

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

KJV

**KING JAMES BIBLE
USED FOR ALL
REFERENCES TO
GOD'S WORD IN
THIS NEWSPAPER**

The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



"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 2024

God's Way is the Best Way!

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:3-4

God has an order and a way for man to come to Him. God's desire has always been to have fellowship with mankind. That is why God created man. However, man has been trying since the Garden of Eden to come to God in his own way. As we look and examine the Scriptures, we will see God's way and understand that God's way is the best way.

First of all, God's way shows man the way to salvation. This is the beginning point for man to come to God. God never intended man to go to the Lake of Fire. It was created for the devil and his angels, but man will go there if he rejects God's free gift of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is

come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." John 3:16-20

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" Matthew 25:41

God only has one way of salvation. Man must come God's way in order to be saved, which is the will of God for all mankind. No other way is acceptable.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12

The next step in God's way is that after someone has been saved or born again, they then need to

have Scriptural baptism. This baptism must also be in God's way. After all, it is God's will so it must be done His way. Scriptural baptism must be done by the Scriptures.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Acts 2:41

From this Scripture we see God's way is that someone who is saved, one who "gladly received his word", is then baptized. Over and over the Scriptures emphasize that baptism is a burial. The word "baptize" itself in the Greek means to cover wholly with a fluid. Every example we have in the Scriptures is a burial in water.

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized." John 3:23

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Matthew 3:5-6

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:16-17

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“And as they went on *their way*, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is water*; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.” Acts 8:36-38

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:3-4

Scriptural baptism must be done by Heaven’s authority. The Bible is clear that Jesus has all authority. However, when He was ready to leave the earth, He gave His New Testament church the commission to operate under His authority and to baptize.

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” Matthew 28:16-19

These eleven disciples are the same disciples that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper to. If you will notice, the following Scriptures clearly show that these eleven disciples were His church that was assembled at the appointed place and appointed time with Him in their midst.

“Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his hand* with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.” Matthew 26:20-30

“When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus’ breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of *them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him,

Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.” John 13:21-30

“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” Hebrews 2:11-12

Therefore, Scriptural baptism must be administered by the authority of Christ that comes through a local, New Testament church with a lineage back to the first church that Jesus started. This is God’s way for Scriptural baptism.

Then, Scriptural baptism must be administered by a Scriptural administrator. Remember, all authority isn’t given to one of the Lord’s New Testament churches. Christ is the One with all authority. The Lord simply grants one of His local bodies to carry out His will under His authority. Every example given in the Scriptures is a God called, ordained preacher that was used to administer Scriptural baptism.

“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.” John 1:6-8

“And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” John 1:31-33

“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.” Acts 8:12. 38-40

Philip was no longer a deacon at this time when he was baptizing. He had been called out from being a deacon and was now doing the work of an evangelist. The work of the office of deacon was to assist the apostles. The apostles were at Jerusalem but we see Phillip was out working in Samaria as an evangelist.

“And the next *day* we that were of Paul’s company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven; and abode with him.” Acts 21:8

“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their hands* on them, they sent *them* away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.” Acts 13:1-4

These men were Scripturally ordained ministers that were sent out by and authorized by a local, New Testament church to administer baptism God’s way.

Scriptural baptism is God’s way so it fulfills all righteousness and relieves a disobedient child of a guilty conscience because of his obedience to God’s way.

“But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so now*: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.” Matthew 3:14-15

“The like figure whereunto *even baptism* doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” I Peter 3:21

The next step in God’s way is after salvation and Scriptural baptism then the Lord adds you to one of His New Testament churches. Remember, it is God’s will for all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Where is truth?

“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” I Timothy 3:15

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” John 17:17-19

“But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” John 3:21

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16

Truth is only found inside one of the Lord’s New Testament churches. Jesus left His church with the Word of God and gave them the Holy Spirit as Comforter to guide them into all truth. Therefore, no one can come to the knowledge of the truth without coming to one of the Lord’s New Testament churches.

After salvation, Scriptural baptism, and the Lord adding you to one of His churches, God’s way is that every member sanctify their life in service to the Lord. Many people have joined a church because they felt it was their duty. Others have joined because of a friend. Some have joined churches because they like the preacher while others have joined to conceal their guilty conscience. There have been a few who have joined a church simply to try to get financial gain or for social standing. God’s way is to let the Lord add you and fitly frame you together in the body that He desires for you.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God

and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:41-47

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2:19-22

"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Ephesians 4:16

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." I Corinthians 12:12-18

After one has been added by the Lord to a New Testament church, God's way is for them to live their life in service to the Lord. This can only be done by studying God's Word and growing in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." II Timothy 2:15-19

"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." I Peter 2:1-3

"But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Hebrews 5:14

As one grows in the Word of God, God's way is for their lives to show forth Jesus Christ in this world. A life of a New Testament church member is to be holy, sanctified, and set apart.

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto

honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." II Timothy 2:20-26

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." I Corinthians 6:17-20

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." II Corinthians 6:14-18

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:" Ephesians 5:1-8

God's way is that true New Testament church members are a select group. They are those who have been planted. Truly the Lord began His first church with a chosen group.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John 15:16-19

When a member can leave one of the Lord's New Testament churches and can stay gone, it becomes apparent that they were not added by God.

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no

doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." I John 2:19

The members of the Lord's local, New Testament churches are the only ones that can show forth His praises.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:" I Peter 2:9

Members of each of the Lord's bodies are special to Him.

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:" Deuteronomy 7:6-7

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Hebrews 12:22-24

True members of one of the Lord's churches are members in particular.

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." I Corinthians 12:27

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." I Corinthians 1:10

Those members of each local body that have come God's way, He has planted them and they will not be rooted up.

"Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." Matthew 15:12-14

To be planted is to be firmly fixed and nothing can move or offend those that have come God's way.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Psalm 1:1-3

There may be some who think more of the "weeds" of the world than those that God has "planted" in one of His churches, however, God sees things differently.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not

heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10:13-15

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Psalm 119:165

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25-27

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are." I Corinthians 3:17

If God has planted you in one of His New Testament churches then your time, money, and labor should be firmly set in the house of God where He planted you.

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Romans 6:22

Your devotion and benevolence is to the local body that God planted you in. You are to grow in the place that God planted you. That is God's way. The only way for you to be satisfied is to wholly serve the Lord in the local body He placed you in. That is where God speaks to you from and where He has for you to enter into His light and worship. That is the lampstand He placed your light on.

"How excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." Psalm 36:7-9

"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." Revelation 1:20

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Matthew 5:15

"*This shall be* a continual burnt offering throughout your generations *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee." Exodus 29:42

"But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee." Deuteronomy 12:5-7

"But now *are they* many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the

head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness. For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." I Corinthians 12:20-27

If you have been planted by the Lord in a local body, you can be satisfied with the fatness of the Lord's house.

"Thy righteousness *is* like the great mountains; thy judgments *are* a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast. How excellent *is* thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." Psalm 36:6-9

When God has planted you in one of His local, New Testament churches and you are striving to put Him first, then you can have true joy and happiness in knowing that you can approach God.

"Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.*" Psalm 65:4

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:14-16

"Behold, God *is* mine helper: the Lord *is* with them that uphold my soul." Psalm 54:4

God's way is the best way because when you are saved, come to the knowledge of the truth and are striving to put Him first, you are a part of something that is untouched by human hands.

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain." Psalm 127:1

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Hebrews 3:1-6

It is built for the Spirit.

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2:21-22

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Peter 2:5

With such an awesome privilege given to those who by God have been planted in a local body and are striving to do things God's way, it would behoove us to empty ourselves of self pity and worldly pleasures to serve the Great God of Heaven that gave us this great privilege.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me." Philippians 2:12-18

With this great privilege comes a promise of a great future to those who are willing to submit to God's way.

They shall flourish . . . break forth as a bud, to bloom!

"Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; To shew that the LORD *is* upright: *he is* my rock, and *there is* no unrighteousness in him." Psalm 92:13-15

They will see the beauty of dwelling in the Lord's courts.

"For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee." Psalm 84:10-12

There is a place set for those who follow God's way where He planted them in one of His New Testament churches.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." John 14:1-4

"The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." Psalm 23:1-6