

# Unit One: Doctrine of the Church

## Introduction:

Ekklesia is the Greek word (ἐκκλησία) that is used to refer to the church in biblical writings. It was a commonly used word in first-century Rome, and it connoted an assembly.

“Ecclesiology is the study of the biblical teachings concerning the church and its practices” (Horton, *Systematic Theology*).

“Church: the community of all true believers for all time” (Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*).

In *Theology for the Community of God*, Stanley Grenz wrote, “Church: a people standing in covenant, who are a sign of the divine reign and constitute a special community.” He goes on to say, “The choice of *ekklesia* as the designation of the Christian community suggests that the New Testament believers viewed the church as neither an edifice nor an organization. They were a people—a people brought together by the Holy Spirit—a people bound to each other through Christ—hence, a people standing in covenant with God. Above all, they were God’s people.”

In *Christian Doctrine for Everyman*, Jimmy Millikin wrote:

“There are many false notions as to what a church is today. Perhaps one of the most common misunderstandings is to identify the church with a building, or a meeting place. Others have mistakenly understood the church as an invisible, universal mass of all believers, both living and dead. Some have identified it with the spiritual kingdom of God on earth.

“The Baptist Faith and Message defines a New Testament church as "a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth" (Art. VI).” (Millikin, 110)

## I. The Preparation of the Church

(Mitchell – CD notes; Doctrinal Statement – Section IX, Sub-point C)

### A. Its Founding

1. Jesus established the church during His ministry.

a. He called out the disciples (Mk 3:13-18).

b. Twelve disciples made up the charter members of the first church.

c. BMAA Doctrinal Statement

The Perpetuity of the Church—Instituted by Jesus during His personal ministry on earth (Matt 16:18; Mark 3:13-19; John 1:25-51), true churches have continued to the present and will continue until Jesus returns (Matt 16:18; 28:20). (Section IX, A)

2. Jesus was the Cornerstone of the Church.

- a. He was prophesied to be the Stone (Ps 118:22).
- b. He was rejected by the Jews (Mt 21:41-42; 1 Pe 2:4-8).
- c. He was made head of the church (Ep 1:22; 2:19-22; Co 1:15-18).

B. Its Foundation (Mt 16:13)

1. The Foundation is not Peter, as some claim.

- a. Peter may not have been in Rome.
- b. No where is he viewed as the head of the church nor as infallible. In fact, Paul once rebuked him.

2. Jesus is the Foundation (Mt 16:13)

- a. The word for Peter is Petros, a little stone.
- b. The word for rock is Petra, a massive rock.

3. The foundation is Peter's claim of the deity of Christ. Jesus is the Petra.

C. The False View of the Origin of the Church—the church started on Pentecost

*This view is held by the majority of evangelical scholars.*

1. Problems with the view—the Church already...

- a. Had 120 members by Pentecost (Ac 1:15),
- b. Was added to (Ac 2:41) implies that something already existed.
- c. Had a business meeting (Ac 1:15).
- d. Had observed ordinances (Mt 26:26-29),
- e. Had a treasurer (Jn 13:29) and pastor (Jesus),
- f. Had been given discipline instruction (Mt 18:15-18),
- g. Had been given a commission (Mt 28:19-20)

## 2. Preferred View

- a. On the day of Pentecost the church was empowered to carry out its mission.
- b. On the day of Pentecost the Spirit of God returned to lead the church.

## II. The Pattern of the Church

(Mitchell – CD notes; Millikin – chapters 41-42; Doctrinal Statement – Section IX, Sub-point A)

### A. The Misconceptions of the Nature of the Church

#### 1. The Church is a Building or Meeting Place

#### 2. The Church is Universal, Invisible

- a. Some define the church as the composite of all the saved.
- b. In the early centuries after Christ, the Church Fathers began to refer to the church as the catholic (little "c") or universal church.
- c. The Catholic church (capital "C") sees the church as all believers under the pope.

#### 3. The Church is the Kingdom

- a. The kingdom of God is the same as the church in some beliefs.
- b. However, the kingdom is really the family of God and is entered by salvation. The church is entered by water baptism.

### B. The Meaning of the Church

#### 1. Theories

##### a. Universal—visible—held by Augustine

- (1) All believers are members of the universal church.
- (2) Membership in the catholic church is necessary for salvation.

##### b. Universal—invisible

- (1) Church composed of all the saved.
- (2) View held by most Protestants.

##### c. Universal—local

- (1) Church exists in local congregations.

- (2) There is also another aspect of the church which is universal as all saved are in the body of Christ.

d. Local only

- (1) The church is a local visible assembly of baptized believers covenanted together for the preaching of the gospel, maintenance of the ordinances, and manifestation of the glory of Christ (Paul Byers, Unto Him Be Glory in the Church).
- (2) Ultra Conservative Baptists do not believe that all the saved are in the church, nor is it an invisible body. Rather, it meets in local congregations.

e. Baptist Viewpoints – The BMAA Doctrinal Statement

The Nature of the Church—A New Testament church is a local congregation (Acts 16:5; I Cor. 4:17) of baptized believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41) who are united by covenant in belief of what God has revealed and in obedience to what He has commanded (Acts 2:41-42). (Section IX, A)

2. Term—the etymology of *ecclesia* teaches a local, visible nature for the church in most of its usages.

- a. The word is built on *eccletos*, "to call out" or "call forth," and came to mean "to assemble together".

- b. It is used in the NT in a secular sense as well as a religious sense.

- (1) In Ac. 19:32-40 the word *ecclesia* is used of a Greek assembly.

- (2) In 115 references in the NT the word *ecclesia* refers to the Lord's assembly.

- c. As the church of God, it is used in three senses.

- (1) Generic or institutional sense as the word "marriage," or "home" (Mt. 18:17; Ep. 5:23). Found 20 times in the NT.

- (2) Local or particular sense. This sense is given 90 times. It refers strictly to the local church, as in Ro. 16:4, "all the churches of the Gentiles," or 2 Co. 8:1, "the churches of Macedonia." Found as a locality 17 times; as a plural 35 times; in a local sense 38 times.

- (3) A universal sense (Hb. 12:23) The word is not *ecclesia* but *panēgyros*, literally a festive occasion. It has reference to the church triumphant as it gathers in heaven. Until then the total church is never assembled this side of heaven.

- d. The secular *ecclesia* of Greece typified the Lord's *ecclesia*.

- (1) The Greek *ecclesia* was an assembly of citizens called out from a city to form a governing body.

- (2) This group was specially chosen because of its faithfulness, and its members were excluded when they became unfaithful.
- (3) They hired and fired officials, raised and allocated funds, formed armies, and made treaties.
- (4) They voted democratically and even opened and closed with prayers to their gods.
- (5) The NT ecclesia is similar in nature as the Greek, for it, too, is a local, visible assembly of special citizens, called out from the general population.

#### C. The Makeup of the Local Church (Millikin, chapter 42)

1. Believers – A church is not simply a conglomerate of assembly of people. It is an assembly of people who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
  - a. It is plainly stated that the first church was made up of those “that gladly received His word” (Acts 2:41), those “that believe” (Acts 2:44), and those “who are saved” (Acts 2:47).
  - b. When Paul writes to the churches, he refers to them in ways that reveal they are believers in Jesus (Rom. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:2).
2. Baptized Believers – Not every group of believers constitutes a church.
  - a. Church members must be baptized believers.
  - b. Starting with John the Baptist (Mk. 1:5), then Jesus (Jn. 3:22, 26; 4:1-2; Mt. 28:19-20) and throughout the book of Acts (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 36-38; 9:18; 10:47; 16:14-15, 33; 18:8; 19:5), baptism was a universal practice in the New Testament churches.
3. Spiritual Organism
  - a. The fact that a church is made up of baptized believers in Jesus Christ implies that it is a *spiritual organism*, and not merely an organization.
  - b. It is not an organization like a lodge or civic club. It is a divine institution that belongs to God (Rom. 16:16; 1 Th. 2:14; 1 Pe. 2:10).
  - c. The church owes its beginnings, its history, its present existence, and its destiny to the initiative and power of God’s purpose and grace.

#### D. The Manifestation of the Local Church

1. The Pillar and Ground of Truth (1 Ti. 3:15)
  - a. The church was organized by one called the Truth and it is founded upon His truth.
  - b. If all the saved make up the church then it ceases to be a pillar and ground of truth, for there are many beliefs represented, for instance, on "baptism".
2. The Flock of God (Lk. 12:32; Ac. 20:28)
  - a. A flock is a visible and localized metaphor.

- b. Jesus said that not all of His sheep were in the fold.
- 3. The Candlestick (Re. 1:13)
  - a. Each of Seven Churches is addressed individually in Revelation.
  - b. Each is represented by one candlestick and all resting on Christ who is the lampstand.
- 4. The Body (1 Co. 12:27)
  - a. Some say this metaphor indicates a universal sense as all saved are baptized into the body of Christ.
  - b. However, this metaphor is used with an indefinite article in 1 Co. 12:27, "a body".
- E. The Motivation for a Local Church Concept
  - 1. The Nature of the Church Demands It. Its Orders Are to Preach, Teach, and Administer Ordinances.
  - 2. The Meaning of Ecclesia Determines It.
  - 3. The Exercise of Church Discipline Defines It.
- F. The Meaning of "Body" Is Not Clear in 1 Co. 12:13
  - 1. Which "spirit" is meant? No capital letters in Greek, so the word could refer to the Holy Spirit or man's spirit.
  - 2. Which "baptism" is alluded to, "spirit" baptism or "water" baptism?
  - 3. Which "body" is referred to, "the body" or "a body"?

To build a doctrine on such a tenuous interpretation is unwise.

### **III. The Political Practice and Leadership of the Church**

(Mitchell – CD notes; Millikin – chapter 45; Doctrinal Statement – Section IX, Sub-point B, E & G)

The New Hampshire Confession of Faith states:

[We believe] that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

Does the New Testament teach a definite governmental form for a gospel church?

## A. The Government of the Church

### 1. The Historic Forms of Church Government

- a. Episcopalian—coming from the Greek word episkopos, which means "bishop" or "overseer"; these bishops preside over a number of individual churches, and they alone have authority to ordain to the ministry;
- b. Presbyterian—coming from the Greek word presbuteros, which means "elder" and describes government by a council or presbytery made up of elders. Modern Presbyterian churches practice this type of polity.
- c. Congregationalism—in this form of government, authority rests with the membership at large, the congregation; this stresses the independence of the local church and the priesthood of the believer.

Does it really make a difference which of these types of government is practiced by the Lord's churches?

### 2. The NT Pattern for Church Government

- a. Churches in the NT are represented as local, independent, autonomous bodies of believers. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as the Baptist Church, only Baptist churches.
  - (1) The Baptist Faith and Message says: "The church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible."
  - (2) Two basic ideas:
    - Local church is an autonomous, or self governing body.
    - Local church is governed by democratic processes.
  - (3) Biblical basis for these ideas:
    - There is no church organization above the local church found in the New Testament writings.
    - A democratic autonomous local church is also based upon certain other fundamental Christian teachings: the Lordship of Christ, the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, the priesthood of every believer and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer.

- b. The government of the local church of the NT was in the hands of all the people rather than in the hands of a small group of rulers.
- c. The NT churches associated with one another. Their relationship was not one of rule but benevolent, fraternal, and for missions.

## B. The Ministers and Leaders of the Church

### 1. The Purpose of the Leaders

- a. Pastors and other leaders are not appointed to perform the ministry but rather to equip others to perform it. (Ep. 4:11-12) Those given gifts by the Lord have three jobs: perfect the saints, minister, and edify the body of Christ.
- b. Each of these phrases from Ep. 4 is introduced with a different Greek word. The correct reading shows that:
  - (1) the first clause defines the task of the ministers,
  - (2) the second defines the task of the saints, and
  - (3) the third describes the ultimate goal of the ministry.

### 2. The Office of the Pastor

#### a. The Titles

- (1) There are three different titles given of the one charged with the spiritual leadership of a local church: pastor, bishop, and elder.
- (2) The names themselves do not suggest more than one pastoral office. The terms seem to be relatively synonymous and describe one office.
- (3) The three terms often are not distinguishable.
  - (a) In Acts 20:28 the Holy Spirit made the overseers (episkopous) to feed (poimainein, pastor) the church.
  - (b) Peter exhorted the elders (presbuteros) to "feed (poimanein, pastor) the flock of God..., taking the oversight (episkopountes, bishoping) thereof" (1 Pe. 5:1-2).
- (4) Whenever the officers of the church are listed formally, invariably there are only two—pastors and deacons (Ph. 1:1), and the most comprehensive list of qualifications for church officers mentions only the bishop (1 Ti. 3:1-7) and deacon (1 Ti. 3:8-13).



b. Pastor

- (1) The word translated pastor from the Greek (poimen) literally means shepherd.
- (2) Among the ancient Hebrews, a faithful shepherd led his sheep to grazing lands and water supplies, protected them from the attacks of carnivorous beasts, and guarded against losing sheep that strayed away.
- (3) The pastor is the shepherd—not the owner—of God's flock.
- (4) The duties of the Pastor:
  - (a) He must feed the sheep. (Acts 20:28; Ep. 4:11)
  - (b) He must protect the sheep. False teachers and false teachings prevail around the flock. (Acts 20:29-31)
  - (c) He must care for the sheep. A hireling shepherd will not care for the sheep, but the pastor must love them as his own.

c. The Elder—the most common word for the office of a pastor is presbuteros.

- (1) The fundamental idea of elder has to do with age, wisdom and honor.
- (2) Early in history Moses appointed elders to help him govern the growing nation (Ex. 18:13-27; Nu. 11:16-17; and De. 1:9-16).
- (3) When the NT writers called the early pastors "elders," two ideas were in view, dignity and leadership. Paul admonished Timothy to entertain no accusation against an elder without substantial evidence (1 Ti. 5:19).
- (4) The eldership is also an office of leadership. Paul reminded Timothy that a man who could not rule his own house was not qualified to care for the church of God (1 Ti. 3:5).

d. Bishop

- (1) The uses of the word— episkopos (bishop)—by early Christians indicate a ministry of love and care. Peter bears this out in 1 Pe. 5:2 and then gives Jesus as an example of a Bishop.
- (2) A bishop endeavors to build up in the Lord his people. The spiritual life of his people is his continual burden and responsibility.

## C. The Office of the Deacon

### 1. The Origin

- a. The Greek word diakonos has been taken into the English language as deacon. It is a common word, found in its different forms more than 100 times in the NT.
  - (1) In the KJV, the word “deacon” only appears three times—six times in the ESV.
  - (2) Other translations of these Greek terms are: minister unto, serve, minister, ministry, ministration, and ministering.
- b. The word diakonos was taken from the secular Greek world. Its basic meaning was "to wait at tables, to serve as a table waiter."
- c. In Ep. 4:11-12, Paul declared that Christ gives various kinds of leaders to equip believers for "the work of the ministry" (diakonias).
- d. Most scholars agree that Ac. 6:1-6 either records the origin of the office of the deacon or, at least, foreshadows it. In Ac. 6:2, the phrase "and serve tables" comes from the Greek word diakonein (to deacon).

### 2. The Requirements

- a. To serve the men who preach the Word
- b. Appointed to meet practical needs by whatever administrative means were required. The word "business" in 6:3 is the Greek word chreias, which means literally what will supply the need. The emphasis is on meeting a need, not establishing a managerial board.
- c. The seven were chosen on the basis of their walk with the Lord and their example.
- d. The deacon is always in a subordinate position to the pastor.

## D. The Qualifications for the Leaders

### 1. The Pastor – 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9

- a. Pastors are to be “blameless and above reproach, not overbearing, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not give to much wine, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, well-reputed (particularly among outsiders), upright, holy, and disciplined. He is the husband of only one wife, not a lover of money, not a pursuer of dishonest gain, a good manager of his family (his children obey him), and not a recent convert. He loves what is good, holds firmly to the gospel, and is eager to serve.” (*A Theology for the Church* by Daniel Akin)
- b. Almost all of these qualifications are applicable for every Christian with one exception—the ability to teach. Daniel Akin continues, “The essence of the

elder's office lies with ensuring the Word of God is well understood, evidenced by the commitment to teaching one's particular flock this Word." (Akin 802)

(1) 2 Timothy 2:15 – "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

(2) "Anyone serving as an elder should have a better-than-average grasp of the basics of the gospel as well as the great truths of Scripture, especially those that are under assault in one's own day. An elder should also have a particularly solid grasp of those truths that distinguish his own congregation from others (e.g. baptism for Baptists)."

c. "The qualification to be 'the husband of but one wife' and to 'manage his household well' does not mean that an elder must be married or have children. Rather it appears that Paul assumed most men would be married and have children, and that those family relations provided a natural ground for assessing a man's ability to lead." (Akin 802)

## 2. The Deacon

a. The qualifications for a deacon, for the most part, are the same as for a pastor (notice the words "in like manner").

b. Deacons must be men of impeccable Christian character and example. They must be grounded firmly in the faith (1 Ti. 3:9); men of proven character and ability (1 Ti. 3:13); exemplary domestic life (1 Ti. 3:12); and personal virtue (1 Ti. 3:8).

## IV. The Practices of the Church

An ordinance is an outward and visible symbolic rite commanded in the Bible to be practiced by the church which sets forth a central truth of the Christian faith. It is a memorial or reminder of some precious historical event of great significance.

The distinction between an ordinance and a sacrament should be noted. "A sacrament is something presented to the senses, which has the power, by divine institution, not only signifying, but also of efficiently conveying grace" (Roman Catholic Council of Trent). An ordinance differs from a sacrament in that it is performed not to obtain grace, but because the one observing it has already obtained that grace.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that there are seven sacraments: ordination, confirmation, matrimony, extreme unction, penance, baptism, the Eucharist. However, the Bible lists only two of these and they are the ordinances of the church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### A. The Ordinance of Baptism

#### 1. The Motive of Baptism

a. The Command of the Bible (Acts 2:38)

- b. The Commission (Mt. 28:19-20)
  - c. The Examples of the Bible
    - (1) Jesus' example (Mt. 3:13-17)
    - (2) Apostles' example (Ac. 2:41, 8:12, 8:38, 9:18, 16:15, 16:33, 18:8, 19:5)
- 2. The Meaning of Baptism
  - a. Portrait of Christ (Ro. 6:4-6)
    - (1) Of Christ's death, burial and resurrection (2 Co. 12:12)
    - (2) Of the Sinner's Crucifixion of self
  - b. A Public Commitment
    - (1) To Christ
    - (2) To the Church (Ac. 2:41)
- 3. The Manner of Baptism
  - a. The Applicant
    - (1) Those who are saved
    - (2) Those whose life shows it (Mt. 3:8)
  - b. The Authority
    - (1) John's Baptism authorized from Heaven (Jn. 1:6, 26, 33)
    - (2) Given to the Church (Mt. 16:19, 28:19-20)
  - c. The Administration
    - (1) The Medium (Ac. 8:38) (water)
    - (2) The Method (Mt. 28:19) (Trinity)
    - (3) The Mode (Immersion)
      - (a) "Baptize" (Greek for "submerge")
      - (b) Jesus came up out of the water (Mt. 3:10)
      - (c) The Eunuch went down into the water (Acts 8:38)
      - (d) John baptized in much water (Jn. 3:23)
      - (e) A Burial picture requires complete covering (Ro. 6:3-4)
- 4. The Misuse of Baptism
  - a. Baptism for Salvation
    - (1) Scriptures used
      - (a) Mk. 16:16—verse not in best texts, last phrase of verse says non-belief causes damnation
      - (b) Ac. 2:38—"for" is from eis and could read "because of."

- (c) Jn. 3:5—refers to physical birth or to the Bible, as in Ti. 3:5.
    - (d) Ac. 22:16—Paul was already saved (Ac. 9:18)
  - (2) Scriptures Against
    - (a) Jn. 3:16; Ep. 2:8-9; Ro. 10:9-13
    - (b) Repentant thief not baptized (Lk. 23:39-43)
  - b. Baptism for Infants
    - (1) No Scriptures given in the Bible
    - (2) Ac. 8:12 mentions only adults
- B. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper
1. The Texts of the Supper
    - a. Mt. 26:26-30; Mk. 14:22-26; Lk. 22:17-20 all record the institution of the Supper by Jesus.
    - b. 1 Co. 11:23-24 is recorded by Paul with admonitions about how to partake of the sacred meal.
  2. The Titles of the Supper
    - a. Eucharist (Gr. for "giving of thanks")—comes from 1 Co. 11:24.
    - b. Eulogia (Gr. for "blessing") comes from 1 Co. 10:16, "the cup of blessing".
    - c. Koinonia (Gr. for communion)—derives from 1 Co. 10:16, "the communion of the blood of Christ".
    - d. "Breaking of Bread" is sometimes used to refer to the Supper if the article is used with artion or bread.
  3. The Theories of the Supper
    - a. Transubstantiation—The Roman Catholic doctrine which teaches that the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ when consecrated by the priest during mass, even though they still look and taste the same. Thus, the one partaking literally eats Christ's flesh and drinks his blood. The basis for this view is taken from Christ's statement: "This is my body". However, that no more makes the bread His body than His saying, "I am the Door", turns a door into the Lord Jesus.
    - b. Consubstantiation—The Lutheran doctrine which teaches that, while the bread and wine remain the same, the presence of the body of Christ is nevertheless "in, with, and under" both elements. This theory, too, is unbiblical.
    - c. Memorialization—The doctrine which teaches that the bread and wine are mere symbols to remind and aid the believer in observing both the first and second comings of our Lord. This practice is both scriptural and sensible (1 Co. 11:24-26).
  4. The Typification of the Supper
    - a. The Passover Lamb

- (1) Ex 12:12-27 records the event of the lamb's blood placed as a cross over the Israelite's doors to protect them from the death angel who slaughtered all first born in Egypt. The institution which resulted to remember the event is the Passover Meal.
  - (2) The Passover lamb was carefully chosen 14 days early to observe it for any flaws. It was roasted and eaten during the Passover meal. It typified the blood atonement that was effected by the slaying of certain animals in the Levitical sacrificial system. All pointed to a complete fulfillment one day in God's perfect Lamb.
- b. The Perfect Lamb
- (1) When Jesus began His personal ministry on earth, His harbinger, John the Baptist, saw Him and said to his own disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."
  - (2) Jesus did die the once-and-for-all sacrifice on the cross as God's Lamb. At precisely the moment when families all over Jerusalem were offering the Passover lamb, Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished". He was the perfect Lamb and fulfilled the types of the OT exactly, even to no bones being broken in His body.
  - (3) When Jesus sat down to partake of the Passover with His disciples one more time before His death, He took the wine and wafers of the Passover Meal and instituted a new meal—The Lord's Supper.
5. The Technicalities of the Supper
- a. The Purpose of the Supper
- (1) To Look Backward – "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death" (1 Co. 11:26).
  - (2) A Look Inward – "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Co. 11:28).
  - (3) A Look Forward – "Till he come" (1 Co. 11:26).
- b. The Participants of the Supper
- (1) Attitude toward the Lord's Supper in Church History
    - (a) Open Communion (free, unrestricted)
      - Definition – allowing anyone to partake of the Lord's Supper who wants to, regardless of denomination, creed, or conversion.
      - It views the Lord's Supper as a universal ordinance.
      - Argument for it says it is wrong to exclude anyone from fellowship and communion with fellow saints. However, that is not the purpose of the Lord's Supper. It is for communion with Christ and a picture of His death.
    - (b) Close Communion (restricted, intercommunion)
      - Definition – restricted to members of like faith and order, i.e. within associations or denominations.

- Views the ordinance as kingdom ordinance, or, at least, a denominational ordinance.
- (c) Closed Communion
  - Definition – Lord's Supper restricted to members of local church only.
  - Views the ordinance as a church ordinance.
- (2) Agents of the Lord's Supper – the Church
  - (a) The Nature of the Church– local church as seen in the very nature of the Greek ecclesia.
  - (b) The Authority of the Church
    - Jesus gave the Lord's Supper to the first Church.
    - He passed along the restriction to Paul (1 Co 11:23)
  - (c) Responsibility of the Church
    - We cannot make the invitation to partake of the sacred meal broader than Christ does.
    - We must carefully guard the ordinances so that we do not lose our distinctiveness. 2 Th. 3:4 says, "hold fast the ordinance you were taught whether by word or by letter."
    - For the ordinances to have proper validity, they must be associated with some authority that guards their purity and sanctity.
    - Christian fellowship with other Christians is based on a common experience of salvation, but church fellowship is based on common experience and biblical interpretation.
    - The Lord's Supper is an agent of proclaiming the gospel and must be carefully guarded. The consequences of loose handling of the ordinance may not show up for several generations but the result is inevitable liberalism.
    - Baptism is a gate the Lord placed in His church to keep it separate from the world; the Lord's Supper is a screen that sifts out those within the church, to keep it pure.
- (3) Which view is most plausible?
  - (a) Open Communion – A Dangerous / Risky Option
    - Makes the ordinance a kingdom ordinance and brings division to the table about salvation and baptism.
    - Open communion encourages sentimentality and division by potentially giving the Lord's Supper to the unbaptized, unconverted, and undisciplined.
  - (b) Close Communion – A Rational Option

- Acts 20:7 is used to substantiate. Paul is just passing through Troas—he is not a member of the church there. Why is he breaking bread with them?
  - The word for bread is arton and is not preceded by an article as in other uses of bread related to the Lord's supper.
  - Paul ate a common meal in Acts 20:11. Klan arton is never used with reference to the Lord's Supper, where arton is the direct object of klan (breaking).
  - In Acts 2:42 the article appears but not in v. 46.
- J. R. Graves said of the dangers of simply exercising close communion.
 

It is always done at the expense of good discipline; for when a church invites to her table the members of all other Baptist churches present, she inevitably will invite those she would feel herself bound to exclude, if her own members; and she would often invite those whom she considers unbaptized, and would refuse their application for membership; and oftentimes she would invite back to her communion persons she herself excluded, who are now members of other churches, in good standing. Can this be called good discipline? (Graves, p. 183)

(c) Closed Communion – The Right Option

- W. J. Burgess noted, "It is only reasonable to conclude that our invitation should extend only so far as our discipline reaches." (Burgess, p. 46)
- Controlled by the Church
 

Only 12 disciples partook of the first Lord's Supper.
- Controlled by Church Discipline
 

1 Co. 5:11 teaches that discipline must precede Lord's Supper observance.

6. The Target of Church Discipline in Regard to Communion – 1 Co. 5:1-13

Church discipline is greatly taught in God's Word but rarely practiced in God's churches.

a. Description of the Need for Discipline

(1) The Sin of the Immoral Man

- (a) A man was living with his own step-mother
- (b) The sin was known as a common thing in Corinth among outside folks who, though worldly, would not themselves practice such a thing.

(2) The Sin of the Indifferent Members

- (a) An Attitude of Pride – they were so full of their own sin that they were insensitive to that of other people.
- (b) The Attitude of Permissiveness – they took pride in their tolerance of other people. They considered it a privilege of liberty to live like one desired.
- (c) An Attitude of Passivity – a passive attitude says let well enough alone.



b. The Directives of Discipline

(1) The Purpose of Discipline (3, 5-8)

- (a) To comply with the Scriptures (3) – discipline is a part of all of God's work. We are to discipline ourselves (1 Co. 9:24-27); we are to be disciplined by God (Hb. 12:5ff), we are to discipline our children.
- (b) To Correct the Sinner (5) – as long as a church harbors a fugitive that one cannot be brought to repentance or restitution.
- (c) To Cleanse the Saints (6-8)

(2) The Person in Need of Discipline (11)

- (a) Divisive Attitudes (1 Co. 5:11; Mt. 18:15)
- (b) Doctrinal Alterations (Ga. 1:6-9; Ro. 16:17; 2 Ti. 2:16-18; Ti. 1:9-11; 3:9-10)
- (c) Deviant actions (1 Co. 5:11; 2 Th. 3:6, 11, 14)
- (d) Disrespect of Authority (1 Th. 5:14; Mt. 18:17)

(3) The Procedure of Discipline – 1 Corinthians 5

- (a) The Authority Exhibited (4) – power rests in the church not individuals
- (b) The Attitude Exemplified (5) (2 Cor. 2:4)
  - i) The Law of Love
    - It is our responsibility to love our brothers and sisters but not their sins. We must ask them to give up their sins or suffer the consequences.
  - ii) The Fact of Forgiveness. Forgiveness is dependent upon repentance.
  - iii) The Right of Restoration
    - Restoration is the ultimate goal of church discipline
    - Spiritual people restore repentant offenders (Ga. 6:1).
    - The Corinthian offender was restored (2 Co. 2:5-11).
- (c) The Action Exercised – 1 Corinthians 5
  - i) Various words are used to describe the act of church discipline: v. 5, deliver such a one; v. 7, urge out; v. 9, not keep company with; vv. 1, 2, judge; v. 13, put away.
  - ii) Jesus describes the process in Mt. 18:15-17.

## V. THE MISSION AND FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH

### A. Its Mission to the World—Its Primary Function

1. Here its primary mission is the proclamation of the gospel—that is, evangelism. The biblical evidence for this is manifold and plain. The primary purpose for which Jesus came into the world was to "seek and save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10).
2. What is known as the Great Commission is repeated five times in the Scriptures, and the essential element in each is that of evangelism (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; Jn. 20: 21; Acts 1: 8).
3. It is clear that the early churches understood the ministry of evangelism to be their primary mission to the world.
  - a. They're first evangelistic push came immediately after the indwelling of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41, 47).
  - b. They continued to share the good news of Jesus, even when it got them into trouble (Acts 3:17-20; 4:1-4, 29-31; 5:17-21, 27-29).
  - c. They continued to share the gospel with the lost every day, both in the temple and from house to house teaching Jesus is the Christ (Acts 5: 41-42).
  - d. Experiencing growing pains (Acts 6:1), the apostles chose seven men to help with the daily administrative tasks (Acts 3). The apostles made it clear that their primary mission was the ministry of the word (Acts 6:2, 4), which resulted in the number of disciples being multiplied (Acts 6: 7).
  - e. The deacons were functioning as evangelists too (e.g. Stephen in Acts 7:8-8:60; Philip in Acts 8:5, 26-35)
  - f. When they were scattered abroad as a result of persecution, they practiced evangelism everywhere they went (Acts 8: 4).
    - (1) Remember Jesus' last words to them in Acts 1?  
"... you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)
    - (2) The early church fulfilled Christ's command to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria in Acts 2-7.
    - (3) They did not fulfill the final command in Acts 1:8 until Acts 8:1 when God allowed a "great persecution against the church."

### B. Its Mission to Itself –Its Other Functions

1. It is clear that evangelism is the primary function of the church to the world, but it also has a mission to itself. The Bible articulates these other functions in Acts 2:42-47.
  - a. Evangelism (with baptism and church growth) (Acts 2:41, 47)
  - b. Discipleship / Teaching the Word (Acts 2:42)
  - c. Fellowship with One Another (Acts 2:42, 46)
  - d. Worship—the Lord's Supper, Awe/Wonder and Praise (Acts 2:42-43, 47)
  - e. Compassion / Benevolence (Acts 2:44-45)
  - f. Food ("breaking bread" no definite article) (Acts 2:46)

2. This mission to itself also includes the edification (or building up) of one another.
    - a. Edification is often used in reference to erecting a building.
    - b. With reference to the church it refers to the building and developing the members in the life and faith (Eph. 4:16; Jude 17-21; 1 Cor. 14:26).
    - c. The ultimate goal is that each member might attain the complete likeness of Christ (Eph. 4:13-16).
  3. There are several God-ordained means through which the church is to achieve its mission of edification. Ultimately, of course, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring us all to Christlikeness (Gal. 5: 22-23).
    - a. The Spirit uses the special ministries of God-appointed leaders (Eph. 4: 11-12).
    - b. Also every individual member has a responsibility or part to play in edifying the whole body. This is done through:
      - (1) Encouraging one another (1 Thes. 5:11)
      - (2) Encouraging and provoking one another (Heb. 10:24-25)
      - (3) Exercising spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11)
- C. Its Mission toward God—Its Primary Purpose
1. The ultimate mission of the church is to glorify God and His Son Jesus. This is really the ultimate goal of all the functions of the church, whether it is evangelism, edification, or whatever (Rom. 11:36).
  2. No work of the church should be an end in itself, not even evangelism. The end of all the church does is to glorify the triune God. “To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Eph. 3:21)

## VI. THE PERPETUITY OF THE CHURCH – Matthew 16

In discussing the perpetuity of the church, Dr. E. Harold Henderson states, “Baptists believe in ‘the perpetuity of the church.’ What does that term mean? Baptists believe that the church will continue to exist for an indefinitely long time...” He continues, “The doctrine of the perpetuity of the church does not mean that every congregation ever organized will continue its existence until the return of the Lord. It rather means that there will be true churches on earth in every generation until the Lord returns.” (Henderson, 105)

### A. Definition of Church Perpetuity

1. The word "perpetuity" is from the word "perpetual," meaning:
  - a. Continuing forever; everlasting.
  - b. Valid for all time.
  - c. Occurring continually; indefinitely long-continued.
2. As it relates to the church the doctrine of church perpetuity has reference to the permanent and unending existence of the church from its origin to eternity.
  - a. The doctrine is built on at least two passages: Mt. 16f; Mt. 28:18.
  - b. Since the Bible declares that the Lord's church is perpetual then not to believe it is to deny the Bible.
3. Church perpetuity is not the same doctrine as "church succession."
  - a. While the first phrase states a fact based on the Bible, the last phrase makes suppositions about the history of the church.
  - b. Successionism attempts to prove by organic links a chain from today's church back to the original church instituted by Christ.
  - c. Notice the following attempt to link a church in Dyer, Tn., back through 20 centuries:  
**BAPTIST SUCCESSION BACK TO CHRIST.**

Link One. The Baptist church at Dyer, Tennessee, was organized by J.W. Jeeter, who came from the Philadelphia Association.

Link Two. Hillcliff church, Wales, England. H. Roller came to the Philadelphia Association from The Hillcliff church. See minutes of Philadelphia Association, book 3, item 1.

Link Three. Hillcliff church was organized by Aaron Arlington, A.D. 987. See Alex Munston's Israel of the Alps, p. 39.

Link Four. Lima Piedmont church ordained Aaron Arlington in 940. See Jones' Church History, p. 324.

Link Five. Lima Piedmont church was organized by Balcolao, A.D. 812. See Neander's Church History, vol. 2, p. 320.

- Link Six. Balcolao came from the church at Timto, Asia Minor. See Neander's Church History, Vol. 2, p. 320.
- Link Seven. Timto church was organized by Archer Flavin, A.D. 738. See Mosheim's History, Vol. 1, p. 394.
- Link Eight. Archer Flavin came from the Darethea church, organized by Adromicus, A.D. 671, in Asia Minor. See Lambert's Church History, p. 47.
- Link Nine. Adromicus came from Pontifossi, at the foot of the Alps in France. See Lambert's Church History, P. 47.
- Link Ten. Pontifossi church was organized by Tellestman from Turin, Italy, A.D. 398. See Nowlin's Church History, vol. 2, p. 318.
- Link Eleven. Turan church was organized by Tertullian from Bing Joy, Africa, A.D. 237. See Armitage's Church History, p. 182.
- Link Twelve. Tertullian was a member of the Partus church at the foot of the Tiber, that was organized by Polycarp, A.D. 150. See Cyrus' Commentary of Antiquity, p. 924.
- Link Thirteen. Polycarp was baptized by John the Beloved or Revelator, on the twenty-fifth of December, A.D. 95. See Neander's Church History, p. 285.
- Link Fourteen. John was with Jesus on the Mount. Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:12-13.
- d. While it is possible to establish a spiritual kinship with previous churches and movement in history, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to prove a link year by year, person by person, doctrine by doctrine, church by church through 2,000 years.
- B. The Problems with Proving Perpetuity
1. Many Biblical doctrines must be accepted by Faith.
    - a. The doctrine of creation is biblical but to demonstrate "how" or "when" it occurred is impossible. We know only the "who"—God created.
    - b. Church perpetuity is biblical but to demonstrate it by historical documentation; that in every day of every year of every century, by a particular name, a church has existed back to Christ is impossible.
  2. The Problems with Succession
    - a. Does an organic link between churches or movements prove church authority; prove that each church considered was a true N.T. church? This is somewhat akin to apostolic succession touted by the Catholic church.
    - b. One must ask the question, "What constitutes a N.T. church?"
      - (1) A name? —No! If so, no group today goes back to Christ by name? The biblical term is "Christians" or just "church."
      - (2) An ancient pedigree? —No! If so, would violations in doctrine or lapses into heresy cause that group to be unacceptable as a link?

- (3) Doctrines?--Yes! But how many and which doctrines must be compared? Will just two suffice—The way of salvation, and believer's baptism--as Roy Mason suggests in his great book *The Church that Jesus Built*. Paul Byers suggests seven doctrines: Salvation by grace the ordinances administered as symbol, not sacrament; Baptism by immersion; congregational form of church government; Bible as sufficient rule of faith; separation of church and state; and freedom of religion. (*Unto Him Be Glory*, p. 158)

#### C. The Spiritual Kinship Theory

1. This view does not attempt to find a strict organic link.
2. There are certain doctrines that may, indeed, have been believed by our predecessors, but is our authority based on our ability to find that link even in claiming of affinity with heretical, or at least, questionable groups. Is it more important that a church presently practice biblical truth, than whether or not one did in antiquity?
3. There are certain "links" from which one can derive kinship, if not in relationship, which substantiate that Jesus' promise of perpetuity has been fulfilled throughout the last 20 centuries. Doctrine, or what they believe, is the key. Theology, Christology, and Soteriology are essential to being a N.T. church. Conservative Baptists would add yet, a fourth—Ecclesiology.

#### D. Conclusion about Church Perpetuity

1. Scripture--It is a biblical doctrine and should be believed. (Mt. 18--"and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"). It takes its authenticity from a promise, not proofs.
2. History--The church has always existed but not always discernable by the searching eyes of the historians.

### **Ecclesiology Study Guide:**

What is the name of this study? What Greek words is this name based upon?

What are the details about the founding of the first church?

What did Jesus say the foundation of the church is?

What are some of the misconceptions about the nature of the church?

What are the different theories of the nature of the church? Briefly explain each.

1)

2)

3)

4)

Describe the secular ecclesia and the etymology of the Greek word.

What is different about the concept of “church” in Hebrews 12:23? Briefly explain.

What is church autonomy and why is it important?

What is required for a person to become a member of a church?

What are the three, historical forms of church government? Briefly explain each.

1)

2)

3)

What are the two types of leaders in church?

What are the three different Greek terms used in the Bible to describe the office of pastor?  
Briefly describe the meaning of each term.

1)

2)

3)

What is the Greek term used to describe the office of a deacon? Briefly describe its meaning.

What are the ordinances of the church?

What does baptism symbolize? How do we know that baptism must be by immersion?

What are the three theories concerning the elements of the Lord's Supper? Explain each.

1)

2)

3)

What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper?

What are the three views concerning the participants of the Lord's Supper? Describe each.

1)

2)

3)

What is the purpose and process of church discipline?

What is the perpetuity of the church? What Scripture is this based upon?