

# Preface

This is by no means a comprehensive book, but rather a “REFERENCE GUIDE” that should ideally be used at our Church leader training conferences.

Obviously you may have come upon this booklet without having attended the leadership training and therefore will ONLY be able to understand the doctrinal truths conveyed and unfortunately not the “HEART” of this Apostolic Vision as would be conveyed during our training times.

The FOUNDATION of the Church is “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” and the HEART of this foundation is conveyed primarily by men who have been broken before God and are totally surrendered to His will (Luke 22:41-42 & Luke 9:23-24).

Men who are NOT concerned with titles nor positions but the spiritual development of Church leaders who will give themselves to building their churches on the ONE and ONLY FOUNDATION - Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:10 & Galatians 4:19).

The church having moved from the Apostolic teachings, together with a warning from the Apostle Paul in **2 Timothy 4:1-4** that the church would “no longer endure sound doctrine” in the last days, has been the primary motivation for the development of this manual.

Every reader would be wise to carefully examine the foundation they are currently building on (**1 Corinthians 3:10-15**), study to show themselves approved of God (**2 Timothy 2:14-16**) and take seriously the working out of their own salvation (**Philippians 2:12-18**).

I have used the King James Version as the biblical text, with Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionary to bring clarity and a better understanding to the Greek words in potentially confusing contexts.

**PLEASE** use your Bible together with this reference guide to check and verify all scripture being referenced.

# Foreword

*The Church on the Rock* is a simple scriptural guide that has been carefully and prayerfully put together to provide a solid scriptural pattern establishing JESUS CHRIST AS THE ONLY TRUE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH.

Based on the Apostle Paul's revelation received directly from the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, this guide will give a step-by-step practical understanding to Christian workers who desire to build the church ON THE ROCK JESUS CHRIST.

It is unique in that it covers the complete range of topics required for establishing the true church. May God bless His Word and give increase to His work through the measure He gives to every worker that will use this guide.

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*The Church*

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O N T H E

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**ROCK**

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Gospel for Africa



Church on the Rock

# Chapter 1

## - WHAT IS THE CHURCH? -

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1577**

Greek: ἐκκλησία

English: ekklēsia

Pronunciation: ek-klay-see'-ah

From a compound of G1537 and a derivative of G2564; a *calling out*, that is, (concretely) a popular *meeting*, especially a religious *congregation* (Jewish *synagogue*, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both): - assembly, church.

The word church appears 80 times in the King James Version.

The word church simply means **“the called-out ones”**.

### UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING

Quite simply, the church is a group of people who have been “called out”.

**Although still in the world physically, they are not of the world spiritually.**

### John 17:6-18

This group of people, “the called-out ones”, are the true church of Jesus Christ.

The church is not a physical building, an institution, an organization, a denomination or any such thing made by man.

The church is God's spiritual building that is no longer of this world, yet physically still in this world to manifest His glory.

**Let's look at what God says concerning His church.**

1. God doesn't dwell in a physical building.

**Acts 7:48-50 and Acts 17:24-25**

2. We are the temple of God.

**1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and  
2 Corinthians 6:16**

3. We are a spiritual house.

**1 Peter 2:5**

4. Jesus is the head of His church, which makes up His body.

**Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18, Romans 12:4 -5  
and 1 Corinthians 12:12, 15**

Christ is therefore not separate from His church but one with her as the **"head"** of the body.

**1 Corinthians 6:15-17**

Together with Christ we have become one spirit.

This takes place when we are "baptized into Jesus Christ" and are born again (in the spirit).

**BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST (Romans 6:3, 1 Corinthians 12:13 and  
Galatians 3:27)**



## **BORN AGAIN (John 3:3-7)**

When I believe on Jesus Christ and call on His name for salvation, I am baptized into His body and His Spirit enters into me.

This is the process of the new creature being filled with the Spirit of Christ. God's Spirit is joined to my spirit, giving it LIFE.

**Romans 7:4** teaches that we are "married" to Christ.

## **2 Corinthians 5:17 and Luke 5:37-38**

Only a "new creature" (new bottle) can receive the Spirit of Christ (new wine).

So, everyone who is "born again" is recreated by God (becomes a new creature) and made a member of His "body" (the church) in which He dwells by His Spirit.

The church is therefore a spiritual building, no longer of the world spiritually, yet a new creation of God remaining in the world physically to manifest His glory.

To become a member of this church is a miracle, the greatest gift humanity can receive and the highest calling to be pursued. We have passed from the temporal into the eternal; we have become laborers together with Christ in the building of God's eternal temple.

# Chapter 2

## - HOW TO BUILD THE CHURCH -

So how is the church built? Who are the builders and what is it built with?

### **1 Corinthians 12:4-6**

The three persons of the Godhead, viz. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are intricately involved in the building of the church. The above-mentioned scripture presents their collective functions:

Father:	<b>Different operations -</b>	<b>Acts 2:41-47</b>
Son:	<b>Different administrations -</b>	<b>Ephesians 4:11-16</b>
Holy Spirit:	<b>Different gifts -</b>	<b>1 Corinthians 12:7-11</b>

Let's look at each of these functions as given to us by God.

### **DIFFERENT OPERATIONS**

#### **Acts 2:42-47**

On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached and 3000 people were born again. They were baptized in water and immediately entered into the following operations:

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Apostles' doctrine | 1 John1: 1-3, Hebrews 6:1-2 |
| 2. Fellowship         | 1 John 1:5-7                |
| 3. Breaking of bread  | 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 21  |
| 4. Prayer             |                             |

## **DIFFERENT ADMINISTRATION**

### **Ephesians 4:11-16**

We read in the above scripture that when Jesus ascended back to His Father, he gave the following ministry gifts to men for the equipping of believers to become actively involved in the building of His church.

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Evangelists
4. Pastors
5. Teachers

## **DIFFERENT GIFTS**

### **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

We see in the above passage that the Holy Spirit empowers the believers with the following gifts.

These gifts are for the building of the church and are imparted supernaturally as and when needed.

1. Word of wisdom
2. Word of knowledge
3. Faith
4. Gifts of healing
5. Working of miracles
6. Prophecy
7. Discerning of spirits
8. Diverse kinds of tongues
9. Interpretation of tongues

It is with reference to the above-listed “operations, administrations and gifts” that Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18**, “Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

It is therefore evident that the building of the church is all of God; man simply becomes the vessel through whom God works by His divine abilities.

We will discuss these functions in more detail in the next chapter.

# *Chapter 3*

## **- HOW SHOULD THE CHURCH FUNCTION? -**

1. Apostles' doctrine
2. Fellowship
3. Breaking of bread
4. Prayer

Remember the church is a spiritual building so can only be built with "spiritual materials".

Having been born again, we pass from the natural to the spiritual.

This becomes a struggle for us as we have lived our lives in the natural for many years and now have to slowly make the transition to the spiritual.

Initially, God's ways appear foreign to us because we are still operating naturally.

God enables us to make the transition into the spiritual operations through the "Apostles' doctrine".

### **APOSTLES' DOCTRINE**

This is the doctrine received directly from Jesus and taught by the Apostles (the 12 Apostles and Paul).

The 12 Apostles (the Apostles of the Lamb) were taught directly by Jesus - **Acts 1:2-3**.

When choosing an Apostle to take the place of Judas, the following criteria needed to be met - **Acts 1:21-26**.

It is therefore clear that there were no further Apostles of the Lamb after Matthias.

Paul was an Apostle who was also taught directly by Jesus when he was caught up into heaven - **2 Corinthians 12:1-7 and Galatians 1:11-12**.

The above-mentioned Apostles were taught directly by Jesus and wrote the New Testament Scriptures.

Apostles are responsible for laying the foundation which is Jesus Christ - **1 Corinthians 3:10-11, Ephesians 2:20 and Hebrews 6:1-3**.

Jesus is the foundation, taught to us by the Apostles as “the principles of the doctrine of Christ” - **Hebrews 5:12, 6:1**.

These principles are therefore foundation blocks on which all doctrine is built.

So, according to Paul, Peter and the writer of Hebrews, every new believer (newborn babe) needs the “milk of the word” (principles) to grow before they can partake of the “meat” (doing God’s will).

**1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 1 Peter 2:1-2 and Hebrews 5:12-14**

“The milk of the Word” is therefore the foundation / principles / building blocks which set the platform for a newborn babe or carnal / fleshly believer to grow into being a partaker of “meat” (becoming of full age / spiritual), one of those who are able to discern the will of God.

It is then clear from these scriptures that every new or carnal believer (one who still thinks naturally or is still fleshly) needs to be grounded in the principles, which will give them the ability to discern and then do the will of God.

Jesus tells us that “His meat” is to do His Father’s will and to finish His work - **John 4:31-34**.

Meat is therefore not understanding deep doctrines but rather doing God’s will.

So, without the foundation of the milk, we will not be able to partake of meat and do God’s will.

Jesus put it like this in **Matthew 7:21-27**.

So, in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, we need to do the will of God. It is not enough to simply say: *Lord we have done all these works*. He makes this radical statement in the same context as the need to be built upon the Rock (foundation /principles /milk).

It is imperative that every believer is established in the principles to be equipped to discern God’s will for themselves.

Doing “works” for God in His name is not what we should focus on, but rather discerning and doing His will.

In Hebrews we are given a list of the “building blocks” that make up the foundation - **Hebrews 6:1-2.**

1. Repentance from dead works
2. Faith towards God
3. Baptisms
4. Laying on of hands
5. Resurrection of the dead
6. Eternal judgments
7. Going on unto perfection

## **FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST**

### **2 Timothy 2:19**

Timothy states that being built on the foundation of God assures us that we belong to Him.

### **Matthew 7: 21-27**

Wisdom is building on the right foundation, not just knowing the Bible and being involved in Christian activities. Everything we believe and do will be tried, and only that which is built on Jesus the Rock will stand.

### **Matthew 16:13-18**

The Father in heaven revealed to Peter who Jesus was. It's this revelation from the Father that roots us on the rock. Knowing the Bible intellectually is insufficient; we must have our eyes opened to who Jesus is, and this comes ONLY by revelation.

### **Ephesians 2:19-22**

This foundation is laid by apostles and prophets according to the ability given them by God.



## **1 Corinthians 12:28**

Lists the order of functions regarding building the Church. God has set:

1<sup>st</sup> apostles - they lay the foundation

2<sup>nd</sup> prophets - they encourage us to build on the foundation

3<sup>rd</sup> teachers - they establish the doctrines on the foundation.

## **1 Corinthian 3:1-3**

In this passage, Paul the Apostle makes it clear that a carnal (baby, new, immature, naturally minded) Christian needs the “milk of the Word” (foundation) to grow into spiritual maturity.

## **1 Peter 2:1-2**

Peter the Apostle teaches exactly the same as Paul did concerning a carnal Christian.

## **Hebrews 5:12-14**

The writer of Hebrews confirms what both Paul and Peter taught about a carnal Christian and then names the foundation as the “first principles of the doctrine of Christ”.

The writer of Hebrews then lists these principles, as we will read in the following Scripture - **Hebrews 6:1-3**.

Seven principles are listed in this foundation, giving us the revelation of Jesus Christ. We will now look at each one individually.

### **1. Repentance from dead works:** *Repenting of trying to justify myself*

The old nature (carnal) is predisposed to doing “works” for justification as it is motivated by a guilty conscience.

God can deliver us from this guilty conscience through faith in the sufficiency of the work of Jesus.

No work that originates from guilt is acceptable to God as it is from an evil motive and seeks self-justification and the end result is the glory of man.

### **Hebrews 9:11-14**

God will purge my conscience from “dead works”, enabling me to serve the living God.

### **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Salvation is only by grace (God’s divine enabling), accessed only through faith (trusting only in God’s provision – Jesus).

### **Romans 4:1-5**

Abraham received the gift of righteousness by faith and not by works.

Therefore, when I come to understand that my works will NEVER justify me, ONLY then will I turn to God in faith.

## **2. Faith toward God: *Trusting only in Jesus for justification***

Having faith in the sufficiency of Jesus will cause me to surrender to the work of the Spirit in me that will then produce “good works” which are acceptable to God.

Faith towards God will continually lead me deeper in the Spirit and further from my natural (carnal) desires and glorification of self.

### **Hebrews 11:6**

Only faith pleases God. Trusting in anything or anyone else is an offence because Jesus stated in **John 15:5** that without Him we can do nothing.

### **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Faith leads me into the good works God has prepared for us to walk in, and in doing this, I become His “workmanship”.

### **James 2:17-18**

True faith will always be evidenced by good works, for when we yield to God, He uses us as vessels for His glory.

### **Galatians 2:20**

Faith leads to the Spirit of Christ in me living through me, manifesting the life of Jesus.

### **Romans 10:17**

Faith is increased through hearing the Word of God.

### **Hebrews 11:7**

Because Noah believed God (faith), he built the ark and was therefore pleasing to God.

The result of Noah’s faith was the work of God and not Noah’s ability, so God gets the glory.

Faith in the completed work of Christ and His ability will lead to a life lived in the Spirit and no longer in the flesh.

## **3. Doctrine of Baptisms:**

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: **G909**

Greek: βαπτισμός

English: baptismos

Pronunciation: *bap-tis-mos’*

From G907; *ablution* (ceremonially or Christian): baptism, washing.

This word can be translated as an Old Testament ceremonial washing or a New Testament baptism.

In this instance, it refers to the New Testament baptism.

The root word is:

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G907**

Greek: βαπτίζω

English: baptizō

Pronunciation: *bap-tid'-zo*

From a derivative of G911; to *makewhelmed* (that is, *fully wet*); used only (in the New Testament) of ceremonial *ablution*, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian *baptism*: - baptist, baptize, wash.

To baptize is to immerse fully and to be completely covered by.

There are four baptisms taught in the scripture, yet **Ephesians 4:5** seems to contradict this.

This “ONE baptism” referred to in Ephesians is the initial baptism into Christ from which the other three emanate. Without this initial baptism, the rest are either meaningless or impossible.

- **Baptism into Jesus Christ:** *Salvation is ONLY in Jesus.*

When we put our faith in Jesus for salvation, we are baptized into Christ and are justified immediately.

We become new creatures in Christ, His Spirit enters into us, and we are born again.

We become members of His body and in Him have all things that pertain to life and godliness.

Here are some scriptures that teach this baptism:

**Romans 6:3-4**

**Galatians 3:27**

**1 Corinthians 12:13**

**2 Corinthians 5:17**

In Christ I receive son-ship and forgiveness of sin, and I am clothed in His righteousness. Everything I need I have in Him.

- **Baptism into water:** *Declaration of salvation*

Water baptism seals my salvation by an outward declaration of my inward experience.

This is a declaration that I have been made righteous.

Here are some scriptures that teach this baptism:

**Matthew 3:13-17**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

**1 Peter 3:18-21**

By water baptism, I declare that I have died to my old life and have been raised in new life in Christ.

- **Baptism into the Holy Spirit:** *Power to live the new life*

Living the life that I have declared I am going to live can only be done by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is this baptism into the Holy Spirit that makes available to me the power I need for this new life which is “supernatural”.

The Holy Spirit also makes available to me nine gifts for effectiveness in ministry.

Here are some scriptures that teach this baptism:

**Luke 24:49**

**Acts 1:8**

**John 14:12-16**

**John 15:26**

**John 16:7-15**

When we live in the Spirit, we are given revelation and led into truth, comforted and empowered to live to the full potential God has called us to.

- **Baptism into the sufferings of Jesus Christ:** *Life lived in obedience to God's will*

Living life in the Spirit denies the flesh its passions, desires and will, causing it to suffer.

This suffering is difficult for us as we are living in these bodies, yet it is only through denying the flesh that we can walk in obedience to God's will.

Here are some scriptures that teach this baptism:

**Matthew 20:20-23, 26:36-44**

**2 Timothy 3:12**

**Philippians 3:10**

**1 Peter 4:1-2**

**Hebrews 5:7-8**

Living in obedience to God is both liberating and enabling since I am freed from slavery to the flesh, becoming a vessel fit for God's use.

#### **4. Laying on of hands:** *God works through His vessels.*

As a result of the baptisms, we become a vessel through whom God can manifest His life.

You become a functioning member of His living body. This has a practical outworking, which is the fulfilling of the ministry He has placed in you.

You are now an effective member of the body of Christ (His church).

The principle is not just the physical laying on of hands, but rather our being the hands of Jesus to accomplish His work.

The following examples are when hands were laid on people for various purposes:

**Matthew 19:13-15** (Blessing the little children)

**Mark 16:18** (Healing the sick)

**Acts 8:17, 19: 6** (Receiving the Holy Spirit)

**Acts 6:6** (Recognising the ministries)

**1 Timothy 4:14** (Receiving spiritual gifts)

**Matthew 10:8** makes it abundantly clear that having freely received, we should freely give.

We become a blessing when we take what God has given to us and impart it to others; that why it is more blessed to give than receive (**Acts 20:35**).

#### **5. Resurrection of the dead:** *All of humanity will be raised.*

Every human individual will be raised from the dead, believers to an eternity with Jesus and unbelievers to an eternity damned to torment in the “lake of fire”.

This is the hope of every believer, that we will one day put off this physical body with all its constraints and put on a spiritual body that has no constraints.

Here are some scriptures about the resurrection:

**John 5:25-28**

**John 11:25-26**

**1 Corinthians 15:12-26, 35-54**

**Philippians 3:11**

With this hope as our reality, we can be the vessels God has called us to be, in spite of life's challenges and difficulties. The resurrection encourages us to endure faithfully to the end.

**6. Eternal Judgments:** *All of humanity is accountable to God.*

There are various eternal judgments, all bringing about an accountability and a sober desire to live holy lives.

**Hebrews 9:27**

(All will be judged)

**1 Peter 3:18**

(Jesus judged in our place)

**1 Corinthians 11:31-32**

(Self-judgment)

**1 Corinthians 3:11-15**

(Believers' judgment)

**Revelation 20:11-15**

(Unbelievers' judgment)

Understanding these judgments will enable us to live according to God's will.

We are motivated to reach unbelievers with the good news of salvation and to glorify God in how we live so we can stand before Him and give a good account of our lives.

**7. Going on unto perfection:** *Maturing into the person God called us to be*

When God is pleased that the foundation in our lives has been laid correctly, He permits us to go on unto perfection (spiritual maturity) -

**Hebrews 6:3.**



This is God's desire for all His children because it's in this that we are true disciples and the Father is glorified because we bear much fruit - **John 15:8.**

The following scriptures instruct us in our maturing in Christ:

**Hebrews 10:14**

**Philippians 3:8-14**

**1 John 3:2**

**Philippians 2:12**

Once these principles have been established in us, we begin to discern and move into God's will for our lives. They enable us to align with what God is doing and bring us into the good works He before ordained for us to walk in – **Ephesians 2:10.**

In conclusion, we see that it's these "teachings of the Apostles" that will bring us into true fellowship with God, and as we each come into fellowship with God, we come into fellowship with one another.

At the time of the Apostles, the Church had no buildings so they would gather in public facilities, as well as in homes, to hear the Apostles teach - **Acts 2:1-2.**

**Acts 2:46, Acts 5:42, Acts 12:12, Romans 16:5 and 1 Corinthians 16:19**

So, depending on the environment we live in and the availability of facilities, we must follow the same pattern. The emphasis should not be on the place of worship but rather continuing steadfastly in the teachings of the Apostles, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer.

We will now discuss the next operation (function).

## **FELLOWSHIP**

Fellowship is described by the Apostle John - **1 John 1:1-7**.

As we receive the teachings of the Apostles (light / revelation of Jesus) and we walk in these teachings, we come into “fellowship” with Jesus Christ and then one another.

So fellowship takes place when we walk in the light (teachings of the Apostles), bringing us into unity with Jesus and one another.

### **1 John 1:4**

Being in fellowship with Jesus and one another keeps us in a place of joy.

When we enjoy one another, our gathering together, each other’s gifts and talents, we become a family that loves and cares for each other.

When we come together, we minister to one another, care for one another, pray for one another, support one another. We esteem others greater than ourselves.

### **1 Corinthians 12:25-27**

Through fellowship, the church is united and strengthened; each person walking in the light will love the other members.

**Ephesians 4:11-16** teaches us how God has equipped the church for its edification. It is abundantly clear that God purposes every believer to become an active, functioning member of His church.

When the church walks in obedience to the teachings of the Apostles, fellowship with God and one another will occur naturally, and the church will function in true love and unity. The members develop care for one another, enjoying true fellowship, growing together in love and breaking bread together.

## ***BREAKING OF BREAD***

The next operation the church continued steadfastly in was the breaking of bread.

This is not just the act of having communion but rather a powerful declaration and time of remembrance that comes out of our fellowship together.

### **1 Corinthians 10:15-23**

If we truly are walking in the light (fellowship), we, the “one bread”, become united as a church.

The scripture teaches that all things are lawful, but not all are expedient; therefore, everything we do must be for the edification of one another.

You can’t be one person when you are with the church (partakers of the Lord’s table) and another when you are alone (partaker of the table of devils).

When you break bread, you declare to all present that you are one with them – together we make up the one bread.

Fellowship will keep us united with the church (one bread).

So, when we come together to break bread (communion), we come united as a church (one bread) to remember the glorious work Christ accomplished for us.

### **1 Corinthians 11:23-33**

Paul makes it very clear that the purpose of our coming together to break bread is to remember Jesus.

We remember the awesome price He paid for our salvation, by the laying down of His life for us.

It’s in this we “discern the Lord’s body” (church); we examine ourselves as to whether we are doing the same thing for one another (laying down our lives for the body of Christ).

If we don’t discern the Lord’s body, we become guilty of the “body and blood” of Jesus, thereby eating and drinking damnation to ourselves.

If we don't examine ourselves, the Lord will chastise us. "Many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep" (v30). He does this so that we be not "condemned with the world" (v32).

The early church broke bread on a weekly basis - **Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2.**

Breaking of bread is a vital time for the church to remember what Jesus has done for us and to examine ourselves in that light to ensure we are doing the same for the church.

This will keep us in unity with Jesus and one another, reinforcing the need we have of each other, thereby keeping us from isolating ourselves and becoming an easy target for the devil. We must stand together as "one bread".

### ***PRAYER***

As we enjoy walking in the light and having fellowship together as one bread, we will undoubtedly have a burden for prayer for one another and for others to come into the glorious experience we are enjoying.

**Acts 12:5, Acts 4:31 and Acts 20:36-38**

The different operations are the lifestyle the Father wants His children to enter into and enjoy.

This lifestyle brings us into the light where we enjoy fellowship with God and one another, walking in unity and thereby experiencing the joy our heavenly Father has for us.

This is what the Father intended for His church. We should not make it about structures, programs, formats, rules, dress codes, buildings and the like.

It's all about enjoying the Life given to us in Jesus, hence Paul's statement to abide in Him - **Acts 17:28-29.**

The church, from its inception, continued steadfastly in the operations of the Father as instructed by the Apostles, whilst God was among them doing great and wonderful things.

# *Chapter 4*

## **- CHURCH ADMINISTRATION -**

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Evangelists
4. Pastors
5. Teachers

As the church functions within the operations given by the Father, Jesus gives “ministry gifts” unto men to administer the church.

These ministry gifts are abilities of the Lord Jesus given for the following purpose.

### **Ephesians 4:7-13**

Paul teaches that these ministry gifts (administrations) are to perfect (mature) the saints (every believer) for the work of the ministry (building the church).

They bring us into the unity of the faith (believing the same teachings) and thereby, collectively, to the full measure of the stature of Christ (God’s fullness for us).

These ministries are not a hierarchy but rather God’s divine enabling to administer the church into the purposes of God.

Let us now look at each of these administrative gifts.

I have included the Greek words to get a clear understanding of the true meaning as there is much confusion around these gifts.

## **APOSTLES**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G652**

Greek: ἀπόστολος

English: apostolos

Pronunciation: ap-os'-tol-os

From G649; a *delegate*; specifically an *ambassador* of the Gospel; officially a *commissioner* of Christ (apostle), (with miraculous powers):  
- apostle, messenger, he that is sent.

An apostle is therefore “a messenger or someone who is sent”.

We see three groups of apostles in the Scriptures:

1. The 12 Apostles of the Lamb - Apostles who were with Jesus
2. Paul - An Apostle taken into the presence of Jesus
3. Other apostles - Those apostles who did not receive revelation directly from Jesus

### **The 12 Apostles of the Lamb**

These Apostles were sent to the Jews (lost sheep of the house of Israel) - **Matthew 10:2-6**.

After Judas died, a twelfth Apostle was chosen based on the following criteria - **Acts 1:21-26**.

### **Paul**

An Apostle who was caught up into the third heaven and received revelation directly from Jesus - **2 Corinthians 12:1-7** and **Galatians 1:11-12**.

Paul was sent as an Apostle to the Gentiles - **Galatians 2:7-8**.

## **Other Apostles**

### **Acts 14:14, Romans 16:7 and 1 Thessalonians 1:1-6**

Initially Jesus chose 12 Apostles and sent them to the Jews.

Jesus then chose Paul and sent him to the Gentiles.

The above two groups were the men who received revelation directly from Jesus and who wrote the New Testament canon.

Apostles who came after the 12 and Paul were neither with Jesus physically, as were the 12, or ever caught up into the third heaven, as was Paul.

Therefore, apostles today are not in the same category as the 12 and Paul; rather, they are men with a gift from God to take the foundation as given by the above-mentioned Apostles and have been sent to establish new churches. Modern-day apostles are not men who continue to receive new revelation from Jesus (as taught by some) since we have already been given the complete revelation (the Bible).

Paul makes this abundantly clear in **Galatians 1:1-12**.

We see in Scripture that the ministry of apostles always involved a “sending”, making it clear that this ministry was not intended to be permanently resident in a local church.

Apostles were sent to newly evangelized areas, where the Gospel had been received and people had believed, to establish these new believers on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

### **Acts 8:5-14, Acts 11:19-26, Acts 13:1-4 and 1 Thessalonians 3:12**

Paul makes it abundantly clear that laying the foundation was the primary purpose of his ministry -

**1 Corinthians 3:10-13 and Ephesians 2:20.**

Paul also teaches that there are signs to being an apostle -

**2 Corinthians 12:12, Acts 2:43, Acts 5:12 and  
1 Corinthians 9:2.**

We can therefore conclude the following about the apostolic ministry:

1. A ministry that is sent to establish new churches
2. A ministry that is not permanently resident in a local church
3. A ministry that works with all other ministries, especially prophets and elders
4. A foundation-laying ministry, preaching mainly principles (foundational truths)
5. A ministry that takes oversight, together with elders, over a group of churches
6. A ministry that forms part of the presbytery (group of elders) when resident in a local church that has elders
7. A ministry evidenced by signs and wonders and the ability to establish believers on the foundation

## **PROPHETS**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G4396**

Greek: προφήτης

English: prophētēs

Pronunciation: *prof-ay'-tace*

From a compound of G4253 and G5346; a *foreteller* (prophet); by analogy an *inspired speaker*; by extension a *poet*: - prophet.

There is much confusion regarding this ministry in the church, and a distinction needs to be made between the following:

1. Old Testament prophet
2. New Testament prophet



### 3. Gift of prophecy

#### **Old Testament Prophet**

##### **Hebrews 1:1-2**

The pattern in the Old Testament was that God “anointed an individual” to be His mouthpiece; this was the Old Testament prophet. Whenever people needed to hear from God, they would have to go to the prophet.

Only the prophet had the Holy Spirit come upon him to speak on behalf of God.

John the Baptist was the last of these prophets - **Luke 1:1-17.**

When Jesus came, He was called Christ (anointed one) - **Matthew 1:16.**

When Jesus came, He was filled with the Holy Spirit - **Matthew 3:16.** Jesus, therefore, became the prophet to the people; God spoke through Him.

#### **New Testament Prophet**

In the Old Testament, God spoke by the prophets, but in the last days, He speaks by His Son - **Hebrews 1:1-2.**

In the New Testament, every believer has Jesus in them, so they have the “anointing” as He (Christ) is the Anointed One. Every believer can be filled with the Holy Spirit, thereby qualifying every believer to be the mouthpiece of God - **1 John 2:27.**

The Old Testament prophets came to an end with Jesus.

The New Testament prophet is a “foreteller” and an “inspired speaker” according to Strong’s Greek Lexicon - **Acts 11:27-28, Acts 15:32 and Ephesians 3:2-5.**

## **Gift of Prophecy**

### **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

The gift of prophecy is given by the Holy Spirit to every person as He wills, for the edifying of the church.

(We will discuss this further in the next chapter, “Spiritual Gifts”).

### **1 Corinthians 14:3**

Clearly, the gift of prophecy is to speak unto men for “edification, exhortation, and comfort”.

This gift is to be desired by all who are filled with the Holy Spirit for the building the church.

The ministry of the prophet is to speak by inspiration to the church with the purpose of encouraging the believers to continue to build upon the foundation - **Ephesians 2:20.**

This man may also exercise the gift of prophecy.

## **EVANGELISTS**

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: **G2099**

Greek: εὐαγγελιστής

English: euaggelistēs

Pronunciation: yoo-ang-ghel-is-tace'

From G2097; a *preacher* of the gospel: - evangelist.

We have only one example in Scripture regarding an evangelist:

## **Acts 21:8.**

It was this same Philip that evangelized the Samaritans and preached to the Ethiopian eunuch in **Acts 8**. He was also ordained as a deacon.

Paul teaches that we all have the “ministry of reconciliation” and so encourages Timothy to do the “work of an evangelist” –

## **2 Corinthians 5:18-19 and 2 Timothy 4:5.**

An evangelist is a preacher with a strong emphasis on evangelism.

He would therefore encourage the whole church to do the work of an evangelist as each believer has the ministry of reconciliation.

He would himself be extremely effective in evangelizing.

## **PASTORS**

There has been much confusion in the church over this ministry. It has been made a “title and position”, as well as a name given to “one individual” who takes supreme authority over a church.

This is not just a major error but also very dangerous and the reason for much trouble in the church today.

There are a number of names used to describe this ministry. We will look at the scriptures regarding them all.

In **Ephesians 4:11** Paul gives us a list of five ministries given to the church.

One of these is that of “Pastor”, and this is the only time this word is used in the New Testament in the King James Version.

## **PASTOR (MINISTRY DESCRIPTION)**

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: G4166

Greek: ποιμήν

English: poimēn  
Pronunciation: poy-mane'  
Of uncertain affinity; a shepherd (literally or figuratively): - shepherd, pastor.

We see that the Greek word for pastor is “shepherd”; therefore a pastor is a shepherd.

The Greek word “poimen” is always translated “shepherd” except for this 1 occasion in SOME translations.

Let us look at the other descriptions given to the “Pastor”:

In **1 Peter 5:1-2**, we see Peter instructing the “Elders” to “feed or shepherd” the flock(sheep).

So clearly the task of an “Elder” is to “Shepherd”, so by implication an “Elder” is also a “Shepherd”.

#### ELDER (STATUS DESCRIPTION)

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: G4245

Greek: πρεσβύτερος

English: presbuteros

Pronunciation: pres-boo'-ter-os

Comparative of πρέσβυς presbus (elderly); older; as noun, a senior; specifically an Israelite Sanhedrist (also figuratively, member of the celestial council) or Christian presbyter: - elder (-est), old.

This name describes the man’s status: senior (in years and in spiritual maturity).

#### PRESBYTER (GROUP DESCRIPTION)

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: G4244

Greek: πρεσβυτέριον

English: presbuterion

Pronunciation:           pres-boo-ter'-ee-on

Neuter of a presumed derivative of G4245; the order of elders, that is, (specifically) Israelite Sanhedrim or Christian presbytery: - (estate of) elder (-s), presbytery.

This name describes the group status: two or more elders.

In **1 Peter 5:2**, we see Peter also instructing the “Elders” to take the “Oversight” of the flock(sheep).

So the “Oversight” responsibility is also given to the “Elders”, who are “Shepherds”.

#### OVERSEER (OFFICE OF AUTHORITY)

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: G1985

Greek:                   ἐπίσκοπος

English:               episkopos

Pronunciation:       ep-is'-kop-os

From G1909 and G4649 (in the sense of G1983); a superintendent, that is, Christian officer in general charge of a (or the) church (literally or figuratively): - bishop, overseer.

This name describes the authority of the office. It is the same word as bishop.

#### BISHOP (OFFICE NAME)

Strong’s Greek Lexicon: G1985

Greek:                   ἐπίσκοπος

English:               episkopos

Pronunciation:       ep-is'-kop-os

From G1909 and G4649 (in the sense of G1983); a superintendent, that is, Christian officer in general charge of a (or the) church (literally or figuratively): - bishop, overseer.

This is the name given to the office, and is the same Greek word as overseer.

We should therefore not separate the above names by creating titles, structures or positions as they all refer to the same ministry of “SHEPHERD”.

Elders, therefore, are to be raised up from within a local church, where they must prove themselves by showing they have the shepherding gift and then qualifying to be ordained into the office of “Bishop”. The team of Elders take the “Oversight” responsibility of caring for the local church.

This group of elders (presbytery) will be accountable to God for caring for the local church - **Hebrews 13:17**.

In summary:

An elder is therefore a senior person (in spiritual maturity and age), who has the responsibility of shepherding together with other elders who make up the presbytery.

The Scriptures always refer to elders (presbytery) as plural and not singular.

The elders are therefore the local church oversight (presbyters) - **Titus 1:5, James 5:14, Acts 11:29-30 and Acts 14:21-23**.

The Scriptures group elders together with apostles as a corporate leadership over a group of churches - **Acts 15:2-4, Acts 15:22 and Acts 16:4-5**.

This is why Peter refers to himself (an apostle) as an “Elder” when with a local team of elders (Presbytery) - **1 Peter 5:1**.

We also see from Scripture that elders must qualify to be ordained into the office of a “Bishop” as the oversight of a local church.

## **1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.**

Together with apostles form a corporate oversight over a group of churches. Collectively establishing unity and sound doctrine within that group of churches.

They are also responsible for the ordination of other elders among the group of churches.

### **TEACHER**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1320**

Greek: διδάσκαλος

English: didaskalos

Pronunciation: *did-as'-kal-os*

From G1321; an *instructor* (generally or specifically): - doctor, master, teacher.

A teacher is an "instructor" and a master at it.

His ministry has a clear emphasis on doctrine; he is a specialist (doctor / master) in his field.

In summary:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Apostle    | Lays the foundation                           |
| 2. Prophet    | Inspires believers to build on the foundation |
| 3. Evangelist | Brings people onto the foundation             |
| 4. Pastor     | Shepherds believers on the foundation         |
| 5. Teacher    | Teaches the doctrines of the foundation       |

Paul teaches the following concerning the building (administering) of the church:

## **1 Corinthians 12:27-28**

This is the order in which ministries must function for the unified building of the Church:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1. Apostles | Lay the foundation                              |
| 2. Prophets | Inspire believers to build on the foundation    |
| 3. Teachers | Teach believers the doctrines of the foundation |

It is clear, then, from Scripture that the responsibility of administering the church cannot be fulfilled by one man but must be a collective effort of all the ministries.

The ministries need to function together to accomplish the task, in the order given by God.

Ministry is therefore teamwork.

There are two offices in the church into which men can be ordained: bishop and deacon.

It is clear from Scripture that ONLY elders can be ordained into the office of a bishop.

We will now discuss the office of a deacon.

## DEACONS

Apostles and elders clearly have the responsibility of the spiritual oversight of the church.

The office of deacon was required so that the apostles and elders could take care of the spiritual needs of the church, while the deacons took care of the practical needs - **Acts 6:1-6**.

Philip, one of the seven deacons chosen, had the ministry of an evangelist - **Acts 21:8**.

In **1 Timothy 3:8-13** we are given the qualifications for the office of a deacon.

So, in summary, there are only two offices in the church into which a man can be ordained.

These offices have a very clear and strict qualification.



Those who are ordained into these offices are to be examples to the church.

## CHURCH OFFICES



An apostle forms part of the oversight when serving together with elders in a local church.

### THE APOSTOLIC TEAM

This is not a team of “Apostles” it is a team of various mature, gifted ministries united in the “Apostolic Vision” (The vision given to the apostles by Jesus).

When the Church began in Jerusalem there was clearly an apostolic team who were involved in sending various ministries into the surrounding areas. We see some of these ministries (Barnabas, Paul, Agabus, John Mark etc) referred to in **Acts 11:19-30** and **Acts 12:25**

As the work grew in Antioch an Apostolic team developed there including; Barnabas, Paul, Agabus, John(Mark), Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Judas (Barsabbas) & Silas - **Acts 13-15**

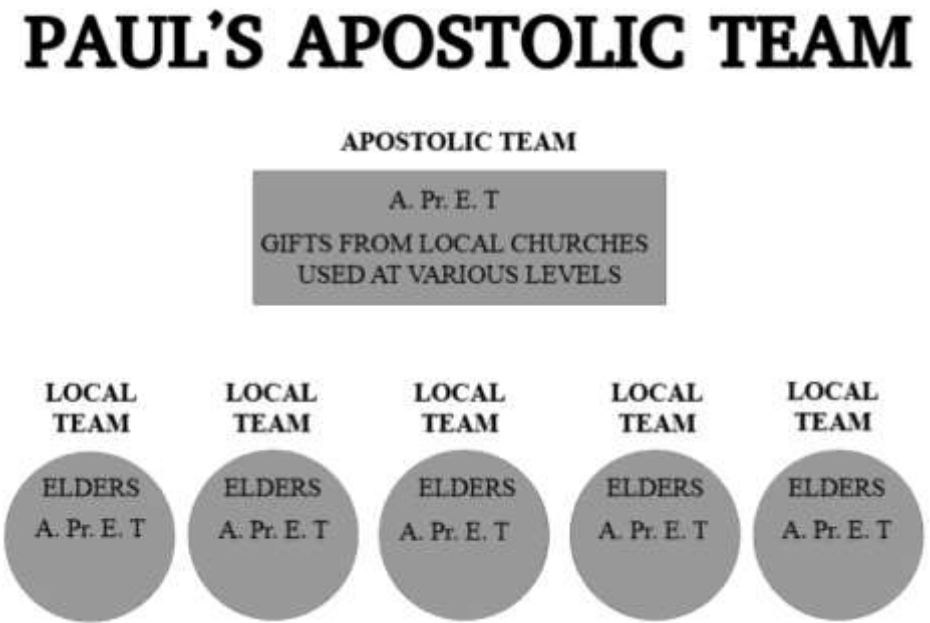
Paul and Barnabas then part ways, Barnabas taking John(Mark) and Paul taking Silas and then building their respective Apostolic teams - **Acts 15:40**

Paul then developed his Apostolic team consisting of many; Silas, Timothy, Aquila, Apoollos, Gaius, Aristarchus, Sopater, Secundus, Tychicus, Trophimus, Andronicus, Junia, Urbanus, Apelles, Herodion, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Rufus, Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, Tertius, Sosthenes, Stephanus, Fortunatus, Achaicus, Titus, Epaphras, Onesimus, Jesus(Justus), Luke, Demas, Archippus, Silvanus, Crescens, Erastus, Zena, Philemon. Onesimus and others.

This team was made up of men from various local Churches who were commended to Paul for the ministry.

Some were used regionally and others travelled all over with Paul.

This team planted, matured and expanded the work, this continued while Paul was under house arrest and after his death.



**We continue to hold to this pattern today, developing Apostolic teams for the building of the Church.**

## **LEADERSHIP:**

Leadership is not about controlling, manipulating, coercing or even managing people but leading them into a common goal or vision through; **teaching, inspiration and example.**

We see this pattern in the early Church;

Teaching:       Apostles and Teachers

Inspiration:    Prophets and Evangelists

Example:       Pastors

## **Teaching**

**1 Corinthians 12:8** states that God has set first in the Church Apostles, second prophets and third teachers.

This is not a hierarchy but an “order” of function.

1. Apostles lay the foundation by teaching “principles”
2. Prophets inspire new converts to live out thee “principles” ie building on this foundation.
3. Teachers will teach the doctrines ensuring building according to the pattern

The teaching aspect of leadership would be primarily the responsibility of Apostles and teachers.

## **Inspiration**

We see in **Ephesians 2:20** that we are built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets.

Clearly from above we understand the Apostles lay the foundation hence the Prophet by description being an “Inspired preacher” would inspire the new converts to build on that foundation.

1. Prophets inspire new converts to build on the foundation
2. Evangelists inspire the Church to bring people onto the foundation

It would seem logical then that the leadership ministries of Prophets and Evangelists would be primarily inspiration

### Example

In **1 Peter 5:1** Peter who was an apostle makes reference to him being an elder when together in a local Church with the elders.

Now in **1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1** and **2 Timothy 3:10-11** the Apostle Paul instructs the Church to be an imitator of himself.

The office of a “Bishop” (Elder / Pastor) has a qualification (**1 Timothy 3:1-7** and **Titus 1:5-9**) that is primarily about example. So as much as every person needs to set an example it is especially true of those in leadership and clearly from the above mentioned scriptures the Pastors are ordained once this example is clearly evidenced.

It is clear then from scripture that Pastors who are “shepherds” to the Church and are looked up to and we are instructed to submit to (**Hebrews 13:7, 17**) set this leadership example.

The following 5 aspects are important in leadership;

1. Character
2. Calling
3. Competence
4. Community
5. Christ

## Character

The scripture is very clear concerning us being known by our fruit (**Galatians 5:22-23**). This is concerning character, as Galatians 5:24 explains that dying to self leads to Christlike fruit. Leaders therefore need to have gone through and continue enduring the “crucifying” of the flesh to manifest the fruit of Christ. A character shaped by God is critical for Biblical leadership.

## Calling

**1 Corinthians 1:26, Ephesians 4:1, 2 Timothy 1:9 and Hebrews 3:1** all explain that God “calls” an individual.

Ministry is NOT a career path that we choose and then fulfill on our terms and convenience. Leadership in the Church is all based on God’s “calling” and so is according to His purpose which usually is contrary to what we want. Its doing God’s will and not ours, we do it because we love Him and we trust Him for every provision to fulfill His call.

## Competence

As leaders in the Church we need to be competent in understanding scripture (**2 Timothy 2:15**), competent in being able to teach it and competent that we are being examples of living what we teach.

## Community

Leadership is about leading people and in this application the Church, therefore leaders need to be integrally involved in the life of the Church and the lives of its members.

**John 10:1-16** Jesus speaks of Himself as being the Good Shepherd who knows and lays down His life for His sheep. Biblical leaders “must know” the Church flock, it’s all about community.

## Christ

Above all our leadership is “TOTALLY” centred on Christ, He alone is the focus, our vision and what we are leading people into.

This is the FIRST and SOLE purpose of the Church - bringing people into a living relationship with Jesus.

We can then conclude from the above that true leadership is taught, inspired and modelled in our character, calling, competence whereby the community of God is lead into the common vision centred on Christ

Leadership should be carried out in the following manner;

Vision

Clarity

Communication / Listening well

Decisiveness

Courage

Passion

Humility

No partiality

Taking responsibility

The different styles of leadership;

Visionary: Mobilize people toward a vision (Apostle / Prophet)

Coaching: Develop people into the vision (Teacher / Evangelist)

Shepherding: Create unity & harmony in the vision (Pastor)

# Chapter 5

## - SPIRITUAL GIFTS -

1. Word of wisdom
2. Word of knowledge
3. Faith
4. Gift of healing
5. Working of miracles
6. Prophecy
7. Discerning of spirits
8. Diverse kinds of tongues
9. Interpretation of tongues

The above-mentioned gifts are available to every believer who is baptized into the Holy Spirit; this is a subsequent event after being baptized into Jesus (salvation).

### **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

Firstly, Paul states that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to EVERY MAN to PROFIT ALL.

- So, it is clear that every believer can manifest the gifts of the Spirit.
- It is also clear that the manifestation is for the profit of ALL.

Secondly, Paul states that the Spirit divides to every man severally as HE WILLS.

### **1 Corinthians 12:31.**

Coveting the best gifts quite simply means to *earnestly desire the better gifts*.

It is to desire the right gift (best) for the circumstance.

For example:

1. The best gifts for a marriage counseling situation would be:  
Word of knowledge  
Word of wisdom  
Discerning of spirits
2. The best gifts when praying for the sick would be:  
Gift of healing  
Faith  
Working of miracles
3. The best gifts when at a public meeting such as the breaking of bread would be:  
Tongues  
Interpretation of tongues  
Prophecy

Every situation requires us to desire the best gifts for that moment.

Every Spirit-filled believer has the awesome privilege of desiring the best gifts to empower their ministry.

The Holy Spirit can choose to grant us the right gift for the situation, supernaturally empowering us in ministry.

This is why every believer needs to be continuously filled with the Spirit and walking in purity before the Lord that we might be a vessel fit for the Master's use.

Without this continual empowering we will lack power in our ministries. This is why many turn to psychology and humanism to try to psychoanalyze situations, rather than earnestly desiring the gifts of the Spirit.

***Let's keep in mind that all these gifts are a supernatural IMPARTING by the Holy Spirit.***



***These gifts do not originate with man, and neither are they of man's own ability.***

## **Word of Wisdom**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G4678**

Greek: σοφία

English: sophia

Pronunciation: sof-ee'-ah

From G4680; *wisdom* (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual): - wisdom.

This is a supernaturally inspired word from God, to bring God's wisdom into a situation.

## **Word of Knowledge**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1108**

Greek: γνῶσις

English: gnōsis

Pronunciation: gno'-sis

From G1097; *knowing* (the act), that is, (by implication) *knowledge*: - knowledge, science.

This is a supernaturally inspired word from God, to bring God's knowledge into a situation.

## **Faith**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G4102**

Greek: πίστις

English: pistis

Pronunciation: pis'-tis

From G3982; *persuasion*, that is, *credence*; moral *conviction* (of *religious* truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially *reliance* upon Christ for salvation; abstractly *constancy* in such profession; by extension the system of religious (Gospel) *truth* itself: - assurance, belief, faith, fidelity.

This is a supernaturally imparted assurance from God, to bring faith into a situation or to a person.

## Healing

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G2386**

Greek: ἰαμα

English: iama

Pronunciation: ee'-am-ah

From G2390; a *cure* (the effect): - healing.

This is a supernaturally imparted ability from God, to bring healing into a situation or to a person.

## Working of Miracles

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1411**

Greek: δύναμις

English: dunamis

Pronunciation: doo'-nam-is

From G1410; *force* (literally or figuratively); specifically miraculous *power* (usually by implication a *miracle* itself): - ability, abundance, meaning, might (-ily, -y, -y deed), (worker of) miracle (-s), power, strength, violence, mighty (wonderful) work.

This is a supernaturally imparted power from God, to bring the miraculous power of God into a situation or to a person.

## Prophecy

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G4394**

Greek: προφητεία

English: prophēteia

Pronunciation: *prof-ay-ti'-ah*

From G4396 (prophecy); *prediction* (scriptural or other): - prophecy, prophesying.

This is a supernaturally imparted message from God, to bring edification, exhortation or comfort to men - **1 Corinthians 14:3**.

## Discerning of Spirits

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1253**

Greek: διάκρισις

English: diakrisis

Pronunciation: *dee-ak'-ree-sis*

From G1252; judicial *estimation*: - discern (-ing), disputation.

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G4151**

Greek: πνεῦμα

English: pneuma

Pronunciation: *pnyoo'-mah*

From G4154; a *current* of air, that is, *breath (blast)* or a *breeze*; by analogy or figuratively a *spirit*, that is, (human) the rational *soul*, (by implication) *vital principle*, mental *disposition*, etc., or (superhuman) an *angel*, *daemon*, or (divine) God, Christ's *spirit*, the Holy *spirit*: - ghost, life, spirit (-ual, -ually), mind.

This is a supernaturally imparted discernment from God, to expose and reveal the spirit in a situation or of men.

### **Diverse kinds of Tongues**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1085**

Greek: γένος

English: genos

Pronunciation: ghen'-os

From G1096; kin (abstractly or concretely, literally or figuratively, individually or collectively): - born, country (-man), diversity, generation, kind (-red), nation, offspring, stock.

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1100**

Greek: γλῶσσα

English: glōssa

Pronunciation: gloce'-sah

Of uncertain affinity; the *tongue*; by implication a *language* (specifically one not naturally acquired): - tongue.

This is a supernaturally imparted language from God to an individual, enabling them to pray directly from their spirit and not their brain - **1 Corinthians 14:2 and Acts 2:4-11.**

### **Interpretation of Tongues**

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G2058**

Greek: ἑρμηνεία

English: hermēneia

Pronunciation: her-may-ni'-ah

From the same as G2059; *translation*: - interpretation.

Strong's Greek Lexicon: **G1100**

Greek: γλῶσσα

English: glōssa

Pronunciation: *gloce'-sah*

Of uncertain affinity; the *tongue*; by implication a *language* (specifically one not naturally acquired): - tongue.

This is a supernaturally imparted message from God, to bring edification, exhortation or comfort to men.

**The gift of tongues when used in one's private capacity is to edify the individual, but when used in the church, it needs to be accompanied by the interpretation of tongues so that the church may receive edification.**

### **1 Corinthians 14:2-5**

It is clear from the above scripture that a tongue with an interpretation would be the same as a prophecy.

Having understood the operations, administration and gifts needed for the church to function, we will now discuss God's plan for every believer to become an active member in the church.

# *Chapter 6*

## **- EVERY BELIEVER IS A PRIEST -**

When we talk about the “believer priesthood” we are referring to the principle of every member of the church being actively involved in fulfilling the ministry given them by God.

### **Ephesians 4:1-7 and Romans 12:3**

From the above scriptures we see that God gives to every believer the following:

1. The MEASURE of the GIFT OF CHRIST
2. The GRACE to carry the measure of the gift of Christ
3. The FAITH to fulfill the measure of the gift of Christ

### **Romans 12:4-5 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-14**

We see that the body of Christ (church) is ONE body made up of MANY members.

It is God’s purpose for every believer to function in the body of Christ according to the measure given them by God.

### **1 Corinthians 12:18 and Ephesians 4:11-13**

It is the five gift ministries that God uses to perfect every believer, maturing them to become effective in the ministry.

Every believer, therefore, is to become involved in the ministry.

The five gift ministries have the God-given measure to equip the believers, to enable them to stir up the gift that is in them.

## 2 Timothy 1:6

In the light of the operations of the church as discussed in chapter 3, every believer must find their place in the body of Christ and use the measure God has given them to its fullest potential.

This will take place according to **Acts 2:42**: *“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*

We need to see every believer develop in their measure, that the body can collectively come into the full measure of the stature of Christ - **Ephesians 4:13**.

This is where we enjoy God’s fullness among us as the church.

For this to happen, every believer needs to function in their measure.

This is what was enjoyed by the church in the Book of Acts and can be enjoyed by us today as it has always been God’s purpose for His church.

So, we see that:

1. Every believer has a measure and therefore a part to play.
2. The five gift ministries are specific measures God gives to equip the believers for ministry.

# *Chapter 7*

## **- WHAT ABOUT WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP? -**

We need to address the topic of “Women in leadership” in the church as there is much confusion surrounding this.

### **Ephesians 4:7**

This includes men and women, so it is clear from Scripture that every believer receives a “measure of the gift of Christ”.

### **1 Timothy 2:12**

Here Paul makes it clear that a woman is NOT permitted to “teach or usurp” authority over a man, thereby excluding women from leadership roles over men.

If women take a leadership role in the church, they automatically have to take authority over men.

Women are clearly able to teach and lead other women and children, so there are women’s leadership roles that are under the authority of men, but never over the church.

Paul also teaches the following:

*Qualifications for the office of a bishop or a deacon* - **1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6-7**



In Chapter 4, we discussed the five gift ministries. These are all leadership roles as they are used to administer the church. These ministries can qualify a man for the office of a bishop or a deacon. One of the qualifications is that the man must be the **husband of one wife**; never are we taught that it can be a woman who is the **wife of one husband**.

**God's Order: God – Christ – Man – Woman**

### **1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:22-24 and Colossians 3:18**

This is not referring to a woman NOT speaking in the church but rather referring to her not arguing with men and thereby usurping authority over men.

### **1 Corinthians 14:3-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12**

We see, then, from Scripture that a woman cannot be in leadership and should not enter into discussions or arguments in the church but rather leave that to the men. However, their input in these matters needs to come through their husbands.

They should discuss the matter with their husbands at home, and the husbands can bring it to the church leadership.

### **Women who were helpers in the ministry**

Dorcas - **Acts 9:36**

Lydia - **Acts 16:13 and Acts 16:14-15**

We see above that women are integral to ministry as *helpers* and are called to support the leaders.

### **Qualification of Widows**

### **1 Timothy 5:9-10, Romans 16:1-15 and Philippians 4:3**

Clearly, from the list of qualifications, women were of vital importance to the ministry.

# Chapter 8

## - TITHING & GIVING GOD'S WAY -

### TITHES

Strong's Hebrew Lexicon: **H4643**

Hebrew: מַעֲשֵׂרָה מַעֲשֵׂר מַעֲשֵׂר

English: ma'ăśêr ma'ăśar ma'ăsrâh

Pronunciation: mah-as-ayr', mah-as-ar', mah-as-raw'

From H6240; a *tenth*; especially a *tithe*: - tenth (part), tithe (-ing).

A tithe means a "tenth".

### Tithing before the Law:

Tithing was a principle established even before the law was given to Moses - **Genesis 14:18-20**.

Abraham pays tithes to Melchizedek (the priest of God), who is a type of Christ - **Hebrews 7:1-4**.

### Tithing commanded by the Law:

Three types of tithes were commanded by God:

1. Tithe for the Levites (Heave Offering) - **Numbers 18:21-24**
2. Tithe of the Feasts - **Deuteronomy 14:22-27**
3. Tithe for the Poor - **Deuteronomy 14:28-29**

We see, then, that the tithes were for the following three purposes:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 1. Levites | - To support the priesthood              |
| 2. Tithers | - To enjoy whatever purposes God decided |
| 3. Poor    | - For those who didn't have              |

### **Tithing taught by Jesus:**

Jesus did not teach on tithing but rather on our attitude toward giving -

**Matthew 6:1-4, Matthew 10:8 and Acts 20:35.**

### **Tithing in the New Testament:**

In the New Testament, we don't see teaching on tithing but rather on the principle of *giving*.

I believe that God would not want to limit us to giving only a tenth but rather enable us to go beyond that in our giving. However, a tenth would be a good benchmark.

Christ is the fulfillment of the law, and He now indwells us by His Spirit. As new creatures, we take on His nature – love – against which there is no law.

So, if I am like Jesus and everything I do is born out of love, my giving will be in line with how He gives: generously, abundantly, sacrificially, wholeheartedly and expecting nothing in return.

So, on this basis, let's look at Scripture regarding our giving:

### **1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 and Acts 4:32-37**

We see from the above scriptures that it was a common practice in the New Testament church to give:

- As God has *prospered* a person
- As each person *purposes* in their own heart
- Not *grudgingly*
- Not out of *necessity*
- *Generously*
- *Cheerfully*
- To the *Apostles*

It would be correct, therefore, to encourage every believer to be Christ-like in their giving and to give as listed above.

We should give as much as we can rather than as little as possible.

We should not be limited by a tenth.

We should give as unto the Lord rather than under compulsion or to be seen by men.

What do we do with that which is given?

- We firstly support the ministry (those who are laboring).

Just as the first tithe under the law was for the Levites (priesthood), so too we first support those who are laboring in ministry.

### **1 Corinthians 9:7-14**

Any of those with gift ministries who are laboring are eligible for support. (This is done according to needs, by agreement and funds permitting.)

Ministry is not a career, it is a “calling”, and the finances given are not a salary but rather a support.

So the amount will vary between individuals, depending on their needs.

### **1 Timothy 5:17-18**

We see the need for supporting elders (especially those who labor in the Word and doctrine) as they will often take up a “full-time” responsibility in a church.

Some, therefore, may need full support, due to their being dedicated only to ministry and having no other form of income.

Others may only need to be subsidized to a degree as they have other forms of income.

There are other costs related to ministry, for example:

- Properties for gathering (rentals or purchases)

- Accommodation
- Transport

We have chosen the following pattern from **Acts 2:44 and Acts 4:32-35**.

We endeavor to share everything we have so all the churches that are working together under our official registration in a country can benefit.

Each local church has its own bank account and will cover its own running costs.

What is left after all local expenses is then sent to a “central account”. From the central fund we support the following:

- All full-time workers – so that there is fair support for all
- The purchase of property and other assets which are held in “trust”
- Missions
- Widows (who qualify) and orphans

This account is held in trust and administered by trustees from several of our churches.

The “trustees” are:

- Apostles – as they know the needs of the entire work
- Ordained elders and deacons – men who are recognized among us as being very astute

The apostles advise on the needs in the work, and the elders and deacons administer funds according to availability, legislative requirements and sound financial advice.

Supporting Widows

### **1 Timothy 5:3-16**

We see from the above scripture that not every woman who has lost her husband qualifies as a “widow indeed”.

For a woman to qualify as a “widow indeed” she needs to meet the following criteria:

- Left alone - isolated
- Trusts in God
- Given to prayer
- Not given to pleasure
- Blameless
- 60 years and over
- Well reported of for good works
- Raised children
- Wife of one husband
- Hospitable
- Washed the feet of the saints
- Relieved the afflicted
- Followed every good work

It is the responsibility of family members to support widows, but if they have no family members or the family members will not take responsibility, then the church will carry the responsibility.

### Supporting orphans - **James 1:27**

The scripture encourages us to visit orphans in their affliction.

We are not financially responsible as the church to care for orphans other than by showing compassion and mercy.

It would be doctrinally correct, then, to support orphans with “gifts and offerings” rather than tithes.

### What do we do with gifts and offerings?

**Matthew 10:8, Acts 2:44-46, Romans 12:13 and Philippians 2:4**

According to the above-mentioned scriptures, we need to use the “gifts and offerings” for needs within the church.

These needs may vary, and each one needs to be assessed and be agreed upon by the elders.

Our first priority is to support the “local church” then the “corporate group” to which we are affiliated before we support other needs.

It would not be right to support any other ministry, venture, etc. until we have ministered to all our needs first, as people are giving for this purpose.

# *Chapter 9*

## **- CHURCH DISCIPLINE -**

Church discipline is almost unheard of in the modern church, due to the extent of our compromise and pursuit of political correctness. The church has become like any other worldly club, trying desperately to attract members through its varied forms of entertainment. This has left the so-called church in a place of great compromise as it has become impossible to bring any form of discipline into the church without offending people (the people who are paying for the show).

Jesus makes this profound declaration in **John 18:37**.

He declares that His primary purpose for coming to the earth was to bear witness to “THE TRUTH”.

So, when Jesus came, truth entered the world.

This same truth needs to continue in the world because it is only the truth that can make people free. Paul makes it clear in his writing to Timothy that the church is the “pillar and ground of truth”.

### **1 Timothy 3:15**

It is the primary mandate of the Church of Jesus Christ to be truth in this world. The moment we lose sight of this, we are doomed.

So in order for the church to be the “pillar and ground (foundation) of truth”, we need to maintain discipline in the church.

Church discipline is not just for discipline’s sake but rather for maintaining our primary purpose in the world (truth).

If we move into error of any kind, it is essential that we be brought back to our primary purpose, and this requires discipline.



We are therefore always under various forms of discipline:

- God's Word
- Being a member of God's church
- Breaking bread
- Walking in the light
- Individual rebuke
- Corporate rebuke
- Public discipline

Often people confuse discipline with punishment; they are definitely not the same.

God will punish the unbeliever in Hell after the great white throne judgment.

God disciplines those whom He loves, with the purpose of bringing correction into our lives so that we can enjoy the fullness He has for us.

### **Hebrews 12:5-10 and Revelation 3:19**

It is clearly evident from the above scriptures that God disciplines us because He loves us as children, and it is ultimately for our good.

### **General church discipline patterns:**

When there is an offence or a sin by an individual in the church, we adhere to the following pattern:

### **Matthew 18:15-19**

1. Go to your brother with the purpose of "gaining" him.
2. If he will not receive you, take a witness.
3. If he will not receive the witness, bring it before the whole church.
4. If he will not receive the church, then remove him from fellowship. This is what it means to "bind on earth".

We agree as the church that the brother is put out of fellowship; we ask the Lord to put the man out of fellowship and to discipline him with the hope of his repenting.

This is then “bound in heaven”, so that no matter where the man goes, he is no longer in fellowship with the Lord. God will then discipline him, and if he repents, we can receive him back into fellowship.

Once we have seen the fruits of repentance, we will pray and ask the Lord to “loose” him from the discipline, and he will be restored to full fellowship.

When someone commits a sin that is serious, can bring reproach on the church and is in the public domain, we follow the following pattern:

Again, using the pattern of **Matthew 18:15-19**, we skip the first step as this no longer involves an individual having to gain another.

1. The elders will meet with the individual who has sinned.
2. The magnitude of the sin and whether it can be contained will determine the severity of the discipline.
3. If the individual receives the elders, the discipline will be met out accordingly. If they do not receive the elders, then the matter is taken to the church.
4. If the individual will not receive the church, then they are removed from fellowship.
5. This will be applied as with point 4 in the previous pattern.

Take also into account the following scripture - **1 Timothy 5:20**.

For those who receive the elders, suitable discipline according to the sin will be administered.

The following will be applied in various forms of severity and length of time:

- Restriction on socializing at meetings
- Restriction on having access to the believers

- Restriction on participation in meetings – prayer, sharing, preaching, leading, etc.

Once the fruit of repentance is evident, the discipline will slowly be lifted, removing the applied restrictions until all are removed and the individual/s are fully restored to fellowship.

When gross sexual sin is committed, we follow the following pattern:

Again, using the pattern of **Matthew 18:15-19**, we skip the first two steps due to the severity of the sin.

We also then take into account the following scripture:

### **1 Corinthians 5:1-13**

1. The elders will meet with the individual/s to rebuke them and to put them out of the church.
2. The church will then come together to “bind” on earth and, in this case, not just to ask God to remove the individual/s from fellowship but to completely remove His protection from their lives and to hand them over to Satan for the destruction of their flesh.
3. If the individual/s repent, they will be brought back into the church under discipline as applied in the previously mentioned pattern.

So, we see that in all applications of discipline, the following is the purpose:

1. To protect the church above the individual/s
2. To bring correction to the individual/s so that they are saved.

Below are a few scriptures that deal with publicly disciplinable sins:

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Ephesians 5:3-6 and  
1 Corinthians 5:9-11**

There is obviously much more one can say regarding church discipline, and it is a very sensitive topic.

This is why we need the utmost discretion and God's leading whenever applying discipline.

The church needs to be well taught in this regard so that when discipline is applied, the church has a clear understanding and there is no division created within the church.

It is a very sensitive issue when having to discipline members of families in the church.

We need to discipline with great discretion, grace and love.

Always remember we are endeavoring to win the person back into a relationship with Christ; we never punish people.

We discipline because we love:

1. First the church, which we don't want contaminated
2. Second the individuals as we care for their souls.

# Chapter 10

## - CHARACTER SHAPED BY GOD -

Character is defined as:

- a characteristic property that defines the apparent individual nature of something.

We are therefore defined by our character.

To have “godly character” therefore implies the need for us to be defined by the character of God.

We need to model the character of Jesus.

### **2 Peter 1:2-4**

Peter makes it abundantly clear here that we have been given all we need to become partakers of the *divine nature* of God.

Character is a spiritual fruit that is built from our real, godly relationship with and commitment to Christ as LORD. It is the fiber of our moral center that stretches throughout our being, embracing and holding together our relationships when it is sealed as a choice and commitment, and not just a feeling or a personality. Character combines with the fruit of the Spirit and the many other characteristics of our Lord to promote our ability to relate and grow in our relationships, to better others as well as ourselves.

**John 3:30** teaches that we must decrease and He (Jesus) must increase.

Below is a list of godly qualities that He calls us to emulate and put into our relationships. These are essential to growing a healthy and lasting

relationship. You can examine the descriptions, look up the scriptures, and then ask yourself these six questions:

1. Is this quality working in me?
2. How do I now exhibit this quality in my daily life?
3. How can I use this quality to develop a greater willingness to respond to others – especially the ones I love – with a sense of awe, and fear of God, and respect for people?
4. What blocks this quality from working and being exhibited in me?
5. How can I make this quality function better, faster, and more strongly, even in times of uncertainty and stress?
6. What steps would I need to take to put this quality into action in a specific instance, or to improve it?

Consider the examples from the passages in God's Word:

### **Galatians 5:22-23 - The Fruits of the Spirit**

**Love** will enable us to appreciate our brothers and sisters in the Lord, and of course our family, and others around us. Love is taking the initiative to build up and meet the needs of others without expecting anything in return (**John 13:1, 15:13 and 1 Corinthians 13:3**).

**Joy** will allow us to enjoy His creation, others, and our circumstances with an expression of delight and real, authentic happiness from and in harmony with God and others (**Proverbs 15:13 and John 15:11, 17:13**).

**Peace** is surrendering and yielding to the Lord's control, for He is our ultimate peace! It is allowing tranquility to be our tone and to control our equanimity. This will be fuelled by our harmonious relationship with God so we can hand over control of our heart, will and mind to Him. Once we make real peace with God, we will be able to make and

maintain peace with others (**Matthew 5:9, Colossians 3:15 and Philippians 4:7**).

**Patience** is showing tolerance and fortitude to others, and even accepting difficult situations from them and God without making demands and conditions (**Matthew 27:14, Romans 12:12 and James 1:3, 12**).

**Kindness** is practicing benevolence and a loving attitude towards others (**Ephesians 4:32**).

**Goodness** displays integrity, honesty and compassion to others, and allows us to do the right thing (**Matthew 19:16**).

**Faithfulness** is the "gluing" fruit that will preserve our faith and the other characteristics of the Spirit, as well as identify God's will so we can be dependable and trustworthy to God and others (**Matthew 17:19, 25:21, 1 Corinthians 12:9, Hebrews 11:1 and 1 Thessalonians 5:24**).

**Gentleness** has the characteristics of calmness, personal care, and tenderness in meeting the needs of others (**Isaiah 40:11, Philippians. 4: 5, 2 Timothy 2:24 and 1 Thessalonians. 2:7**).

**Self-Control** will allow us to have discipline and restraint, with obedience to God and others (**1 Thessalonians 5: 22**).

**Additional Biblical Fruits** (I have added this list as Godly character is essential to leadership.)

**Forgiving** is the realization of how much we have been forgiven by Christ. This enables us to forgive the insignificant things that are done

to us. It involves not being resentful towards others and ignoring the wrongs that we have received so we can heal relationships by expressing Christ's love (**Luke 23:34, Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:13**).

**Humility** minimizes arrogance and removes pride. It is understanding our fallen nature, our tendency to think we are better than we are, and our striving to lift ourselves above others and God. It is admitting that others, and more importantly God, are responsible for our achievements. Humbleness will enable us to be a teachable person with an attitude of submission and servanthood, one who confesses sin and remembers how Christ served us (**Luke 22:27, Philippians 2:8 and 1 Peter 5:3-5**).

**Fairness** sees a situation from the viewpoint of each person involved and not just ours. It seeks the most just and equitable solution, even if it hurts us (**Matthew 7:12**).

**Courage** realizes that God has given us the strength to face any situation, trial or peril. It is the ability to react knowing that God is in control, that He who is in me is greater than he who is against me (**Deuteronomy 31:6 and 1 John 4:4**).

**Friendship** is the companionship and closeness we are to have with one another. It is the commitment to help form a godly character in others. This is not to be feared but embraced, even when it hurts (**Proverbs 27:17**).

**Honesty & Truthfulness** mean being straight and honest with others and doing what is right. This trait allows us to earn trust by being accurate with facts and situations (**2 Corinthians 8:21 and Ephesians 4:25**).



**Dependability** is being constantly reliable and trustworthy. It allows us to continue in our commitments, even if it means personal sacrifice (**1 Corinthians 4:2 and Colossians 1:10**).

**Gratitude** is an attitude of being thankful, even when we do not see what we have. This is an aspect of worship, expressing to God and others how they have benefited our lives by showing their support and benevolence (**1 Corinthians 4:7 and 1 Thessalonians 5: 18**).

**Responsibility** is knowing and doing what God and others expect (**Romans 14:12**).

**Contentment** is the attitude of accepting whatever God provides for us and being happy with it. It does not seek what we do not need for gratification and does not find happiness in the shallow things of life (**Romans 9:19-21, Philippians 4: 10-13 and 1 Timothy 6:6-9**).

**Generosity** allows us to give to others because God has given abundantly to us. It is the attitude that all I have belongs to God and knowing we are the caretakers for His purpose (**Deuteronomy 16:17 and Matthew 10:8**).

**Purity & Holiness** mean being set apart for God's use, which is holiness in action. It does not allow us to be contaminated or interfere with others in our growth and relationships in Christ (**Matthew 5:8, Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 1:5, 5:22 and James 4:8**).

**Confidence** helps us rely on the Lord for all things in our life. It enables us to push forward in the direction that we are called because He is governing. It makes us realize we are not responsible for the results -- only the obedience (**Philippians 4:13**).

**Encouragement** will lift, support and help others up through difficult circumstances, all from God's perspective (**Psalm 119:28, 143:3, Matthew 3:17, John 14:1 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11-14**).

**Availability** is being willing to adjust our own schedule, agenda and plans to fit the right desires of God and others. It makes personal priorities secondary to the needs of God and others. It is to reflect God's priorities so we are always available to Him and others when we are serving (**Mark 1:17-18 and Acts 16:10**).

**Attentiveness** recognizes the value of other people by giving them listening ears, respect, courtesy and total concentration. This means paying attention to others, not just listening to our own needs and desires, but also giving genuine contemplation to God's Word (**Hebrews 2:1**).

**Wisdom** truly desires the knowledge of God's Word and the proper application to our life. This enables us to make good judgments and decisions (**1 Kings 3:9 and Psalm 119:97-98**).

**Compassion** feels the pain and plight of others. It enables us to convey a deep feeling of love and concern that moves us to alleviate their distresses and struggles and meet their needs (**Job 29:13, Isaiah 40:11, Mark 1:41 and 1 Peter 3:8**).

**Enthusiasm** enables us to overcome disappointments and setbacks so we can be positive and optimistic and keep up our interest, attitude and zeal, even when things are harsh (**Matthew 5:16, Romans 12:11, Galatians 6:9 and Colossians 3:23**).

**Initiative** takes the front position to recognize and do what needs to be done before being asked to do it (**Proverbs 22:29 and Philippians 3:14, 4:13-15**).

**Diligence** allows us to operate with our best for His highest, with excitement and passion, in order to complete our work and call from the Lord (**Proverbs 10:4, Romans 12:11 and Colossians 3:23**).

**Thoughtfulness** considers and gives attention and care to others and their feelings first (**Philippians 2:4**).

**Efficiency** is being well organized, competent and resourceful so we can make the most of every situation, doing our best and seeking better ways (**Psalms 90:12, Ephesians 4:23, 5:15-16 and 1 Peter 4:10**).

**Discretion** keeps our minds and focus on sound judgment, giving serious attention and thought to what is going on. It ensures our words, attitudes and actions are right for any given situation, thus avoiding words and actions that could have adverse consequences (**Psalms 112:5, Proverbs 22:3 and Romans 12:2, 9, 14:19, 22**).

**Optimism** thinks the best of people and situations, even if later proven wrong (**Luke 21:18, John 16:33 and Romans 8:25, 28**).

**Obedience** is submitting to doing what God requires of us. It is also recognizing the authority of and direction from others, such as the pastors and church, so we can create winning situations (**Deuteronomy 13:4, Proverbs 19:16, John 14:15, 15:14 and 2 Corinthians 10:5**).

**Reverence** is recognizing and respecting people, not just because of their position and authority but as brothers and sisters in the Lord, regardless of their personality, knowing He loves them too.

**(1 Peter 2:13-14).**

**Here is a further list to expand on the qualities and behaviours mentioned above.**

**Agreement** finds Biblical solutions and support for others, without compromising truth **(Amos 3:3).**

**Appreciation** gives God our heartfelt thanks as a lifestyle of worship and adoration. This allows us to give to, and value, others with respect **(Romans 12:10).**

**Avoiding anger** requires knowing its destructive force and striving to maintain "cool" and serenity **(James 1:19).**

**Being a good example** is not allowing your relationship with Christ to become hypocritical, since people see you as an example of what a Christian is **(1 Peter 2:21-25 and 1 Peter 2:12, 15, 17).**

**Childlike faith** is the wonder and awe we feel at what Christ did for us. It is something that we should never lose. Let us maintain our enthusiasm and not become just a subculture or routine **(Matthew 18:2-4, 34).**

**Commitment** is being dedicated and pushing ahead, as well as being satisfied with what you have. It is vowing to honor and be the best with what God has given of spiritual and material things.

**(1 Timothy 6:20).**

**Communication** is being willing to convey thoughts, attitudes, feelings and actions to others in a kind and listening manner that reflects Christ **(1 Timothy 4:12)**.

**Conviction** is devotion to and following the precepts of Scripture with zeal, whatever the cost **(Daniel 1:8)**.

**Cooperation** is support and the willingness to work together in peace, unity and harmony **(Ephesians 4:3)**.

**Creativity** is being resourceful and imaginative in our use of the goods and talents we have been given to serve the Lord.  
**(1 Timothy 4:14)**.

**Decisiveness** is sticking to right and just decisions based on God's perfect will **(Romans 12:2)**.

**Deference** is being willing to bend personal freedom for the respect and esteem of others **(Romans 14:21)**.

**Determination** is the ability to make difficult decisions and accomplish God's goals based on the truths of God's Word, regardless of the opposition **(Psalms 119:30 and 2 Timothy 4:7, 8)**.

**Devotion** is aligning personal desires, plans, worship and hope with God **(Colossians 3:2)**.

**Diligence** means loving our call and pursuing our work, doing our best for His glory **(Colossians 3:23)**.

**Discernment** is the ability to see people and situations the way they really are, with neutrality and justice, while also being cautious about right timing and actions **(1 Samuel 16:7 and Proverbs 19:2)**.

**Discipline** is upholding and continuing a consistent and well-ordered life through godly obedience, regardless of how we feel. **(1 Timothy 4:7)**.

**Endurance** is the inner strength to remain in Him in order to accomplish God's will **(Galatians 6:9)**.

**Fearlessness** is facing down peril without being stupid. Having a *sound mind* enables us to be bold since God gives us strength **(2 Timothy 1:7)**.

**Flexibility** is being open to others' plans and ideas and willing to be instructed and challenged to change for the better **(Colossians 3:2)**.

**Godly priorities cause us** to follow Scriptural precepts as the primary schedule and value in life **(Matthew 6:33)**.

**Godliness** is being pious, which is rearranging our priorities to line up with God's character **(3 John 1:11)**.

**Grace** is elegant simplicity and calm that minimizes crudeness **(Psalm 94:11 and James 4:6)**.

**Guidance** is a willingness to help others to apply the precepts of Scripture in everyday and difficult situations **(Proverbs 27:9)**.

**Harmlessness** is not deliberately hurting anyone or anything **(Hebrews 7:26)**.

**Honesty** means being truthful and doing what is sincere and right before God and others (**Hebrews 7:26**).

**Hospitality** is a willingness to share, with discernment, what God has given us, including our family, home, finances, and food (**Romans 12:13**).

**Integrity** is obedience to a moral code of values based on honor, truth and reliability. It allows one to keep one's word and do one's best, even when no one else is looking (**Psalms 78:72**).

**Justice** entails doing what is fair, moral, impartial and right, according to God's will (**Genesis 6:9**).

**Loyalty** is remaining committed to those whom God has brought into our lives and has called us to serve, even in times of difficulty (**Proverbs 17:17**).

**Meekness** is not about being weak! It is strength under control, which yields personal rights and expectations to God (**Psalms 62:5**).

**Mercifulness** is demonstrating more forgiveness and gracious kindness than the world requires (**Luke 6:36**).

**Patience** is the fortitude to accept from others difficult situations that we do not like. With God, it is trust in His timing and not giving Him a deadline (**Romans 12:12**).

**Perseverance** is not being faint with our call but persisting and dealing with stress so that we can accomplish what God calls us to (**Galatians 6:9**).

**Persuasiveness** advocates God's Word to others so they can be changed in their thinking and can conform to His will  
(**2 Timothy 2:25**).

**Promptness** results in not holding others back with our inadequacies; it is respecting the time of others and being able to act quickly when God and others call on us (**Ecclesiastes 3:1**).

**Prudence** is not being a prude but applying good, logical and just judgment to situations that will help in avoiding error and problems  
(**Proverbs 13:6, 22:3**).

**Purpose** is in knowing who we are in Christ and acting out our call, that is, devoting our life, spiritual gifts and abilities to bring out the best in people and situations. Our lives will have eternal meaning and results  
(**John 15**).

**Respect** means being polite and courteous to the people and civil authorities God has placed in our life (**1 Thessalonians 5:13-13**).

**Security** is trust and reliance upon God for our daily needs. This is not laziness but working with God's values and organizing our life around God's will, with an eternal outlook in mind. We are safe because of God's protection (**Proverbs 29:25 and John 6:27**).

**Self-acceptance** is realizing we are deeply loved and accepted by Christ; thus, we can accept ourselves. Self-hatred is not Biblical! Self-acceptance will allow us to accept unchangeable physical features and situations that God has made, to allow us to focus on the more important things in life such as character (**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**).



**Self-restraint** is not swearing or slandering someone; refusing to verbally hurt others (**James 1:26**).

**Selflessness** is the sacrificial giving of ourselves to others, as Christ gave Himself to us (**Titus 2:14**).

**Sensitivity** is exercising kindness and compassion so we can go beyond just reason and logic to perceive and respond to others (**Romans 12:15**).

**Servant leadership** is exercising real godly leadership as Christ did through example, influencing, equipping and empowering people to accomplish God's purpose and plan (**Luke 22:26**).

**Sincerity** is earnest honesty that readily does what is right, with pure and loving intention (**Joshua 24:14 and 1 Peter 1:22**).

**Submission** is surrendering, with awe and reverence, and yielding our will and plans to God's guidance (**Ephesians 5:21**).

**Success** is not what the world labels achievement; it is to know and faithfully follow God's will and His Word. It is our obedience, not our numbers or measurements (**Matthew 25:21**).

**Suffering** is not sought, but when it happens, it can shape us for the better, as "*Christ hath suffered*". It is not a personal attack; rather it is a means to get our attention to make us better, stronger, more useful, and to understand what takes place in others (**1 Peter 4:1-19**).

**Support** is coming alongside others, sharing our strength and courage in their afflictions and troubles (**Galatians 6:2**).

**Tact** is being considerate, delicate and diplomatic with another's feelings and ideas; doing, and saying the right thing (**Colossians 4:6**).

**Teaching** is sharing our insights and what we have learned with others, to disciple them (**Matthew 7:28, 28:19-20, John 7:16, Mark 4:2 and 2 John 1:9**).

**Temperance** is having self-control so we do not give in to lust and the extremes of society's ills (**Titus 2:12**).

**Thoroughness** is careful diligence in carrying out our call, acting with our very best for God's approval (**Ecclesiastes 9:10 and Colossians 3:23**).

**Time** is the moments in which we either burn or live for His glory. It offers us the opportunities to live, serve, learn, and grow. In so doing, if we invest wisely, we will produce eternal treasures. If not, it will go to waste (**Psalms 90:12**).

**Tolerance** is being forbearing and patient with others, even when they are different or weaker (**1 Thessalonians 5:14**).

**Understanding** is the ability to reason and comprehend situations (**Psalms 119:34**).

**Virtue** is holding onto the principles of moral excellence that call us to a higher level where few people desire to go but, as Christians, we must go (**Colossians 3:12-17**).

**Zeal** is maintaining our enthusiasm for our faith and call, not allowing our church or ourselves to fall into a rut of meaningless rhetoric (**Luke 2:49 and John 2:17, 8:29**).

There are dozens more godly characteristics, illustrated in the Bible, which God calls us to embrace and apply in our lives. Remember, these all combine to help create the mature, Christ-like Christian. What Christ gives to us in grace, and how we respond towards others around us, are essential in all of our relationships.

When the other ingredients of a good relationship are right, then the love will come. Love does not stand alone; it needs to be in synergy with good character, a good attitude, and reverence so that we can stroll through the maze of relationships with confidence and the assurance that Christ is lighting our path.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

### **1 Corinthians 4:1-2**

**All of life is a stewardship**, from learning to look after possessions (no matter the value) when a child, caring for siblings and taking care of your first vehicle and home to laying your life down for your spouse and raising Godly children.

We need to learn to be stewards from our youth, seeing as everything we have, we have received as a gift from God (it all belongs to Him).

He has entrusted much into our care; we need to be “good stewards” who will give an account to Him one day.

Consider this parable spoken by Jesus regarding stewardship -

**Matthew 25:14-30.**

The foundational principle in exercising Godly character is stewardship, where my whole life is lived for the “glory of God” - **John 15:8.**

# *Chapter 11*

## **- STRONG FAMILY UNITS -**

This chapter has been added for the express reason that if a man called by God is actively involved in ministry and is married, he needs to have his marriage in order.

If a man's marriage fails, he is automatically disqualified from the church offices of bishop and deacon and his testimony is adversely affected. He can be restored, but this will take time, and there will unfortunately always be a reproach on his ministry. If you are married or need to marry, this is your **FIRST** and **GREATEST** responsibility in ministry before you preach to anyone else.

Marriage is an institution designed by God with the purpose of man's having a helper - **Genesis 2:20-24**.

It is not good for man to be alone because, for the most part, man needs a helper - **1 Corinthians 11:8-9**.

However, Paul also suggests a man who is able to exercise self-control (**1 Corinthians 7:7-9**) should remain single as he can then give himself totally to the Lord - **1 Corinthians 7:28, 32-38**.

It is therefore clear from Scripture that the primary purpose for marriage is to avoid sexual immorality - **1 Corinthians 7:1-6**.

Secondary to this is to then enjoy God's full purpose and benefit of a marriage - **Ephesians 5:22-33**.

Marriage in Christ is the ***most fulfilling*** experience a human can enjoy as each gives themselves to the other, ministering to and meeting each other's needs, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

This is a powerful expression to the world of Jesus and His Church. (Our marriages need to be exemplified in this picture.)

## **GOD HATES DIVORCE!!!**

If a marriage portrays Jesus and His Church, divorce would be symbolic of a separation of Jesus from His Church. God has promised to never "leave or forsake" us - **Hebrews 13:5**.

Men should love their wives as Jesus loves His church.

God therefore cannot ever be pleased with divorce, but knowing the hardness of men's hearts, He allowed for this in the Old Testament but makes it clear that if a person remarries, they commit adultery. If a person cannot remain single, they would then have to face the reality of not giving up on their marriage and find God's grace to make it work.

We appreciate that various situations can be very complicated, and as church leaders we would need to address these on their merits as we find God's wisdom in the individual situations - **Mark 10:2-12**.

Scripture only makes place for divorce if a spouse commits adultery - **Matthew 5:32, 19:9**.

Yet our counsel is always to reconcile if at all possible.

## **THE FAMILY UNIT**

A good Christian family is one that lines up with biblical principles and one in which each member understands and fulfills his or her God-given role. The family is not an institution designed by man. It was created by God for the benefit of man, and man has been given stewardship over it. The basic biblical family unit is comprised of one man, one woman (his spouse) and their offspring or adopted children.

The extended family can include relatives by blood or marriage such as grandparents, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, and uncles. One of the primary principles of the family unit is that it involves a commitment ordained by God for the lifetime of the members. The husband and wife are responsible for holding it together, the current attitude of our culture notwithstanding. Although divorce is sought and granted much too easily in our society, the Bible tells us that God hates divorce - **Malachi 2:16**.

The objective is for all family members to be Christians, having a true relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

**Ephesians 5:22–26** provides the guidelines for husbands and wives in a Christian family. The husband is required to love his wife as Christ loved the church, and a wife should respect her husband and willingly submit to his leadership in the family. The husband's leadership role should start with his own spiritual relationship with God and then flow to instructing his wife and children in scriptural values, leading the family into biblical truth. Fathers are instructed to bring up their children in "the training and instruction of the Lord" - **Ephesians 6:4**.

A father is also to provide for his family. If he does not, he "denies the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" - **1 Timothy 5:8**.

So, a man who makes no effort to provide for his family cannot rightly call himself a Christian. This does not mean that the wife cannot assist in supporting the family – **Proverbs 31** demonstrates that a godly wife may surely do so – but providing for the family is not primarily her responsibility; it is her husband's.

Woman was given to man for the purpose of being her husband's helper (**Genesis 2:18–20**) and to bear children. The husband and wife in a Christian marriage are to remain faithful to one another for a lifetime. God declares equality of worth in that men and women are created in God's image and are therefore equally valuable in His eyes. This does not mean, however, that men and women have identical

roles in life. Women are more adept at nurturing and caring for the young, while men are better equipped to provide for and protect the family. Thus, they are equal in status, but each has a different role to play in a Christian marriage.

A Christian marriage, foundational to a Christian family, follows the biblical instructions concerning sex. The Bible counters the cultural view that divorce, living together without being married, and same-sex marriage are acceptable in God's eyes. Sexuality expressed according to biblical standards is a beautiful expression of love and commitment. Outside of marriage, it is sin.

Children are given two primary responsibilities in the Christian family: to obey their parents and to honor them **(Ephesians 6:1–3)**.

Obeying parents is the duty of children until they reach adulthood, but honoring parents is their responsibility for a lifetime. God promises His blessings on those who honor their parents.

Ideally, a Christian family will have all members committed to Christ and His service. When a husband, his wife, and their children all fulfill their God-appointed roles, then peace and harmony reign in the home. If we try to have a Christian family without Christ as Head or without adhering to the biblical principles the Lord has lovingly provided for us, the home will suffer.

### **Dedication of children**

Child dedication is a symbolic ceremony undertaken by Christian parents soon after the birth of a child.

For water baptism, a person needs to “believe” on Jesus before being baptized by full immersion. A young child, especially a baby, would not have developed the capacity to believe, and on this basis, we do not believe in “infant baptism”.

Dedication rather is intended to be a public statement by the parents that they will train their children in the Christian faith and seek to instill that faith in them.

The congregation often responds through responsive reading or some other method to affirm that they, as a church family, will also seek to encourage the parents to bring up the child in the faith. There is no implied salvation in the ceremony, and it varies from church to church.

The idea of dedicating a child to the Lord can certainly be found in the Bible. Hannah was a barren wife who promised to dedicate her child to God if He would give her a son - **1 Samuel 1:11**.

**Luke 2:22** begins the account of Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to the temple after forty days in order to dedicate Him to the Lord. This was slightly more involved since it involved a sacrifice, but once again this ceremony did not indicate any level of salvation.

Child (baby) dedication is not one of the two ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper) required of Christians in the New Testament. As Christians, we are baptized and participate in the Lord's Supper as outward and public signs of what Christ has done within us. While baby dedication is not an officially instituted ordinance of the church, there does not seem to be any conflict with Scripture as long as parents do not view it as assuring the salvation of the child.



# Chapter 12

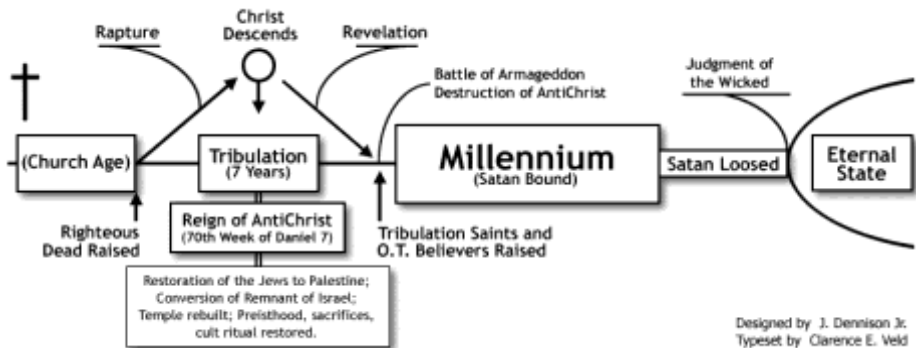
## - WHAT HAPPENS IN THE END? -

The study of the “End Times” (eschatology) is enormous, complex, and requires much elaboration, so for our purposes we will give only a brief outline by providing a skeleton on which you can build.

Our understanding of end time events is determined by our positioning of the “millennium”(1000-year reign of Christ). All Scripture pertaining to the last days is interpreted from this viewpoint.

There are three primary millennial positions:

1. **Premillennialism:** The millennium will start at the second coming of Christ; this is future.



Premillennialism advocates the following:

- The millennial reign begins at the second coming of Christ.
- Satan is the god of this world until Christ's return. ONLY then is he bound.

- Christ physically returns to Jerusalem, from where He reigns.
- Christ brings an end to all human rule and sets up His eternal kingdom, physically on earth.
- The resurrected saints return with Christ physically to reign with Him.
- Satan is physically bound and has no influence on the earth until the end of the millennium.
- Satan will be loosed at the end of the millennium; he will deceive the nations into a war against Christ called the battle of Gog and Magog where they will be destroyed.
- Satan will be cast into the lake of fire.
- All the unrighteous will face the final judgment (great white throne) and be cast into the lake of fire.
- This earth as we know it is destroyed and Christ creates a new heaven and earth in which ONLY the righteous dwell.

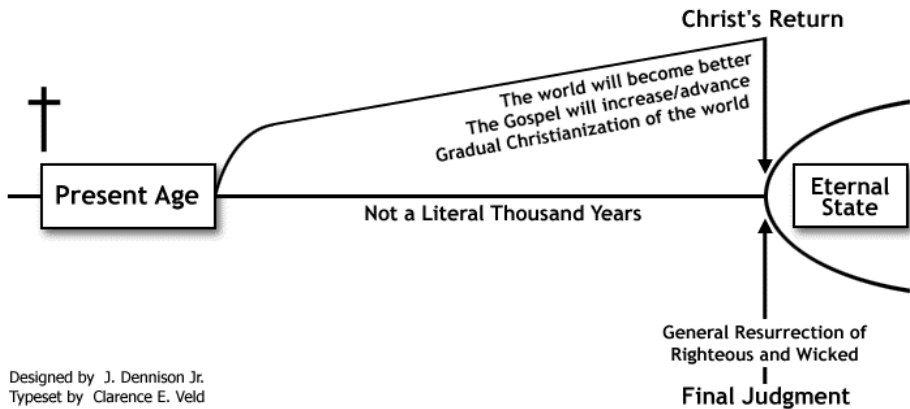
2. **Amillennialism:** There is no millennium, it is only symbolic.



Amillennialism advocates the following:

- The millennium is only symbolic.
- The church has replaced Israel (no 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel nor any prophetic purposes remain).
- There is no tribulation period (this was all fulfilled in 70 AD with the destruction of the temple).

- There is no rule of the antichrist (Nero was the antichrist during the above-mentioned period).
  - There is no future battle of Armageddon.
  - There is no rapture of the church, only a general resurrection at the return of Christ.
  - Satan is not physically bound during the millennium.
  - The church is currently ruling with Christ.
3. **Postmillennialism:** The millennium is a “golden age” of Christian ethics that concludes with the second coming of Christ. We are currently in the millennium.



Postmillennialism advocates the following:

- The church will have growing rule over time, culminating with the second coming of Christ.
- The church has replaced Israel (no 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel nor any prophetic purposes remain).
- There is no tribulation period (this was all fulfilled in 70 AD with the destruction of the temple).
- There is no rule of the antichrist (Nero was the antichrist during the above-mentioned period).
- There is no future battle of Armageddon.

- There is no rapture of the Church, only a general resurrection at the return of Christ.
- Satan is not physically bound during the millennium.
- The church is currently ruling with Christ.
- The world gets better, not worse (less Christian persecution).
- The church will Christianize the world, resulting in a moral increase until Christ returns.

### **We believe the premillennial view to be biblical.**

Based on the premillennial view, the following events still need to happen:

1. Rise of the 10 kings - **Revelation 13:1-10, 17:12-18** (globalists who take control of the earth)
2. Great apostasy and Christian persecution -  
**2 Thessalonians 2:1-12** (as a result of globalist control)
3. Rapture of the Church - **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**
4. **Ezekiel 38-39** war (Israel invaded by Russia, Iran, Turkey, Ethiopia and Libya)
5. Abomination of desolation - **Daniel 12:11** and **Matthew 24:15** (Satan enters the temple and declares himself to be god.)
6. Reign of the antichrist for 3½ years - **Daniel 12:11**
7. Persecution of Israel - **Matthew 24:15-22**
8. Battle of Armageddon - **Revelation 16:13-16**
9. Second coming of Christ - **1 Corinthians 15:23-26**

**NOTE:** It is critically important to always remember the following in light of “End Times” teaching:

1. Jesus ONLY sets up His kingdom at His second coming. (It is not set up by men.)
2. Satan, therefore, is the god of this world until Christ’s second coming.

## **Errors that originate from Amillennial and Post-Millennial views:**

### ***Dominion Theology***

Dominion Theology is a grouping of theological systems with the common belief that society should be governed exclusively by the law of God as codified in the Bible, to the exclusion of secular law. The two main streams of Dominion Theology are "Christian Reconstructionism" and "Kingdom Now Theology". Though these two differ greatly in their general theological orientation (the first is strongly Reformed and Neo-Calvinistic, the second is charismatic), they share a postmillennial vision in which the Kingdom of God will be established on Earth through political and (in some cases) even military means.

The name "Dominion Theology" is derived from **Genesis 1:28**, where God grants humanity "dominion" over the Earth.

**REMEMBER: WHEN ADAM FELL HE LOST HIS DOMINION TO SATAN - Ephesians 2:1-2 and 2 Corinthians 4:4.** Satan is the god of this world and will be until the second coming of Christ. Only at this point will Christ take dominion and set up His kingdom - **1 Corinthians 15:23-26.**

### ***Christian Reconstructionism***

An example of Dominionism in reformed theology is Christian Reconstructionism, which originated with the teachings of R.J. Rushdoony in the 1960s and 1970s. Rushdoony's theology focuses on theonomy (the rule of the Law of God), a belief that all of society should be ordered according to the laws that governed the Israelites in the Old Testament.

Christian Reconstructionism is reformed theology that strongly emphasizes the sovereignty of God over human freedom and action, and denies the operation of charismatic gifts in the present day

(cessationism); both of these aspects are in direct opposition to Kingdom Now Theology.

### *Kingdom Now Theology:*

Kingdom Now Theology is a branch of Dominion Theology which has a following within Pentecostal and charismatic circles and was popularized in the late 1980s.

Kingdom Now Theology states that although Satan has been in control of the world since the Fall, God is looking for people who will help him take back dominion. Those who yield themselves to the authority of God's apostles and prophets will take control of the kingdoms of this world (7 Mountains).

The main promoters of this movement are the "Latter Rain" and "New Apostolic Reformation" proponents.

### **Errors that originate with Kingdom Now Theology:**

It has been necessary to highlight the following errors due to their massive influence on the church, especially within Pentecostal and charismatic groups.

### *The Latter Rain Movement (LRM)*

The LRM had its beginnings in the years following World War II and was contemporary with the evangelical awakening that was occurring with Billy Graham at the forefront, as well as the Healing Revival with Oral Roberts, Jack Coe, and William Branham.

The LRM brought a new focus on the spiritual elements of Christianity, including personal prophecy, spiritual warfare and typological interpretation of Scripture with a different eschatological emphasis.

A major feature expected by the LRM would be the "manifestation of the Sons of God" or "Joel's Army". The LRM taught that as the end of the age approached, the "over comers" would arise within the church. These Manifest Sons of God are the ones who have come into the full stature of Jesus Christ and have received the Spirit without measure.

They would be as Jesus was when on earth and would receive a number of divine gifts, including the ability to change their physical location, to speak any language through the Holy Spirit, and to perform divine healings and other miracles. They would complete the work of God, restoring man's rightful position as was originally mandated in **Genesis 1:28**, and by coming into the full stature of Christ would usher in his millennial reign. Extreme versions of this spoke of Jesus as a "pattern" Son and applied "ye are gods" (**Psalms 82:6**) to this coming company of believers.

The most vehement promoters were the Kansas City Prophets (Paul Cain, Bob Jones and Mike Bickle) and the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) who are currently the largest proponents. C. Peter Wagner, being rooted in the Latter Rain Movement, assumed the position of "Super Apostle" of the NAR, who have an aggressive dominionist agenda.

Supposedly, the Manifest Sons of God are expected to reign on earth during a coming millennial age until ultimately every human being will be restored to harmony with God.

#### *The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)*

The NAR is a movement in Protestant Christianity largely associated with the Pentecostal and charismatic movements. The basic thesis asserts that God is restoring the offices of prophets and apostles (equal to the 12 Apostles and Paul, who receive new revelation to be accepted as Scripture). This is blasphemy and should be rejected (**Galatians 1:6-9**), and, according to this scripture, these people should be accursed.

According to Wagner, "The second apostolic age began in the year 2001," when, according to him, the lost offices of "prophet" and "apostle" were restored in this age.

#### *Spiritual Warfare Movement (SWM)*

The SWM incorporates various unbiblical practices whereby Satan and demons are combatted, using a variety of methods depending on the beliefs of the group, but typically prayer.

According to C. Peter Wagner, "spiritual mapping" involves research and prayer to locate specific individuals who are then accused of witchcraft, or individuals, groups, or locations that are thought to be victims of witchcraft or possessed by demons, against which spiritual warfare is then waged. Peter Wagner claims that this type of spiritual warfare was "virtually unknown to the majority of Christians before the 1990s". Occult practitioners such as witches and Freemasons, or occult idol objects such as statues of Catholic saints, are named and fought, using methods ranging from intensive prayer to burning with fire.

Spiritual warfare has become a prominent feature in some Pentecostal and charismatic churches. The concept is well-embedded in Pentecostal history, particularly through Jessie Penn-Lewis's book *War on the Saints* arising from the Welsh Revival in the early twentieth century. However, Jessie Penn-Lewis preaches a very different kind of spiritual warfare than that preached by the third-wave charismatic movement of today – notably C. Peter Wagner and Cindy Jacobs. Some of the other errors linked with this are inner healing, breaking generational curses, identifying and waging war on territorial spirits, anointing stakes to be placed in strategic positions, and burying Bibles under stadiums. Some have even resorted to the senseless and futile practice of "binding Satan and demons, having Jesus marches and gatherings where war is waged against the demonic realm by speaking into the atmosphere, rebuking, proclaiming (even roaring like lions) and binding". Sadly, on the back of all these false teachings and practices, the prosperity gospel has been peddled. Jesus and the apostles warned us concerning the rise of false prophets in the last days.



The above-mentioned errors are clearly not biblical and have resulted in much confusion, hurt, misplaced trust, and even rejection of the true Gospel.

A scriptural starting point for the concept of spiritual warfare can be found in **Ephesians 6:11-18**, where Paul metaphorically urges Christians to arm themselves with weapons and armor that resemble those of a Roman soldier. However, it is worth noting that the idea of "armor" from God, including the "helmet of salvation" and the "breastplate of righteousness", which Paul mentions, are included in **Isaiah 59:17**, which predates the Roman Republic and its legionary army by several centuries. **Psalms 18**, in particular, gives visualization of spiritual warfare (the divine power of God defeating the strategies of His enemy) and makes several references to equipment for battle - verses **32, 33, 36, 39**. **Psalms 17:5, 140:4** and **149:6-9** also allude to this battle.

The battleground for this war was transferred from the physical realm to the spiritual - **Ephesians 2:5-6, 1 Corinthians 15:24, Ephesians 1:21, 3:10, 6:12, Colossians 1:16, 2:10** and **2:15**).

**1 Corinthians 10:3-6** teaches very clearly that spiritual warfare is what takes place in the mind and is the responsibility of every individual.

Our victory is already secure in Christ. We don't need to fight Satan and his demons as we are new creatures and more than conquerors in Christ - **2 Corinthians 5:17** and **Romans 8:37**.

So when will the church be raptured?

Most of the Old Testament prophets, as well as Paul, Peter and John, spoke of the "Day of the Lord" as a day of darkness, vengeance, sorrow and wrath. This is not a specific day but rather a period of time beginning after the opening of the sixth seal (**Revelations 6:12-17**) and concluding at the "great white throne judgment". The "Day of the

Lord” is the period when Jesus begins to pour out His wrath

**(Revelation 6:16-17)** upon the world, returns to destroy His enemies at Armageddon, puts an end to the rule of man and sets up His everlasting kingdom. The kingdom is initially established on the earth where the world is ruled by Jesus with a rod of iron and concludes with the “great white throne judgment”. The day of the Lord then comes to an end, and Jesus creates a new heaven and earth.

We believe the church will escape the “Day of the Lord” as Paul teaches that we escape the “wrath that is to come” -

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.** We see in Bible typology that God always has a rescue mission before His wrath is poured out, for example, Noah and Lot. So what is clear from Scripture is that the church will be raptured before the “Day of the Lord”.

This day is fast approaching; we, the church, need to return to the teachings of the Apostles in earnest contention for the faith that was once and for all delivered to the saints, as instructed by Jude. It’s time to be discerning and watchful. To walk in total surrender and obedience to Christ as we prayerfully await that great and dreadful “Day of the Lord” which will come upon the whole world. And to this end, Paul reminds the church that we are children of “the day” and that we will escape the “wrath” that is to come -

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.**

Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will give you revelation and understanding of the Scriptures and that you will experience God's unfailing grace as you walk in the light of the teachings of the Apostles. To church leaders, may God grant you great wisdom in building the church upon this foundation.

**Watch! Stand fast in the faith! Be men!  
Be strong!**

**1 Corinthians 16:13**