

## WHAT ABOUT WOMEN PREACHERS?

Since the 1980's there has been a strong movement in the Christian Churches to ordain female pastors followed later by permitting them to be elected as bishops or into positions of denominational leadership.

On the face of it, this only seems fair. Ever since the 1920's when women were given the right to vote (in the USA) the women's movement has increased in strength. It is only natural that it would begin to move into the arena of the church. The question is, is this a good thing? Is it a scriptural thing?

To find out the biblical answer we have to go all of the way back to the book of Genesis and the Garden of Eden.

Gen. 1:24 And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so.

When God created Adam he did not immediately make a female human to complete the human species as he did with the animal kingdom.

Gen. 2:20 KJV And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

Mankind was different. Mankind was special. In the creation of the animals each was created individually, like cookies cut out of different cutters. With human beings God used a different method.

Gen. 2:20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

Notice in verse 2:20 that no suitable "helper" was found for Adam. Adam needed a helper, not a supervisor.

It was not as if God had to look and see if perhaps he forgot to make a suitable companion for Adam. It was all in his plan. What God did with humans was different than what he did with the other creatures.

With other creatures he created them in pairs, each one being a separate individual creation. With mankind he only created one, a male. Then from that one He created the second one, a female. In effect, God cloned Adam from his rib, but made the result a female. Let's read the whole story.

Gen. 2:18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Gen. 2:19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

Gen. 2:20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

Gen. 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

Gen. 2:22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Gen. 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Gen. 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

In God's kingdom there is order and rank. Even in what we call the Trinity there is an order.

John 14:28 "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

John 14:31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. "Come now; let us leave.

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

1Cor. 15:23 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

1Cor. 15:24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

1Cor. 15:25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

1Cor. 15:26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

1Cor. 15:27 For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.

1Cor. 15:28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

It is clear that there is order in the heavens. Even the angels have rank. Michael and Gabriel are archangels. They have authority over the other angels. Humans have authority over every living thing on the earth. The larger, stronger beasts rule over the smaller ones. It goes on down the line, like the food chain, the birds are over the worms and the insects. God created an orderly universe. Everyone but God the Father Himself is subject to someone. Even in what is called the Trinity there is order, God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, who is subservient to and proceeds from both the Father and the Son.

### **HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO WOMEN PREACHERS?**

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

Gen. 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

God has placed Human beings both male and female over all the creatures of the earth. In the beginning there was no clear command for Adam to have the leadership role in the family, although that was no doubt in God’s plan for a later time. Think about it, before sin entered the world there was no need for either the man or the woman to be a leader in authority over the other. They were both perfect. They could discuss something, and both being perfect, would arrive at the same conclusion. They would come up with the same answer in any discussion and the answer would be to do whatever would be most pleasing to God. What a peaceful world it must have been. But, all good things in this world come to an end. Sin then entered the world.

### **DECEIVED**

Gen. 3:13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

2Cor. 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

1Tim. 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Eve was deceived, but not Adam. A pastor must have discernment to be able to understand who is lying to him and who is not. Satan deceived Eve when he lied to her. A woman's discernment and judgment is clouded by emotion. Emotion, the very thing that God gave her as a gift for raising children prevents her from having a perfectly unbiased opinion about right and wrong. When emotion gets into the picture you cannot arrive at a clear solution. As any union-management negotiator knows, When emotion gets into the picture no settlement is possible. Both sides refuse to budge and bargain logically. A cooling off period has to be called for before negotiations can resume.

In the church world a woman's compassion for others gets in the way of requiring biblical truth to be the standard rule of the congregation. Neither a woman or a man can make an entirely clear minded decision when emotion becomes involved. To make an honest judgment emotion must be entirely removed from the equation and men are better at this than women.

Does this mean that men will always make the right decisions? Absolutely not! It just slows Satan down a bit. It only took a short time to deceive Eve after the creation; it took about a hundred years to get the church all messed up after Jesus left.

Not only that but in some ways Adam's sin was worse than Eve's. At least Eve had an excuse, and a good one. She was deceived. Adam sinned willfully, choosing to side with his wife and sin against God knowingly.

Heb. 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

But, God would rather have someone sin with knowledge than in ignorance. Then they can at least be held accountable.

Rev. 3:15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

After sin entered the world and there was no more perfection, no more would both people come up with the same solution to every problem. This being the case, leadership by delegated authority had to come into being in the human realm.

Gen. 3:16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

Without leadership by God's delegation of authority, there would be chaos. By God's choice Adam was given delegated authority. He would rule over his wife, Eve, and all men after him of those who would follow God's will would rule over their wives. Since we do not follow this today we have chaos in the churches and in the homes.

Another point to be thought upon is this: sin entered the picture when Adam trespassed the commandment, not when Eve did. Had Adam not followed Eve into sin at that time the world could have went on in perfection until Adam finally made a willful mistake. Adam could have said, Eve, we are not doing this, this is against God's will and nothing would have happened at that time. You will see that clearly when we study vows in a moment. A husband has the right to rescind a vow or a sin that his wife has become involved in and the Lord will not hold her accountable for it. That is why sin did not enter the world of humans (it existed in Satan and his fallen angels, but not in the human race) until Adam sinned.

Rom. 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—

Rom. 5:15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

Sin entered the world when Adam sinned, not Eve. Sin entered the world through one male human being. Eve was truly deceived, she did not sin willfully. Adam was not deceived. He sinned because he wanted to. Women may not realize it but this is a blessing. Just suppose for a moment that women were in charge of everything. That would mean that women would then be responsible at the judgment for all of men's sins. Do you really think that women could keep all men under their control and make them do only good things? If you say yes, then answer this: since women are at the present time ruling over all children, male and female, how come all children are not almost perfect? How come there are juvenile delinquents? How come kids don't always obey their mothers and be perfect little angels? Do you see what a burdensome responsibility it would be for

women if they were responsible for the sins of all full grown men along with the responsibility they already have? Believe me, it's a blessing for women that God has not given them the responsibility of full leadership of the human race. Men in authority do not always realize that they are responsible for the behavior of those they are leading. There will be some sad men on the judgment day.

But, by God's grace and mercy all sin has been paid for by one man, Jesus Christ. Not one person has to go to hell because of Adam's sin. Christ paid for every sin, past, present and future. All we have to do is believe it by faith to obtain the gift of forgiveness of sin and salvation. Praise God that the gift is not like the trespass!

So, another point is, why should women even want to take the blame for something that is not their responsibility or job in the first place? Why do people confess to crimes they didn't commit? Why go to prison for something you didn't do? When a woman takes over a leadership position in the church she is taking on a responsibility that she does not have to accept. Having accepted it though she will be judged for her performance since she willfully took it upon herself. The Lord gives us the guidelines for leadership in the book of Numbers when he lays out the rules concerning freewill vows and offerings.

## **VOWS AND FREEWILL OFFERINGS**

Num. 30:1 Moses said to the heads of the tribes of Israel: "This is what the LORD commands:

Num. 30:2 When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said.

Num. 30:3 "When a young woman still living in her father's house makes a vow to the LORD or obligates herself by a pledge

Num. 30:4 and her father hears about her vow or pledge but says nothing to her, then all her vows and every pledge by which she obligated herself will stand.

Num. 30:5 But if her father forbids her when he hears about it, none of her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand; the LORD will release her because her father has forbidden her.

Num. 30:6 "If she marries after she makes a vow or after her lips utter a rash promise by which she obligates herself

Num. 30:7 and her husband hears about it but says nothing to her, then her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand.

Num. 30:8 But if her husband forbids her when he hears about it, he nullifies the vow that obligates her or the rash promise by which she obligates herself, and the LORD will release her.

Num. 30:9 "Any vow or obligation taken by a widow or divorced woman will be binding on her.

Num. 30:10 “If a woman living with her husband makes a vow or obligates herself by a pledge under oath

Num. 30:11 and her husband hears about it but says nothing to her and does not forbid her, then all her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand.

Num. 30:12 But if her husband nullifies them when he hears about them, then none of the vows or pledges that came from her lips will stand. Her husband has nullified them, and the LORD will release her.

Num. 30:13 Her husband may confirm or nullify any vow she makes or any sworn pledge to deny herself.

Num. 30:14 But if her husband says nothing to her about it from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or the pledges binding on her. He confirms them by saying nothing to her when he hears about them.

Num. 30:15 If, however, he nullifies them some time after he hears about them, then he is responsible for her guilt.”

Num. 30:16 These are the regulations the LORD gave Moses concerning relationships between a man and his wife, and between a father and his young daughter still living in his house.

The rules concerning vows basically outline the chain of leadership that God has set in place. The lesson is that a father of a single woman or the husband of a married woman has the right to nullify his daughters or his wife’s vows as the case may be. Adam had the opportunity to be a hero and refuse to partake in sin and nullify what Eve did, but he chose to be a dummy.

## **WHAT ABOUT HEAD COVERINGS?**

When I was a child almost every woman wore a hat to church every Sunday. On Easter the new hats and the really special hats came out. I used to enjoy sitting in church and just looking at all of the women’s hats. Now that is certainly not a good reason to return to that custom, just to have something interesting to do in church, but, let’s see where and why the custom originated.

1Cor. 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

1Cor. 11:2 I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you.

1Cor. 11:3 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

1Cor. 11:4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.

1Cor. 11:5 And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as though her head were shaved.

1Cor. 11:6 If a woman does not cover her head, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head.

1Cor. 11:7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

1Cor. 11:8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man;

1Cor. 11:9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

1Cor. 11:10 For this reason, and because of the angels, the woman ought to have a sign of authority on her head.

1Cor. 11:11 In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman.

1Cor. 11:12 For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.

1Cor. 11:13 Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?

1Cor. 11:14 Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him,

1Cor. 11:15 but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering.

1Cor. 11:16 If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God.

Paul's teaching here outlines the fact that there is order in all creation. There is delegated authority, a chain of command. Covering of the head with a hat or long hair on a woman symbolizes submission to God. In the church a woman should not pray without a head covering. A man should take his hat off when entering the church. You might think, how stupid is that? Who cares about hats? It's not about hats, it's about reverence for God, something that is missing in a lot of modern day churches. The Moslems go overboard with the old customs and practically want their ladies to be covered with a blanket head to foot before stepping outside the door of their home. We will see later that God does not condone changing his instructions, either to stricter or more lenient. We are just to do what he says, no more, and no less.

In some churches the music and dancing resembles that of a strip club. There seems to be no reverence for God at all in those places. It reminds me of what happened in Exodus. What some call worship in modern day churches is more like the revelry that occurred in Exodus 32.

Ex. 32:1 When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will

go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."

Ex. 32:2 Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me."

Ex. 32:3 So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron.

Ex. 32:4 He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."

Ex. 32:5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD."

Ex. 32:6 So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

Ex. 32:7 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt.

A woman wearing a head covering and a man removing his hat in church are outward symbols that each is submissive to God and trying to do his will and follow his commands. It is reverence for God that is the issue here. I know many will not agree with this, they did not even agree in Paul's day. But, if the church wants revival, they have to do it God's way or no way. Revival will not come as long as we are living in sin. We need to give glory, reverence and honor to our awesome God in the churches. Then we will see good results.

Deut. 22:5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

The Old Testament commands about clothing are violated everywhere. You can't walk into a department store or a grocery store without walking behind people whose sex is a mystery. The women look like men and vice versa.

God created male and female to be different and he expects us to look like it. Even the animal kingdom can teach us that. Now when I was young it was taught that it was a sin for a woman to wear pants. That is not at all what the scriptures are talking about. In China women have worn pants to work in the fields for thousands of years. Basically it is talking about someone intentionally dressing up disguised or imitating the opposite sex. Today we call them transvestites.

Definition of transvestite on the Web: \* someone who adopts the dress or manner or sexual role of the opposite sex

\* transvestic: receiving sexual gratification from wearing clothing of the opposite sex. [wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)

## Tattoos

Tattoos are a sign of false religion. They also disfigure the human body and dishonor God by making the statement, "I can make my body more beautiful by adding ink." In a sense tattoos, even a flower or a child's name is dishonoring to God. It's like saying "You didn't know what you were doing God, I'll help you by fixing myself up a little bit." Tattoos are also often used in cultures around the world to represent crime and evil. They are also a forerunner of the "Mark of the Beast." Hey, what's one more little old mark of 666 when you have a whole body full of tattoos already.

Rev. 14:9 A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand,

Rev. 14:10 he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.

Rev. 14:11 And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were **sealed** for the day of redemption.

God marks and seals his people invisibly with the Holy Spirit. Humans can't see it but the angels and creatures of the spiritual realm can. Satan does not have the power to mark people with a spiritual mark, so he will cause his followers to be marked in the physical realm.

Tattoos are just another deception of Satan and a way to make people rebel against God. If you don't have any, don't get any. If you have some, don't get any more. Even the cops and prison shows on television illustrate that tattoos for some reason are appealing to those who hate God and love evil. It used to be only sailors, marines and bikers had tattoos. Now Satan has everyone deceived, even grandmothers. To me, nothing looks more unappealing than a 65 year old grandmother with a butch haircut and tattoos. It brings to my mind this scripture;

Heb. 5:12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

Older women should be teachers to younger women, not bad examples. When I was young almost all older women seemed to be good examples for children. Now most of them are only a good example of a bad example.

Titus 2:3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.

Titus 2:4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

Prov. 11:22 Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.

Don't be associated with such things as tattoos and piercings either, except in the ears. Ear piercing or any piercing denotes ownership. If your piercing does not represent ownership by Jesus Christ then it represents ownership of your life by Satan. We are servants of Jesus, if we are saved and not servants of Satan.

Lev. 19:28 “Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the LORD.

Ex. 21:5 “But if the servant declares, ‘I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,’

Ex. 21:6 then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life.

On the flip side many of the older women who are trying to act like their granddaughters may have been driven to it by husbands who are doing the same things. How many men nowadays are getting divorced in their sixties, buying a Harley Davidson motorcycle, getting a tattoo and an earring along with a bag of cocaine and one or two bimbo crack headed girlfriends? It is ridiculous down here in Florida. These men do not realize what a spectacle they are making of themselves. Even their young friends laugh at them behind their backs while the girls spend all of the money. These men will wind up at seventy years old broke, in credit card debt, with no retirement money left and no inheritance for their children. They may wind up moving in with their children. In the process they have probably put their wives in the same situation that they are in.

Prov. 13:22 A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

Believe it or not, God holds the men responsible for their wives and children's sins. This is another example of the responsibility and guilt before God that the male species is under judgment for. If women only understood what they were getting themselves into when desire a man's job they would not want it. Who would want to be responsible for the sins of a bunch of perverted old men?

Hos. 4:1 Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites, because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land.

Hos. 4:2 There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

Hos. 4:3 Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying.

Hos. 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

Hos. 4:7 The more the priests increased, the more they sinned against me; they exchanged their Glory for something disgraceful.

Hos. 4:8 They feed on the sins of my people and relish their wickedness.

Hos. 4:9 And it will be: Like people, like priests. I will punish both of them for their ways and repay them for their deeds.

Hos. 4:14 "I will not punish your daughters when they turn to prostitution, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery, because the men themselves consort with harlots..."

God holds the men responsible for the sins of their families when the men set a bad example. The priests are in even more trouble. Not only are they leading their own families astray but the entire nation (whatever nation they are in) and the church. As we will see later, priests who set a bad example will receive a greater damnation, perhaps a hotter place in hell.

What a terrible legacy this is to leave for ones grandchildren. Grandpa was a dirty old pervert and grandma was nuttier than a fruitcake and trying to act like her 16 year old grandchild. What a sad state of affairs. All due to sin, and all was preventable. All we have to do is follow God's Word.

## IS A WOMAN PERMITTED TO SPEAK IN THE CHURCH?

1Cor. 14:34 women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says.

1Tim. 2:12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.

Lets look at the verses in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy that pertain to the order of authority in the churches.

1Tim. 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

1Tim. 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

1Tim. 2:10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

1Tim. 2:11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

1Tim. 2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

1Tim. 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

1Tim. 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

In the article following we will be looking at the responsibility of the Christian woman to teach, as it is outlined in God's word. It needs to be emphasized that women are responsible for teaching the Word as surely as are men but there are specific restrictions to women, some of which we have already seen in the verses above.

Where is a woman allowed to teach? She may teach in a private, informal capacity. Who may a woman teach? In this private, informal capacity a woman may teach:

1. A man - Acts 18:26.. whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

2. A child - Timothy was taught the scriptures as a child by his mother and grandmother (II Tim 3:15).

3. Another woman - Titus 2:3-4. Older women are instructed to teach the younger.

In summation of these Bible instructions we find a woman may teach in a private, informal setting. In this setting she may teach men, women and children. It is important to note that where a woman may teach she may teach anyone.  
Joe Hisle 1991

It was already discussed earlier in this lesson that a woman was to pray in church with her head covered, so prayer in church was acceptable. Exercising spiritual gifts was also acceptable, including tongues, provided there was an interpreter. Singing was also acceptable, even in the Old Testament. Miriam the prophetess was singing praises to God in mixed company. She was not however in the tabernacle but neither is the church building the tabernacle. It would seem that singing in the church by women is acceptable as long as it is under the direction of the pastor.

Ex. 15:20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.  
Ex. 15:21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

1Cor. 14:26 What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.

So, in conclusion basically what Paul was forbidding seems to be women presenting the sermon and teaching the Word of God in the church to mixed company, not singing or exercising spiritual gifts under the direction of the pastor.

Paul was also trying to prevent disruptions in the church. It was not permissible to interrupt the speaker and ask questions during the sermon. Even men today do not normally interrupt the pastor when he is delivering the message. In a bible study, such as in a home fellowship group, that is a different story entirely. We are all commanded to meet together and study the Word of God, both men and women. In fact, rewards are earned just for talking to one another about God's word. Fellowship and biblical discussions are very important indeed, for both men and women.

Mal. 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

One word of caution. A problem that is still in the church today is over talking by women even when it is acceptable for them to speak in the church. I shudder

whenever the pastor asks at 11:23 AM if anyone has a prayer request or a word to share before we close the service. Often about five hands go up, all women. Then I know the service will last for another hour. Many women cannot just say “please pray for my sister, she has cancer.” No, we have to hear about her sisters life story from cradle until today with many side trips. After this is repeated five times we may close the service at 12:30 PM. In situations where women need to speak in the church they need to keep it brief.

Now, in all fairness I understand why they do it. They are exercising their gift of emotion and they want to be sure that the hearers understand every detail and just how everyone involved in the story they are telling felt. This is just the nature of women. They talk a lot. Even little girls in elementary school exhibit this characteristic with no training whatsoever. It comes natural. There are many men who have this problem also, they seem to be attracted to the political field.

Even autism symptoms concerning lack of speech are very rare in girls. One medical view is that even if a young girl is autistic in some aspects, speech is not affected like it is in boys. They surmise that the natural instinct of females to talk and interact is so strong that it overrides the autistic characteristics. In other words women talk so much that an autistic girls symptoms in the speech arena are not even recognizable. Even with speech slowed down they talk so much they seem normal.

Paul’s injunction for ‘women to keep silent IN THE CHURCHES’ was an effort to instill some sanity and orderliness to the meetings that were taking place in Corinth. They were totally out of control as you will see if you read the entire book of 1st Corinthians. The point is that women are free to talk and share in informal bible studies, to unbelievers, in the workplace, in fact anywhere they are they can talk about Jesus. They just can’t deliver the sermon from the pulpit or disrupt the service with endless chatter.

## **DENOMINATIONS, WOMENS ORDINATION, AND OTHER ERRORS**

"If we look at the denominations that approved women's ordination from 1956-1976, we find that several of them, such as the United Methodist church and the United Presbyterian Church have large contingents pressing for the endorsement of homosexual conduct as morally valid and the approval of homosexual ordination.

[When some denominations started to consecrate Female bishops:](#)

Only some Protestant churches have bishops. A few of these have allowed women to become bishops:

1956 United Church of Christ  
1964 American Baptist  
1980: United Methodist Church  
1989: Episcopal Church in the U.S.  
1992: Evangelical Lutheran Church  
1997: Anglican Church  
1998: Presbyterian Church

If you look at the list above and then compare that list to the churches that are today having problems with homosexual ordination you will find that they are identical. Why is this so, you may ask? It is so because Satan is able to more easily mislead women into doing his will by preying on their emotions.

God endowed women with more emotion in their lives than men. This difference enabled women to be better at raising children and men to be better at hard labor, both being necessary for the survival of the species.

A woman will plead for the life of her son even if he has committed a horrendous crime, such as killing fifteen innocent people with an automatic weapon at a fast food restaurant. A man, being less emotional and more practical will say, "I'm sorry he has to die but he deserves it." God have mercy on his soul.

The point is that women are more easily misled by Satan to put aside the teaching of the bible in order to allow someone who ought not to be in church leadership to be appointed to a high position.

Where will this all lead to? I can tell you with absolute certainty where it will lead. It will lead to the end times church called in scripture Laodicea. It will lead to all manner of sin not just being permitted but approved in the church. It will lead to the Jezebel religion, the woman portrayed as riding the beast of false religion.

The end times church that will be destroyed during the outpouring of the wrath of God will allow women preachers, will allow homosexuals to be ordained as church leaders, will allow all manner of other sin to be legal in the church and will put Christ outside of his own church. It is already happening. The verse below refers to Christ being outside the door of his own church in the end times. Jesus is outside, sin is inside, but he is willing to have fellowship with anyone, church or individual who will invite him in.

Rev. 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

False religion will be destroyed. Don't let yourself be deceived into becoming a part of it and be destroyed with it, and if you already are involved, get out of it now as God commands.

Rev. 18:4 NIV Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues;

Lets look at the verse in context from the KJV and get the whole picture.

Rev. 18:1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

Rev. 18:2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

Rev. 18:3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

Rev. 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

Rev. 18:5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

Rev. 18:6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Rev. 18:7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

Rev. 18:8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

Rev. 18:24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

The end times church will not only permit all evil to be sanctioned as good, they will persecute and martyr the true followers of Jesus.

Is. 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

## THE HIERARCHY OF THE CHURCH

If your goal is to rise up in church leadership above the bishop or pastor level, you are in trouble already. There is not any scriptural justification for such offices to even exist. There is no such thing in the scriptures as the College of Cardinals or a denominational headquarters full of highly paid modern day Pharisees.

In the early church if a meeting needed to be held to discuss issues in the church or doctrinal differences, the most senior and spiritual pastor from an area was sent by the local churches to attend the meeting. There was not a palatial headquarters from which he emerged to go forth. He was a working pastor not a politician. The money that now supports church hierarchy is the money that should be used to support orphans and widows. Those receiving a salary for working in church politics are stealing from the poor and will be judged for it. If all that money was being used to help people in need, the church would be growing not shrinking. There should not need to be a welfare system in the United States, that is the job of the church. You disagree? God himself says that he hates those who create and maintain church hierarchy.

Rev. 2:6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Rev. 2:15 Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

The Nicolaitans were the creators of church offices such as pope and cardinal. The Greek translation of Nicolaitans means rulers over the laity. Nico (from where the name Nicholas comes from) means victory or ruler. The laity of course is the congregation, the same as it means today. God says he hates those who put themselves in positions ruling over the laity with of course the exceptions of pastors and deacons, which offices are the only ones God ordained in the church.

The male given name, Nicholas, is derived from the Greek Νικόλαος, Nikólaos, a combination of the words for "victory" (níkē) and "people" (laós). The name can be understood to mean victory of the people or "power of the people". From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Greek form of the word "laity" is "laos", which Strong assigns number 2992 and defines simply as "people". It is used 143 times in the New Testament

Nicholas means victory of the people. (notice also that Nike meaning victory is also the name of a popular tennis shoe) Nico or nike with laitans added rather than olas changes it to victory over the people. In the church this means that the ruling class of the clergy has conquered and had victory over the laity reducing them to slavery. Again, God hates this and Jesus commanded against it vehemently in the Gospels. Let's look at what Jesus said. That should settle it.

Matt. 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.  
Matt. 20:26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,  
Matt. 20:27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—  
Matt. 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.  
Mark 10:43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,  
Mark 10:44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.  
Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Luke 22:24 Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.  
Luke 22:25 Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.  
Luke 22:26 But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.  
Luke 22:27 For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

If you are seeking higher office in the church, forget it if you want to be servant of God and hear the pleasing words, "well done" at the judgment.

Matt. 25:21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

Serving in the ruling class of the church will get you only the condemnation of being a thief and a robber, stealing the tithes and offerings of the saints that should be being used to help widows and orphans.

Luke 20:46 “Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.

Luke 20:47 They devour widows’ houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely.”

We have gotten off on a few bunny trails but it is necessary to understand the how the church is supposed to be run before we can fully understand why God has set the rules for church leadership in place the way he has.

My point is that some peoples idea of serving God is to go to bible college, get a job as a pastor, work ones way up into denominational headquarters after about ten years, get a big cushy office with a nice salary, a good pension and be welcomed into God’s kingdom when they die as a great man or woman of God. That false notion needs to be dispelled.

James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Helping widows and orphans is what true religion is all about. The Assemblies of God became the fastest growing protestant denomination for many years. From the late 1970’s until the early 2000’s they went from one million members to three million. They did it by emphasizing bus ministry to children. Whether by accident or design I don’t know but they were ministering to many children of single parents, no parent at all living with them or ministering to children who were being neglected by their parents. These children were in effect all orphans in a sense. They had no direction or guidance in their lives and the church was helping them to have the opportunity for a better life.

1Tim. 5:3 Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need.

1Tim. 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.

1Tim. 5:5 The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help.

1Tim. 5:6 But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

1Tim. 5:7 Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame.

1Tim. 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

1Tim. 5:9 No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband,

1Tim. 5:10 and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

1Tim. 5:11 As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry.

1Tim. 5:12 Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge.

1Tim. 5:13 Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to.

1Tim. 5:14 So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.

1Tim. 5:15 Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.

1Tim. 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.

The church has gotten away from the practice of helping widows and orphans and allowed the government to take over. For this reason there is no longer a spiritual outreach to those in need. The government helps with food and shelter but provides no nourishment for the soul. God set things up properly and we are guilty of not following what he has ordained.

Notice that there is no provision for able bodied men to be given church sponsored welfare. A man being endowed by God with the responsibility for leadership should be able to take care of himself.

Notice also that the widows who are cared for by the church have committed themselves to be life long workers in the church and not just receive help until they find a new husband. They are to pray, help with anything that needs to be done around the church and be rich in good works and good deeds. God set up a beautiful plan to help both the widows to be able to survive and be useful and to get things done in and around the church. If we would only follow His plan things would be a lot better.

If you as an individual really want to serve God whether within the church walls or out of it, then minister physically and spiritually to widows and children. This is God's will and these rewards will follow you into heaven. I would rather have the reward of giving one cup of water to an orphan than to be the leader of a denomination. You don't even need a church to help you do God's will in this matter. Just do it yourself whenever you find an opportunity.

## Moses and Miriam

Num. 12:1 Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite.

Num. 12:2 "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the LORD heard this.

Num. 12:3 (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)

Num. 12:4 At once the LORD said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the Tent of Meeting, all three of you." So the three of them came out.

Num. 12:5 Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the Tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them stepped forward,

Num. 12:6 he said, "Listen to my words: "When a prophet of the LORD is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams.

Num. 12:7 But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house.

Num. 12:8 With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

Num. 12:9 The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them.

Num. 12:10 When the cloud lifted from above the Tent, there stood Miriam—leprous, like snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had leprosy;

Num. 12:11 and he said to Moses, "Please, my lord, do not hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed.

Num. 12:12 Do not let her be like a stillborn infant coming from its mother's womb with its flesh half eaten away."

Num. 12:13 So Moses cried out to the LORD, "O God, please heal her!"

Num. 12:14 The LORD replied to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in disgrace for seven days? Confine her outside the camp for seven days; after that she can be brought back."

Num. 12:15 So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on till she was brought back.

Num. 12:16 After that, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Desert of Paran.

All of the trouble recounted above started because some people, Miriam and her cohorts, wanted to share the leadership role with Moses. Their reasoning was that God could speak through them just as well as through Moses.

Num. 12:2 “Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?” they asked. “Hasn’t he also spoken through us?” And the LORD heard this.

This is true. God could speak through them just as easily as he was speaking through Moses, but that just was not his choice at the time. Remember, it’s not about what we want or what we think is fair. It is about the sovereign will of God to do as he pleases. Our job is to follow his (God’s) will in everything, just like Jesus did. No questions asked.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

They wanted the same thing many want today. They want to bring down the leadership designated by God and place themselves in that position. Even if there were absolutely no human reason why women and homosexuals should not lead the church, and by no reason I mean no differences in ability, it would still be wrong to disobey God’s command. If God chose a talking jackass to lead the church and gave him delegated authority to do, it would be wrong for anyone to kick him out of that position, even an ordained male clergyman. It’s not really about human ability or about who will do the best job, it’s about following God’s commands.

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.

1John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

Rev. 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

**IT’S ALL ABOUT LOVE**

People who really love Jesus want to do his will and the Father's will. They are not looking for a way to weasel around what he has told us to do in order to fulfill their own desires, whims or lusts. They just want to do whatever it is God wants done in the manner he wants it done. It makes no difference whether God wants them to be the church janitor or the president of the denomination, "Thy will be done" is their doctrine.

It is dangerous to go against God's will. One could find himself or herself fighting against God. If we are fighting against God, we may not even be saved, even if we have done many wonderful works in his name, but not by his will.

The practice of today's denominations and churches is "our will be done" as if true religion is a democracy. We will vote on what we want to do and do it, even if it is contrary to God's Word, is their attitude. This shows that they are not following Christ, but their own desires and lusts.

Matt. 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 7:22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

Matt. 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Matt. 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Although we said above that it did not matter if God chose an unqualified person to lead the church, it would still be his choice and we, if we are true believers, would be required to follow it. But, God does give us a method to choose qualified people to lead the church, however, often today we do not allow God's Word to be the deciding factor in leadership decisions.

## DEACONS

There are only two New Testament offices of church workers outlined in the scriptures, elders and deacons. We will look at deacons first, although the bible does it in the reverse order. We are looking at deacons first because they are the lower level of leadership. Everything a deacon has to live up to in order to be qualified and appointed, an elder or pastor must do also. So pastors must meet all the requirements of deacons and even more if they are truly called by God to that position. God will not violate his own Word. Anyone HE calls to be a deacon or pastor WILL meet the requirements outlined in the scriptures.

Philippians 1:1 "Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."

"The officers in a local New Testament church are pastors and deacons (Phil. 1:1). The same office is variously called bishop, elder or pastor." - Hershel H. Hobbs  
The Baptist Faith and Message, p. 69

Baptist polity through the years has affirmed two scriptural officers of a New Testament church, pastor and deacon. Baptists believe the Bible teaches that all Christians are called to serve and minister to others in Christ's name, but some are called and gifted by God to function in specific roles of ministry, such as pastors and deacons.

A deacon is an assistant to the pastor or a church worker. The word translated "deacon" from the Greek means "servant or servants." (diakonoi)

Anyone can be a servant in the church. Man, woman, child, new convert, perhaps even an unsaved person. However, in the sense of being a deacon as an office in the church, that is a different matter entirely.

Before we continue let me explain a bit more. More than once at our church we have had the air conditioning break down. A local service technician was called to repair it. He repaired it free of charge even though he was not a believer or a member of our church. He wanted to do something nice for us. In that sense he was being a "servant" for the church. Again, anyone is allowed to do that. The verses in Timothy though are not referring to that type of servant. They are referring to a position that today we might call a pastors assistant or an assistant pastor. It is referring to a position of leadership in the church under the direction of the elder, overseer, bishop or pastor. (elder, overseer and bishop refer to the same church office which today we call pastor)

Anyone may be a servant (diakonite) in the church. The Greek word (diakonite) means servant. Even a non Christian can serve in this capacity. We have had non-Christians cut the grass just because they wanted to help. Just being around Christians is good for them. Perhaps they will be converted. However, this is not the type of deacon we are referring to when we speak of a person holding the office of deacon in the church. A person holding the office of deacon must meet the biblical requirements. Anyone can be a helper, but only those biblically qualified may hold office in the church.

A deacon is generally an unpaid position. A deacon in today's English is basically a lay minister and / or a pastor's assistant. Not an assistant pastor on the payroll,

but a pastors helper, someone who is willing to do whatever is necessary to help the pastor and the church and is doing it freely to serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes a deacon may later become a pastor. A deacon may be someone going through bible school getting some free hands on experience in church operation. A deacon may also be someone who has absolutely no desire to be a pastor or an overseer. They have their own secular work and career and they just want to be faithful in serving the Lord to the utmost of their ability to benefit the body of believers.

There is no record in the bible or in early church history of deacons ever being paid for their services as a helper in the church. Of course full time church workers in a large church such as secretaries, janitors, teachers in a Christian school. Etc. are paid workers. They are not a part of the leadership of the church per se. They are paid employees using their skills to make a living. They should not formulate church policy just because they are paid employees. The elders (pastors) and deacons direct the operation of the local body. Of course a paid employee may also server as a deacon if they meet the requirements and are elected or appointed to do so.

1Tim. 3:8 Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.

1Tim. 3:9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.

1Tim. 3:10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

1Tim. 3:11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

1Tim. 3:12 A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

The assistant to the pastor must meet the same high standards as the pastor. Someday he may become the pastor. His wife must also have the qualities of spiritually grown person. Again, he can neither be a polygamist nor divorced. He obviously must be male since he is the "husband of one wife." He cannot be an alcoholic, at least not a practicing one, he must be knowledgeable in the scriptures knowing the deep truths of the faith, he cannot be greedy or dishonest and even after meeting all these requirements he must be tested. It does not state the manner of the test but it seems that his life must be examined to make sure there are no hidden sins and after that he may serve as a deacon.

Joshua was the assistant to Moses and later became the leader of Israel. Elisha was the assistant to Elijah and was a prophet to Israel after Elijah was taken up. Even Jesus had his twelve disciples ready to preach the gospel after his ascension. An assistant or servant does not automatically have to follow in their masters' footsteps to a higher leadership role, but often they do. Not all aspire to a higher position. Some are content to serve as a helper to the next leader when there is a change. Daniel served many kings, but never tried to ascend to the throne.

1Tim. 3:13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

1Tim. 3:14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that,

1Tim. 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

1Tim. 3:16 Beyond all question, the mystery of Godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

Paul states his reasons for giving these rules and instructions. It is so Christians will know how to conduct themselves in the management of the church. At the end of his message he gives a short version of sound doctrine.

We will now look at some historical material, the role of deacons in the Baptist Church and in the Roman Catholic tradition.

## Baptist Deacons

The second office in a Baptist church is that of deacon. Deacons are usually selected from within the membership. The biblical qualifications for a deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13) focus primarily on character and relationships within the church, family and community. Deacons are to be persons of impeccable character and deep faith who rely on the Holy Spirit.

Acts 6:1-6 likely records the beginning of the role of deacons. They are to care for the physical needs of the congregation so that pastors can concentrate on spiritual needs. The deacons are not viewed as a governing body but as servant leaders.

In a Baptist church the process of selecting deacons involves the entire congregation. Although churches differ in regard to the details of the process, the

common practice is for the entire church to vote on who will be selected as deacons.

The role of a deacon varies from church to church. In many churches, deacons are asked to evaluate and recommend major matters to be brought to the entire congregation for vote. Churches involve deacons in various ministries, such as visiting the sick, helping families in distress and providing relief to the poor.

### **CATHOLIC DEACONS** (from the Catholic Encyclopedia)

The name deacon (diakonos) means only minister or servant, and is employed in this sense both in the Septuagint (though only in the book of Esther, e.g. 2:2; 6:3) and in the New Testament (e.g. Matthew 20:28; Romans 15:25; Ephesians 3:7; etc.). But in Apostolic times the word began to acquire a more definite and technical meaning. Writing about 63 A.D. St. Paul addresses "all the saints who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1). A few years later (1 Timothy 3:8 sq.) he impresses upon Timothy that "deacons must be chaste, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience." He directs further that they must "first be proved: and so let them minister, having no crime", and he adds that they should be the husbands of one wife: who rule well their children and their own houses. For they that have ministered well shall purchase to themselves a good degree, and much confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." This passage is worthy of note, not only because it describes the qualities desirable in candidates for the diaconate, but also because it suggests that external administration and the handling of money were likely to form part of their functions.

#### Origin and early history of the diaconate

According to the constant tradition of the Catholic Church, the narrative of Acts 6:1-6, which serves to introduce the account of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, describes the first institution of the office of deacon. The Apostles, in order to meet the complaints of the Hellenistic Jews that, "their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations" (diakonia), called together the multitude of the disciples and said: It is not reasonable that we should leave the word of God and serve (diakonein) tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continuously to prayer, and to the ministry of the word (te diakonia tou logou). And the saying was liked by all the multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost (with six others who are named). These they placed "before the Apostles; and they, praying, imposed hands upon them."

Now, on the ground that the Seven are not expressly called deacons and that some of them (e.g. St. Stephen, and later Phillip (Acts 21:8) preached and ranked next to the Apostles, Protestant commentators have constantly raised objections against the identification of this choice of the Seven with the institution of the diaconate. But apart from the fact that the tradition among the Fathers is both unanimous and early — e.g. St. Irenaeus (Adv. Haer., III, xii, 10 and IV, xv, 1) speaks of St. Stephen as the first deacon — the similarity between the functions of the Seven who served the tables and those of the early deacons is most striking. Compare, for example, both with the passage from the Acts with 1 Timothy 3:8 sq., quoted above, the following sentence from Hermas (Sim., IX, 26):

“They that have spots are the deacons that exercised their office ill and plundered the livelihood of widows and orphans and made gains for themselves from the ministrations they had received to perform.”

Or, again, St. Ignatius (Ep. ii to the Trallians):

“Those who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must please all men in all ways. For they are not deacons of meats and drinks [only] but servants of the church of God.”

St. Clement of Rome (about A.D. 95) clearly describes the institution of deacons along with that of bishops as being the work of the Apostles themselves (Ep. Clem., xlii). Further, it should be noted that ancient tradition limited the number of deacons at Rome to seven (Eusebius, Church History VI.43), and that a canon of the council of Neo-Caesarea (325) prescribed the same restriction for all cities, however large, appealing directly to the Acts of the Apostles as a precedent. We seem, therefore, thoroughly justified in identifying the functions of the Seven with those of the deacons of whom we hear so much in the Apostolic Fathers and the early councils. Established primarily to relieve the bishops and presbyters of their more secular and invidious duties, notably in distributing the alms of the faithful, we need not do more than recall the large place occupied by the agapae, or love feasts, in the early worship of the Church, to understand how readily the duty of serving at tables may have passed into the privilege of serving at the altar. They became the natural intermediaries between the celebrant and the people. Inside the Church they made public announcements, marshaled the congregation, preserved order, and the like. Outside of it they were the bishop's deputies in secular matters, and especially in the relief of the poor. Their subordination and general duties of service seem to have been indicated by their standing during the public assemblies of the Church, while the bishops and priests were seated. It should be noticed that along with these functions probably went a large share in

the instruction of catechumens and preparation of the altar services. Even in the Acts of the Apostles (8:38) the Sacrament of Baptism is administered by the deacon Phillip.

**Acts 21:8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven.**

Deacons had to be honest and trustworthy because they were handling the money. They were in charge from the very beginning in the book of Acts for distributing food and financial aid to widows and orphans. As we see from both the Baptist summary of deacons and from the Roman Catholic viewpoint, deacons assisted the pastor or elder in almost every phase of ministry.

## **BISHOPS, OVERSEERS, ELDERS, PASTORS AND SHEPHERDS**

We are going to take a look at the criteria for becoming a pastor in the church. We will begin in the book of Titus. Note that an “elder” is the equivalent of a “Pastor.” In Timothy the word “overseer” probably represents the same position as elder or pastor. Sometimes it is translated as “bishop” which would be a pastor of pastors, or the senior or most wise pastor in a particular town or area. Remember when studying the following verses, there was only one church at the time. There were no denominations, just groups of Christians meeting house to house. The most spiritual person among them would be chosen as elder or pastor, and the most spiritual of all of the pastors in the area would be the overseer or bishop but he would still be the pastor of his own congregation.

## **PASTORS AND DIVORCE**

**Titus 1:6 An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.**

First of all we notice that the elder must be the “husband of one wife.” There is disagreement as to whether this means divorce or is referring to polygamy, which was legal in some countries at the time. To err on the side of caution one would have to exclude single men, divorced men and polygamists from the position of pastor (elder).

Some might argue that this could also mean “the wife of one husband,” but there are no scriptures which support that view. Every verse of scripture on the subject indicates that it is the man’s responsibility to educate his family in the ways of the Lord. Should he not do it the wife may of course do so, but he will be held responsible at the judgment for failure to do his job. Even if the wife has to do the

job of spiritual leader in her home this does not constitute an endorsement of female pastors. The home is a personal place, not the public church of God.

Notice also that his (the pastors) children must be well behaved. If not, he was not to be a pastor. How many would this exclude today?

Now about divorce, we are treading on sensitive ground here as there are many divorced pastors throughout most denominations with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church. A divorced person can do many jobs in the church, but pastor and deacon are probably excluded. There is much debate on this subject and you are free to form your own opinion but consider this: If a man is ruling over his own family well, will he be divorced? I think not. If he shows his wife the scriptures and she meets the requirements of a holy and chaste woman as is required for a man to be a pastor or deacon, then that should end all talk of divorce. When he says to her “the bible says God hates divorce, so we need to work it out and stay married,” then that should settle it. If it doesn’t then it proves that he does not have his family under control and therefore does not meet the qualifications to be a pastor.

Mal. 2:16 “I hate divorce,” says the LORD God of Israel, “and I hate a man’s covering himself with violence as well as with his garment,” says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

Matt. 5:32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

Luke 16:18 “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

How can a man counsel the church of God about marriage if he can’t even convince his own wife not to divorce him. If he’s the one who filed for divorce he is definitely in the wrong. Also, how can you know how his children are behaving if there is no contact with the previous wife and his (the pastors) children from the previous marriage?

The following verse from Leviticus shows that a man in the Old Testament who was going to be a priest had to choose his spouse very carefully and it is good advice for today also, but not a law, at least not the part about marrying from within your own tribe.

Lev. 21:14 He must not marry a widow, a divorced woman, or a woman defiled by prostitution, but only a virgin from his own people,

This helped insure that she (the wife of the priest) would be the type of woman that would help him in the priesthood not hinder him. Making the right choice in marriage goes a long way toward preventing divorce. Again, if a man cannot even choose the right wife for himself, how can he help the people in the congregation make good choices in marriage or anything else?

You may say “my goodness, that is awful harsh not allowing divorced men to be pastors.” It may seem so but there is a reason for it. It is not because they are not forgiven, it is because marriage is a picture of Christ’s relationship with the Church, as we shall see in Ephesians 5:32.

Eph. 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph. 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Eph. 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Eph. 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Eph. 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Eph. 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Eph. 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Eph. 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Eph. 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Eph. 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Eph. 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Human marriage, which God himself instituted, is a picture of Christ’s relationship with the church. When a congregation looks at their pastor and his wife’s lives they should see the qualities listed above in Ephesians in evidence. The pastor and his wife should be a shining example of both human marriage, how it should be and an example of how much Jesus Christ loves and cares for us. A divorced person just cannot fulfill this example. It’s not that divorce is a worse sin than any

other sin, it just destroys the similitude of Christ and his bride when a pastor is divorced.

To help you understand better an illustration from the animal kingdom may help. In the Old Testament rabbits were forbidden to be eaten. Why? Were they bad animals? Did God make a mistake and create something bad? Not at all. But, rabbits basically don't do much useful work. They eat and breed and make more little bunnies. The male rabbits then abandon the female rabbit and her brood and go off with another female rabbit. God designed them this way but the picture they portray is that of immoral living. It is not an example that humans are to follow. That's why playboy uses the symbol of a rabbit as their logo. It symbolizes an immoral man who has sex with many women and doesn't care about the children he produces.

God also forbade the Israelites from eating the hyena. Why? Because it acts irreverent, the noises it makes sounds like laughing and mocking. The hyena represents people who laugh and scoff at God. Is the hyena really bad. Of course not. It's just a picture for us to learn from. The lesson from the laughing hyena is "don't be a scoffer."

The same goes for the prohibition from eating bottom feeding fish, flesh eating birds and swine. Even today a "bottom feeder" means a low life character or scoundrel, a slime ball type of person. Vultures eat dead rotting flesh and represent sin, laziness and it's putrid results. No matter how many times you wash a pig it will return to the mud and wallow in it the first chance it gets. The pig represents people who return to sin to wallow in it every chance they get. Again, these animals are not bad, God created them the way they are, perhaps just for the purpose of teaching us the things just stated above. In the same way, a divorced person is no better or worse than anyone else, but after divorce their life no longer fits the example that God wants to show through a pastor and his wife, which is the mystery of Christ and his bride the Church.

A person is only bound by marriage so long as their partner is alive. Death frees one from the bond of marriage and Christ's death freed us from the bondage of sin.

**1Cor. 7:39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.**

A widowed man may of course continue on as a pastor and he may remarry. Just as long of course that he didn't murder his wife as the kings of England used to

do. In olden times a king had to have the popes permission to divorce and remarry. After a few divorces and remarriages the pope would refuse to grant any more annulments so the kings would simply accuse their wife of treason or adultery and have her executed and marry their new lover. I don't think they will be welcomed into God's kingdom and commended for keeping the law so splendidly. They may have been keeping the letter of the law, but certainly not the spirit of it.

For more information about marriage and divorce go to [www.countdownto6000.com](http://www.countdownto6000.com) and read the bible studies concerning marriage, divorce and polygamy.

Many people look at the scriptures and the bible in wrong way. They see a harsh and intolerant God. They see a God who makes rules that are impossible to keep and blames us when we break them. Nothing could be further from the truth. God is love. God is kind. God is good. All the time!

The things God commands are for our benefit and our learning. You just have to view it properly. In the early and middle ages most people could not read and write. For that reason the Orthodox Church tells the story of Jesus in pictures on the walls of the church. Both Roman Catholics and Orthodox churches were big on art from the bible. The story of Christ could be told to the masses by simply having them enter the church and view the paintings. Many are those whose conversion was orchestrated by the Holy Spirit after they had viewed Christian art.

We do the same thing in teaching children to read. We use large pictures and few words in order to teach them visually what an object is and what the letters for it are. The same goes for learning a foreign language from a book. The picture method is often used. God does the same thing. He uses everyday things that we are familiar with to tell us the story of Jesus and salvation.

He uses the constellations in the sky in the sky to tell the story of salvation. The glory of the heavens shows His handiwork. As we said, marriage represents Christ and the Church. The snake and the dragon represent Satan. If you read through the bible you will find example after example of God using physical things to represent or teach about spiritual things, because the physical universe is about all we can understand as long as we are trapped in this body of flesh and blood.

If you understand that concept you will not see a harsh, hating God, but a loving father teaching his children the true precepts of life in a simple, gentle and loving way, easy to be understood by all who choose to learn.

Titus 1:7 Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.

A Pastor had to have a good reputation in all things, spiritually speaking. The scripture says he must be “blameless.” He could not be pushy (overbearing) hot tempered, not a drunkard, not violent and he could not be greedy for worldly wealth. (Ouch, be careful there televangelists)

Titus 1:8 Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.

The list above is pretty much self explanatory. He would be a mature Christian, strong in the Lord to have the qualities listed above.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

He also had to be very knowledgeable in the word, able to teach others in sound doctrine and refute those who taught falsehood with the Word of God.

In Timothy we have the requirements for being a pastor repeated again.

1Tim. 3:1 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task.

1Tim. 3:2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

1Tim. 3:3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

1Tim. 3:4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.

1Tim. 3:5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

1Tim. 3:6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.

1Tim. 3:7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

We will look at the same verses but this time in the KJV version.

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

1Tim. 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;  
1Tim. 3:3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;  
1Tim. 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;  
1Tim. 3:5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

The requirements for overseer and bishop are almost identical to those listed in Titus. Once again he must be the husband of one wife, which is impossible for a woman, unless she is a lesbian, which would then exclude her on the basis of sexual sin.

In this verse the reason for managing his own family well is given. If a man cannot manage his own small family well, how can he possibly manage a large group of people, the family of God.

Consider this: If a man had a small flock of sheep at his home, and he desired the position of Shepherd over a rich man's flock, and the rich man came to his house to view his sheep. When the rich man arrived he found that the man's sheep were filthy, shabby and undernourished sorry specimens of sheep. He found the fence in disrepair and evidence that wolves had come in at night and killed some sheep. Do you think that the rich man would hire this person to look after thousands of sheep. Of course not. How much more important are the children of God than sheep? An overseer must be a good Shepherd of his own household before he can become a pastor in God's church.

## **BAPTIST PASTORS**

Baptists declare the office of pastor is one of two that a church patterned after New Testament churches should have. The Bible uses three words for the same office: elder, pastor and bishop. In the Greek language of the New Testament, these words indicate different functions and not different persons (Acts 20:17-28; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

Baptists look to the Bible for the qualifications for persons to serve as pastor (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). The qualifications fall generally into two categories — character and gifts for ministry. The office of pastor should be used to serve others, not in selfish or self-promoting ways.

Each Baptist church selects (calls) the person to be its pastor. The specific process differs to some degree among churches, but the following pattern is followed by most.

- When the church is pastorless, the congregation elects a pastor search committee to prayerfully evaluate the qualifications of various persons to be the church's pastor.
- After careful deliberation, the committee recommends to the church as a whole the person it believes God wants to be the pastor.
- The prospective pastor visits the church and preaches "in view of a call." The congregation then votes on whether or not to "call" the person. If the vote is favorable, the prospective pastor either accepts or declines.
- A pastor serves in the church as long as both pastor and congregation agree the relationship should continue.

The relationship of pastor and church is a very special one. Each has opportunities and responsibilities which, when properly met, make the relationship positive and productive. For example, the church should pray for, provide financial support to, encourage and assist the pastor in carrying out the purposes of the church. Likewise, a pastor should pray for, minister to, disciple and provide Godly servant leadership for the people.

## **ELDERS**

The apostles told all Christians to watch over each other with loving care and prayer (Gal. 6:1-2; 1 John 3:16-18; 5:16; Heb. 12:15-16), but they also appointed in each congregation guardians, called "elders" (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5), who would look after the people as shepherds look after sheep (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Pet. 5:1-4), leading them by example (1 Pet. 5:3) away from all that is harmful into all that is good. In virtue of their role, the elders (presbyters: Greek: presbuteroi) are also called "shepherds" (Greek: poimenes, or "pastors," Eph. 4:11) and overseers (Greek: episkopoi, or "bishops," Acts 20:28, cf. v. 17; Titus 1:5, cf. v. 7; 1 Pet. 5:1-2), and are spoken of in other terms that express leadership (Rom. 12:8; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24). The congregation, for its part, is to acknowledge the God-given authority of its leaders and follow the lead they give (Heb. 13:17). This pattern is already present in the Old Testament, where God is the shepherd of Israel (Ps. 80:1) and kings, prophets, priests, and elders (local rulers) are called to act as his agents in an under-shepherd role (Num. 11:24-30; Deut. 27:1; Ezra 5:5; 6:14; 10:8; Ps. 77:20; Jer. 23:1-4; Ezek. 34; Zech. 11:16-17). In the New

Testament, Jesus the Good Shepherd (John 10:11-30) is also the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4), and the elders are his subordinates. The apostle Peter calls himself an “elder” under Christ (1 Pet. 5:1), remembering perhaps that spiritual shepherding was the specific task that Jesus gave him when restoring him to ministry (John 21:15-17).

Some though not all elders teach (1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:9; Heb. 13:7), and Ephesians 4:11-16 says that Christ gave the church “pastor-teachers” (one class of persons with a dual role) to equip everyone for service through the discovery and development of each person’s spiritual gifts (vv. 12-16). In the congregational leadership groups envisaged by the apostles, there may have been teachers who were not elders (2 Tim. 2:2) as well as elders who did not teach and elders who both ruled and taught.

The pastoral role of elders demands mature and stable Christian character and a well-ordered personal life (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Wholeheartedness and fidelity in eldership ministry will be rewarded (Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:4; cf. 1 Tim. 4:7-8).

The pastoral responsibilities of the apostles and their deputies, like Timothy and Titus, were wider than those of congregational elders (2 Cor. 11:28; Titus 1:5), while those of congregational deacons (Greek: diakonoi, or “servants,” perhaps elders’ assistants, 1 Tim. 3:8-13; Phil. 1:1) were narrower, with particular responsibility for the ministry of mercy (Acts 6:2-6; Rom. 16:1-2).

Every church needs ministerial functionaries to fulfill the eldership role, and should set in place a wise method of selecting and appointing them.

This article was excerpted from Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs by J. I. Packer.

In contrast to deacons, the full time pastor or elder is to be paid for his work.

1Tim. 5:17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

1Tim. 5:18 For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.”

Elders and pastors, those teach and preach as a full time occupation and service are to receive wages as with any other form of employment.

Deut. 25:4 Do not **muzzle** an ox while it is treading out the grain.

1Cor. 9:9 For it is written in the Law of Moses: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.” Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

1Cor. 9:10 Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest.

1Cor. 9:11 If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?

1Cor. 9:12 If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.

1Cor. 9:13 Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar?

1Cor. 9:14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

## **EQUALITY AND EGALITARIANISM**

Abraham Lincoln may have considered all people equal when he spoke the Gettysburg address, but he did not get that doctrine from the bible. In a spiritual sense we are all equal, we all have equal opportunity to be saved. We all have equal opportunity to serve God and earn rewards after salvation, just not by doing the same jobs. We have different assignments. (Note: egal mean equal in French. Egalitarianism just means equalitarianism)

1Cor. 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Eph. 6:8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

Col. 3:11 Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

In the spiritual realm, we are all equal, but not yet in the physical realm. When we receive our new bodies in the resurrection we will be like the angels and neither marry nor be given in marriage.

Mark 12:25 When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

At that time we will all be equal. At that time women, men, slave and free will all be both spiritually and physically equal. Women's libbers, do not despair! God will see to it that you triumph and eventually receive equality. Chalk up one for the egalitarians.

It is plain to see that equality does not extend to the physical and mental realm here and now. If that were so we could all throw a football like Peyton Manning and do math like Albert Einstein. We are equal before God in that we are all sinners who need to be saved by his grace, but we are not all born with equal abilities in everything. We are not all born millionaires. Some of us are poor. To try to say that we are all equal now is simply nonsense.

Eph. 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

Eph. 2:9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

Some women may be better than men in many things, even in things pertaining to ministry. But regardless of that, women do not have the delegated authority by God to be pastors because that would include ruling over men which he forbids.

Why someone would want to take responsibility for a situation that is not their responsibility and not of their making is beyond me. I can't see myself taking responsibility for Hitler's crimes and he goes to heaven and I go to hell. If my boss steals from the company and gets caught why should I be fired and he keeps working if I had nothing to do with it and no knowledge of his crimes? For a woman to take on the responsibility of a pastor and assume the guilt for the sorry state the church is in today is beyond comprehension. The only thing I can figure is that like the Scribes and Pharisees they want the glory and the money. If it is not that then it must be some other deception of Satan that I do not know of or understand. Perhaps the desire to be equal to God as Eve desired to do.

Luke 20:45 Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples,

Luke 20:46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

Luke 20:47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

Luke 16:14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus.

It is because of the failure of the men in positions of leadership in the church to follow the guidelines for elders and deacons that we are in the state we are in today. There would still only be one church and one denomination if the biblical rules had been followed. There would not be Catholics, Orthodox, Lutherans, Baptists, Pentecostals and all of the others. There are more than 2000 Christian denominations in the world today. Lust for power, greed for wealth, and love of sin in church leadership has caused the current condition of the church today.

## **DO NOT CHANGE GOD'S WORD**

The Roman Catholic Church chose to ban marriage for the priesthood in 1139. By human reasoning this seemed like a great idea. Their thinking was that all priests should be like the Apostle Paul and be able to devote all of their energy to ministry and not be bothered with the problems of everyday family life. How spiritual that sounds! But, they were rebelling against God without realizing it and causing grave problems for the future. We have already seen that pastors were to be the "husband of one wife." This banning of marriage for priests was direct disobedience of God's Word.

1Tim. 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;  
1Tim. 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;  
1Tim. 4:3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

By adding to God's word false commands the Roman Catholic Church actually caused Luther's break from the church and the reformation. The RCC hurt itself by it's own actions. This is only one item they did. There were many more such as promoting the contributing money to get the souls of loved ones out of purgatory (indulgences) and requiring the abstention from eating meat on Fridays to help the Italian fishing industry. But, in this study we are only looking at things that affected God's instructions for pastors and priests.

Deut. 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Deut. 12:32 See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it.

Prov. 30:6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Rev. 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

Rev. 22:19 And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

The Roman Catholic's went overboard and condemned things that God had ordained as good. Like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, they added their own traditions to the Word of God. Jesus rebuked the church leaders of his day for doing it and then 1100 years later the Christian church did it again. By doing what they did they caused immorality to run rampant. It is reported that illegitimate children of priests in Rome were all over the streets of the city in the middle ages. First it was immorality that the celibacy rule caused and then later homosexuality and perversion against children, which they are still dealing with to this day. Lets take a look at the historical record of what happens when man fools with God's plan.

## **CORRUPTION IN CATHOLIC HISTORY**

The first statement Pope Leo X made after being elected to the papacy, according to the Venetian ambassador, was "Now that God has given us the papacy, let us enjoy it." That was the attitude of many Roman Catholic Popes, and on Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther picked up his hammer and nail and drove his point into the church door at Wittenberg and into the heart of the Roman Church. Then began the Reformation although there were stirrings of reform many years earlier with Wycliffe, Tyndale, Knox, Calvin, etc., who responded to Catholic heresy and gross immorality in the priesthood and monastic orders.

Dante wrote his Inferno shortly after 1308 and in the ninth (last) circle of hell he sees leaders who betrayed the trust of those whose care with which they were entrusted. Many priests, popes, and preachers were there. He had reason to abhor the immoral lifestyle of churchmen who betrayed the trust of their followers. In fact, there was so much sexual immorality in the early tenth century that for a period of about 60 years, the papacy was known as "The Pornocracy or Rule of the Harlots."

Some Popes made their palaces (later the Vatican) little better than elegant whorehouses decorated with religious art and statuary in each room. Pope Benedict IX (who ruled in the 11th century) was the youngest and most immoral pope. A sincere and effective reformer, Peter Damian (who introduced flagellation

into monastic life), described Benedict in his *Liber Gomorrhianus* as "feasting on immorality" and "a demon from hell in the disguise of a priest." He accused Benedict IX of routine homosexuality and bestiality. Few people will argue with that characterization of Benedict.

Bishop Benno of Placentia accused Benedict of "many vile adulteries and murders," and Pope Victor III spoke of Benedict's "rapes, murders and other unspeakable acts. His life as a Pope so vile, so foul, so execrable, that I shudder to think of it." Evidently Benedict was a bad boy.

Pope John XII who ruled from 955 to 963 turned the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano into a brothel and "was accused of adultery, fornication, and incest" according to *Patrologia Latina*. A basilica was a Roman Catholic Church given ceremonial privileges by the Pope. But surely those "privileges" didn't include making the church a bordello!

Baptists and Protestants have been very quick to chastise Roman Catholics for past and present sexual sins, yet too often excuse and cover their own. Roman Catholics (and other hierarchical) denominations have an easier time of covering up the sins of erring churchmen: they simply move the ordained moral leper in a clerical collar from Atlanta to Anchorage. Those church groups without a Church Boss have a more difficult time dealing with the sins of offending preachers. Now we have cases of celebrated pastors in Colorado, Texas, Florida, and Missouri who have been accused of sexual misconduct.

When a person walks into a modern church, it is often a roll of the dice between walking into a real church (and there are many out there) and walking into a bordello with an organ playing inspirational hymns. While that statement is an obvious hyperbole, the reality is that there is far too much illicit sexual activity in our churches that is being covered-up in many cases. Before you put out a contract on me, consider the facts: *Leadership* magazine revealed that their 1992 study showed 37 percent of ministers confessed to having been involved in "inappropriate sexual behavior" with a church member! Please note that that percent was what was admitted! How bad is it in reality?

Now it has been revealed that an accused sexual predator was hired by the large and influential Trinity Baptist in Jacksonville. The predator "took a leave of absence" just before former pastor Dr. Bob Gray was arrested in May of 2006 and charged with sexual child abuse (having at least 21 accusers) and the case is now in the courts. The newly revealed predator is an impressive man who has had numerous accusations against him going back to 1977 in NC where he was the music director in an independent Baptist church. He was very talented and loved

by all and was asked to also handle the young people. And handle them he did, especially the girls!

What a travesty when spiritual leaders betray their ordination vows, marriage vows and break criminal laws by taking advantage of innocent victims. Church leaders are to protect the sheep from preying wolves not pay wolves to ravage the sheep. Sexual predators should be in prison, not the pulpit.

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Sin in the highest offices of the church is what happens when the biblical directions for choosing pastors and deacons are not followed. At the very least immoral persons in the ministry should be removed from their position as soon as their sins are exposed.

When the leadership at the top is rotten to the core then the rest of the church follows in that path. Before long some denominations will need to remove the name "Christian" from everything concerning their church. They are no more Christian than pagans from countries that have never heard the gospel.

## **ROTTENESS IN TODAY'S CHURCH**

The Bible clearly states that the progression toward the full effects of sin is progressive. Sin most of the time starts small, but then builds larger, until one day it is so advanced that it will cause the spiritual - physical death of the sinner. This is just this type of story, with the sinner being an entire church movement, and the sin being one of the worst possible in the entire Bible. This is the sad tale.

For the third time, this Lutheran denomination is debating whether the "Gospel over-rides the Bible". During the debates on the first two issues, this Lutheran church did decide that the Gospel over-rode the Bible, so during this current debate on homosexuality, you just understand how they will rule. Truly, the prophesied Church Apostasy is deepening and widening, foretelling the closeness of the hour.

## **Lutherans To Study Homosexuality**

Subtitle: "The Gospel Overrides The Bible" - For the third time, this Lutheran denomination is debating whether the "Gospel over-rides the Bible".

"The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America decided Monday to undertake its first major study on whether to endorse the morality of homosexual relationships.

The study, approved at the denomination's national assembly, includes an examination of whether the church should accept gay and lesbian clergy who refuse to take a vow of celibacy. The project will involve the Chicago headquarters staff, the church's bishops, its 65 synods - or regional units - and colleges and seminaries. The 5.1 million-member denomination will also conduct open hearings and local focus groups. An interim report with possible recommendations is due in 2003 and the final report in 2005."

Notice that this issue is not whether this Lutheran denomination -- 5.1 million strong -- will accept homosexuals in their congregation; the issue is not even whether they will accept homosexuals in their clergy; oh, no, since those issues have already been decided in the affirmative, this debate centers on the problem of "gay and lesbian clergy who refuse to take a vow of celibacy".

In other words, this debate is over whether this Lutheran denomination should allow gay and lesbian clergy who are sexually active in their respective sexual lifestyles. While Bible-believing and Born Again Christians simply cannot understand how a church that calls itself "Christian" could allow such things, Liberal theologians are busily interpreting the Bible in a completely other manner. This re-interpretation certainly involves the issue of homosexuality. Listen to the next relevant statement in this feature article:

"The Rev. Ronald Rude of Denver said theologians are divided on homosexuality..."

We have just learned that Liberal "theologians" are "divided on homosexuality". Of course, we are not told the basis for this belief, but we know it certainly cannot be the Bible! You can also note that the Rev. Rude did not say Fundamental theologians; no, he is quoting Liberal "theologians" who have long ago denied the Godly origin of the Bible and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul told us in Romans 1:21-22, 24 about these type of "theologians".

"Because when they knew and recognized Him as God, they did not honor and glorify Him as God or give Him thanks."

This is the plight of Modern Liberal Theologians of today. They have rejected God as the Person He has revealed Himself to be in His Bible. They refused to give Him "honor" and they certainly did not "glorify Him as God", and they most certainly refused to "give Him thanks". At this End of the Age, this type of "theologian" has successfully spiritually deceived 5.1 million American Lutherans and tens of millions of other church-going people worldwide. Further, such modern "theologians" have thrown the cloak of respectability to untold millions of

people who were practicing the sin of homosexuality and lesbianism; by believing this lie, they will not ever feel the pain of a knowledge of sin so they may repent and be forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ.

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We began this study for the purpose of seeking scriptural guidance concerning female pastors. We have now seen that that is just one small issue. The real issue is sin in the pulpit, sin in the hierarchy of the church and sin amongst the congregation. Sin, unrepentant sin, is the true issue. The sins we have discussed are only the symptoms of the disease. Greed and lust have become the controlling factors in the church. Some sins are easily detected because they are open for all to see, such as homosexuality and abortion. Others are more subtle and hidden such as greed and drunkenness.

As we conclude this study we want to remind everyone that this is not a condemnation of women or an attempt to relegate them to second class citizenship in the church. Indeed, if not for the women many churches would cease to exist. The men have utterly failed in the leadership role from the time of 100 AD until today. If you read about how the religion of Mystery Babylon infiltrated the church you will understand what I am talking about.

<http://www.countdownto6000.com/afd3.html>

The real purpose of this study is to restore the original teaching from the scriptures that has been lost since the earliest days of the church, that is how to appoint pastors and deacons. If we want to present ourselves (the church) to Christ without spot or wrinkle as is prophesied in Ephesians, we must get back on the right track before he returns. Judgment must begin at the house of God, so first we have to clean up the church leadership and work down from there.

**1Pet. 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?**

**Eph. 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.**

If a woman really feels called to full time ministry, there is a solution. Marry a pastor. As a pastors wife a woman is automatically a deacon, a helper to the pastor. Since the two have also become one she is also a co-pastor in a spiritual sense. The only restriction is that God should tell the pastor what to do and then together, the pastor and his wife should perform it.

The life of a pastors wife is not all peaches and cream though, at least not if you do the job as it ought to be done. It will include every type of work around the church including cooking and cleaning and office work. It will include late night calls from distraught parents whose sons are in jail and daughters are pregnant. It will include dealing with every type of problem known to mankind on this planet. It will include childcare and Sunday school teaching. It may also include being the music minister when necessary, singing and playing some type of musical instrument. On top of all this the wife of a pastor must rule her own brood of children well and be well respected in all things with a good reputation in the community. It will also include being gossiped about by many of the women in the congregation. If this is not the life you want then don't become a pastors wife.

Some may say: I'm divorced man, I'm a woman, I've lived a horrible life, I'm in jail, I'm a new convert, I want to serve the Lord. What can I do?

First of all Rejoice! If you are saved you have great things to rejoice about. Read Happy, Joyous and Free! At: [www.countdownto6000.com/hjf.html](http://www.countdownto6000.com/hjf.html)

It's wonderful that you want to serve the Lord, and you can! The list of jobs you can do as an ambassador for Christ are almost endless. You can work in the church in many capacities from janitor, to greeter, to cook to food pantry for the poor, to building maintenance to you name it. These are all jobs that you can do at the beginning of your Christian walk. As you get your life in order you can move up to the spiritual jobs, doing everything you can to assist the pastoral and deacon staff in whatever they delegate to you. You can also volunteer at a local jail ministry, rescue mission or hospital. How about visiting nursing homes and assisted living facilities to hold bible studies and just to fellowship with people who are stuck inside of four walls most of the time. They will be happy to see you. Even helping people from their cars to the hospital entrance can be a service for Christ. On top of that you can give your testimony about what coming to believe in Jesus Christ has done for you and how it has changed your life. You can tell this to anyone and everyone who will listen without any restriction to gender. You can pray with people and lead them to Christ. You can pray with people about anything. People need help with everything from health to finances to raising children. Many will be glad to have you pray for them. You can be a prayer warrior. Your reward will be great, much greater than being a deacon or a pastor without the call.

**Dan. 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**

## HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR MINISTRY

First of all, ministry is not just being a pastor or a deacon. Ministry is everything you can do for Jesus Christ. Giving a cup of cold water in his name is ministry.

Matt. 10:42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”

Preparing yourself for ministry involves three major pairs of items: repentance and baptism, restitution and restoration, and reading and studying the Word.

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Acts 2:40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

The very first thing you need to do after believing the gospel is repent and be baptized. Those who do this grow faster spiritually than those who do not. Many of those who skip these steps are still little baby Christians after 30 years of believing. You need to follow Christ’s first command to believers in order to make good progress. Don’t question it, just do it. Then you will receive the seal of the Holy Spirit and very often your spiritual gift, your ministerial gift will be revealed to you.

Luke 19:5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”

Luke 19:6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

Luke 19:7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a ‘sinner.’”

Luke 19:8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

Luke 19:9 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

**Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”**

Making restitution, apologizing to people you have hurt or sinned against in the past and forgiving all who have ever sinned against you is step two to spiritual maturity. If you really want to get your past straightened out, work the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. You can find them on the Internet for free. Just google “twelve steps.” You can ignore the parts about religion. Just concentrate on getting your life in order and repairing everything you can from the past. After doing this, forget it and press forward.

**Phil. 3:13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,**

Forgetting the past and pressing forward is a crucial issue for many. Many of the television detective shows today focus on a persons past as causing them to be a criminal. They make it seem as if the person is innocent because some incident earlier in their life has practically forced them into a life of crime. That may be true to a degree without Jesus in ones life, but with Jesus the past is washed away, all things have become new.

**2Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

Bad things do happen to good people, Satan does attack the saints of God, but no matter what happens God is in control and can make it work for good.

**Rom. 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

Therefore leave the past behind every day except for the good lessons you can learn from it. Trust God to make it come out right. Don't try to seek revenge for every injustice ever done to you or any injustice for that matter.

**2Tim. 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**

Third you need to learn the Word of God. It is your weapon. You don't go into battle without your sword.

**Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

You need to read the bible all the way through at least once before you even think about teaching anyone anything other than the very basics of salvation. You just cannot teach the bible if you don't know what it says. Reading books about the bible is good but reading the bible itself is better.

Be careful about being a teacher until you are thoroughly trained in understanding the Word of God.

1Tim. 1:7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

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

Those of us who teach will be judged more strictly. Why? Because we think we know what we are talking about, and we better really know that we are teaching the truth before we teach. If we are teaching a lie our reward is lost. We may think we are serving God and are actually going backwards in a sense because we are leading people astray.

Matt. 23:15 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.

Matt. 23:33 "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

Teaching and preaching is a dangerous thing to do if you are not fully in the truth. Jesus' words to the Pharisees verify that. Don't preach until you know what you are doing. That is why it is so dangerous for women pastors. If they knew the Word and knew what they were doing they would not be pastoring in the first place. Every word they speak in the pulpit is condemnation to themselves. Even if they are saved, they will be called least in the kingdom of heaven for the bad example they are setting and the false doctrine they are teaching.

Matt. 5:19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

In order to teach the bible you have to know what it says. In order to know what it says and means you have to be saved and have the Holy Spirit for a guide.

Anyone in the pulpit who doesn't meet these requirements is putting themselves in grave danger of hell, or at the very least losing every reward they have ever earned for God's kingdom. They may make it in but like a person escaping a burning building, just barely.

1Cor. 3:10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.

1Cor. 3:11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Cor. 3:12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw,

1Cor. 3:13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work.

1Cor. 3:14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.

1Cor. 3:15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

1Cor. 3:15 KJV If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

## **BIBLE READING PROGRAM**

To read the bible through in one year do this: read four chapters a day in the Old Testament, read one chapter a day in the New Testament. Get a bible handbook and read the summary of the chapters you are going to read before you read them. Then you will have a feel for the background setting of what you are reading. This is especially important in the historical books such as kings and chronicles. You should do this every year for a few years with a different bible translation and a different handbook. At the end of three years you will know many times more than most bible college graduates. They may know how to marry, bury and baptize, but you will know the Word. Nothing against bible colleges. That's a good thing to do also if you can. If every minister of the gospel prepared themselves in this way before taking over a church there would be far fewer problems in Christianity today.

Eph. 4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

Eph. 4:8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

Eph. 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,

Eph. 4:12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

Eph. 4:13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Eph. 4:14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

Eph. 4:15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Eph. 4:17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.

Eph. 4:18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

Eph. 4:19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

Eph. 4:20 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way.

Eph. 4:21 Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.

Eph. 4:22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;

Eph. 4:23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds;

Eph. 4:24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Eph. 4:25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Eph. 4:26 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,

Eph. 4:27 and do not give the devil a foothold.

Eph. 4:28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Eph. 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

## **THE LAST DAYS**

It would almost be funny if it were not so sad. The very people who are denying the truth of the bible are proving it to be true. They are fulfilling the end times

prophecies by their own actions. They deny the truth of the bible but yet they are living it out, albeit on the wrong side of the path.

2Pet. 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

2Tim. 3:1 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

2Tim. 3:2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,

2Tim. 3:3 without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,

2Tim. 3:4 treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—

2Tim. 3:5 having a form of Godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

2Tim. 3:6 They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires,

2Tim. 3:7 always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.

Jude 14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones

Jude 15 to judge everyone, and to convict all the unGodly of all the unGodly acts they have done in the unGodly way, and of all the harsh words unGodly sinners have spoken against him.”

Jude 16 These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

Jude 17 But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.

Jude 18 They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own unGodly desires.”

Jude 19 These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

Jude 20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

Beware those of you involved in a church that is defying God’s word on how to run the church. You may be denying the authority of the bible, but unwittingly you are proving that it is true. The very thing you are denying, you are fulfilling. By walking in your own lusts and doing what YOU think is right, oblivious to God’s word, you are proving his word is true.

Is. 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

If you call evil good and good evil you are one of the scoffers of the end times and will be cast into the lake of fire at the last judgment.

Is. 3:12 Youths oppress my people, women rule over them. O my people, your guides lead you astray; they turn you from the path.

If your church is being run by women and young people (teenagers or less) you are in deep trouble indeed. If it is run by men who do not preach, teach and live as the scriptures command, again you are in trouble. It's time to find a new church.

### **THE TRUE CHURCH IN THE END TIMES**

Lest it seem like all is lost and the true church is going to go out of existence in the end times we need to see final condition of true believers.

Rev. 12:17 Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Rev. 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The true church in the end times, which I believe we are very close to, will be a faithful church. Notice first, the devil is enraged at them because they hold to the truth. They hang on tight to the testimony of Jesus. Notice also that they OBEY the commandments of God. They are faithful in both word and deed. The gates of hell will not prevail against this church.

Matt. 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Satan will not prevail against the end times church. This church will hold on tight to Jesus until he rescues them from this world at the First Resurrection commonly called the rapture.

Are you in a good church? The test is simple. Is your church hanging on tightly to salvation through Jesus Christ alone and obeying all the commandments of the New Testament? If so you are in a good church. If not, find a better one. Find a

bible study or cell group too while you are at it. You can learn a lot in a small group where everyone gets the chance to talk and ask questions, often a lot more than you can learn sitting in church listening to a lecture. But, don't neglect either one while we still have the opportunity. The church freedom we have today will probably be gone soon and all we will have is small groups meeting in private homes and rented buildings. Enjoy the large church while you can but be prepared to meet in small groups as we near the return of Jesus Christ. Do both now and you will be ready for whatever may come. There is strength in Christian unity. Persecution will purify the end times church so Jesus Christ can rescue a perfect bride, one without spot or wrinkle, before he pours out God's wrath on an unbelieving world that is worshipping Antichrist. Read or listen to "Countdown to 6000" free online for more prophetic information at: [www.countdownto6000.com](http://www.countdownto6000.com).

Rev. 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

Rev. 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Rev. 22:14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

Rev. 22:15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Rev. 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

Rev. 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Rev. 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

## SALVATION

This study would not be complete without a simple explanation of Salvation.

Very briefly, everyone who ever has or will ever make it into God's Kingdom will have been saved by faith in the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Many before his first coming never knew his name as Jesus Christ. They only knew and believed by faith that God would someday send a Redeemer, a Messiah, a Christ, to save them from both spiritual and physical problems. They had Faith in an unknown unnamed Jesus Christ. The promise of a Saviour began in Genesis right after man's

fall into sin and salvation by faith in this promise has been available from the time of Adam and Eve onward up until This promised Messiah, Saviour and Redeemer was revealed as Jesus Christ about 2000 years ago.

We no longer have the option of just believing in some un-named coming redeemer for salvation. This option vanishes for every person the moment they hear, read or have the Gospel presented to them in some manner. From that point on they must make a choice. This is so because Jesus said;

(John 10:24-29 NCV) The Jews gathered around him and said, "How long will you make us wonder about you? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I told you already, but you did not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name show who I am. But you don't believe, because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never die, and no one can steal them out of my hand. My Father gave my sheep to me. He is greater than all, and no person can steal my sheep out of my Father's hand.

Since Jesus returned to Heaven whenever anyone hears the Gospel the Holy Spirit is there to open the minds and hearts of those who are hearing it to the fact that it is the truth. Anyone who rejects the Gospel upon having it presented to it simply show that they are not willing to accept the truth and be saved.

You can be saved right now, in the next few moments by simply praying sincerely to God the Father and to Jesus Christ the simple prayer below.

Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus Christ; I know I am a sinner. Please come into my life and save me and forgive me all of my sins and make me into the kind of person you want me to be. I'm trusting only in Jesus Christ for my salvation and I ask this prayer in his name. Thank You Lord for Saving me, Amen.

That's all there is to it. Now tell someone about it. Read your Bible. Get Baptized. Discover your Spiritual Gifts and Talents. Find a good church and volunteer to serve in some manner according to your gifts and talents.

You may ask, How do I find a good church. That's easy. Find one where people are being saved or at least an invitation is given for salvation through Jesus Christ in every service and you will be in a good church.

(John 7:14-17 NCV) When the feast was about half over, Jesus went to the Temple and began to teach. The Jews were amazed and said, "This man has never studied in school. How did he learn so much?" Jesus answered, "The things

I teach are not my own, but they come from him who sent me. If people choose to do what God wants, they will know that my teaching comes from God and not from me.

If you begin to serve the Lord and do his will you will understand more and more with certainty the truth of teaching and doctrines of Jesus Christ. If you ever doubt your salvation, refer to the verse below, and remember, God cannot lie, it is true, and will always be true if you meet the qualifications in the verse below.

(Rom 10:9 NKJV) that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

(Titus 1:2 NKJV) in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,