

“For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?” 1 Corinthians 14:8



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“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...” Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith

April 2016

What is the Lord’s, Local Church?

There are many opinions and ideas as to what the Lord’s, local, New Testament church is, but all differences can be settled by the Word of God. (II Timothy 3:16-17) Each local, New Testament church is a Divine institution. The Lord planned for His local churches in the halls of eternity so they each have a Divine Head and Founder. (Ephesians 1:11; Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20; 3:8-10; I Peter 2:6) Each local church has the same Divine message, the message of God. (Ephesians 1:17-23; Mark 16:15) A pastor is responsible to God for what he preaches to one of the Lord’s churches. (II Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17)

As the Bride of Christ, each local church will be clothed with Divine garments. (Revelation 19:8) They are clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ and washed by the Word. (II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 5:26-27)

Each local church is the body of Christ. (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23) The Lord’s churches should be treated as such, with reverence and respect. They should look to Christ for guidance in all things. Each body is local. Look at the examples in the Scriptures. The Bible always addresses a local church: the church at Corinth, the church at Ephesus, the churches of Asia, the churches of Galatia.

The church is the salt of the earth. (Matthew 5:13) Salt preserves. God has preserved truth through His local, New Testament

churches. They are the means that God uses to uphold and support His truth. (I Timothy 3:15) The Lord’s churches are the light of the world. (Matthew 5:14) We are to preach the gospel and show forth Christ in our daily lives. (Matthew 28:18-20; John 9:5)

Each local church is an executive body. (Matthew 16:19; John 15:14-15) They are to execute the laws of Christ, not make new ones. His churches are to carry out the Word of God, the things that Christ commanded. (Matthew 28:20)

The Lord’s, local churches are judicial bodies. (I Corinthians 5:12) They are to judge their membership according to the Word and the laws that God has set down. (I Thessalonians 5:14; II Thessalonians 3:6-15) They have no rule over those outside their local body, whether in the world or as members of another church.

The Lord’s, local churches are the place for worship. (Hebrews 10:25; Psalm 77:13; Exodus 25:8,22) When His local church meets together in the assembly, Jesus is present. (Matthew 18:20; Ephesians 2:19-22) Through a local church, by Christ, is the only way that God receives glory from man. (Ephesians 3:21; Romans 16:27) The Lord’s, local churches are His jewels in this world and it is a privilege to be a member. We should not take this privilege for granted, considering the great price that was paid for this privilege.

Church Discipline

The Bible teaches that His local churches must exercise discipline over those of their own membership for the good of the whole local church. The best discipline possible is the local church seeking to lead men to be conformed to Christ and “renewed day by day” through prayer, study of God’s Word, fellowship with God’s people, and efforts to win lost souls to Christ. However, in spite of this, it is necessary at times to exercise discipline to members who will not heed God’s Word. (II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; 2:15)

There are two primary purposes for church discipline. The first is to keep the local church morally clean. The second is to keep the local church doctrinally clean. These reasons help to keep the unsaved out of the local church, to keep immoral conduct out of the local church, and to keep heresy from being agitated in the local church fellowship.

There are three main classes of offenses for which the local church is to exclude a member. The first is a personal offense. Jesus Christ gave specific instructions concerning personal offenses of brother to brother in the local church. When the Lord’s instructions are followed for the reconciliation of brother with brother in the local church, differences should be settled without the local church even being aware of it. It is good for each local church member to remember that God has, for Jesus’ sake, forgiven us much more than we will ever have to forgive our brother. (Ephesians 4:30-32; Matthew 6:15; 18:15; Matthew 5:23-24; Luke 17:1-4) In case reconciliation cannot be secured between the two offended parties personally, or with two or three witnesses, the matter of the personal offense is to be brought to the local church for settlement, either by reconciliation or by exclusion. The church may need to set one or both members outside the membership of that local body if they will not hear the church. They are to be treated as a heathen or a publican if they are put out because they are in contempt of the local body. (Matthew 18:16-18)

For public offenses, when a local church member walks disorderly by committing public sin as in I Corinthians 5:1-13, II Thessalonians 3:6, and other Scriptures, they should be excluded. This should be done to be in obedience to God’s Word and to help the member to be lead to repentance. They are to be admonished as a brother.

For doctrinal offenses and causing division, we have clear instructions how to handle this. A new member should be willing to listen much and object little to the teaching of the doctrines in the local church until he understands what they are. It is possible to have those that do not understand or even believe all the doctrines, as long as the person is willing to listen to the teaching on the subject without causing division or sowing discord. One who is caught agitating heretical doctrine in the local church should be reproved sharply. If he is not willing to stop and be taught by the local church, he should be excluded from her membership for the good of the fellowship as a whole. (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10; Proverbs 26:2-28; 17:9; 11:9) These are to be avoided.

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The Book of Hebrews — To New Testament Church Members

A Shadow From the Old Testament to Teach the New Testament

First, let's begin with some background on the sanctuary of God in the Old Testament, the Tabernacle, and today, His New Testament churches. God desires to dwell with His people. (Exodus 25:8-9) God says His ways are in His sanctuary. (Psalm 77:13) Man cannot praise God acceptably outside of His sanctuary. (Psalm 150:1) Understanding is found God's way, in His sanctuary. (Psalm 73:17) Man needs the help of the Holy Spirit to understand God's Word. (I Corinthians 2:14) Understanding the deep truths and all truths of God, can only be found inside of His sanctuary. (I Corinthians 2:10; John 16:13) The power and glory of God is found in His sanctuary. (Psalm 63:1-2) The sanctuary of God is a place of rest and safety. (Psalm 27:1-6)

Now, let's consider God's will for mankind today. (I Timothy 2:4; 3:15) God's will for man is for him to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The Lord's, local, New Testament churches are the pillar and ground of the truth. The Lord is nigh to those who call upon Him in truth. (Psalm 145:18) Going against the teachings of God is not truth.

Jesus started His New Testament church. (Matthew 4:17-22) Jesus purchased His church with His own blood. (Acts 20:28) If the Lord's, local church is not important, then we don't need it. If that's the case, why would Christ die for His church? Did Christ die for all churches? No, He purchased one, one kind. In the tabernacle, He chose to place His name and to speak only from there. (Leviticus 1:1) God still speaks from His "tabernacle" today, His local, New Testament churches. (Revelation 22:16-17) If you're not a part of one of His local "tabernacles", you would not be where He is speaking.

Now, down to the brass tacks. There is some confusion by some concerning the book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews was written to Jews who were New Testament church members that were scattered abroad. (Acts 2:5-12, 40-47; Acts 8:1,4) They were not serving the Lord and were trying to go back under the law. (Acts 15:1-2,5) These Jews were saved, Scripturally baptized, and had been serving the Lord. When persecution came upon the church in Jerusalem, they were scattered. Not all of them continued to serve the Lord. The book of Hebrews is a letter of admonishment to them, trying to pull them away from the law, back to the New Testament law of grace.

The book of Hebrews is a direct link between the tabernacle and the New Testament church. The tabernacle is a type and picture of a New Testament church. When Christ died on the cross, He did away with the law as a rule of faith and practice. (Colossians 2:14; Galatians 3:11-14) Notice in Hebrews 1:1-3 how that He "spoke in times past" to the forefathers through the prophets. Then, Christ spoke to them, but now He sits on the right hand of the Father.

In Hebrews 2:1-4, the Lord speaks by inspiration to the Hebrew church members about giving a more earnest heed to the things they had been taught. Notice in verse 3 how that they had been saved and the Word had been confirmed to them by those that heard Jesus speak. We are looking at the first church that Jesus built.

In Psalms 22:22 it was prophesied that the Christ would sing in the midst of His brethren. In Hebrews 2:9-12, we see that Jesus sang in the midst of His church. In Matthew 26:26-30, Jesus sings at the institution of the Lord's supper with His church. If these Hebrews were simply Jews, then why address the topic of the Lord's supper? Because these Hebrews were also New Testament church members, the topic of the Lord's supper makes perfect sense.

In Hebrews 3:1-6, Christ's house is found superior to Moses' house. The tabernacle was referred to as Moses' house because Moses was responsible for rearing the tabernacle. Jesus built His church, His house. Verse 6 confirms that these Hebrews were absolutely New Testament church members. These Hebrews were members of Jesus' house, His church. No where in the Bible is universal church taught. No where do all the saved make up the church or His bride.

Hebrews 3:7-15 compares the hardness of Israel in the wilderness to those not doing God's will. If this was to the Hebrews as Jews, there would be no need to address their forefathers' rebellion because they would be in the same condition. Hebrews 5:11-14 shows that these Hebrews, as New Testament church members, had become dull of hearing. They had left what they had been taught about the new covenant. They had forgotten the new covenant. They were going back to the old. They had need to be taught again because they had forgotten the new way.

Hebrews 6:1-15 shows that they had left the principles of the doctrine of Christ. They hadn't left the principles of the law, but of Christ. Verse 2 deals with the doctrine of baptism. Is that an Old Testament teaching or a New Testament? It's a New Testament teaching, therefore, showing that He's dealing with them as New Testament church members. This is a warning that once you walk away from the truth, if you spurn that space for repentance, there's no regaining bridal relationship. Notice that their inheritance was different than Abraham's. If they were Hebrews as Jews, then their inheritance would be the same as Abraham's. However, their inheritance was different than Abraham's because they were Jewish New Testament church members.

Christ was a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Hebrews 5:1-10 compares the Aaronic priesthood to the priesthood of Melchisedec, of which Christ's priesthood came by. These Jewish church members had accepted Christ as their High Priest, but they were trying to serve Him back under the Old Covenant. In Hebrews 7:1-28, Melchisedec is described. He was the king of Jerusalem and also the priest of God. Abraham paid tithes to him. Verses 11-28, describe the imperfection of the Aaronic priesthood and the need for Christ to come through the order of Melchisedec. Christ is the change. The oath of the law made men high priests, but the oath of God made Christ our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 8:1-13 shows that the New Testament covenant is a better covenant. There is a tabernacle, or dwelling place, that the Lord built and not man. Christ built His New Testament church, not man. Moses built the tabernacle in the wilderness, and shows a picture of the Lord's New Testament church.

In Hebrews 9:1-28, the old and new covenants are compared. Christ became a High Priest of a greater and more perfect tabernacle, the New Testament church. The Lord's church was not made with hands. In verse 11, the Word is talking about a perfect tabernacle that was not of "this building", referring back to the tabernacle or temple, the old way of worship. At the shedding of Christ's blood, this New Testament covenant came into force. The old was done away. (Colossians 2:14; Galatians 3:11-14)

Hebrews 10:1-12 compares the sacrifice of Christ to the sacrifices made under the law. The law was a shadow, or picture, of the new covenant according to verse 1. Sacrifices of the animals never took away one sin. The sacrifices of Christ forever took away man's sin.

Hebrews 10:24-31 talks about forsaking the assembly. What assembly could they be forsaking under the law? This is to New Testament church members forsaking the assembly in New Testament church capacity. Forsaking the assembly is compared to the gravest punishment under the law, but it was said to be "worse" because of the grace of the new covenant. If this was to the Hebrews as Jews, it wouldn't be worse, but of course, it is to the Hebrews as New Testament church members.

Hebrews 11:1-40 defines the faith of the Old Testament disciples. As it goes through their walk of faith, it concludes that they received not the promise. Then it ends with "some better thing for us". This "us" is referring to New Testament church members, differently than Hebrews as Jews.

Hebrews 12:1-4 talks about laying things aside, those things that hinder, and to look to Jesus. Notice how Jesus is described as the "author and finisher of our faith". This shows that these Jews had accepted Jesus under the new covenant. The Jews, as a people, had rejected Jesus, but these Jews, as New Testament church members, had accepted Him.

Hebrews 12:5-17 teaches the chastening of the Lord for His children. They are warned about Esau, who gave away his birthright. This comparison with these Jewish church members, shows that they were in danger of losing their bridal relationship. If they were being obedient under the Old Testament, then why would they be admonished about chastisement? They were being warned because they were backslidden and falling back into their old, religious ways instead of continuing on in the new covenant as New Testament church members.

Hebrews 12:22-24 talks about the "general assembly and church of the firstborn". This is referring to the first church, the general assembly in Jerusalem that these Hebrews were members of. These admonitions were made to try to help them see they needed to continue in the ways they had been taught as New Testament church members.

Hebrews 12:25-29 warns of the danger of refusing God. When you refuse the ways of God, you refuse God. These Hebrew church members were told they had received a kingdom which cannot be moved.

Hebrews 13:7, 17 admonishes them to follow pastoral leadership. Pastors were a New Testament church office. The pastor is the one in the New Testament church God has chosen to physically and spiritually lead His local churches.

Hebrews 13:24 says that the saints of Italy salute them. New Testament saints are only New Testament church members. These fellow saints, as New Testament church members, were falling away from the doctrines of Christ in His New Testament church.

The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish church members that were scattered. They were not doing the will of God. They were trying to practice the Old and New Testaments together. Hence, we see God's way of admonishing them by going back and showing them the pictures in the Old Testament of His New Testament church. The book of Hebrews should impress upon us the need as New Testament church members to study the tabernacle so we can have a clear example to show us the way of the Lord.

Divorce and Remarriage—What does the Bible teach?

Paul said marriage was honorable. (Hebrews 13:4) Solomon said to rejoice with the wife of thy youth. (Proverbs 5:28) Jesus honored marriage by His presence in Cana of Galilee. (John 2:1-11)

Polygamy was introduced by Lamech, who took two wives. (Genesis 4:19) After the Jews had formed the habit, contrary to their usual customs and laws of intermarrying with “those outside their faith”, they indulged in polygamy unrestrainedly. The captivity seems to have stamped out this custom, however, for there is no instance on record in the Old Testament of this practice after the return from Babylon. (Luke 16:18; I Corinthians 6:9-11; Jeremiah 3:6-14) Polygamy is not the subject of I Timothy 3:1-2. One means original.

God hates divorce. (Malachai 2:11-16; Hebrews 9:24-28) The Lord gave Israel a divorce. (Jeremiah 3:8) The Lord asks Israel to return for He was still married to her. (Jeremiah 3:14) The Lord asks Israel to produce her bill of divorcement. (Isaiah 50:1)

Divorce was only permitted because of the hardness of men’s hearts because God never intended for it to happen, nor does He approve of it. (Matthew 19:8) The only Biblical grounds for divorce and remarriage under the law of Moses was for pre-marital uncleanness. (Deuteronomy 24:1) The divorcee could remarry lawfully then and only under these circumstances. (Deuteronomy 24:2) This uncleanness had to be discovered on the wedding night. If a spouse had been promised virginity, and on the wedding night it was discovered not to be so, then a divorce could be granted and they were free to marry again without punishment. However, after remarrying, they could not go back to their original spouse. (Deuteronomy 24:3-4; Numbers 30:6-8)

Fornication is not the same as adultery. Every place in the Bible that fornication is used it is talking about the unmarried. (Matthew 5:31-32; Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Matthew 19:8) Adultery is committed only by the married or those that have been married. Adultery is not grounds for a divorce and especially not for remarriage. Divorcees should fit their lives to the Bible, not the Bible to the divorcee. Luke 16:15 says, “And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”

Divorce is a cutting off, the dissolution of a marriage relation. Divorces were permitted under the Mosaic law, for the special reasons previously discussed. (Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Matthew 19:8) However, God’s will was never to condone divorce. He only allowed it because of man’s own sin. This allowance came to be greatly abused by the licentious and Christ reprimanded the Jews very severely for their conduct. (Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12) Apparently, the woman also had the privilege in the time of Christ to divorce her husband. (Mark 10:12; John 4:16-18)

Jesus honors widowhood. He raised the widow’s son in Luke 7:11-18. He rebuked the Pharisees for devouring widow’s houses in Matthew 23:14; Mark 12:40; and Luke 20:47. He honored the widow when Elijah helped her during the famine and then he recalled it in Luke 4:24-26 as an object lesson. He used a widow in a parable to teach about His second coming in Luke 18:1-6. He honored a widow’s gift in Mark 12:42. He honored their faithfulness as it was demonstrated in their commitment to their vows.

Paul honors widows that were widows indeed. (I Timothy 5:3) A widow indeed is one who has lost her husband to death. (Romans 7:1-3; I Timothy 5:10) Younger widows were forbidden to be taken into the number of disciples. (I Timothy 5:9) Younger widows would be waxen wanton against Christ and will marry because of the lust of their flesh. (I Timothy 5:11; I Corinthians 7:10-11) The high priest of Israel was forbidden to marry a widow, unless she had been married to a priest, or a divorced woman, even though there is a difference. (Leviticus 21:10-14)

A widow, under the law, could remarry her husband’s brother. (Deuteronomy 25:5-10) She could marry a priest if she had been a wife of a priest. (Ezekiel 44:22) Today in the New Testament covenant, a widow indeed is free from her covenant. She is lawfully free to marry a brother-in-Christ that has not been married or is a widower. However, she may be much happier if she remains unmarried. (I Corinthians 7:39-40)

Conversion does not alter or remove the stigma of marital relations. (I Corinthians 7:21-24) “If a ruler hearkeneth unto lies, all his servants are wicked.” (Proverbs 29:12) People tend to follow and are like their leaders. Hosea 4:9 says, “And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings.” (II Timothy 4:3-4)

The Lord’s preachers and churches should be governed by three rules:

- 1)

The statement or declaration of the Scriptures,
- 2)

The example or pattern of events of occurrences in the Scriptures,
- 3)

The command or authority for our state and practice as found in the Scriptures.

If we see any of these three, then we should be duty bound to heed to them.

I Timothy 3:2 gives us a qualification of a bishop that hinges upon this doctrine of divorce and remarriage. The Greek word “mia” is used for the word one. This word does not mean one as opposed to another. It simply means “original”. If a bishop is to lead the church of God, then how can he lead them away from

the sin of divorce and remarriage if he is guilty himself? This same word is used in Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:2, Luke 24:1, and John 20:19. “One or first; only” is the Strong’s definition. If you notice, there are many other qualifications for a bishop to be Scripturally ordained. However, a man or his wife that has been divorced and remarried cannot this circumstance of having more than one living wife.

God’s Word is clear as to our responsibility in the circumstance of divorce, and divorce and remarriage. It is good that God is merciful and forgiving. However, we need to teach our children that following God’s order is imperative. If we sin, there is a penalty. Let’s save our children years of misery and heartache. Let’s teach them the truth of God’s way of marriage. God’s way is that if a man and woman marry it is for their lifetime. A covenant made before God and man is binding. (Genesis 2:20-25; Matthew 19:6; Mark 10:9)

“Monuments”

God’s people stood by the river of Jordan, looking back on the water they had passed through.

They shouted and raised their voices to Heaven, but Joshua said there’s one thing we must do.

Where are the monuments we should be building, so our children can find the way to get home?

We should be laying stones so they can follow the pathway that leads to God’s throne.

They laid twelve stones on the banks of the river, at Gilgal they offered their tribute that day.

Their children would question them,

“What are these stones?

Child, they mark the spot of this sanctified place.”

Where are the monuments we should be building, so our children can find the way to get home?

We should be laying stones so they can follow the pathway that leads to God’s throne.

Mothers and fathers of this generation, there’s hope for your family, keep this in mind.

Don’t move the landmarks set up for your children, they will find the way by what we’ve left behind.

Where are the monuments we should be building, so our children can find the way to get home?

We should be laying stones so they can follow the pathway that leads to God’s throne.

Results of Church Discipline

When a church purges herself of the unclean and the reproachful in her membership, two things usually happen:

If a church turns out a goat (an unsaved person), he usually bleats and butts. If a church turns out a sheep (a child of God), it will cause him to repent and come back to that church home, more useful than before. (II Corinthians 2:6)

Secondly, the members of the church will have more respect and love for one another, the world will respect the church’s stand, and souls will be added.

Perhaps, the reason the Lord’s churches aren’t growing is because of a lack of church discipline?

~ GOD ~

Persons or Personalities?

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Gen 1:1) The first verse in the Bible introduces us to God, the Creator of all things. According to our English language, God appears to be a singular Person. However, a quick analysis of God’s name as it is written in Hebrew (the language the Old Testament was originally written in) confirms a much different reality.

In Hebrew, “God” translates to “Elohiym” which is the plural form of “Elowahh” meaning “[three] strong Ones.” Grammatically, the plurality of God’s name in Hebrew holds great significance. The Hebrew language contains three kinds of nouns in regards to number: singular, dual, and plural. Obviously, English differs by having just singular and plural nouns. This distinction sheds some important light on the identity of our Maker by showing us His Triune nature. This is further evident by Genesis 1:26, “Let Us make man in Our image.” Many Jewish and other religious scholars determine to dismiss the truth that our God is Three in One, as these afore mentioned verses highlight, but even if we were to completely ignore them; God makes it clear who He is throughout the rest of His Word.

No article on the Trinity would be complete without the mentioning of 1 John 5:7. This verse describes God in explicit detail. Read and see for yourself. This verse leaves no wiggle room for the erroneous assertion that the Trinity is composed of three “personalities”. “For there are three that bear record in heaven...” This should be all the evidence we need to confirm the Trinity’s existence, but of course our wonderful Creator has left us much more than that! Let’s consider some events in the New Testament that show us the Godhead as mentioned in Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20, and Colossians 2:9.

Jesus’ baptism is a well recorded event that appears in all four of the Gospels. (Matt 3:13-17, Mark1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, John 1:29-34) Within this event, we clearly see our Triune God in one place of the Scriptures, at one time manifesting themselves openly. The Father speaks from Heaven; the Spirit descends in bodily form as a dove upon Jesus; and Jesus is being baptized here on the earth. On a tangent, some may attempt to explain away that the voice from Heaven wasn’t indeed audible. However, we see the same situation in Mathew 17:5-6 at the transfiguration of Jesus Christ where the Father spoke saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.” Peter, who was a first-hand witness of this event, was inspired of the Spirit to write of this impactful event in 2 Peter 1:17-18 citing that, “this voice which came from heaven we heard...” These events beg the question: “How did God speak, visibly descend in Spirit in the bodily form of a dove, and get baptized in the flesh of man being three personalities?”

How about the stoning of Stephen? In Acts 7, we read a grim narrative where a great man of God is murdered for the sake of his faith and gets a glimpse of the glory he would soon come face to face with. What did Stephen see? The Scriptures state that he sees “the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God”. He saw two distinct individuals! I suppose if one was to refute the clear evidence of the Trinity within this passage they must claim that Jesus isn’t God; however,

that’s just as erroneous if not more so than to assert that our God is merely made up of “personalities”. Passages such as: John 1:1-14; Hebrews 1:8; John 17:5; and Colossians 1:12-17 make it abundantly clear that Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, is more than just a “holy man” or “prophet” or “preacher”. He **IS** God the Son: a Person of the Trinity.

Stephen clearly understood that God is a Trinity. He also understood that Jesus Christ—“The Just One”, according to Acts 7:52—is very much a part of the Godhead.

There are many other verses that could be mentioned to back up the doctrine of the Trinity. The best admonishment I could give to any child of God striving to find the truth on this subject is to slow down and truly analyze how each verse is written. I’m afraid we--me included--often breeze over verses and passages that we are familiar with so quickly that we miss the simple, glaring truth that is embedded within them. For instance, Ephesians 4:4-6. In these verses we can clearly see three, distinct Individuals mentioned in each consecutive verse: One Spirit, One Lord, and One Father. Similar to this is 1 Corinthians 8:6: “There is but One God the Father... and One Lord Jesus Christ...” Another familiar passage is the great commission as found in Matthew 28:18-20. These verses show us the authority (name) by which we should baptize qualified candidates: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.

Lastly, consider John chapter 17. In this passage we see one of the most intimate and emotional events in all the Bible with Jesus praying to God the Father just before His brutal crucifixion. Was Jesus praying to Himself? Was He just leaving us an example to look at? Verse 5 seems to disagree with that thought, and I believe if we’re honest with ourselves, we would too. Instead, when we look at the Bible as it is plainly and clearly written, we would conclude that our God is Three Divine Persons in One. Thankfully, our God doesn’t require that we understand how the Trinity works inside and out (Isaiah 55:8-9), He just requires a little faith! (Matthew 17:20)

*“Now faith is the substance of
things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.
For by it the elders obtained
a good report.
Through faith we understand
that the worlds were framed
by the word of God,
so that things which are seen
were not made of things
which do appear.”*

Hebrews 11:1-3



The Lord’s Supper:
It’s Not Our Own!

The ordinance of the Lord’s supper is exactly that: the **Lord’s** supper! The Lord has a house, each local, New Testament church, and in each house His table where He invites His children from each house to come and dine.

The house of God is His local church. (I Timothy 3:15; I Peter 4:17) His local church is an Ekklesia which means, “that which is called out”. (Matthew 16:18; Matthew 4:18-22) His house is a local, called out body of Scripturally baptized believers. One must be saved before they are baptized. (Matthew 3:5-8) One must be Scripturally baptized by the authority of Christ that comes through one of His New Testament churches. John had God’s authority to baptize. (John 1:33) Jesus left His local churches authorized to carry out baptism Scripturally under His authority. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 19:1-7) After salvation and Scriptural baptism, one can then be added to the Lord’s church. (Acts 2:41-47; Acts 20:9-10; I Corinthians 11:1-2)

Jesus placed the supper inside the local body, His church. He gave it to the called out ones. (Matthew 26:26-30) These were the ones He called out first and then later ordained them in His church as Apostles. (I Corinthians 12:28) Jesus sang in the midst of His church to fulfill prophecy. The only place we see recorded of Jesus singing is during the institution of the Lord’s Supper. (Hebrews 2:12; Psalm 22:22)

God extends an invitation to all His children to come and dine, but they must come His way. It’s His house, and His table so we must come His way. His way is first in salvation, (Romans 10:9-10) then baptism, (Acts 8:12) then uniting with a local church, (Acts 2:41,47) and then continuing in fellowship and doctrine. (Acts 2:42)

He left us an example in the Passover. The Passover was observed in each local house with one law. (Exodus 12) The Lord’s supper was always observed in the coming together into one place. To go away from this is to remove the Lord’s name from this supper and making it our own. (I Corinthians 11:17-20, 33; I Corinthians 5:11-12)

God’s invitation to the Lord’s supper is open to all, but it must be His way. The Lord’s Supper is open for those that will come His way, but it is closed to those who are not willing to submit to His way. God’s work is always done through a local, New Testament church for which He shed His blood. (Acts 20:28)



These doctrinal lessons published in this paper come as a direct result of the teaching that takes place at our seminary classes in our fellowship. If you desire to learn more of the deep truths of God’s Word, these classes are online, live, every first and third Friday and Saturday of the month, October through May. Friday night classes begin at 7 p.m. PST and Saturday classes at 9 a.m. PST. Classes are also archived. Tune in at flmbc.org.