

- c. **Ephesians 5:21-33** (21) Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as _____ is the _____ of the _____: and he is the saviour of the _____... 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are _____ of his _____, of his _____, and of his _____...

Am I a healthy cell, doing my part for the vital functioning of the whole body, a team worker, for the health and the whole and the expression of the Life of the Head?

III. The Prophecy of the Church

- A. The Church was not revealed unto the Old Testament prophets. It is strictly New Testament revelation though the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry gave a prophetic hint concerning the Church (see Matthew 16:18).
- B. John 1:10-12 (10) He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, but his own _____ Him not. 12 But as many as _____ him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. The Jewish people rejected their Messiah. God in grace reached out to whoever would receive His Son.

C. READ **Matthew 16:13-23**

1. Matthew 16, verse 13. To whom did the Lord Jesus address a question?

What was the question? _____

2. Verse 14. What did some believe? _____

3. Verse 15. What was His second question? _____

_____ Who answered for the group?
 _____ What was his answer? _____

How would you have answered this question? (See Romans 10:9-10)

4. Verse 17. *We ought to earnestly take heed lest at any time we think that our own wisdom or effort has given us a position spiritually. Who is He that reveals Truth?*

_____ (*Compare 1 Corinthians 2:10,14; 4:7*)

5. Matthew 16:18. ...THOU ART P_____ (petros), and upon this _____ (petra) I WILL BUILD **MY** CHURCH; and the gates of hell (Hades) shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee (Peter) the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

petros = “a little stone, a piece of a rock, a detached stone or boulder, a stone that might easily be thrown or moved.” The Lord gave Peter this name in John 1:42 as a descriptive name that would show his character.

petra = “a mass of rock like Gibraltar, used of the rock foundation for the house in Matt. 7:24-25; of a tomb hewn from rock in Matt. 27:60.” The Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is that foundation which none other can lay. Compare 1 Cor. 3:11; 1 Peter 2:6-8) **“I will build my Church”** (Matt. 16:18). Jesus Himself is the Architect and He Himself is the Builder. It is HIS Church. It belongs to Him. He purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). The building of the Church is yet future (“I will build”), not to begin until the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

[Note: See the first chapter in our set of notes called Church History which discusses in detail whether the “Rock” of Matthew 16:18 was Peter or Christ]

- a. Peter had three occasions to use “the keys” to open up the door of salvation: Acts 2:14-40, to the Jews; Acts 8:14–25, to the Samaritans (who were half-Jews and half-Gentiles); Acts 10—11:18, to the Gentiles.
- b. Note once more the prophetic announcement: I (the Lord) WILL (future) BUILD (He is the Architect) MY (He is the owner) CHURCH (called out assembly) ON THIS ROCK (On Himself, the Christ, the Son of the Living God). *“I’m on the Rock, Hallelujah!”*

D. The Lord Jesus Christ is to be crucified and raised again on the third day and to ascend into heaven to the right hand of the Majesty on High before returning to earth for a literal kingdom of 1000 years in fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures. In the mean time God does not leave Himself without a witness. The life and ministry of the Lord Jesus is to continue by means of His Body on earth, the Church. The Head will represent the Body in heaven while the Body represents the Head on earth. The Church picks up where the Lord Jesus left off.

1. The Great Commission According to Matthew 28:18-20

- a. Who has the authority to commission? _____
 How much authority does He have? _____
 What is the sphere of this authority? _____
- b. GO YE (be going about) THEREFORE, AND _____ (make disciples of) ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST: 20 _____ them TO OBSERVE _____
 WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. . .

i. The Lord Jesus went about making disciples (learners), teaching them.

- ii. Similarly the disciples were to continue this work of going about making disciples, indoctrinating them in everything the Lord Jesus had taught them, the Holy Spirit being their Helper (John 14:26; 16:7-14).
- iii. The Lord Jesus did not say go and save souls. We cannot save souls, this is the supernatural work of God. He alone can save. It is our privilege, as His witnesses, to point men and women, boys and girls to God’s only Saviour. The great essential of the missionary is that he remains true to the commission of God to disciple all nations by teaching them ALL THINGS that our Saviour has commanded. God’s truth must not be minimized.

2. The Great Commission According to **Mark 16:15**

- a. Mark 16:15: GO YE (having gone, having proceeded) INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND _____ (announce, proclaim, herald) THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. We are to herald the message of the King!
- b. The gospel is for all (cp. Matthew 10:5-6 where the message of the kingdom was restricted to the Jews only). There is to be no exception though there will be some who will never hear the gospel. Paul considered himself a debtor to all; he proclaimed himself ready to preach to all; and he was not ashamed to take the gospel to all (Romans 1:14-16), but there were some to whom he was hindered in going. The key was his readiness. The “where” was God’s directing. The spreading of the gospel in the first century was without distinctions Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, young or old. The same gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.

3. The Great Commission According to Luke

a. **Luke 24:44-49**

- i. What was to be preached (47)? _____
- ii. To whom (47)? _____
- iii. Beginning where (47)? _____
- iv. What were they called (48)? W _____
- v. What were they to receive (49)? _____
- vi. What happened next (51)? _____

b. **Acts 1:1-11**

- i. Luke here picks up from where he left off in his gospel.
- ii. The former treatise (letter) tells what things? (verse 1)

- iii. Luke will now go on to tell “The Acts of the Apostles by the Holy Spirit For the Outworking of God’s Continued Program, God’s Son Being Glorified” (*Title suggested for the Book of Acts by Pastor Parsons*)
4. The Great Commission According to John 20:21, 17:18
 - a. **AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME.** Christ was sent not to do His Own will, but the will of the Father, His Sender (4:34, 5:30, 6:38); NOT to please Himself, but to please His Sender (8:29); NOT to seek His own glory, but to seek the glory of His Sender (7:18). Christ was sent into the world to represent His invisible Sender (1:18, 5:37, 12:44-45, 14:7-11). Christ Jesus was sent into the world, not with His Own words and doctrine, but with the words and doctrine of His Sender (3:34, 7:16, 12:49-50). Christ Jesus could do nothing apart from His Sender, He lived by the Life of His Sender (5:30, 6:57). Christ Jesus was not alone, His Sender was with Him (8:16,29) Christ Jesus was busy in doing the work of His Sender (4:34, 9:4). Christ Jesus finished His work and went home to be with His Sender (7:33, 16:5).
 - b. **SO SEND I YOU.** Not my will, but His will be done. May I please Him Who has chosen me. May I point as a witness to Him. May His beauty rest upon me. May Christ be seen in me. May I preach not myself but Christ Jesus the Lord. Without Him I can do nothing. I live, yet, not I but Christ. Lo, He is with me always. I must abound in the work of the Lord. When my work on earth is done I will be taken home to be with the Lord Who sent me. (*Can you supply verses to go with each of these statements?*) See our literature item, The Great Commission According to John.
 - c. **CHRIST JESUS IS PERFECT HUMANITY REPRESENTING THE FATHER. THE CHURCH IS REDEEMED HUMANITY REPRESENTING CHRIST (YEAH, EVEN THE FATHER WHO SENT HIM), THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLING WITHIN US.**

IV. The Progress of the Church (ACTS)

- A. Having made a prophecy concerning this new thing He would do, our Lord was crucified, buried, and resurrected to provide for the creation of this new entity, the Church. Without His death there could be no forgiveness of sins (Romans 4:25, Ephesians 1:7); without His resurrection from the dead there could be no life (Romans 4:25, 1 John 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:12-22). The Old Testament Feasts of Jehovah in Leviticus 23 picture the grand movement of God in His drama of redemption.

1. **Passover** speaks of redemption from bondage (1 Corinthians 5:7).
2. **Unleavened Bread** speaks of fellowship on the basis of a holy walk made possible by blood atonement.
3. **Firstfruits** typifies resurrection—Christ first, then those who are His at His coming (1 Corinthians 15:22-23).
4. **Pentecost** followed the feast of unleavened bread by seven sabbaths plus one day (50 days, Pentecost). It pictures the founding of the Church. Whereas believers were once loosely tied together as sheaves of separate grain (the nation Israel), now believers are identified as one unique organism, a body. The separate identities of the grain are lost in one loaf (body) where there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, bond nor free. The presence of leaven suggests the presence of sin yet in the church while it is being formed. (Galatians 3:26-28; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 12:12-13,20).
5. The last three feasts to complete the seven are separated from the first four by a long gap because they pertain to the future regathering (**Feast of Trumpets**), repentance (**Day of Atonement**), and the glorious kingdom (**Feast of Tabernacles**) of the nation Israel. Remember, God is not finished with Israel yet. Israel shall rise again!

[For more help on the Feasts of Israel, see our study notes entitled Bible Times and Customs, Chapter 13.]

- B. Just before His ascension to begin His present ministry of intercession for us at the right hand of the throne of God, our Lord made a promise to His disciples.
1. For how many days after His resurrection did the Lord Jesus show Himself alive? (Acts 1:2-3) _____
 2. **Acts 1:8:** But ye shall receive _____, after that the _____ is come upon you: and ye shall be _____ unto me both in _____, and in all _____, and in _____, and unto the uttermost _____ of the _____.
 - a. Who was the source of this power? _____
 - b. What were they empowered to be? _____
 - c. Note the rippling effect—Jerusalem (home base), Judea (branching out to the area surrounding Jerusalem), Samaria (moving farther out), and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
- C. The Day of Pentecost (**Acts 2**)
1. On that day the disciples were in one accord, in one place, when the Spirit of God came upon them in a visible and audible way. What were the two evidences that the Spirit of God had come? (Acts 2:2-3)
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

2. On that day the Spirit of God did His work of placing or incorporating those assembled believers into the Body of Christ. This was the “Birthday” of the Church.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 12:13 For by _____ are we all baptized (immersed, placed into) into _____, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been _____ made to drink into _____.
 - b. A birthday is not repeated, though we use the term loosely. Actually we celebrate the anniversary of our birth. Pentecost does not need to be repeated. Once the baby is born one does not have to keep going back to have the baby again. Instead one needs to feed and nourish and nurture the baby. We want the baby to grow up into maturity. Even so the Church. (*And even so the believer—Hebrews 5:12—6:2,9*).
 - c. Pentecost, then, marks the entrance of the Spirit of God into the world in a dramatic way to begin this new ministry.

3. On that day God gave credentials to His spokesmen.
 - a. They began to speak with other tongues (language) as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4) so that those gathered from all over the empire for this great feast might hear in their own language in which they were born (2:8) the wonderful works of God (2:11).
 - b. See Acts 2:14. P _____ became the principal spokesman (fulfilling Matt 16:19): **Acts 2:22**--Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it... 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ... 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost... 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

4. On that day God gave warning to the Jews of certain judgment in the sign of tongues or languages (Isaiah 28:9-16, Matthew 21:42-44). *For a carefully done study of this subject of God’s Gift of Tongues you are referred to George Zeller’s book by that title. In it he gives a good study on tongues as a sign of God’s judgment of the Jews for rejecting Him.* Through the gift of tongues, God was indicating that He was going to put aside Israel for a time and was going to begin a new program involving His Church.

5. On that day _____ souls were added to the 120 disciples (Acts 2:41).
 - a. Acts 2:41 They gladly _____ his [Peter’s] _____.
 - b. Acts 2:41 They were _____ (outward sign of their inward faith; outward sign of being identified with this new organism).

- c. Acts 2:42 They _____ steadfastly in the apostle's _____ and _____, and in breaking of _____, and in _____.
- d. Acts 2:43 And _____ came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs (credentials) were done by the apostles.
- e. Acts 2:44 And all that believed were _____, and had all things common.
- f. Acts 2:46 And they continuing _____ with _____ in the temple, and breaking _____ from house to house, did eat their meat (food) with _____ and singleness of heart.
- g. Acts 2:47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the _____ added to the church daily such as should be saved.

D. Subsequent to the day of Pentecost (Acts chapters 4-13)

1. There was the beginning of persecution (Can you find this in chapter 4?).
2. Surprisingly, more were being added to the church (see Acts 4:4 and 5:14).
3. The believers continued with one H _____ and one S _____, growing in the Lord (Acts 4:32, 5:42, etc.).
4. Fear came upon those within and without so that only the serious and sober dared join them (Acts 5:11-14).
5. More persecution took place and Stephen became the first martyr (see the end of chapter 5 and chapters 6-7). He bravely died and stayed true to the Lord to the end.
6. The believers were _____ abroad and went everywhere preaching the _____ (Acts 8:4).
7. Philip went down to the city of _____, and preached _____ unto them (Acts 8:5).
 - a. Acts 8:6 And the people with _____ accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.
 - b. P _____ and John were commissioned to confirm this new development (Acts 8:14-17,25). P _____ thus opens the door of the Church to the Samaritans (who were racially half Jews, half Gentiles). Thus also Acts 1:8 is being fulfilled in its next ripple.
8. P _____ goes to open the door to the Gentiles (Acts chapters 10,11). God marks this new development in the same way He has marked the others with the visible and audible outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44-48,11:15-18).
9. In Acts 13 we find the beginning of the first missionary journey taking the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.
10. It was necessary that the gospel be first preached to the J _____ (Romans 1:16; Acts 13:46-49, 28:25-28). Salvation is of the J _____ (John 4:22). Christ came