

# God's Message



**Servants of Christ**

*The Bible Way Online*

## Servants of Christ

### Contents

1. All Christians
2. Shepherding
3. Men Servants – *Diakonos*
4. Women Servants – *Diakonos*
5. Teachers
6. Evangelists, Preachers and Ministers
7. Christians Relationships

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## All Christians

### Lesson 1

God gives individual in His Body, His Church, functions to perform.

Romans 12:3-6 “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but **all the members do not have the same function**, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, **let us use them:**” The context of gifts is the ability to perform a task, work or function for the good of the Body.

2 Timothy 2:20-21 “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.”

Therefore, the Church Christ built, an organism not an organization, is a body of faithful, obedient and believing people with differing functions (gifts) in a way that the body may fulfill its mission, care for one another and carry out all the services that Jesus Christ, the Head of the Body, gave them to do.

“Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name. And do not forget **to do good and to share with others**, for with such sacrifices [offerings] God is pleased” (Hebrews 13:15-16).

“**If anyone serves**, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power forever and ever” (1 Peter 4:11b).

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And **whatever you do**, in word [what you say (rd)] or deed [what you do (rd)], do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:16-17).

“Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to **show hospitality** [take care of needs (rd)] to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those [Christians] who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body” (Hebrews 13:1-3).

“Whatever you do, **work heartily**, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:23-24).

“Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may **see your good deeds** and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:12).

“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling [NOT - I’ll do it out of duty but I really don’t want to (rd)]. As **each has received a gift use it to serve one another**, as good stewards of God’s varied grace whoever speaks [words (rd)], as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves [deeds (rd)], as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever” (1 Peter 4:8-11).

“If anyone does not **take care of** (provide for) his own relatives, especially his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8).

“A religion that is pure and stainless according to God the Father is this: to **take care of orphans and widows** who are suffering and to keep oneself unstained by the world” (James 1:27).

“For God is not unjust so as to overlook **your work** and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end” (Hebrews 6:10-11).

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Galatians 6:9-10).

### Summary

Jesus came to serve not to be served. Those who have put their trust in Christ as their Savior and Redeemer are to humble themselves before God as servants of Christ to do whatever is best for others. In doing good deeds God is glorified, and fellow Christians are encouraged to remain faithful and to do good works.

### Questions

1. There is not any variance in the work of Christians as all must perform the same work.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
2. Whatever function a Christian performs for God it should be with the strength God also provides.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
3. Some Christians within the Body of Christ do not have any work to do.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
4. The service Jesus desires is for those in His Body to do His will  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
5. God is love and one’s actions of serving others must come from a heart of love to do what is best for the individual.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_

### Shepherding

#### Lesson 2

Paul states “He gave some as apostles (*apostólous* - a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders) , and some as prophets (*proféetas* - one through whom God speaks), and some as evangelists (*euangelistás* - a bringer of good tidings);, and some as pastors and teachers (*poiménas* - shepherd, pastor; *kaí*<sup>a</sup>- and *didaskálous* - an instructor), for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; (Ephesians 4:11-12 NASU)

<sup>a</sup> *Kaí* (*and*) serves as a copulative. it connects single words or terms. It connects pastors and teachers probably meaning teaching pastors or pastors in habit of teaching.

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop <sup>1</sup> [office of overseer <sup>2</sup> - ESV] he desireth a good work <sup>3</sup> [noble task – ESV]." (1 Tim 3:1 KJV) A work not an office. God's requirements for shepherds.

Character	Possible meaning
hold firmly to the message	be faithful to Christ and know Him and His apostles' teachings
above reproach	not open to censure
good reputation, blameless	good reputation with outsiders
the husband of one wife	not a polygamist
temperate, sober minded	uses good judgment
self-controlled disciplined	disciplined, not a loose cannon
respectable	orderly, good behavior
hospitable	takes care of needs of others
able to teach (apt KJV)	powerful in communicating
not given to drunkenness	not drink excessively no brawler
not a striker (violent)	not combative or quick tempered
gentle	kind and considerate of others
not quarrelsome	not contentious (argue) e.g., my understanding is straight from the Bible
not greedy	does not puts material things first
manage his own family	family lives within income - not a spendthrift
not be a recent convert	need to face trials as Christian
children not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient	children not rebellious whether a Christian or not a Christian

Perhaps an understanding of shepherding sheep and goats will provide the key to understanding the function of shepherding spiritual sheep.

A good shepherd cares for his sheep and wants to take on the responsibility of their wellbeing. He will constantly be with them calling them by name for they must recognize his voice in order to follow. It is his responsibility to locate pastures near still or slow-moving water and away from danger. He must have knowledge of and remove toxic plants in pastures so they won't be able to eat them and become sick and die. He must be physically strong to protect them from thieves and predators. It is not a job for anyone who just needs a job or money. Recall David's 23 Psalm "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ... You prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." I trust HIM for HE takes care of me!

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<sup>1</sup> *episkopeés*, guardian watchman, sentinel, one who alerts others of pending danger, oversees or watches over - a guardian (inspection, visitation -Thayer). The English translation of the Greek Septuagint translates *episkopeés* as sentinel. Luke 19:41-44

<sup>2</sup> Another term for this work is *presbuteros*- an adjective to denote seniority older or old man. KJV changed it from an adjective to Elders, a noun.

<sup>3</sup> *érgou* - an act, deed, function, not an office

On the other hand, goats are independent, inquisitive and difficult to herd whereas sheep are followers and require continual care and protection.

As a young Jewish boy your father has decided it is time for you to assume the responsibilities of a shepherd. You have been with him or your older brother while he was shepherding. Are you prepared?

1. Do you know the sheep by name so they will follow you?
2. Do you know how to lead?
3. Do you know where to find pastures and still water?
4. Can you identify and remove plants they must not eat?
5. Can you recognize predators?
6. Are you physically strong enough to fend off the enemy?
7. Do you have the tools necessary for tending the sheep and taking care of your safety such as a sling, pouch, stones, rod, staff and tunic? Are you proficient in their use?

**Spiritual shepherds, guardians, watchmen or sentinels** need to have:

1. A close relationship with God and those in the Body of Christ
2. A good knowledge and understanding of the teachings of Christ and His apostles' doctrine [teaching] to prepare Christians for serving and to bring them to maturity into God's nature.
3. Ability to recognize false teachings and provide opportunity for those under their care to learn, recognize and acquire ability to refute such teachings. [For example, in their time a prevalent teaching was all flesh is evil. Jesus could not have been in an evil human being. So, He was just a phantom - Gnosticism]
4. Knowledge of difference between an opinion and a false teaching?
5. Ability to lead without forcing your personal opinion on others
6. Equipped with spiritual tools needed to perform the shepherding functions and their proficient use; e.g., patience - not to fly off the handle or quick to judge; compassionate; gentle when expressing concerns; not combative, not a loose cannon, not contentious.
7. The desire to protect your brethren even if it cost your life.
8. Ability to communicate effectively [apt - KJV; *didaktikos* Greek (skillful in teaching -Thayer)]
9. Patience - not to fly off the handle or quick to judge.
10. Compassionate, gentle, not combative and concern of spiritual wellbeing of brethren.

**Functions of Watchmen** - NOT some hireling:

1. Teach, feed, equip and bring to maturity
2. Exhort, admonish, edify and strengthen
3. Convict false teachers and their false teachings; e.g.,
  - a. One who denies Christ is God in human body
  - b. One is saved without being cleansed by Christ's blood
  - c. Salvation is received, earned, by what a person accomplishes
4. Promote unity and harmony
5. Comfort weak and sick [physically but primarily spiritually]
6. Seek and restore those who have drifted or are drifting away
7. Assist all to become participants according to their ability and congregational needs according to God's plan for salvation
8. Pray for self, those under your care and the lost
9. Warn of dangers lurking in the pathway of life
10. Prepare God's saints for work of service [show & tell].

### **Functions Guardians must refrain from**

1. Being partial
2. Demanding others to agree to his interpretation of some teaching
3. Assuming Christ's authority by making decisions the His Body should make
4. Performing work the His Body should be doing
5. Assuming an arbitrator's function
6. Yielding to voice of the more vocal and large contributors

[1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-11; 1 Peter 5:2-4; Acts: 20:28-30; Ephesians 4:11-15; Ezekiel 34:2-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14; James 5:14 and Luke 15:3]

During the persecution of Christians by the Jews and Romans. Those teaching pastors desiring to do the spiritual shepherds work were willing to put their lives on the line to protect his fellow brethren. The spiritual wellbeing of the brethren was more important than his physical body. It was not a position of honor, power or prestige but a dangerous **work**. These men were to be known by the Body, not pretenders intent on identifying Christians to deliver to the persecutors.

### **Warning**

The words spoken by Ezekiel long ago to God's shepherds of Israel under the Old Covenant are also applicable to His spiritual shepherds under the New Covenant who are not performing the tasks given to them by God.

"The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel [their leaders (rd)]; prophesy and say to them: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not

- a. strengthened the weak
- b. healed the sick
- c. bound up the injured.
- d. brought back the strays
- e. searched for the lost

"You have ruled them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them" (Ezekiel 34:1-6).

" Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them" (Ezekiel 34:7-10).

"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so, hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. But if you do warn the wicked man and he does not turn

from his wickedness or from his evil ways, he will die for his sin; but you will have saved yourself" (Ezekiel 3:17-19).

"My people come ... to listen to your words, but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice" Ezekiel (33:31-32).

Paul warned the Ephesian elders "Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves [wolves in sheep clothing Matthew 7:15] will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number [elder (rd)] men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard" (Acts 20:28-31)!

How could elders "from your own number" come in?

1. The process of selecting them?
2. The body of Christians is not being involved with each other such that their beliefs and opinions are unknown?
3. The training and equipping method is faulty, insufficient or turned over to others?
4. Not hearing the concerns of the spiritual meek and gentle while paying attention to voices of the vocal blow without substance.

Spiritual wolves are people within the assembly professing to be Christians but have a non-biblical agenda. How can they be prevented from drawing Christians away after their teachings? Equip and train the Body with knowledge by open discussion of prevalent teachings comparing them to biblical truths. Christians need to be able to recognize their teaching as false. We must cease being hearers only and become serious students of God's Word while receiving and participating in much instruction, discussion and edification by their, watchmen/shepherds and others knowledgeable in the Word.

Peter issued a warning to all Christians, "there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them - bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed [for money, power, control or prestige (rd)] these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up (2 Peter 2:1-3). [Peter is talking about people we trust promoting their opinions and interpretations. Prevention is obtaining a better knowledge of the teachings of Christ and the apostles. Another possibility of false teaching is from a hireling, a preacher, with unknown personal opinions and interpretations, a wolf in sheep's clothing - refer to 2 Timothy 4:3-5.

The Holy Spirit through the apostle John in Revelation 2 and 3 warned the Christians in six of the churches in Asia to repent.

Used but unquoted - Eldership - Office (Hierarchical) or Function (Communitarian) Integrity, (non-copyrighted), Grand Blanc, MI

Questions

1. Who does the function of watching over God's spiritual sheep (Christians) by instructing and responding to questions and concerns?
  - a. \_\_\_ Preachers
  - b. \_\_\_ Evangelists
  - c. \_\_\_ Deacons

- d. \_\_\_ Teaching pastors (pastors and teachers)
2. Is it the functions of elders, bishops, overseers or preachers to feed those God has placed under their care?
- \_\_\_ Preacher
  - \_\_\_ Elder, overseer, shepherd
3. Which of God's warning to the shepherds of Israel applicable to the shepherds in Christ's church?
- \_\_\_ strengthen the weak
  - \_\_\_ heal the sick
  - \_\_\_ bind up the injured.
  - \_\_\_ bring back the strays
  - \_\_\_ search for the lost
  - \_\_\_ all the above
  - \_\_\_ a and e
  - \_\_\_ c and e
  - \_\_\_ a, c and e
4. The bishops, overseers, sentinels, guardians and pastors are offices, positions of authority, in the church rather than servants who perform a function.
- T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
5. Who can be spiritual wolves that are from among you?
- \_\_\_ Elders
  - \_\_\_ Preachers
  - \_\_\_ Deacons
  - \_\_\_ All the above
  - \_\_\_ b and c
  - \_\_\_ b and d

### **Men Servants *Diakonos***

#### Lesson 3

The word translated deacon, servant and minister is from the gender-neutral Greek word *diakonos* and meaning one who executes another's orders, a runner of errands, an attendant - either male or female (from Thayer Greek Lexicon). *Diakonos* or its variants are used 28 times in the New Testament one of which refers to Phoebe, a female servant with no indication she met the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:11 and twice as deacon Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

*Diakonos* are servants doing servants work or function, not an office or position. The simplest way to define the work of a *diakonos* is by its meaning. *Diakonos* is translated in a generic application in many places, referring to all Christians. Every Christian is, therefore, a "servant minister."

In 1 Timothy 3:1 -7 Paul discussed the elder/watchmen/sentinel function. Many people also consider this an office or position rather than a function even though Paul called it a work (GK. *érgou* –work, labor, deed). After giving the character or qualifications of these men Paul then discusses the deacons/*diakonos* specific spiritual traits.

#### **Qualifications of some servants**

**1 Timothy 3:8-13** 1 “Deacons, *diakonos*, likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their

wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. et deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. ESV

The work of these deacon/servants is not specified so any understanding is an interpretation or opinion. While we do have a certain conviction about the work of Christians having these special qualifications, we should never be so dogmatic to think that this is the last word on the subject. We must keep in mind certain Biblical truths about the Body of Christ so that any interpretation will be consistent with these truths.

The *diakonosus* qualifications given above include being husband of one wife and managing his children and household well cannot apply to all *diakonosus* as all Christians are servants. Therefore, the function of men with these qualifications must be different from other *diakonosus*.

Some people infer that the seven selected by the Jerusalem church in Acts to take care of the Grecian widows' needs were deacons, *diakonos*. But they are not referred to as *diakonos* nor are their qualifications given neither is it known if all the seven met all the qualifications in 1 Timothy.

### **The Spiritual Nature Of The Qualifications**

Many today consider the work of elders as men over spiritual matters while deacons are men over physical matters. This appears to be an incorrect understanding, for by doing so, the work of all other members of the Body, man or woman, is grossly restricted. In fact, if elders do the spiritual and deacons perform the physical, there is no work left for non-deacon servant. But this cannot be the case for Peter writing to the exiles of the Dispersion states in 1 Peter 4:10 "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." The word "each" includes men or women with and without the special qualifications. If "each" does not include women then Paul was in error by stating in Romans 16:1 that Phoebe was a *diakonon* (servant).

The contemporary concept that deacons to take care of the physical needs of the congregation, such as upkeep on the building and grounds, is not derived from New Testament practice since there is no record in the New Testament of any assembly of Christians owning or maintaining physical facilities; e.g., buildings. The church's needs during the period of persecution were needs of people not property or things.

In certain context the term '*diakonos*' takes on additional specific meaning and significance when it refers to a group of servants with unique spiritual qualifications as in 1 Timothy 3 where it was transliterated deacon. In a sense, this was a helpful practice, since it calls attention that certain Christians are chosen to do a special service probably assisting the overseeing watchmen in their spiritual function.

### **The Dynamic Nature Of The Needs Of The Church**

The Body of Christ a living, growing and battling kingdom - a living organism - has many dynamic needs that are constantly changing.

Problems arise, needs appear, emergencies occur: someone gets sick, another loses his job, families have squabbles, parents have problems with children, people die and families must be consoled, important ministries need to be developed. Not all the needs in a church are dynamic but many are and, at times, they are unforeseeable or even emergencies. When these needs appear, they must be met, and met right now! Who is going to meet these needs of the church? Who will serve? Who are the servants of the church?

Consider that during the first century whenever a Christian failed to assemble all were concerned. Did the Roman authorities arrest him for his faith? Did a sect of the Jews do physical harm to him? If so, it would

have been appropriate for the Christian family, or their watchmen to ask a brother living in close proximity to go by and check on his well-being and supply any missing need.

All Christians are servants. All are called to serve. The church can call on anyone to meet a need (to serve). It depends on the situation. For example, in the area of finances, the church ought to choose someone with a good knowledge of accounting, who is trustworthy and has the integrity and honesty necessary to do that job. But is it really necessary for that person to be married with children in order to be the treasurer of the church? Does that person have to have these spiritual qualifications? Any Christian can serve and should serve in some area, independently of the special qualifications. He just needs to be qualified to do that particular job. But all Christians, man or woman, should and can serve in some area.

Now when dynamic needs arise; that is, when emergencies occur, normally, there is neither time nor opportunity to research the talents and investigate the character of the brethren in order to discover who can serve that particular need at that moment. The church needs a group of servants, already spiritually qualified; proven and identified who are available to be called upon to assist the shepherds/ elders/ watchmen in unforeseen situations where the need is of an emergency nature and must be handled "immediately."

### **The Church Is An Organized Organism**

The church is a spiritual entity described as a body, a living organism, with many parts. It is compared to the human body with its many parts all functioning in harmony, with each part performing its unique function. "But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose" (1 Corinthians 12:18).

The "deacons", a group of servants of character and experience already proven, assist the elders in their spiritual work of taking care of the spiritual needs of the church, especially those needs that are urgent. Deacons are not "junior elders" although their work would be similar to some work the shepherds perform and the experience could be good training for these men to one day may desire or aspire to the function of guardian, watchman, sentinel. Adapted from a lesson by Joe McKinney.

#### Questions

1. The Greek word translated deacon meant one who served another – ran errands, a servant.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
2. Spiritual qualifications for some men are necessary for them to do the physical work for the church.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
3. Phoebe was a *diakonos* but not one with specified qualifications.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
4. Elders perform the spiritual work of the church while deacons perform the physical work thereby being the only Christians who can do God's work as His servants.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
5. Peter stated that all Christians were to serve one another.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_

### **Women Servants (*Diakonos*)**

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**” (Galatians 3:26-28). God is not partial (Acts 10:34). All, men and women, are priests of God (Revelation 5:10).

Over the centuries Bible scholars have raised many questions about the functions of women in Christ’s Body and what they could or could not do.

In 1 Corinthians Paul gives the Corinthian Christians, men and women, some instructions in order that all may be encouraged to remain faithful and do good deeds.

- always seek the other person’s well-being – 10:24
- whatever you do, glorify God – 10:31
- men and women, do not dishonor your head – 11:4
- do not treat the poor Christian as inferior – 11:21
- don’t consider your spiritual gift more important than others -12
- love is most important – it lasts forever. – 12:31-13:13
- avoid confusion, encourage, respect, honor one another and those having responsibility for your well-being. – 14

In the New Testament several women are identified by name while inclusive words such as, all, each, everyone, include men and women. This lesson examines servant activities of both groups for the purpose of determine if there are any functions Christian women are required to do or are prohibited from doing.

### **Women and functions they performed**

Acts 18:1-2; 24-26 — “After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla. ... Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures [Tanakh, Old Testament (rd)]. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, [things Jesus said and the miracles He performed (rd)] though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, [apparently they were still going to the synagogue (rd)] they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately.”

Acts 9:36 — “Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity.”

Acts 16:15 — “And after she [Lydia] was baptized she urged us saying ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.’ And she prevailed upon us.”

Acts 5:1-2; 7-9 — “But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds ... about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter said to her, ‘Tell me whether you sold the land for so much.’ And she said, ‘Yes, for so much.’ But Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test [lie to] the Spirit of the Lord?”

Little is said about several other women except they labored, worked hard and were full of good works.

Mary, Acts 12:12

Damaras, Acts 17:34

Phoebe, Romans 16:1

Euodia and Syntyche, Philippians 4:2-3

Philip’s daughters, Acts 21:8-9

Priscilla, Romans 16:3-7  
Apphia, Philemon 1-2  
Lois and Eunice, 2 Timothy 1:5  
Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis - Romans 16:12

Functions performed by woman. are just as important, necessary, essential and indispensable as those performed by men.

### **Women included in - all, each and every one, friends or church**

Acts 2:41 — “So those who received his word were baptized

Acts 11:29 — “The disciples determined, everyone according to his ability,

Acts 15:22 — “Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church

Acts 15:30-31 — having gathered the congregation ... they rejoiced because of its encouragement.”

Acts 24:23 — “Then he gave orders to the centurion that ... none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs.”

Romans 2:9-11 — “There will be tribulation and distress for every human being

Galatians 3:26-29 — “For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into

### **Women’s Activity and Attitude**

1 Corinthians 10:31—11:6 — “So, whether you [male or female (rd)] eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions \* even as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head [one responsible (rd)] of every man {Gk *andrós*- man or husband} is Christ; and the head of the woman (Gk *gunaikós* - woman or wife) is the man (her husband); and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying [delivering a message from God (rd)], having his head covered, dishonoreth his head (Christ). But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled [uncovered] dishonoreth her head; for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven [shaven or shorn hair was punishment of whoredom, or adultery (rd)]. For if a woman is not veiled (head covered) let her also be shorn: but if it is a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled.” \* {Paradóseis -Paul delivered Christ’s message of salvation not oral teachings about Jesus.}

Paul is reminding the Corinthians that respect and honor is of utmost importance when praying or prophesying. The custom of the time was for men to remove their head covering in the presence of a superior and for women not to be seen in public without a head covering, a veil. Both violate tradition and custom of respect in their society and possibly imply acceptance of pagan practices. This does not prohibit either men or women from praying or prophesying. But one’s freedom and liberty in Christ must never result in or lead to disrespect of others.

1 Corinthians 14:26-36 — “What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson (Gk. *didacheén* - teaching), a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any [man or woman, (rd)] speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone [man or woman (rd)] interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them [man or woman (rd)] keep silent in church [assembly (rd)] and speak to himself [not gender specific (rd)] and to

God. Let two or three prophets [not gender specific (rd)] speak, and let the others [not gender specific (rd)] weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first [man or woman] be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, the women (your women [wife (rd)]) should keep silent in the churches (Gk. *ekkleesiais* – assemblies). For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.”

The Christians in Corinth were assembled together as Christ’s Body where they sang, taught, gave revelations and spoke in other languages through interpreters. The purpose of assembling together was to encourage Christians to remain faithful and do good works. Speakers, men or women, who were not able to be understood because an interpreter was not present, were to keep quiet. Chaos and confusion caused by all praying, speaking or singing at the same time caused visitors to think “you are out of your mind” and prevented God’s message from being heard. Allowing everyone to speak or sing in succession, one following another, is respectful to God and one’s fellow man.

While still on the subject of maintaining orderliness Paul instructs the Corinthian wives/women to keep silent and not interrupt their (*idíous* – one’s own) husbands, but to wait and ask him when you get home. Paul’s instructions would not apply to unmarried women or to married women whose husbands were pagans, dead or had abandoned them. The key is to respect others – men and women, wives, or visitors but most especially one’s husband.

Colossians 3:12, 16 - “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience ... Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

The ‘chosen ones’ include women and men. Both are to teach and admonish in wisdom and knowledge. The instruction is silent as to whether this is to be done in private or assembly. The text states the teaching and admonishing is done in song in the heart unto God. But teaching and admonishing one another requires one to speak and from their heart.

#### Questions

1. In the church women are less important than men.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
2. Women are encouraged to
  - a. \_\_\_ always seek the other person’s well-being
  - b. \_\_\_ whatever you do, glorify God
  - c. \_\_\_ do not dishonor your head
  - d. \_\_\_ do not treat the poor Christian as inferior
  - e. \_\_\_ don’t consider your spiritual gift more important than others
  - f. \_\_\_ love is most important – it lasts forever.
  - g. \_\_\_ avoid confusion, encourage, respect, honor one another
  - h. \_\_\_ all the above
  - i. \_\_\_ remain silent – do not speak, pray or sing
3. Women in Christ are to labor, teach and be full of good works.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
4. Cultural and custom disrespect is not condemned.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_

5. Christian women who did not understand a lesson must not ask while in the church assembly but wait and ask her non-Christian husband.

T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_

### Teacher

#### Lesson 5

“For though by this time you [man or woman (rd)] ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil” (Hebrews 5:12-14).

The common theme throughout the New Testament is to proclaim the Gospel to the lost. First century evangelists and preachers performed the function of teaching the gospel to the lost and according to Acts 8:4. All Christians, man or woman, scattered room Jerusalem.

Today preachers primarily present their interpretation of some Biblical subject of their choosing to those in Christ without any opportunity for questioning or discussing. However, some teach directly from the Bible by directing their thoughts to the passage under consideration. There is no mention of proclaiming the Gospel, death, burial and resurrection, again to those already in Christ, the saved.

God relies on Christians within His kingdom to teach and proclaim the gospel so that none perish and all remain faithful as a living sacrifice. The mission of the living Body of Christ \* is to:

- (a) **go into all the world** and proclaim the Gospel (Mark 16:15).
- (b) **do good to all people**, especially to believers (Gal. 6:9-10).
- (c) **encourage [edify] members of the Body** (1 Corinthians 14).
- (d) **speak to one another** in psalms and hymns (Ephesians 5:19).
- (e) **offer your bodies** to God as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1).

\* men only or men and women

The most effective method of evangelizing is on an individual basis. It would be rare indeed if conversions occurred from mass communications, a method used to create awareness and to provide a source for obtaining additional information.

If the gospel is to be preached to the entire world, then congregations of Christians must place more emphasis on evangelism regardless of the English name associated with the activity; e.g., teacher, minister, missionary, evangelist, preacher, servant, pastor, elder, watchman or disciple - but using Bible names will prevent confusion.

What is to be taught?

- Gospel – Mark 15:16
- Power of God unto salvation – Romans 1:16
- Death burial and resurrection and ascension of Christ
- Word - Acts 13:1-5
- Apostles Doctrine – Acts
- Everything I commanded – Matt 28:19

Who is to teach?

- Evangelists – 2 Timothy 4:5
- Disciples – Mark 15:16
- Christians scattered abroad – Acts 8:4

How is the teaching to be done?

- No particular method is to be excluded, nor is any specific method required.

To whom is God's message to be taught?

- All creation – Mark 15:16

When are His servants to teach?

- Teach as opportunity becomes available.

Where are those in Christ to take the Gospel?

- Wherever they went. Acts 8:4
- Where the person is who is interested. Acts 13:7
- When assembled together. Acts 20:7
- In foreign countries- Acts 13:2-3
- All the world – Mark 16:15

Acts 13:1-2 – “In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers (Gk. *didaskaloi*): Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”

Romans 2:17-21 – “But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God, and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector [Gk. *paideuteén*] instructor (rd)] of the foolish, a teacher (Gk. *didaskálos*) of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, you, therefore, who teach (Gk. *didáskoon*) another, do you not teach (Gk. *didáskeis*) yourself?”

James 3:1-2 – “Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.”

2 Peter 2:1-3 – “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers (Gk. *pseudodidaskaloi*) among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed (Gk. *pleonexia*) these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up.” Greed generally refers to a unsatisfied desire for more money but can also include an inordinate desire for power or prestige.

1 Corinthians 12:28-30 – “And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?”

1 Timothy 2:5-7 – “The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle — I am telling the truth, I am not lying — and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.”

2 Timothy 1:10-12 – “But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald \* and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I

am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.” \* { *keerux*, proclaimer }

2 Timothy 2:24-26 – “And the servant, *doúlon*, of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt (able, skillful in teaching) to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

1 Timothy 3:2 – “A bishop [*episkopeés* – watchman, sentinel, guardian] then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach.”

All Christians are to teach in some manner, Hebrews 5:11. One of the requirements for *episkopeés* is to be skillful in teaching, so they can exhort and rebuke those God has assigned to their care. Shepherds passing their function of teaching those God placed under their care to a paid professional does not appear to be biblical concept.

### Questions

1. The mission of Christ’s Body individually and collectively is to:
  - a. \_\_\_ Proclaim gospel to all the world
  - b. \_\_\_ Do good to all people especially believers
  - c. \_\_\_ Encourage Christians to remain faithful and do good works
  - d. \_\_\_ Communicate with other Christians in songs
  - e. \_\_\_ Be living sacrifices
  - f. \_\_\_ All the above
2. The most effective method use in teaching is one-on-one  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
3. There are some people who teach whatever people want to hear just for the money  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
4. Everyone is not a professional teacher but all are to teach to some degree.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
5. Who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel?
  - a. \_\_\_ Paul
  - b. \_\_\_ Peter
  - c. \_\_\_ Christ
  - d. \_\_\_ All the apostles

## **Evangelist / Preacher/Minister**

### Lesson 6

#### **Evangelist**

An evangelist, Greek *euangeliou*, is one who proclaims the Good News that salvation is in Christ.

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

On Pentecost Day those who accepted God's message delivered by Peter and the other apostles were immersed and "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42-43).

Paul evangelized, taught the gospel: "I planted the seed, Apollos watered (Gk. *epótisen* – supplied the source for growth) it, but God made it grow" (1 Corinthians 3:6-7). The seed is the Word which Paul taught to those who did not know Christ - the Non-Christian. Apollos taught Christians the way of the Lord, perhaps like Priscilla and Aquila who explained to him the way of God more adequately (Acts 18:26). Evangelists and heralds, (preachers) generally proclaim the Good News and the more mature Christians such as watchmen/sentinels/shepherds skilled in instructing, taught them how to live sacrificial lives pleasing to God helping them to mature into the nature of God.

Acts 8:35 – "Then Philip, [Philip the evangelist], opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told (Greek *eueangelísato*), him (Ethiopian eunuch) the good news, Jesus - the Christ."

Romans 15:14-16 – "I am fully convinced, my dear brothers and sisters, that you are full of goodness. You know these things so well you can teach each other all about them. Even so, I have been bold enough to write about some of these points, knowing that all you need is this reminder. For by God's grace, I am a special messenger from Christ Jesus to you Gentiles. I bring you the Good News so that I might present you as an acceptable offering to God, made holy by the Holy Spirit."

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached (*eueangelisámeen*-evangelize not *kerusso*-preach) to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, **if** you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. [Therefore, if one did not hold firm to the word, one would not continue in a saved condition (rd)]. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

2 Timothy 4:3-5 – "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

1 Corinthians 9:13-14 - "Know ye not that they that minister (work) about sacred things eat *of* the things of the temple, *and* they that wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel."

There are many methods of teaching; e.g., individuals, families, classrooms, small groups, radio and TV speakers, writing Bible lessons, bringing someone to a teacher and providing assistance so others can proclaim the resurrected Christ. There are also those who instruct teachers how to be better teachers. Without doubt a Godly life is a lesson anyone can emulate.

### **Preacher**

The Biblical concept of 'preaching' is best ascertained from an examination of New Testament examples of the Greek word *kerux* meaning make proclamation as a herald.

1 Timothy 2:5-7 – "The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose, I [Paul] was appointed a herald [proclaimer, preacher (rd)] and an apostle — I am telling the truth, I am not lying — and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles."

2 Timothy 1:10-12 – “But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I [Paul] was appointed a herald (*Preacher*) and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed [committed to (rd)], and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.”

2 Timothy 4:1-2 – “I charge you [Timothy] in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching [*didache* – instruction].” The terms reprove, rebuke and exhort are terms relating to living a life pleasing to God – not the gospel. \*

There are no references of good news orators or preachers who devoted full or part time addressing the assembly of saints, whether with or without compensation. The function of teaching the saints belongs to watchmen, sentinels, elders, shepherds, men skillful in communicating. It is noteworthy that Paul in Troas had a lengthy discussion rather than a proclamation, sermon, lecture, oration or monologue.

Acts 20:7 “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked, *dielégeto*,<sup>a</sup> (preached KJV) with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.” [<sup>a</sup> *kerux* is the Greek word for preach. Whereas *dielégeto* is means discussed, not a sermon or lecture (rd).]

### **Minister**

Minister is Latin from the Greek *diákonós* which was discussed in a previous lesson. Today a minister is considered a professional religious speaker rather than an evangelist. Today the minister/preacher function is more on the order of the teaching pastors of Ephesians 4. But according to Revelation 1:6, all Christians are priests to minister to God.

### **Questions**

1. The primary function of preachers and evangelists is to proclaim the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
2. In addition to the function of heralding the gospel, an evangelist is instructed to rebuke, reprove and exhort.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
3. Apollos watered by supplying spiritual nourishment to the gospel seed necessary for growth and maturity.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
4. One is saved by obedience to the gospel, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
5. There are many examples of lecture type lessons / sermons presented to non-participatory church assemblies.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_

## **Christian Relationships**

### Lesson 7

Paul explains to the Ephesians Christian, men and women, how they were to live righteously in a pre-vised world (Ephesians 4-5). They were to avoid:

- a) *porneía* – all sexual relationships other than between husband and wife – fornication; physical act.
- b) *akatharsía* – a term broader than *porneía*, includes physical and mental acts; e.g., vulgar words, sexual humor, trash talk and filthy minds.
- c) *pleonexía*– all-inclusive term covetousness, never satisfied, always wanting more; e.g., power, fame, sexual pleasure, or the material things of life. For example, “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

Ephesians 5:15-22 – Paul gives instructions about the actions and activities of Ephesian men and women outside the assembly. “Look carefully then how you walk [one’s daily life (rd)], not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

Paul encourages righteous living, being filled with the Spirit. The actions of their daily life were obviously different.

Ephesians 5:22-29 – “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands’, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her [people in Christ (rd)] by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.”

Husbands and wives are to nourish and cherish each other as they are united as one. Their honor and respect must always show one’s love of Christ even if one spouse is not a believer for they may be won to Christ by their spouse’s actions. A wife is to yield to the head of the family even when she disagrees so long as it did not violate her relationship with God. [Love is greater than submission so where love is present submission should be easier (rd)]

1 Timothy 2:8-10 – “I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands [unstained by sin (rd)] without anger or quarreling; likewise also that **women should adorn themselves** in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but **with what is proper for women who profess godliness**—with good works

Paul shows the objective is for Christian men and women to proclaim the gospel of Christ. This requires prayer and righteous living by those teaching so that what is taught is heard as well as observed. Christians are not to be angry, quarrelsome, but to seek what is best for others. They are to be different from the world in which they live. Their lives are to be open books to be read. It is difficult for anyone to hear the message when the messenger does not live by the message.

Women’s appearance in public reflects her values. Does she reflect godliness or godlessness? In the Greek/Roman culture a woman’s hair was a very erotic area of her body. Being adorned with ‘braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire’ called attention to her wealth and sensuality and ‘not proper for women who profess godliness.’

Hebrews 5:11-12 – “About this [probably Jesus’ obedience as a son (rd)] we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you, [Christians], have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God.”

God placed the responsibility of teaching the Gospel to the lost to all Christians, men and women, rather than to a few evangelists or shepherds. Christians to whom the Hebrew writer is addressing were slack in their teaching responsibilities. They were immature in their knowledge and with little a desire to teach.

The context of these passages focuses on the message one sends by the way they conduct their lives and relationships – calm, godly and simple lives, preferring others over self, not demanding of others, not calling attention to their knowledge, wealth or position but in all actions respecting others whether poor or wealthy, Jew or pagan, man or woman. Thus, Christian men and women will be known by their righteous lives and by their appearance and demeanor in public by not calling attention to the sexual and sensual but to the spiritual. Their teachings will reflect their humility and respectfulness.

A Christian’s righteous living and a united family based on love will be displayed in all relationships with others.

### **Relationship among Christians**

Philippians 4:2-3 – “I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.”

These women helped Paul in teaching the gospel. Like many men and women today, Euodia and Syntyche needed to be reminded that Christ’s gospel is greater than the individual and that unity is required for effectiveness in reaching those outside Christ while encouraging Christians to be faithful to their calling.

### **Relationships between husband and wife**

Ephesians 5:22-31 — “Wives, submit [preferences, wants and desires are to be made known but not an attempt to be the one in charge (rd)] to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, His body, and is Himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her [love is greater than submission (rd)]. – Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast [bound or glued to (rd)] to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

Colossians 3:18-19 — “Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.” How can a husband love as Christ and be harsh toward his wife?

1 Peter 3:1-5 — “Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives— when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Peter and Paul are addressing the actions and attitude of Christians as they live daily among the saved and the perishing.

Husbands and wives are joined together in marriage, a covenant relationship, living and working together united as one being. Each is to love the other better than self. When this is present all significant situations or problems will be discussed in a calm loving environment doing what is considered best for the eternal well-being of each member of the family. All discussions leading up to the decision must not be:

- a. contentious,
- b. an exercise to prove who is right,
- c. a relationship of ruler and servant
- d. the wife challenging the responsibility or authority of the husband by some defiant action.
- e. husbands and/or wives focused on fulfilling their wants and desires

Respect for each other must be of the highest order. Husbands and wives wrangling over settled matters to ‘get my way’ is very damaging to the marriage relationship, to training of children and not in the likeness of God.

Paul stated that the submitting by Christian wives to their husbands’ decision is the way Christians submit to Christ; e.g., “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours,

be done.” [Christ made a request to loving His Father. The Father’s decision was what was best for His creation. Out of love and respect for His Father Christ yielded and submitted to do “the Father’s will].”

Christians are fully assured of Christ’s love, knowing that He always chooses what is best. So, also the Christian husband’s decision must be whatever is best for the family. However, a wife cannot submit to any decision of Christian or non-Christian husband that would violate her relationship with Christ.

### **Other Relationships**

1 Timothy 5:16 – “If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are really widows.”

James 1:27 – “Religion [worship that involved external action (rd)] that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit (take care of) orphans and widows in their affliction.” Christians must take care of spiritual and physical family needs.

2 Timothy 1:5 – “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.” Faith of family encourages and strengthens your faith.

### **All in Christ**

1 Peter 2:4-5; 9 – “As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. -- But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellences of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

1 Peter 3:8 – “Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.”

All Christians whether male or female are servants to do the will of God which is to be faithful, do good works and to teach the gospel. Unity of mind among those in Christ is not the same as complete agreement. There is still room for differences in understanding, opinion and interpretation on a teaching (doctrine). To be united in Christ there must be agreement of what constitutes the gospel – Jesus was God in human form, His atoning sacrifice, burial and resurrection “the power of God unto salvation” and how God adds one into Christ’s Body. Unity does not include agreement on personal opinion and interpretation.

### **Questions**

1. A Christian’s attire must not be like those who emphasize the sexual and sensual but be modest stressing godliness.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
2. Unresolved differences between Christians harms their relationship and unity among other believers.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
3. A wife submitting to her husband includes expressing her feelings and opinion without attempting to take control.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_
4. Seeing to needs of family and others known to be in need is pure and undefiled worship.  
T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_

5. Unity of mind is not the same as having no differences of opinion rather being united in Christ in proclaiming His death, burial and resurrection.

T. \_\_\_ F. \_\_\_





