lift them heavenward. The genuinely Christian man, like Christ, when He walked on earth, has favor and power with both God and man.

In Lesson 6 we talked about the fruit of the Spirit as seen in the life of Christ. We learned that as we allow the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of a Christlike character in our lives we become more like Christ and we mature in Him. We studied the apostle Paul’s description of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Now we will look at another description given to us by the apostle Peter.

4 Read carefully 2 Peter 1:6-8 and compare it with the list given in Galatians 5:22-23. What result does Peter promise to those whose character reveals these qualities?

.....

5 Now read verse 9, and select the statement below which best describes the result when a Christian does not possess these qualities.

- a) He loses his spiritual vision and forgets what Christ has done for Him.
- b) He seeks other ways to have an effective ministry for the Lord.

Now let's look at these qualities of character as seen in the life of a believer who wants to be effective in his ministry for the Lord.

1. *Faith.* Faith is as natural to man as eyesight. It is seen in a child who has complete faith in his parents. This is similar to the faith of a Christian. His faith accepts the revelation of God and is the door to Christ and His salvation. It demonstrates a complete trust in God which is not affected by his circumstances. It is a total reliance on God and on the great truths of the gospel.

2. *Goodness.* Goodness implies virtue or purity. The person who possesses this quality will stand his ground for Christ in the face of the greatest opposition. This is the element of character that makes men bold to confess their Lord, and stand for His truth. The person who has this quality will be able to resist temptation and live a pure life.

3. *Knowledge.* Ignorance is the enemy of Christian character. Those who desire to work for God should know God. We know more about Him as we spend time with Him. We learn to know the Scriptures as we read and study them. This will help us to know ourselves, to know life's true purpose, and see its grand possibilities.

4. *Self-control.* Self-control (temperance) means mastery of self under all circumstances. Those who are to work for God cannot be slaves to lowly passions. There is no place in a Christian character for greed, gluttony (such as eating more than is needed), or lack of self-discipline. These are masters of men, from which every man should free himself.

5. *Endurance.* Endurance, or patience, means leaning with quiet trust on God when circumstances would cause us to be discouraged. It means keeping the mouth tightly shut when pain would make us cry out. Endurance leads us to keep on in our work for the salvation of men, when the apparent results would indicate that we should give up. Patience is one of the most godlike qualities, and one of the most necessary elements of the Christian character.

6. *Godliness.* Godliness implies that a person is full of God, that all of his thoughts, desires, and actions are controlled by the Spirit of God. It is the goal toward which we should all strive.

7. *Brotherliness.* God intended that the race of man should be a great brotherhood. Sin had hindered God's purpose. But He is gathering men together into the family of His church, and He shall yet accomplish His original purpose. The conduct of the genuine Christian towards his fellowman is most brotherly. He becomes interested in others and their needs. It is this element of Christian character that makes the fellowship of the church so attractive. We who have been redeemed are truly brothers and sisters in Christ.

8. *Love.* This is talking about love in its largest meaning. It is seen in the love of the Christian for others, regardless of their nationality, or whether they are different from him. It is seen in his forgiving spirit towards those who injure him. It is the kind of love that took Jesus to the cross to die for our sins. It is a self-sacrificing love.

These elements of the genuine Christian character are not separate and distinct from each other, for one element enters into the nature of another element. When these characteristics are fully developed in the life of a Christian, they make him a revelation of God and the highest of His handiworks.

Christian Growth

Developing Christian character is a progressive action. A man does not suddenly receive all of these Christlike qualities the moment he becomes a Christian. They become the character of the Christian as he actively participates in allowing the Holy Spirit to develop them in his life. Developing them fully becomes life's business. The apostle Peter urges us to "try even harder to make God's call and his choice of you a permanent experience; if you do so, you will never abandon your faith" (2 Peter 1:10).

We are to become more like Christ. The world wants to see Jesus in those who represent Him. Is it possible for a person to

fall who is trying hard to become more Christlike? We must put our whole heart into this work, so that our character will truly be Christlike. If we do this, no power on earth can cast us down or mar our glory.

The Christian who allows the Holy Spirit to produce these qualities in His life will gain the confidence and respect of others. This is the person whom people delight to honor. This is the person who will be a true witness of the gospel. He will bring no shame to the gospel by wrong actions. He is the person who makes it easier and more successful to “go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind” (Mark 16:15).

6 How would you describe the relationship between a person’s Christian character and the effect he will have in ministering about Christ?

.....
.....

Consider each of the following situations and answer the question given with each one.

7 John finds it easy to talk about Christ with fellow Christians, but when he is with non-Christian friends he goes back into his bad habits and finds it difficult to take a stand for Christ.

- a** What needs to be developed in his character?
- b** How will this lack in his character affect his witness?

.....

8 Mark sets a good example by his pure life and dedication, but he gets discouraged easily and gives up when things become difficult.

- a** What needs to be developed in his character? (Two qualities)

.....

- b** How will this lack in his character affect his witness?

.....

9 David has difficulty keeping balance in his life—he allows himself to overdo in some areas, while he lets other things go that he should be doing.

a What needs to be developed in his character?.....

b How will this lack in his character affect his witness?

.....

10 Samuel is so concerned about improving his own life that he has no time for fellowship with his Christian brothers and sisters, or with his non-Christian associates.

a What needs to be developed in his character? (Two qualities)

.....

b How will this lack in his character affect his witness?

.....

11 Philip is always witnessing to people and trying to win them to the Lord. But he spends very little time in prayer or Bible study because he is such a busy person.

a What needs to be developed in his character?.....

b How will this lack in his character affect his witness?

.....

Have these exercises helped you to see how very important it is to have a spotless, consistent Christian life that will be a testimony to everyone you meet? I want to try even harder—don't you?

PERSONAL PREPARATION

Discipleship

Objective 3. *Identify basic principles of discipleship.*

How does a person prepare himself for service to God? The first step in preparation is *discipleship*. A disciple is one who follows after Christ. He learns from Christ and accepts Him as his teacher. Christ's word to him is authority. He hears first what Jesus has to say on any subject, and accepts what others have to say only as it agrees with Christ's words. He follows Jesus as his example and model. The disciple is prepared to change his own ways for Christ's ways.

To be a disciple is not an easy thing. Jesus did not make it easy for men to be His disciples. Indeed, it seems at times that He was not as concerned about the *number* of His followers as he was about their *quality*. Had he been as anxious as we are to increase our church membership, He would not have made the conditions so difficult.

What are the conditions of discipleship?

1. A disciple denies himself in order to follow Christ.
2. A disciple turns away from sinful ways and pleasures.
3. A disciple controls his own desires and allows himself to be controlled by Christ.
4. A disciple must be willing to bear a cross.

If we deny someone, that person has no influence with us. His voice is not admitted into the management of our affairs. We do not allow him to control our movements or our pleasures. The most important condition of discipleship is to deny yourself. This means that you allow Jesus to direct your affairs, control your desires, give the answers to your questions. A man who will be Christ's disciple must so ignore himself that Christ will truly be LORD of his life. If Jesus is Lord, it is impossible to say *No* to Him. The two words cannot go together. When He is Lord, we say *No* to self; and *Yes* to Him.



In Matthew 16:24 we read these words of Jesus to His disciples: "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself; carry his cross, and follow me." Cross-bearing may mean painful experiences which we must be prepared to bear for Christ's sake. It also means to sacrifice for others. The cross is associated with Christ's sacrifice for our sin. We must also be willing to sacrifice to do away with sin. That means we must hate sin in our own lives and in the lives of others, and be willing to make any sacrifice to get rid of sin. An old hymn says,

Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for everyone,
And there's a cross for me!

12 Which of these descriptions are included in the principles of discipleship?

- a** Self first, Jesus second, others last
- b** Jesus first, others second, myself last
- c** Yes, Lord!
- d** No, Lord!
- e** Self-control through control by Christ
- f** Making our own decisions
- g** Turning away from sin
- h** Self-sacrifice
- i** Bearing a cross
- j** Excusing sin in others
- k** Willing to learn from Christ
- l** Following the example of Christ

A Right Heart

Objective 4. *Recognize the characteristics which describe each aspect of a right heart.*

The second condition for effective service to God is having a right heart. Self-denial alone is not enough—one must also have a heart prepared for service.

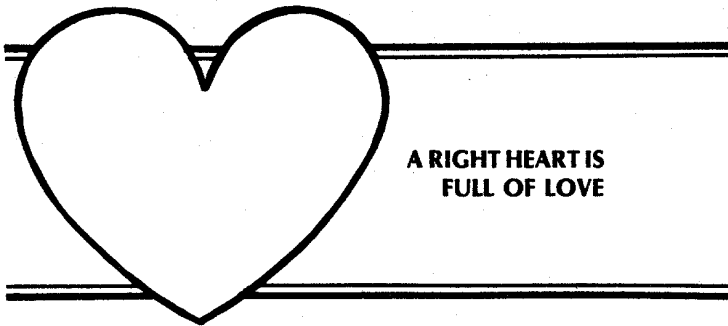
The condition of the physical heart is a matter of great importance. The health of the body depends on the heart's soundness. If the heart is diseased, life becomes uncertain. The spiritual heart of man should concern him far more than his physical heart, because its condition affects him for eternity. Here are some ways to determine if we have a right heart. It should be:

1. *A God-loving heart.* The hearts of many are fixed on riches, pleasure, position, or fame, but a right heart is fixed on

God. This explains the elevated character of a Christian. Christians should rise in the direction of the object of their greatest love. A right heart shows its affection for the Lord by its acts and service. He who has a God-loving heart shows reverence to the Lord, is faithful and trustful.

2. *A sin-hating heart.* There are many words in the Bible which mean “sin.” Some of them are *error, failure, go astray, trespass, miss the mark, offense, and iniquity.* In 1 John 3:4 we read that “sin is a breaking of the law.” God’s law is holy, just, and good. He wants us to hate sin and obey His law. Sin ruins man, and separates him from God—it is truly an awful thing.

We must hate sin and have a burning desire for it to be removed from people’s lives. Sin injures people and leads them to eternal death. We must work hard to destroy its influence in the world. This is one strong reason for service and dedication to God



3. *A humble heart.* A humble heart has nothing to boast of. It gives God the credit for all good things. It is a rich heart, but its riches have been given by mercy and love. It is a clean heart because the divine Spirit of God cleansed it. It has nothing to be proud of but its relationship to Jesus. It is a truthful heart.

There are those whose sense of humility leads them to speak of themselves in a way that is not true to fact. They speak of themselves as poor, miserable sinners, but they are now the children of God and saints of God. They use the most humble expressions regarding themselves, even though God has given them the most exalted relationship in the universe. The person who has a humble heart has a grateful heart, because he has been adopted into the divine family of God. Through Christ he has been made a king and a priest of the highest order. He counts it a privilege to serve his Lord and Master as a humble servant.

4. *A thankful heart.* Man is made to be grateful. Ingratitude is not natural for him. The gifts that God has given to man are many and wonderful. They are expressions of His love. They are favors—none of them has been deserved. They should, therefore, call forth our heartfelt thanks—thanks which comes from the heart. This thanks is not only expressed by words, but also by the conduct of our lives.

5. *A forgiving heart.* A Christian has the forgiving heart of Jesus. His whole mission to the world was to show that God forgives sin and restores man's relationship with Him. He prayed that God would forgive those who sinned against Him. His last words included the forgiveness of those who killed Him, because "they don't know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Forgiveness is a chief characteristic of Christ's followers. They are clear examples of God's forgiving heart to the world.

6. *A loving heart.* A loving heart has a Christlike love for men. Love made Jesus leave heaven, take up His cross, and die for the sins of the world. He showed the world God's love. He has chosen us to minister to the world with His love. This means loving God so much that we want to serve Him, and loving the world so much that we want to win it to Christ.

13 Match each characteristic of a right heart (right column) with its description (left column).

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>.... a Makes us want to serve God and tell the world about Jesus Christ</p> | <p>1) A God-loving heart
2) A forgiving heart
3) A humble heart</p> |
| <p>.... b Makes us want to tell others that disobedience separates them from God</p> | <p>4) A thankful heart
5) A sin-hating heart
6) A loving heart</p> |
| <p>.... c Realizes that all that we are is by the grace of God</p> | |
| <p>.... d Appreciates the wonderful gifts that come from God and shows it by conduct as well as words</p> | |
| <p>.... e Has the same attitude towards others that Jesus had towards those who sinned against Him</p> | |
| <p>.... f Has reverence for God, is faithful in service, reaches towards God</p> | |

A Life of Prayer

Objective 5. *List some values of a life of prayer.*

We have already emphasized the importance of prayer in a Christian's life several times in these lessons. It is a vital part of personal preparation for service. Prayer is powerful in bringing others to Christ. It is necessary for the ministry of the church in the world. It is through prayer that the Christian brings others into the presence of God.

We cannot lead others where we have not walked, and our big task in this world is to lead others to walk with God. We walk with God in prayer and meditation. Man is different from all other creatures because he can know God and talk with Him. Prayer should be a very natural thing for a Christian. It should be as natural to us as opening our mouth to ask a friend for

something or to tell him something. It should be as natural as a beloved son talking to his father.

God wants us to pray to Him. We are His children, and He is our Father. He could supply all of our needs without us asking Him, but if He did so, we would forget Him. He wants to keep us always near Him, and He wants us always to feel our need of Him. It is because of His great love for us that He would have us pray often to Him.

14 List from memory three values of prayer that we have discussed in this section of the lesson.

.....
.....

Use of God’s Gifts

Objective 6. *Explain what God expects us to do with the gifts He has given us.*

The last condition which we will mention in preparation for doing God’s work refers to the use of the divine gifts He has given us. He has given these gifts to us so that we will be able to carry out His purpose for the world. He expects us to do three things:

1. *Accept the gifts.* God’s greatest gift to the world was Christ. Christ continues to give to the world through His church. Through the Holy Spirit He has given spiritual gifts to the church to prepare it for ministry. We must therefore accept what God has given to us so that we in turn can give it to others.

2. *Use the gifts.* If you gave a hungry man a loaf of bread and he should lay it aside and make no use of it, would you think he was thankful for the gift? God has given us His Word, and He expects us to use it for His glory. He has changed our lives and given us power through His own Spirit. He expects us to use that power to tell others how He can change their lives also.

God has given us great possibilities for service. He has created us in a wonderful way. We have been saved by Christ to

a wonderful new life. We should use our new life by sharing it with others in need.

3. *Recognize the Giver.* People eat and drink, enjoy health and pleasure, boast of liberty and salvation, but sometimes forget to recognize the Giver of all of these things. God wants us to show gratitude to Him as the source of all that we have freely received. The greatest way to show gratitude is to share Him with others who have yet to receive His greatest gift—salvation.

15 Briefly explain in your own words what God expects us to do with the gifts He has given us.

.....
.....

self-test

SHORT ANSWER OR COMPLETION. Answer or complete the following questions in your own words without looking back at the lesson.

1 Who is included in God's general call to ministry?

.....

2 If early Christians had not continued Christ's ministry, how would that have affected you?

.....

3 If someone is giving his full time to some type of gospel ministry, we can assume that he has what kind of call?

.....

4 What are the qualifications for ministry which we discussed in this lesson?

.....

.....

5 What is the relationship between these qualifications and our ministry for Christ?

.....

6 Self-denial, cross-bearing, turning from sin, and allowing yourself to be controlled by Christ are all part of practicing

.....

7 As we develop Christian character there is spiritual
..... in our life.

TRUE-FALSE. Write T in the blank space if the statement is TRUE, and write F if the statement is FALSE.

- **8** All believers may receive the same authority and power to do the work of God.
- **9** Brotherliness means that all people of my race or nationality are my brothers.
- **10** Christian character can be developed fully very quickly after we become Christians.
- **11** If we want to be disciples of Christ we must allow Him to be Lord of our lives.
- **12** A heart full of love cannot hate sin.
- **13** Prayer is necessary in bringing others to God.
- **14** The best way to show gratitude to God for all of His gifts is to share Him with those who do not know Him.
- **15** The most important Christian quality is love.

answers to study questions

- 8 a** Faith, endurance.
b Until he learns to trust God and not give up, he will not see the results of his labors.
- 1 a** True.
b False.
c False.
d True.
e True.
- 9 a** Self-control.
b Those to whom he witnesses will be confused by the lack of discipline in his life.
- 2 b)** We might never have heard the gospel, since the message was passed from believer to believer until it reached us.
- 10 a** Brotherliness, love.
b His selfish attitude will turn people away from Christ instead of drawing them to Him.
- 3** Probably you answered in this way:
a 1) General call.
b 2) Specific call.
c 1) General call.
d 1) General call.
e 2) Specific call.
f 2) Specific call.
g 3) Either general or specific call.
- 11 a** Knowledge.
b He will not have a strong enough contact with God or knowledge of the Scriptures to help others see their need of a Savior.
- 4** They will be active and effective in their knowledge of Christ.

- 12 a** No.
b Yes.
c Yes.
d No.
e Yes.
f No.
g Yes.
h Yes.
i Yes.
j No.
k Yes.
l Yes.
- 5 a)** He loses his spiritual vision and forgets what Christ has done for him.
- 13 a** 6) A loving heart.
b 5) A sin-hating heart.
c 3) A humble heart.
d 4) A thankful heart.
e 2) A forgiving heart.
f 1) A God-loving heart.
- 6** The more Christlike his character is, the more useful he will be to God.
- 14** Your answer. Compare your answer with the values we have given in this section.
- 7** Your answers may not be exactly like mine, but this is what I would say:
a Goodness.
b His witness will be very weak, because his friends will see no difference between his life and their own.
- 15** Your answer. He expects us first to accept His gifts, then to use them to bring others to Him, and finally to recognize that He is the one who has given everything to us.

For Your Notes

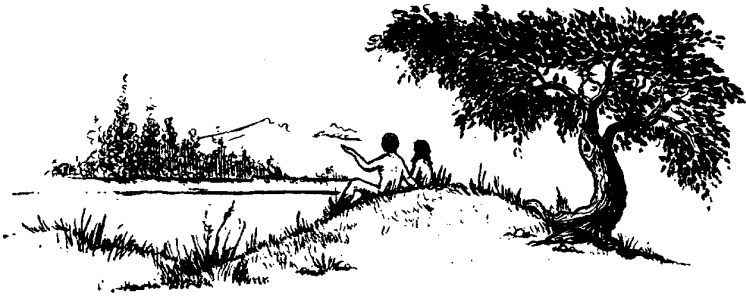
Lesson 9

The Act of Ministry

There is a story about an emperor who wanted to find out what language Adam and Eve spoke. To make an experiment, he set apart several newborn babies. He gave strict orders that no one was to speak a word in the presence of these babies. He thought that by doing this the babies would learn to speak a language of their own. That language, the emperor thought, would be the language of Adam and Eve. Of course the experiment failed, because the babies died from lack of communication.

Man is born to communicate. He was made to communicate with his fellowman and with God. The people of God have a responsibility to communicate the gospel of Christ. The life of the church is to share Christ. The life of the world depends on its hearing the good news. Without this communication, the world will die.

In this lesson we want to talk about the act of ministry—the act of communicating the gospel. This communication is done in three ways: by speaking, by sharing, and by serving. As you study the lesson, think about your part in carrying out this three-fold ministry of the church of Jesus Christ.



lesson outline

Christ Our Model
Proclaiming the Message
Sharing by Example
Serving With Love

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson you will be able to:

- Describe the three-fold act of ministry as seen in the life of Christ.
- Understand practical ways you can be involved in the church's ministry to the world.
- Recognize possibilities for ministry through your local church.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson following the procedure given in Lesson 1. Be sure to read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer all study questions. Check your answer to each question after you have written your answer.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

communicate
 deacon
 herald
 hospitable
 proclaim

lesson development
CHRIST OUR MODEL

Objective 1. *Recognize the goals of Jesus in communicating the gospel.*

Effective communication of the gospel is what ministry is all about. Only as the believer begins to communicate the gospel does the act of ministry begin.

As the scripture says, “Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved. But how can they call to him for help if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed?” (Romans 10:13-14).

Communicating the gospel is not simply passing on information. For communication to be effective, the gospel must speak to the hearts of people—it must be applied to their lives.

Jesus spoke to the hearts of people. We have already learned the words of his first public address. Read again Luke 4:18. These words, based on Isaiah 61:1-2, show us what Jesus considered His ministry to be:

1. *Preach the gospel to the poor.* Jesus’ message was for the welfare of the soul—the poor in spirit—as well as for those who were poor in body and mind. He was concerned about the whole man.

2. *Proclaim liberty to the captives.* Man is a captive of sin. He is also a captive of his own condition resulting from a life of sin. Captives need freedom. Christ came to set men free, so that

they could be all that God intended for them to be. He makes possible a full and rich life. Jesus said, “I am come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).

3. *Heal the brokenhearted.* Jesus is concerned with man’s suffering and his needs. Redemption offers the solution for everything that keeps a man from having a full life, whether it be an emotional problem, conflicts with others, sorrow, or pain.

4. *Recovery of sight to the blind.* This may refer to spiritual healing as well as physical healing. The gospel can be applied to all areas of a man’s life.



Jesus wanted to redeem the total person. He was concerned for man’s physical and emotional well-being as well as his spiritual needs.

1 Read Isaiah 53:5. What does this Scripture show us was included in Christ’s redemptive act upon the cross?

.....

Christ’s goal in communicating the gospel was to make people whole or complete in Him. In Matthew 5:48 Jesus said, “You must be perfect—just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” A better word for *perfect* in this instance is the word *complete*. This same word is used by Jesus when He talked with a rich young man. He said, “If you want to be perfect [complete], go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me” (Matthew 19:21).

To be complete is to do the right things. It also means to reach maturity and fullness. (See Colossians 1:28). This is the goal of the gospel—that all men might come to maturity in Christ. Christ came to destroy the works of sin so that we might obtain our completeness in Him. Through His words, by His example of a holy life, and in His actions of servant ministry, He sought to free men from sin and its effects. His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead were the final signs of victory over sin. He communicated the good news by His very life. This is the good news which the church now communicates to the world!

2 Which of these statements explain the goals of Jesus in communicating the good news?

- a** His concern was only for man's spiritual condition.
- b** He knew it was important to minister to man's physical and emotional needs as well as his spiritual needs.
- c** He spoke to the hearts of men through His example and His concern as much as through His words.
- d** His ministry was mainly to those who were not troubled by disease or problems.
- e** He wanted all men to be complete or whole persons spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

PROCLAIMING THE MESSAGE

The Spoken Word

Objective 2. *Describe ways the gospel is communicated through the spoken word.*

Men who set out to conquer nations usually do so with great armies and powerful weapons of war. Christ's goal was to conquer the world and bring every nation under His feet. But He sends men not with the glittering sword or the thundering cannon, but with the power of speech.

We are sent as heralds of the gospel. A *herald* is one who proclaims a message. He may speak to one person or to a group of persons, in public or in private, but always he brings a message from his master and lord.



One outstanding characteristic of the herald is his authority. He does not speak in his own name, but in the name of the one who has sent him. His authority is not only in his words, but in his ability to act in behalf of the one who sent him.

The men Christ sent out were faithful and spoke with the authority He had given them. They returned with joy, and said: "Lord . . . even the demons obeyed us when we gave them a command in your name!" (Luke 10:17).

Today Christ is still calling men and women to become heralds of God's truth. The power of the New Testament believers depended upon the importance of the truth they spoke. What was this truth?

1. God's love has been made known to man.
2. There is salvation from sin for man.
3. Salvation from sin is only possible through the death of Jesus.

Let's look at some ways the gospel is communicated through the spoken word.

Preaching and Teaching. The Great Commission is a command to preach and teach. There are many other Scriptures concerning the importance of heralding the good news in these two ways. The following Scriptures emphasize the value of preaching and teaching:

1. Faithfulness is required from those who are instructed to preach the Word (2 Timothy 4:2).

2. The Lord has chosen that by the foolishness of preaching men should be saved (1 Corinthians 1:21).
3. It is through preaching that God's Word has been revealed (Titus 1:3).
4. There is tremendous power in the Word of God as it is proclaimed, whether from a pulpit or elsewhere. The Word is able to save (James 1:21).
5. The Word helps newborn Christians to grow (1 Peter 2:2).
6. The disciples followed the example of Christ in preaching and teaching (Acts 5:42).
7. The apostle Paul's ministry included both preaching and teaching (Colossians 1:28).

By preaching, men and women are brought into the kingdom of God, and by teaching, they are held and confirmed. It is our responsibility not only to preach and teach, but to receive preaching and teaching, so that we too might be edified and strengthened by God's Word.

Peter and John were warned not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. Their answer was, "We cannot stop speaking of what we ourselves have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). If we have been redeemed by Jesus' sacrifice and have experienced His love in our hearts, how can we help but speak that which we have experienced ourselves!

Personal Testimony. Real communication involves a two-way process. It is a sharing of ideas, attitudes, and experiences. An example is given in Acts 8, when Philip shared the gospel with an Ethiopian. Although God had instructed him to approach this man, Philip did not immediately begin to speak of the gospel. Rather, he began with a question which served to ask, "May I get involved with your life?" Philip began to talk to the man about Christ in response to a direct question from the man himself (Acts 8:31). Then Philip's testimony was effective because it answered a specific need that this man had.

Even though we may never be called to preach, we can all communicate the gospel by our personal spoken testimony. We can find many opportunities, in talking with others, to tell them how the gospel can answer a specific need in their lives.

The apostle Paul reminded us that our communication of the gospel by the spoken word is only effective when we also have a two-way communication with the Spirit through prayer. In 1 Corinthians 2:4 he said, “My teaching and message were not delivered with skillful words of human wisdom, but with convincing proof of the power of God’s Spirit.” Without the power of the Spirit we can accomplish nothing of any lasting value.

3 Explain the *particular* value of each of these three ways of communicating the gospel:

- a** By preaching:
-
- b** By teaching:
-
- c** By personal testimony:
-

Today the gospel is being preached in large city churches and small village chapels, in prisons, on street corners, over the radio, on television—in almost every country of the world. The Word is being taught in neighborhood Bible studies, in Sunday schools, at youth gatherings, in college classrooms, in prayer groups, in hospitals—everywhere that Christians gather together. And the sharing of the good news in one-to-one personal evangelism is still a wonderful, effective way of bringing men and women to Christ. Believers cannot stop telling the world what they have discovered about Christ!

The Written Word

This lesson would be incomplete if we did not mention the power of the *written* Word in communicating the message. There are some places in the world where a spoken gospel witness is not permitted. Missionaries are not allowed to go to these places. But there is a way to reach even into areas like this with the gospel. ICI has many recorded testimonies of people who have found Christ after receiving an ICI evangelism course by mail or from a friend. If we cannot *go* with the gospel, we can still *send* the gospel, and the Word of God is powerful—it speaks to men’s hearts whether the message is spoken or written! Do you know someone who came to Christ after *reading* the message of salvation? Have you placed a gospel tract or other Christian literature in the hands of someone to whom you could not speak, or sent it by mail? We must use every available means of proclaiming the Word to all people everywhere!

SHARING BY EXAMPLE

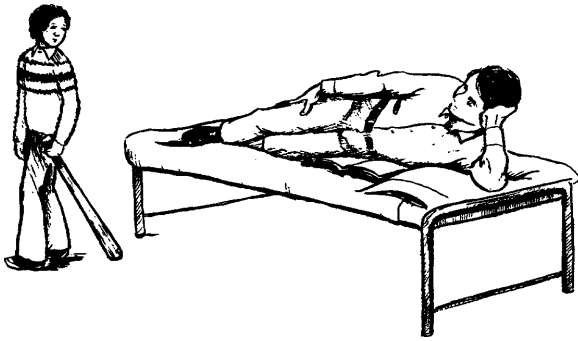
Objective 3. *Recognize good examples of the principle of sharing Christ through our example.*

Throughout history, the good example of Christians has had a powerful impact upon unbelievers. This type of sharing, or *communion*, has led many people to know Christ. Actions speak louder than words for the kingdom of God. We communicate the gospel through our contact, our fellowship with people.

Albert Schweitzer once said, “Example is not the *main* thing in influencing others. It is the *only* thing!” A contact with someone whose life is consecrated to the Lord is a message with tremendous power! A good example has twice the value of good advice.

A friend once asked Henry Ward Beecher (a famous preacher in the 1800s), “Who influenced you most toward Christ? Was it some college professor, some great

preacher, or a faithful Sunday school teacher?” Beecher replied, “I doubt if the man knew at the time what an influence he was. He used to lie on his cot and read the New Testament, hardly aware that I was in the room. Then he’d talk to himself about what he read. Sometimes he would smile as he read. I never saw the Bible enjoyed like that. It challenged me more than any other thing.” “But,” his friend said, “you didn’t tell me who this great man was.” “Oh, I’m sorry,” responded Beecher, “that man was Charles Smith, a hired man on my father’s farm.”



Like the moon that has no light of its own, but reflects the rays of the sun, so it is that the Christian who lives in close communion with God can reflect Christ when he shares his life with others. What is a normal and natural life to a sincere Christian can be a moving message to the unbeliever. No one can give what he does not have. Peter had something to offer to the lame man at the gate of the temple: “I give you what I have” (Acts 3:6).

As we share our lives with others, and as they see the beauty of Jesus in us, they will want to have what we have. We have a great responsibility to be Christlike at all times—in our home, on the street, at our jobs, in the shops—wherever we may be. Our conduct may influence someone *for* or *against* Christ. As we share by communion with others, the Holy Spirit will give us opportunities to tell them the good news of salvation.

Someone once said, “Power with men proceeds from power with God.” We have already talked about the importance of a prayer life. Prayer is our communion with the Lord. It is easier to plan an evangelistic campaign, organize the promotion, visit homes, and invite people to church than it is to pray earnestly for their salvation. A genuine love for those to be reached is born out of a life of prayer. It is through love that our communion with the world will bring the unbeliever to Christ.

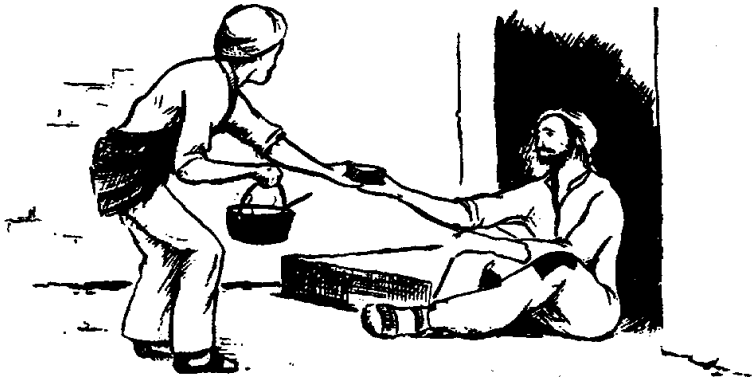
- 4** Circle the letter in front of good examples of sharing and communion which could help to win others to Christ.
- a** John works for a man who is not a Christian. John always arrives early for work, and does not waste time on the job.
 - b** When James is driving his car, he gets angry and blows his horn when other drivers are too slow or get in his way.
 - c** Mrs. Smith is a friendly neighbor who always seems to know when her help is needed because of sickness or other needs.
 - d** Robert prays every morning that the Lord will help him to be Christlike in all his activities throughout the day.
 - e** George is polite and kind to most people, but he is often unkind and critical to members of his own family.

SERVING WITH LOVE

Objective 4. *Describe the relationship of service to the preaching of the gospel.*

The Bible gives us some definite instructions concerning our service ministry through the church. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-13. The first seven verses describe the church leader. Verses 8 through 13 describe the church helpers. In many Bible translations the word for church helpers is *deacon*. The Greek word from which the word *deacon* comes means “one who serves, one who ministers.” The Bible text suggests three ways of serving:

1. The first way is in the sense of serving at tables, providing for the physical needs of persons, attending to visitors or guests, or in a more general sense, it describes the actions of a hospitable person.



2. Another way of serving is to give a service of love to a neighbor, particularly the poor and needy, such as food for the hungry, water for the thirsty, clothes for the naked. (Read Matthew 25:42-45; Acts 11:29.)

3. In a broader sense, serving means performing any activity that contributes to the good of the community.

Love Your Neighbor. The concept that Christ taught concerning service was closely related to the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself (Mark 12:31). This, together with the commandment to love God (Mark 12:30), is the basis for Christian conduct. Service for others involves an active Christian love for one's neighbors. This is the characteristic of a true follower of Christ.

5 Read Matthew 20:26-28; Mark 9:35; Mark 10:43-45; and Luke 22:26. What is the principle given in these verses concerning service?

.....
.....

Christian service is an effective way to communicate the gospel in today's world. When the church is moved

with the compassion of Christ to serve the lost and needy, even when it means self-sacrifice, it can reach the world with the gospel through its service. To minister in service without proclaiming the gospel is to fail to meet man's deepest need. To preach the gospel and at the same time ignore the physical needs of the poor is not an expression of Christ's love. He wants us to minister to the whole man.



Respond to the World's Needs. The problems of the world are multiplying. The only solution for the evils of the world is the gospel of Christ. When we see the needs of the world, our hearts are moved to respond to those needs.

We must continue to preach the truths of the gospel. But we must also join those who oppose injustice and hatred. The two go hand-in-hand.

Jesus said that He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life (Matthew 20:28). This is not easily understood in today's world. Today when a man reaches a high position he expects to be waited on. Jesus recognized that this is a characteristic of the human heart. He told the disciples that they were to be different from the Gentiles, who liked to rule over one another. He told them that the one who wanted to be the greatest among them should be

the servant of all (Matthew 20:27). This is a basic quality of a true believer in action-one who serves or ministers.

6 How is our service to others related to our preaching the gospel?

.....
.....

7 How does the concept of love taught by Christ affect the way we minister in service?

.....

8 Can you see ways you or your church are ministering in service along with preaching the gospel? List them here.

.....
.....

self-test

ALTERNATE CHOICE. Each pair of statements below refers to a principle taught in this lesson. For each set, choose the statement that best reflects the principle taught.

1 *Communicating the gospel:*

- a) Communicating the gospel is done most effectively by preaching and teaching.
- b) Communicating the gospel is more than just passing on information-it involves applying the truths to people's lives, reaching into their hearts.

2 *The purpose of Christ's redemptive act:*

- a) Christ's suffering and death made provision for all of man's needs-physical, emotional, and spiritual.
- b) Christ's death had one purpose, and that was to redeem man from sin.

3 *Power of the spoken Word:*

- a) The power of the message depends upon the ability and power of the one who speaks it.
- b) The message has power because it is spoken through the authority of the one who sent it-Jesus Christ.

4 *Sharing or communion:*

- a) The most effective message we can give to an unbeliever is the example of our own life as we share it in love and self-sacrifice.
- b) Although our actions are important, people pay more attention to what we say than to what we do.

5 *Serving:*

- a) A true servant of God will do everything he can to minister to man's human needs as well as his spiritual needs.
- b) Christians should concentrate on preaching the gospel, and let the government and other service organizations take care of other needs.

6 *Love:*

- a) Real Christian love causes us to be as concerned about the needs of our neighbor as we are about our own needs.
- b) A true Christian does not allow love to rule his decisions for service but he serves God out of a sense of duty and respect.

answers to study questions

- 5 The one who serves others is the one who is great in the kingdom of God.
- 1 Through His suffering and death He paid the price to secure for us forgiveness of sins and complete healing in mind, body, and spirit.
- 6 We must minister to meet the human needs of man as well as his spiritual needs. Christ wants us to minister to the whole man.
- 2 a False.
b True.
c True.
d False.
e True.
- 7 Christ's love will give us a love and desire to help men in their need, whatever that need might be.
- 3 a It is by preaching that God has chosen men and women to be brought into His kingdom.
b It is by teaching that believers are built up in the faith. (*Note:* There can be considerable overlapping in preaching and teaching. Many times teaching takes place when the gospel is preached. And the unbeliever can be drawn to repentance through the teaching of gospel truth.)
c It is by personal testimony that we can have two-way communication. By sharing what Christ has done in our lives, we can answer specific needs in the lives of others.
- 8 Your answer. Has this lesson helped you to see other ways of winning the lost through service?
- 4 a Yes.
b No.
c Yes.
d Yes.
e No.

For Your Notes

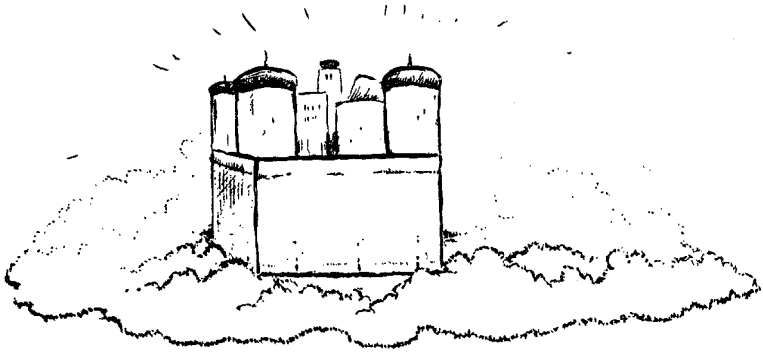
Lesson 10

The Results of Ministry

Let's take an imaginary walk down those streets of gold which we read about in Revelation 21-22. There are many people moving about enjoying fellowship. Over there I see the man who won my parents to the Lord. Now I see the Sunday school teacher who first told me the way of salvation. Oh! And there stands the first person I led to the Lord! What glorious sights!

As I walk along, I see men and women from every page of the church's history: the apostles who wrote the New Testament Scriptures which guided my life—early Christians who went to their deaths as martyrs in defense of the gospel of Jesus Christ—great missionaries who gave their lives for people of a foreign culture—humble saints who quietly did the work of the Lord in their own communities. Now I see more clearly that they all had a part in my own salvation. The gospel story has gone from one to the other, down through the ages, until it reached me in my sin and I was redeemed!

In this lesson we will look at some of the results of ministry. The greatest result is that we will be united in heaven with those who brought us to Christ, and those we brought to Him, and all together we will worship our Lord, singing with a host of angels, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" (See Revelation 5).



lesson outline

Results in the Church
Results in the World

lesson objectives

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe the results of the church's ministry in the church itself and in the world.
- Recognize your own responsibility to be involved in the church's ministry, and its relationship to Christ's return.
- Appreciate the effects of the church's ministry in your own life and in the world.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson according to the instructions given in Lesson 1. Be sure to read all Scriptures given, and answer all study questions.
2. Take the self-test and check your answers.
3. Review the material in Unit 3, then answer the questions in Unit Student Report 3.

key words

benefits

fulfillment

involvement

numerical

rejoicing

lesson development**RESULTS IN THE CHURCH**

It is natural for us to want to see results in rewards for our labors. The believer and the church long to hear their Master say, “Well done, you good and faithful servant!” (Matthew 25:23). Even the physical universe longs to be delivered out of the decay into which it has fallen on account of man’s sin (Romans 8:20-21). But the church does not labor in vain. There are wonderful results because of its ministry. Let’s look at some of these results both for the person in ministry and for the church as a whole.

Growth

Objective 1. *Describe several ways in which growth results from ministry.*

A church that is deeply involved in ministry is a growing church. We have already seen that part of the church’s ministry to itself is for the purpose of *edification*, or building itself up. Here we are talking about *spiritual* growth. This comes through *involvement*.

A person learns to pray by praying. A person learns to witness by witnessing. As the church provides opportunities for members of the body to be involved, the members grow spiritually. Involvement builds confidence. For example, if the church has a training course for witnessing, and the instructor says, “This afternoon we are going to go out and put into practice what we have studied today,” the students will become excited. As they experience the joy of witnessing and seeing people come to Christ, their confidence will grow, and they will witness even more.

When a believer is involved in ministry, Christ occupies a central place in his heart. It is Christ who gives meaning and purpose to his life. As he becomes more aware of Christ, he grows in his understanding of himself. He gains a sense of responsibility and self-worth. He also accepts God's goals for his life. He understands that service and ministry are vital to his wholeness in Christ.

When the church is involved in active witness to the world, it is brought to a complete dependence on the working of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who gives power to witness, and all of the other helps that are necessary for a healthy spiritual condition. A church in ministry is a dynamic growing church full of vitality. As it senses the need for spiritual wisdom and prays and hungers for the power of the Holy Spirit, it experiences God's presence and power. There is a warmth of spiritual fellowship within the body. This leads to further involvement in God's ministry to the world.

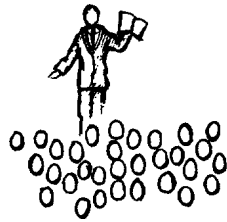
A church involved in ministry also experiences numerical growth. We see examples of this in the book of Acts:

Acts 2:41 — “Many of them believed his message and were baptized, and about three thousand people were added to the group that day.”

Acts 4:4 — “But many who heard the message believed; and the number of men grew to about five thousand.”

Acts 5:14 — “But more and more people were added to the group—a crowd of men and women who believed in the Lord.”

The story continues through the book of Acts. As people heard the message, more and more were added to the church. The church is still growing today, and yet there are many people who do not know Christ. The church's ministry is not complete until all of them have heard the gospel. A spiritually healthy church is a growing church!



MINISTRY BRINGS GROWTH

- 1 Choose the best answer: A church grows spiritually and numerically when it
 - a) has a fine building and an educated pastor.
 - b) emphasizes fellowship among the believers.
 - c) is actively involved in ministries to God, to itself, and to the world.

2 State three ways that growth results from involvement in ministry.

.....

.....

Fulfillment

Objective 2. *Compare ordinary fulfillment with spiritual fulfillment.*

Active involvement in ministry brings real satisfaction. Jesus Himself found satisfaction in knowing that He had come to serve and not be served. He found satisfaction in doing His Father’s will. As a believer ministers, he is in harmony with himself, his neighbors, and God. This brings a sense of fulfillment.

Men who make a contribution to the world do so out of a dedication, a sense of commitment. The poet believes that nothing is as important as his poetry. The sculptor and artist give themselves to their art—they exalt it. This is why they approach the canvas and stone with such determination to make them come alive. They find fulfillment in their contribution. But this is an ordinary type of fulfillment which fades away. A great sculpture can be admired by many people over many centuries, but it will not endure forever.

The fulfillment that a believer experiences through his ministry for God has eternal value. It is seen in the light of

eternity. A soul brought to Christ will last forever. Man’s deepest needs and highest ideals can be met only in a spiritual way. In 2 Corinthians 4:18 we read, “For we fix our attention, not on things that are seen, but on things that are unseen. What can be seen lasts only for a time, but what cannot be seen lasts forever.” Spiritual fulfillment is an eternal result of ministry. The apostle Paul expressed this sense of fulfillment near the end of his ministry. We read his words in 2 Timothy 4:7-8:

I have done my best in the race. I have run the full distance, and I have kept the faith. And now there is waiting for me the prize of victory awarded for a righteous life, the prize which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day—and not only to me, but to all those who wait with love for him to appear.



... to all who wait with love ...

- 3** How does a Christian find his greatest fulfillment?
 - a) By working hard in the church so that others will praise him
 - b) By leading someone to Christ
 - c) By contributing something of value to the world
- 4** Compare ordinary fulfillment with spiritual fulfillment. Explain which is most complete, and why.

.....
.....

Rejoicing

Objective 3. *Analyze Scripture texts which refer to the joy of winning souls.*

There is great joy in serving Jesus. We have seen that one of the fruits of the Spirit is joy. Christians have many reasons to rejoice—to express their joy. First, they themselves have been redeemed! Their lives have been changed, and they are free from the burden of sin!

Christians also experience joy when they see the fruit of their labors for the Lord. Have you led someone to the Lord? Do you remember what a joyful experience that was? The Bible tells us that even the angels in heaven rejoice when a sinner repents (Luke 15:10).

Jesus compared winning souls to gathering in a harvest. Let’s look at a few Scriptures concerning the harvest and its results.

5 Read John 4:35-38, and answer these questions.

a What is meant by “the man who plants”?

.....

b What is meant by “the man who reaps”?

.....

c What does verse 36 mean?

.....

d What do verses 37 and 38 mean?

.....

Sometimes our ministries may not seem to be directly involved with sinning souls. We may not see the results of our efforts. But when we are busy serving the Lord wherever He places us, we can rejoice with others who are helping to reach the world for Christ. The missionary who goes to a distant land with the message may win many souls to Christ in that land. But the Christians who provided the funds for him to go, and all those who pray for him, will also rejoice and share in the rewards for the harvest!

Psalm 126:5-6 is sometimes called “the law of the harvest.” If we plant the seed we *shall* have a harvest, and we *shall* rejoice!

Let those who wept as they planted their crops, gather the harvest with joy! Those who wept as they went out carrying the seed will come back singing for joy, as they bring in the harvest (Psalm 126:5-6).



WE REJOICE TOGETHER

6 Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9. How does this Scripture explain why we can rejoice together when we see someone come to Christ through the efforts of many people?

.....
.....

RESULTS IN THE WORLD

In Romans 16:26 we read that the gospel—the good news about Jesus Christ—“. . . has been brought out into the open through the writings of the prophets; and by the command of the eternal God it is made known to all nations, so that all may believe and obey.”

The gospel of Christ is the fulfillment of man’s hope for a better world. Since early times man has looked forward to an age of justice and righteousness. God created a people to be the example for the world. But His chosen people, the Israelites, failed to live up to His standards. Still the people dreamed of a new age, a world of peace.

The prophets pointed to that new order of things. Read their prophecies in the following Scriptures: Isaiah 52:7; Isaiah 2:2-3; Isaiah 11:2-5; Psalm 72:12-14; Isaiah 66:12-14, 23; Isaiah 62:12. “The land will be as full of knowledge of the Lord as the seas are full of water” (Isaiah 11:9).

Jesus came announcing the kingdom of God. He was the anointed one of God to bring about a new order and a new age (Luke 4:18-21). He provided redemption to all mankind. By His death He provided the way to restore man to his original state. Man, by accepting Christ’s death, can be restored to his former fellowship with God the Creator. The church has been privileged to carry on Christ’s ministry, which offers hope to the people of the world. What are the results in the world of the church’s ministry? How has the preaching of the gospel message affected our world? In this section we will look at some important results of our ministry in the world.

Changed Lives

Objective 4. *Give examples from Scripture and from personal experience of lives changed by the gospel of Christ.*

When the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the responsibility of the church are combined, there is a change in the unbelieving world. There is a response when the gospel is preached. Evangelistic work results in new disciples for the Kingdom.

Who can explain the miracle of salvation and how it changes lives? In John chapter 9 we read the story of a blind man whom Jesus healed instantly. The man had been blind from birth. The Pharisees, who were trying to get rid of Jesus, questioned the man about his healing, and about Jesus. The man’s answer was: “I do not know One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see” (John 9:25). The man did not know *how* it happened—he only knew that it happened!

We read about another miraculous change in Acts 9. A man named Saul was on his way to Damascus to kill Christians. Suddenly there was a flashing light from the sky, and Saul fell to the ground. At that moment, he met Jesus Christ, and his life

was changed. He became the apostle Paul, the greatest missionary of the early church!



7 Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-18.

a What is the first thing that happens when someone accepts Christ?

.....

b What happens after this change takes place in a life (v. 18)?

.....

There are many other examples in Scripture of people who were instantly changed when they met Jesus: Matthew (Matthew 9:9); four fishermen (Matthew 4:18-22); a man possessed with demons (Luke 8:26-39); Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10); and others.

Perhaps you know someone who was instantly delivered of alcoholism, or drug addiction, or some other burden of sin the moment he found Jesus Christ. Whether or not you were bound in such a way, the moment you met Christ you became a new creation. When His love filled your heart, it changed your attitudes, your desires, and your behaviors.

8 Choose one of the four Gospels and see how many examples you can find of lives changed in some way when they met Jesus. Write these examples in your notebook under the heading *The Gospel Changes Lives!*

9 Can you also write down some examples from your own experience of lives that were changed through your ministry or that of your church? Write them in your notebook.

Increase In Workers

Objective 5. *Recognize how the fulfillment of the church's ministry results in an increase in workers.*

The ministry of the church results in changed lives. These lives then become living testimonies of the power of the gospel. They in turn influence others whose lives need to be changed.

This is how the early church grew. The 12 disciples were joined by 108 other disciples (followers of Christ) who waited in Jerusalem for the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:15). After they were baptized in the Spirit, these disciples went out and made new disciples, who in their turn made more disciples. It is within the church that future pastors, missionaries, and other Christian workers are being converted, trained, and prepared for the next generation of gospel ministry.

When the church is faithful in obeying the mission God has given to it, the result is that men and women are persuaded to become faithful disciples of Christ, and they take their places as responsible members of His church.

10 Which of these statements best describes the way in which the fulfillment of the church's ministry results in an increase in workers?

- a) Just as only sheep can give birth to sheep, only disciples can bring forth new disciples. As the members of the body of Christ preach the gospel, their converts in their turn become workers in the church, taking the gospel to the world.
- b) As the church becomes more active in ministering to the needs of the world it becomes more powerful, and can therefore have a greater influence in getting help with its ministries from important people in the world.

Benefits to Society

Objective 6. *List five ways that the church's ministry to the world is a benefit to society.*

Can you think of ways the world would be different if Christ had not come to the world, or if the church had not carried out His commission to preach the gospel? What about your own

country? In many places schools have been established and people taught to read and write so they could be taught from the Bible. Many languages have been put into written form by missionaries, so that the Bible could be given to the people. The inventor of the printing press was motivated by his desire to print many copies of the Bible so that people could read it for themselves. Many of the world’s greatest paintings, books, and musical compositions were inspired by the message of the gospel.

Jesus told us that we are a light in a world of darkness (Matthew 5:14-16). The gospel brings freedom, hope, and joy. It causes men and women to be better neighbors, honest in their dealings with others, faithful to their employers, loyal citizens in their community. It causes parents to teach the children to love that which is right, and hate evil. Who can say how great is the value to a community of a Christian doctor or nurse who ministers to spiritual as well as physical needs? Or the worth of a schoolteacher who loves the Lord and by his example teaches his students the true meaning of love? Wherever Christians are proclaiming the gospel, their message holds back evil.

In one African country where tribes were very fearful of one another, villages were secluded in the forests away from roads until the gospel message reached them. As people in these villages turned to Christ, they lost their fear, and entire villages moved out to the roads where they could communicate the gospel with other tribes. Large churches have been established in that area—their entire way of life has been changed!

11 List one way the gospel has affected society in each of these areas:

- a** Education:
- b** Artistic contributions:
- c** Language:
- d** Behavior:
- e** Other ways:

12 There are, of course, many other benefits to society from the preaching of the gospel that we do not have space to mention. Can you think of some benefits in your own area?

.....
.....

Soon Return of Christ

Objective 7. *Explain the relationship between the church’s ministry and the return of Christ.*

Did you know that the church has an active part in determining when Christ will return to gather up His church and take it to be with Him in heaven? Jesus revealed this in his words recorded in Matthew 24:14:

And this Good News about the Kingdom will be preached through all the world for a witness to all mankind; and then the end will come.

13 Read 2 Peter 3:3-4 and 9:15.

a What reason does this Scripture give for the delay in Christ’s coming?

.....

b What is our responsibility in affecting His soon return (vs. 11-12)?

.....

Clearly we see here that God is interested in results. He is “not willing that any should perish.”(2 Peter 3:9 KJV) He wants every man, woman, and child to have an opportunity to hear about Christ. He is not pleased with the following results:

- Fishing without catching (Luke 5:4-11)
- An empty banquet table (Luke 14:15-23)
- Sowing without reaping (Matthew 13:3-9)
- A fig tree that bears no figs (Luke 13:6-9)
- Lost sheep that are not brought into the fold (Matthew 18:11-14)
- A lost coin that is sought but not found (Luke 15:8-10)
- Ripe harvests that are not reaped (Matthew 9:36-38)

We have a responsibility to take the gospel message to the *whole world*. It is through the gospel message that wholeness or completeness will come to the world. God’s grace has been shown through Christ, but Christ Himself promised that greater things were to come. The new community which He formed, the church, must be totally committed to the ushering in of that great and wonderful new age.

This is the church’s ministry: A body of believers, a new community, entrusted with a message to proclaim in such a way that Jesus Christ might be presented to the world in His fullness, as the Lord and Savior of creation, and as the soon-coming King!

14 What is the relationship between the church’s ministry and the soon return of Christ?

.....
.....

This is the final lesson on *The Christian Church in Ministry*. I trust that you have been inspired to be more actively involved in the ministry of the church. I pray that the fruit of the Spirit will be very evident in your life and ministry.

After you have taken the self-test, review all of the lessons in Unit 3, then answer all of the questions in Unit Student Report 3.

I conclude with John’s final words in Revelation 22:20-21:
He who gives his testimony to all this says, “Yes indeed! I am coming soon!” So be it. Come, Lord Jesus! May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with everyone.

self-test

TRUE-FALSE. Write **T** in the blank space if the statement is TRUE. Write **F** if it is FALSE.

- **1** A person's spiritual growth can be measured by the amount of his involvement in ministry.
- **2** An active church depends upon the working of the Holy Spirit.
- **3** A church's numerical growth is no indication of its spiritual strength.
- **4** Fulfillment means finding real satisfaction in doing something worthwhile.
- **5** All workers in the harvest—those who plant, those who water the plants, and those who gather the fruit—will share alike in the rewards of the harvest.
- **6** God's chosen people, the Israelites, were a good example to the world.
- **7** A person's life usually changes slowly when he becomes a Christian.
- **8** Outside of the church, the world has not really been influenced by the gospel message.
- **9** The gospel of Christ is the fulfillment of man's hope for a better world.
- **10** Christ will not return until the gospel has been preached through all the world.

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Select the one best answer or completion for each item.

- 11** A person's wholeness in Christ is dependent upon his
- a) abilities.
 - b) self-image.
 - c) goals in life.
 - d) service and ministry.

12 In the book of Acts the result of preaching the gospel message was always that

- a) the Christians were persecuted.
- b) some people believed and were added to the church.
- c) people were confused and frightened by the strange teaching.
- d) everyone who heard the message believed it.

13 The fulfillment experienced by a person who has had results in his Christian ministry is greater than that found in the world in what way?

- a) It comes from commitment and dedication.
- b) It brings him honor among men.
- c) It has eternal value.
- d) It depends on what can be seen.

14 The “law of the harvest” is that

- a) those who plant good seed will joyfully reap a harvest.
- b) there are never enough workers.
- c) most of the seed will not grow.
- d) the one who plants the seed usually doesn’t see the harvest.

15 To become a worker in the church, to tell others about Christ, is

- a) the natural result for anyone whose life has been changed by the gospel.
- b) the responsibility of special Christians chosen by God.
- c) possible only after someone has been a Christian for a long time.

16 The return of Christ has not yet taken place because God

- a) is waiting for the world to become better.
- b) wants every man, woman, and child to have a chance to accept Christ as Savior.
- c) wants to surprise us when we aren’t doing our best for Him.

answers to study questions

8 Your answer. We have given a few examples in the lesson.

1 c) is actively involved in ministries to God, to itself, and to the world.

9 Your answer.

2 (Any of these) Spiritual growth takes place as Christ becomes central in our life; as we practice involvement we gain confidence and want to do more; our involvement causes us to lean more on the Holy Spirit; growth in numbers takes place.

10 a) Only disciples can bring forth new disciples. New converts in their turn become workers.

3 b) By leading someone to Christ.

11 Your answer. Any of those ways listed in this section. For example:

- a** Schools established by missionaries.
- b** Great paintings, books, and music inspired by the gospel.
- c** Many languages put in writing to record the gospel message.
- d** People who become Christians practice love, honesty, are faithful, loyal, hold back evil by standing for what is right.
- e** Inventions such as printing press, changes in lifestyles.

4 Ordinary fulfillment is the satisfaction that comes with any job done well. Spiritual fulfillment comes from knowing we have done God's will through our ministry. Spiritual fulfillment is more complete because it is eternal. It results when souls are brought into the kingdom of God.

12 Your answer.

- 5 a** The man who plants is the one who first takes the gospel message to a sinner.
 - b** The man who reaps is the one who leads the sinner to Christ.
 - c** Both men rejoice when the sinner comes to Christ.
 - d** We give the message to some who later come to Christ through another person's ministry. We also lead people to Christ who heard the message from someone else. We all rejoice together when a soul is won to Christ.
- 13 a** He wants to give everyone a chance to come to Him and turn away from sin.
- b** Live holy lives and do our best to make His coming soon, by telling the whole world about Him.
- 6** Because none of us can take personal credit when a person comes to Christ—it is God's grace alone which makes his salvation possible. We are simply God's partners in bringing the unsaved to Him, and we rejoice in what God has done.
- 14** The church must be faithful and work hard to fulfill the Great Commission, because it is then that Jesus will return.
- 7 a** He becomes new—his old life is gone, he has a new life in Christ.
 - b** The changed person then takes to others the message that Christ can change their lives.

Glossary

The right-hand column lists the lesson in the study guide in which the word is first used.

		<i>Lesson</i>
access	— right to approach, enter, or use; admittance	5
ambition	— a strong desire to rise to high position or to attain rank, influence, or distinction	4
artificial	— made to imitate and compete with or as a substitute for something natural; not natural	4
atone	— to supply satisfaction for; to reconcile	5
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basilica	— an early Christian church having an oblong plan, with a high central section separated by columns from aisles on each side	4
benefits	— useful aids; helps	10
bondage	— lack of freedom; slavery; condition of being under some power or influence	1
<hr/>		
captive	— a person captured and held against his will; prisoner; owned and controlled by another	2
carnal	— of or connected with the desires and passions of the body; worldly; not spiritual	1

cathedral	— a large or important church; usually elaborate in design and furnishings	4
character	— moral strength or weakness; the special way in which any person feels, thinks, and acts; the estimate formed of a person's qualities; how a person thinks, feels, and acts in the important matters of life, especially in relation to the principles of right and wrong	8
clergy	— persons ordained (set apart) for religious work; ministers, pastors, leaders of the body of Christ, called to full-time service to the Lord	3
climax	— high point	2
commission	— a giving of authority; task given to a person; authority, power, or right given	7
commitment	— a pledge; promise	8
communicate	— give information or news by speaking, writing, etc.; pass along; transfer; send and receive messages	9
community	— all the people living in the same place and subject to the same laws; group of people living together or sharing common interests; ownership together; sharing together	6
complex	— difficult to understand; complicated	4
conduct	— way of acting; behavior	8
consecration	— a dedication; commitment	8

cornerstone	— stone at the corner of two walls that holds them together; something of fundamental importance; foundation; basis	6
corporate	— united; combined; unified body	5
council	— group of people called together to give advice, talk things over, or settle questions; assembly	4
covenant	— a solemn agreement between two or more persons or groups; the solemn promises of God to man	1
deacon	— officer of a Christian church who helps the minister in church duties not connected with preaching	9
debtors	— persons who owe something to another	7
deliverance	— a setting free or being set free; rescue; release	2
discipleship	— state of being a disciple or follower	8
dispute	— argument; disagreement	1
doctrine	— what is taught as true; principles of Christian faith; belief	7
edification	— building up; moral improvement; spiritual benefit; instruction	3
edify	— improve morally; benefit spiritually; instruct and uplift	3
eternal	— without beginning or ending; lasting forever	2
evangelize	— preach the gospel; convert to Christianity by preaching	7

fulfillment	— satisfaction; sense of accomplishment	10
generation	— all the people born about the same period; the time from the birth of one generation to the birth of the next; about 30 years	7
herald	— person who carries messages and makes announcements; messenger; one who brings news	9
hospitable	— giving or liking to give a welcome, food and shelter, and friendly treatment to guests or strangers	9
humility	— lack of pride; meekness	6
illumination	— a making clear; explanation	5
imperial	— of or having to do with an empire or emperor; of or having to do with the rule or authority of one country over other countries and colonies	4
incarnation	— a taking on of human form by a divine being; the union of divine nature and human nature in the person of Jesus Christ	2
independence	— freedom from the control, influence, support or help of others	1
inspiration	— influence of thought and strong feelings on actions, especially on good actions; divine influence	5
invisible	— cannot be seen	3
involvement	— inclusion; participation; becoming a part of something	10

laity	— the people who are not members of the clergy; laymen collectively	3
longsuffering	— long and patient endurance of trouble, pain, or injury	6
<hr/>		
manifestation	— a showing; making clear to the eye or to the mind; revelation	3
marred	— spoiled; damaged; injured; ruined	1
mediator	— person or group that interacts between others for the purpose of effecting agreement; a go-between	7
meekness	— condition of being not easily angered; mildness; patience; submissiveness	6
ministry	— office, duties, or service of a minister; that which is done for God	3
moderation	— freedom from excess; avoidance of extremes in behavior or expression; temperance	6
<hr/>		
numerical	— of or relating to numbers	10
<hr/>		
oral traditions	— records of history, stories, or customs which have been kept alive by word of mouth, by being told to each generation that comes along	4
organism	— a living body made up of separate parts which work together	3
origin	— thing from which anything comes; starting point; source; beginning	2
<hr/>		
pagan	— one who worships many gods, or no gods; heathen; person who has no religion; one who does not believe in God	4

participation	— having a share; taking part	7
penalty	— punishment required for breaking a law; something paid by a person to fulfill an obligation	2
perish	— be destroyed; die	5
persecution	— systematic punishment or oppression of a person or group by others who oppose them or their beliefs	4
persuasion	— power of convincing	7
presbyter	— an elder in the early Christian church	8
presence	— fact or condition of being present in a place; in the sight or company of; place where a person is	7
priesthood	— position or rank of priest, or mediator	7
proclaim	— declare publicly	9
proclamation	— an official announcement; public declaration	7
progressive	— moving forward; developing; going from one to the next	8
purification	— making clean, without sin	3
purity	— freedom from anything unclean; freedom from evil; innocence	6
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ransom	— price paid or demanded before a captive is set free	2
rebellious	— hard to manage; disobedient; not willing to do what is commanded	1
receptive	— willing to receive	1

reconciliation	— bringing together again in friendship; settlement of differences	1
redemption	— deliverance from sin; salvation	1
reformation	— change for the better; improvement; the great religious movement in Europe in the 1500s that aimed at reform within the Roman Catholic church and led to the establishment of Protestant churches	4
rejoicing	— expressing joy or great delight	10
restoration	— the act of returning something to its original condition or state	2
resurrection	— a coming to life again; rising from the dead; the rising again of Christ after His death and burial	2
reverence	— a feeling of deep respect, mixed with wonder, awe, and love	5
<hr/>		
sacrifice	— a giving up of one thing for another; that which is given up; giving one's life for another	1
salvation	— a saving; a being saved; person or thing that saves; deliverance from sin and from punishment for sin	2
sanctuary	— the most sacred part of any place of worship; place of refuge or protection	5
secular	— not religious or sacred; worldly	4
submission	— a yielding to the power, control, or authority of another; obedience; humbleness	5

synagogue	— building used by Jews for religious worship and instruction	3
temperance	— moderation in action, speech, habits; self-control	6
temporal	— lasting for a time only; temporary; of this life only; earthly	4
transformed	— completely changed in form, nature, substance, or state	5
uniformity	— sameness throughout; no differences	6
unity	— oneness; singleness; harmony; in one accord	6
universal	— of or for all; belonging to all; existing everywhere	1
urgency	— need for immediate action or attention	7
vital	— necessary to life; very necessary; very important; essential	5
worthiness	— the quality or state of being of great value	5
written traditions	— records of history, stories, or customs that have been written down and passed from one generation to another	4

Answers to Self - Tests

Lesson 1

- 1 Because of their sin, all men have been born in sin.
- 2 You should have put an **X** in front of these words:
change, problems, rebellion, loneliness, bondage, disobedience, selfish values, independence, sin, fear.
- 3 Peace, security, happiness.
- 4 People in need are receptive to (willing to receive) the gospel.
- 5 God provided a sacrifice, His Son, to free us from sin. When we accept His sacrifice, we are free from the bondage of sin.
- 6 His church, the redeemed.

Lesson 2

- 1 b) man fell into sin because he was not obedient to God's law.
- 2 a) Buying back that which was rightfully His and which had been lost to Him.
- 3 c) loves us and wants to have fellowship with us.
- 4 a) His resurrection.
- 5 (In your own words)
 - a Redemption shows us the very nature of God, which is love. (He has acted in man's favor because He loves us.)
 - b God has put into action His redemptive plan.
 - c Redemption is for man (for all people) and is made possible by the Son of Man,

Jesus Christ, who became a man to pay the penalty for our sin.

d Redemption was completed by the resurrection of Christ, which fulfilled God's plan.

6 Any of these: He gives the church power to witness, to carry out the Great Commission. He brings conviction of sin to sinful man, and gives new birth to those who repent. He gives gifts to ministry to the church, and He produces fruit in believers.

Lesson 3

1 The universal church is made up of all believers everywhere throughout history. The local church is any group of believers who meet together for worship and ministry. The local church is part of the universal church.

2 The universal church cannot be seen as a group because it is made up of

all believers from all times.

3 is the divine Creator of the church, and it belongs to Him. We are His people, and we have been given access to Him through the sacrifice of His Son.

4 He is the head and we (believers) are the body. We show the world what He is like. The church has been called the "bride" of Christ. He is preparing the church for His return.

5 baptizes believers into the body of Christ, and baptizes them for service; gives life to the church and keeps it. The church is called the temple of the Holy Spirit.

6 The church ministers 1) to God in worship and service; 2) to its own members by edification, purification, education, and discipline; and 3) to the world in evangelization.

7 Your answer. I hope you are involved in all three types of ministry.

8 I would like to encourage you to begin now to increase your personal ministries.

Lesson 4

1 a 5) The church in the Modern Period.

b 2) The church during persecution.

c 4) The church in the Middle Period.

d 4) The church in Middle Period.

e 3) The church after Constantine.

f 1) The early church.

2 c) Augustine.

3 d) Martin Luther.

4 b) the theologian who had the greatest influence during the Middle Period.

5 b) the spread of Christianity to all parts of the world as Christians were scattered everywhere.

6 True.

7 True.

8 False.

9 False.

10 True.

11 True.

12 False.

Lesson 5

1 b) a recognition of the worth of God, and our response to that recognition.

2 d) worship is necessary as a part of our ministry to God.

3 a) God coming near to man.

4 c) His Son Jesus.

5 c) inward and spiritual.

6 a) It depends on following a certain ritual or ceremony.

7 c) our spirit must have communion with His Spirit.

8 a) His names reveal who He is and what He has done to be worthy of worship.

9 b) the Almighty God is with us.

10 d) Savior.

11 d) unbroken fellowship with Him.

12 b) Public worship is important for all Christians as an outward expression to the world of an inward communion with Christ.

Lesson 6

- 1** True.
- 2** False. (The members of the body are called to do both.)
- 3** True.
- 4** False.
- 5** False.
- 6** True.
- 7** True.
- 8** False.
- 9** False.
- 10** True.
- 11** True.
- 12** True.
- 13** False.
- 14** True.
- 15** True.

Lesson 7

1 b) take the message of Christ to the unbelievers.

2 b) all Christians are to take the message to all the world.

3 c) God in His grace redeemed us even though we were not worthy.

4 d) give all believers power for service, and prepare the hearts of unbelievers.

5 a) acts as a go-between or mediator between God and the unbelievers.

6 a) *is*.

7 True.

8 False.

9 True.

10 False.

11 True.

12 True.

13 True.

14 False.

15 True.

Lesson 8

1 All believers.

2 You probably would not have had an opportunity to hear about Christ.

- 3 A specific call.
- 4 Faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherliness, love.
- 5 If we lack any of them, our ministry is less effective.
- 6 discipleship
- 7 growth
- 8 True.
- 9 False.
- 10 False.
- 11 True.
- 12 False.
- 13 True.
- 14 True.
- 15 True.

Lesson 9

- 1 b) Communicating the gospel is more than just passing on information.
- 2 a) Christ’s suffering and death made provision for all of man’s needs.

- 3 b) The message has power because it is spoken through the authority of the one who sent it—Jesus Christ.
- 4 a) The most effective message we can give to an unbeliever is the example of our own life.
- 5 a) A true servant of God will do everything he can to minister to man’s human needs as well as his spiritual needs.
- 6 a) Real Christian love causes us to be as concerned about the needs of our neighbor as we are about our own needs.

Lesson 10

- 1 True.
- 2 True.
- 3 False.
- 4 True.
- 5 True.
- 6 False.
- 7 False.

- 8** False.
- 9** True.
- 10** True.
- 11** d) service and ministry.
- 12** b) some people believed and were added to the church.
- 13** c) It has eternal value.
- 14** a) those who plant good seed will joyfully reap a harvest.
- 15** a) the natural result for anyone whose life has been changed by the gospel.
- 16** b) wants every man, woman, and child to have a chance to accept Christ as Savior.

The Christian Church in Ministry

UNIT STUDENT REPORTS
AND
ANSWER SHEETS

DIRECTIONS

When you have completed your study of each unit, fill out the unit student report answer sheet for that unit. The following are directions how to indicate your answer to each question. There are two kinds of questions: TRUE-FALSE and MULTIPLE-CHOICE.

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTION EXAMPLE

The following statement is either true or false. If the statement is TRUE, blacken space A. FALSE, blacken space B.

1 The Bible is God’s message for us.

The above statement, *The Bible is God’s message for us*, is TRUE, so you would blacken space A like this:

1 B C D

PART 2—MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION EXAMPLE

There is one best answer for the following question. Blacken the space for the answer you have chosen.

- 2** To be born again means to
 - a) be young in age.
 - b) accept Jesus as Savior.
 - c) start a new year.
 - d) find a different church.

The correct answer is b) *accept Jesus as Savior*, so you would blacken space B like this:

2 A B C D

STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT ONE

Answer all questions on Answer Sheet for Unit One. See the examples on the **DIRECTIONS** page which show you how to mark your answers.

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is
TRUE, blacken space A.
FALSE, blacken space B.

- 1 I have carefully read all of the lessons in Unit One.
- 2 Sin can be described as rebellion, disobedience, and bondage.
- 3 When people move from small villages to large cities their values are not affected.
- 4 The Holy Spirit is still active in carrying out God's redemptive plan.
- 5 The mystery of the incarnation is that God became flesh—His nature was both divine and human.
- 6 The word *church* means “the called-out ones.”
- 7 The invisible church is also called the *local* church.
- 8 The true nature of the church is shown by its unity or “oneness” with Christ.

PART 2—MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

There is one best answer for each of the following questions. Blacken the space on your answer sheet for the answer you have chosen.

- 9 The word *redemption* means
 - a) exchanging one thing for another that is better.
 - b) paying a price to gain back something which was lost.
 - c) accepting a gift even though it wasn't deserved.
 - d) forgiving someone who has acted against you.

10 God chose to redeem man through

- a) the Law.
- b) the church.
- c) fellowship with Him.
- d) the sacrifice of His own Son.

11 God's redemptive act was completed when Jesus

- a) was born.
- b) died on the cross.
- c) was resurrected.
- d) returned to heaven.

12 Redemption was necessary because

- a) it was the only way fellowship could be restored between man and God.
- b) God wanted to punish man for his sin.
- c) man had no desire to know God.
- d) the power of sin was greater than the power of God.

13 Because Adam and Eve sinned, all men are born with

- a) the possibility of becoming sinful.
- b) a sinful nature.
- c) no chance of knowing God.
- d) full fellowship with God.

14 What should be the church's attitude toward ministry in the cities?

- a) People in the cities aren't interested in hearing the gospel.
- b) It is easier to win souls in smaller towns.
- c) Because people in the cities have great needs, they will respond to the gospel message.
- d) There are already too many churches in the cities.

15 Which of these terms describes a movement towards God and away from the spirit of this present age?

- a) The "Bethlehem" movement
- b) The "Canaan" movement
- c) The "Tower of Babel" movement

16 To solve the sin problem God

- a) turned His back on all men.
- b) took man's free choice away from him.
- c) demanded a sacrifice, and gave His own Son as that sacrifice.

17 The invisible church refers to

- a) the church in hiding.
- b) members of the body of Christ who are no longer living.
- c) all believers in all places throughout the ages.
- d) God's chosen people the Jews.

18 The church is called "the body of Christ" and "the bride of Christ" to illustrate

- a) its unity with Christ.
- b) its equality with Christ.
- c) its perfection.
- d) its power in the world.

19 Which of these words describes the way Christ taught us to minister to others? As a

- a) person of importance
- b) servant
- c) ruler
- d) laborer

20 Which is the best statement concerning the importance of the church's ministries?

- a) Its ministry to the world is the most important.
- b) Its ministry to itself is second in importance.
- c) Its ministry to God is the least important.
- d) All of the ministries are important and necessary.

END OF REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIT ONE. Follow the remaining instructions on your answer sheet and return it to your ICI Instructor or office in your area, then begin your study of Unit Two.

STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT TWO

Answer all questions on Answer Sheet for Unit Two. See the examples on the DIRECTIONS page which show you how to mark your answers.

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

*The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is TRUE, blacken space A.
FALSE, blacken space B.*

- 1 I have carefully read all of the lessons in Unit Two.
- 2 The church under the Roman Empire taught that salvation depended only upon faith in Christ.
- 3 Throughout church history the Bible has been available for any believer to read and study.
- 4 The names of God describe His character.
- 5 What the church *does* is more important than what it *is*.
- 6 We know a person has the fruit of the Spirit if his character is like Christ's.
- 7 To be effective, our message must be Christ-centered and Bible-centered.
- 8 The purpose of the Great Commission was to develop church leadership.

PART 2—MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

There is one best answer for each of the following questions. Blacken the space on your answer sheet for the answer you have chosen.

- 9 Which period of church history is defined by: a simple form of worship, unity, close fellowship, attitude of love, many converts?
 - a) The early church in Jerusalem-A.D. 64
 - b) The recognized church-A.D. 600
 - c) The church of the middle period-A.D. 1500

10 Which of these men broke away from the traditions of the Roman church and returned to the simple message of salvation through faith in Christ?

- a) Thomas Aquinas
- b) Hudson Taylor
- c) Martin Luther
- d) Constantine

11 Which of these events weakened the church's redemptive ministry to the world?

- a) Persecution of believers
- b) Establishment of monasteries
- c) The Reformation
- d) Control of the church by political powers

12 What is the church's highest privilege on earth and in heaven?

- a) Worship of God
- b) Fellowship with other believers
- c) Study of the Word of God
- d) Involvement with the world

13 The most important need of man that God has provided for is man's need to have

- a) success in life.
- b) family and friends.
- c) a good self-image.
- d) unbroken fellowship with God.

14 To worship means to

- a) make a sacrifice of something that has great value.
- b) follow a form of service which includes singing, prayer, and preaching.
- c) praise and adore God because of who He is and what He has done.

15 Edification in the church is

- a) producing spiritual fruit.
- b) building up the body of Christ through training.
- c) sending out evangelists to the world.

16 To have the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit the believer must

- a) do nothing, because the Spirit chooses who will receive.
- b) allow the Spirit to control his life.
- c) wait until he has been properly trained.
- d) tell everyone that he has received them.

17 If the church is to minister properly to its members and to the world, it must have

- a) uniformity.
- b) the gift of prophecy.
- c) unity.
- d) strong leadership.

18 The Great Commission includes which of these four instructions?

- a) Go, give, receive, enlarge
- b) Pray, send, encourage, reap
- c) Go, make disciples, baptize, teach
- d) Come, rest, take, learn

19 The Great Commission will be fulfilled when

- a) all people everywhere are saved.
- b) the gospel has been preached to all people.
- c) all the churches are filled with worshipers.
- d) sin has been removed from the world.

20 The teaching of the good news of God's redemptive acts for the purpose of *building up* is called

- a) evangelism.
- b) edification.
- c) salvation.
- d) reaping.

END OF REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIT TWO. Follow the remaining instructions on your answer sheet and return it to your ICI instructor or office in your area, then begin your study of Unit Three.

STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT THREE

Answer all questions on Answer Sheet for Unit Three. See the examples on the **DIRECTIONS** page which show you how to mark your answers.

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is TRUE, blacken space A.
FALSE, blacken space B.

- 1 I have carefully read all of the lessons in Unit Three.
- 2 As the study guide defines a *specific call* to ministry, we can say that all Christians receive this kind of call.
- 3 It is impossible for a true disciple of Christ to say *No* to his Lord's call.
- 4 Jesus was concerned with the needs of the whole man-body, mind, and spirit.
- 5 Preaching and teaching are the only scriptural ways of announcing the gospel.
- 6 Unless we reach a person's heart with our message, our communication is not complete.
- 7 The most important result of ministry is the fulfillment it gives us.
- 8 A person's wholeness in Christ depends upon his abilities.

PART 2—MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

There is one best answer for each of the following questions. Blacken the space on your answer sheet for the answer you have chosen.

- 9 In order to be useful to God in ministry a Christian must have a
 - a) specific call.
 - b) good education.
 - c) strong personality.
 - d) Christlike character.

10 The greatest element of Christian character is

- a) love.
- b) endurance.
- c) self-control.
- d) faith.

11 Which of these descriptions is NOT true of a disciple of Christ?

- a) He accepts Christ as his teacher.
- b) He is willing to deny himself and follow Christ.
- c) He prefers his own ways rather than Christ's ways.
- d) He turns away from sinful desires and pleasures.

12 Which of these is of greatest importance for an effective ministry?

- a) Willingness to do anything
- b) A consistent prayer life
- c) Speaking ability
- d) Years of training

13 When Jesus said that we must be *perfect* He was referring to

- a) a sinless life.
- b) completeness or Christian maturity.
- c) life in heaven.
- d) never making a mistake.

14 The most effective way we can influence people for Christ is by

- a) our own example.
- b) telling them about great men who became Christians.
- c) taking them to church.
- d) showing them how bad their sin is.

15 Jesus taught that the one who wants to be greatest should

- a) have all the gifts of the Spirit.
- b) practice ruling over others.
- c) spend more time in preparation.
- d) be the servant of all.

16 What method of ministry has God chosen to bring men to repentance?

- a) Miracles and signs
- b) Healings
- c) Preaching and teaching
- d) Music

17 What is the function of the Holy Spirit in bringing someone to Christ?

- a) He works through the believer to give him power in witnessing.
- b) He draws the unbeliever to God.
- c) He is actively working through both the believer and the unbeliever as described in a) and b) above.

18 The best way to learn how to minister is to

- a) pray.
- b) study.
- c) practice.
- d) watch others in ministry.

19 The church in Acts shows us that as a result of our ministry we can expect

- a) growth.
- b) division.
- c) temptation.
- d) organization.

20 The person who plants the seed is the one who

- a) is first to give the gospel message to an unbeliever.
- b) will reap the harvest.
- c) prays for those who witness.
- d) receives the message of salvation.

END OF REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIT THREE. Follow the remaining instructions on your answer sheet and return it to your ICI instructor or office in your area. This completes your study of this course. Ask your ICI instructor to recommend another course of study for you.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN MINISTRY

ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT ONE

CS4141

Congratulations on finishing your study of the lessons in Unit One! Please fill in all the blanks below.

Your Name

Your ICI Student Number
(Leave blank if you do not know what it is.)

Your Mailing Address

.....

City

Province/State Postal/Zip

Country

Occupation Age Sex

Are you married? How many members are in your family?

How many years have you studied in school?

Are you a member of a church?

If so, what is the name of the church?

What responsibility do you have in your church?

.....

How are you studying this course: Alone?

In a group?

What other ICI courses have you studied?

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Cut this page and send to your ICI instructor.



ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT ONE

Blacken the correct space for each numbered item. For all questions, be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question.

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Write below any questions you would like to ask your instructor about the lessons.

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Now look over this student report answer sheet to be sure you have completed all the questions. Then return it to your ICI instructor or office in your area. The address should be stamped on the copyright page of your study guide.

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Date	Score

Christian Service Program

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN MINISTRY

ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT TWO

CS4141

We hope you have enjoyed your study of the lessons in Unit Two! Please fill in all the blanks below.

Your Name

Your ICI Student Number
(Leave blank if you do not know what it is.)

Your Mailing Address

.....

City

Province/State Postal/Zip

Country

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ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT TWO

Blacken the correct space for each numbered item. For all questions, be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question.

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Write below any questions you would like to ask your instructor about the lessons.

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Now look over this student report answer sheet to be sure you have completed all the questions. Then return it to your ICI instructor or office in your area. The address should be stamped on the copyright page of your study guide.

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Date **Score**

Christian Service Program

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN MINISTRY

ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT THREE

CS4141

We hope you have enjoyed your study of the lessons in Unit Three! Please fill in all the blanks below.

Your Name

Your ICI Student Number

(Leave blank if you do not know what it is.)

Your Mailing Address

.....

City

Province/State Postal/Zip

Country

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The ICI office in your area will be happy to send you information about other ICI courses that are available and their cost. You may use the space below to ask for that information.

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Cut this page and send to your ICI instructor.



ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT THREE

Blacken the correct space for each numbered item. For all questions, be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question.

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Please write below one specific comment about the unit:

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CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finished this Christian Service course. We have enjoyed having you as a student and hope you will study more courses with ICI. Return this unit student report answer sheet to your ICI instructor or office in your area. You will then receive your grade on a student score report form along with a certificate or seal for this course in your program of studies.

Please print your name below as you want it on your certificate.

Name

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Date	Score

Christian Service Program