

Lesson Forty-Four

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (Concluded)

Scripture Reading: Eph. 2:10-22, 3:14-21, 5:22-33.

Scriptures to Memorize: "He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21).

61. Q. Who is the Head of the Church of Christ?

A. Christ Himself is the Head of the true Church.

Matt. 28:18—"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." Eph. 1:22, 23—"and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." Eph. 5:23—"Christ also is the head of the church." See Eph. 4:15-16, Col. 1:18, Col. 2:10, etc. **The true Church of Christ has no other head.** Eph. 4:5—"one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

62. Q. Who is the Foundation of the Church of Christ?

A. Christ Himself is the Foundation of the true Church.

(1) Matt. 16:18—"upon this rock I will build my church," i. e., upon the truth to which Peter had just given expression, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

This is the fundamental truth upon which the Church, the Gospel, in fact the entire Christian System, is built. To say that the Church rests upon the foundation of His Divine Sonship and Messiahship, is equivalent to saying that it is built upon Christ Himself. 1 Cor. 3:11—"For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (2) Moreover, as the Apostles were ambassadors of Christ, the executors of His Last Will and Testament, fully clothed with His authority and infallibility through the gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon them in baptismal measure; the Church is also said to have been erected upon the foundation of the prophetic and apostolic testimony, which is the word of Christ. Eph. 2:20—"being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone."

63. Q. What is the Creed of the Church of Christ?

A. Christ Himself is the Creed of the true Church.

John 20:31—"that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." Acts 16:31—"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." John 14:1—"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." 2 Tim. 1:12—"for I know him whom I have believed." The living Creed of the living Church of the living God is the ever-living Christ. Rev. 1:17, 18—"I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

64. Q. In what formula is this Creed expressed?

A. In the formula: I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(1) Matt. 16:16—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is the fundamental truth of Christianity, which in turn rests upon the fundamental fact of Christianity, that God raised up Jesus from the dead. Rom. 10:9, 10—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead,

thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (2) The expression of this creedal formula by the individual, is the "good confession" (1 Tim. 6:13), which is made with the mouth (Rom. 10:9) unto salvation (Rom. 10:10). (3) **Jesus** is His name (Matt. 1:21). **Christ** is His title. The word **Christ** means **The Anointed One**. As prophets, priests and kings were anointed into office in olden times, it follows, that to confess Jesus as our Christ, is to accept Him as our Prophet, the Revealer of God, the One to whom we go for the words of eternal life (John 6:68); as our High Priest who maketh intercession for us at the right hand of God the Father (Heb. 7:25, 1 John 2:1, 1 Tim. 2:5); and as our King who has all authority over our lives (Matt. 28:18). (4) This Creed and its formula are both heaven-sent (John 1:14, 3:17; Matt. 16:17), scriptural, simple, comprehensive, and all-sufficient. **No other creeds or confessions are necessary.**

65. Q. **What is the all-sufficient Discipline for the guidance of the true Church?**

A. **The all-sufficient Discipline for the guidance of the Church in faith and practice is the New Testament canon.**

(1) The New Testament canon, i. e., the New Testament Scriptures as a whole, is the apostles' teaching, which is also the teaching of Christ as revealed by the Holy Spirit. John 16:13-15, 14:26, 20:21-23; Acts 2:4; 1 Cor. 2:1-15; 1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16, etc. Acts 2:42—"and they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching," etc. (2) In the New Testament Scriptures "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" are fully revealed. 2 Pet. 1:3; cf. Jude 3. In 2 Tim. 3:16-17, we are told that the Scriptures are sufficient to furnish all Christians "completely unto every good work"; therefore no human additions are needed. The New Testament itself, which is **the word**

of Christ, is the authoritative and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice for the Church of Christ.

66. Q. What are the terms of admission into the Church of Christ?

A. They are: (1) belief in Christ, which includes the acceptance of Him as a personal Savior; (2) repentance from sin; (3) public confession of Christ; and (4) baptism into Christ.

(1) John 20:30-31, Acts 16:31, John 14:1. (2) Acts 2:38, Luke 13:3, Acts 17:30, Acts 26:18. (3) Matt. 10:32-33, Rom. 10:9-10, 1 Tim. 6:13. (4) Matt. 28:19, Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 8:36-39, 22:16; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:26-27; John 3:3-5, etc. (See Question 96.)

67. Q. What are the members of the Church of Christ called, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. They are called disciples, believers, brethren, saints, priests, and Christians.

(1) Disciples, Acts 19:30. (2) Believers, Acts 5:14. (3) Brethren, 1 Cor. 6:8, 1 Tim. 4:6. (4) Saints, Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:2. (5) Priests, 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10, 1:6, etc. (6) Christians, Acts 11:26, 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16.

68. Q. What does the word "Christian" mean?

A. The word "Christian" means "of Christ" or "belonging to Christ."

69. Q. What names are given to the Church itself, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. In its universal aspect, it is called "the church," "the church of God," "the church of the living God," "the church of the Lord," "the general assembly and church of the firstborn." Local congregations are called "churches," "churches of God," and "churches of Christ."

(1) Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 15:9; 1 Tim. 3:5, 15; Acts 20:28; Heb. 12:23. (2) 1 Cor. 16:1; 1 Thess. 2:14; 1 Cor. 1:2; Rom. 16:16; Rev. 2:12, 18, etc.

70. Q. By what four great metaphors is the Church described, in the New Testament Scriptures?

A. It is spoken of as the temple of God, as the body of Christ, as the bride of Christ, and as the household of God.

(1) The temple of God, Eph. 2:21-22. This metaphor suggests dignity, solidarity, strength. (2) The body of Christ, 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 4:12, 1:22-23; Col. 1:24, etc. This metaphor suggests a fellowship of parts or members. (3) The bride of Christ, Eph. 5:22-33, Gal. 4:26; Rev. 21:2, 21:9, 22:17. This metaphor suggests purity, constancy, service, etc. (4) The household of God; or, the household of the faith, Eph. 2:19, Gal. 6:10. This metaphor suggests affinity of interest, purpose and work.

71. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these metaphors of the Church?

A. We should learn that the Church is most intimately related to Christ, and His partner in the great work of redeeming humanity; and that any one who ignores the Church or holds the Church in contempt cannot possibly please or honor Christ Himself.

Acts 20:28—"the church of the Lord, which he purchased with his own blood." Eph. 5:25—"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it." And so we sing, in the words of Timothy Dwight:

"I love Thy Church, O God;
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand.
For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end."

**REVIEW EXAMINATION OVER LESSON
FORTY-FOUR**

61. Q. Who is the Head of the Church of Christ?
62. Q. Who is the Foundation of the Church of Christ?
63. Q. What is the Creed of the Church of Christ?
64. Q. In what formula is this Creed expressed?
65. Q. What is the all-sufficient Discipline for the guidance of the true Church?
66. Q. What are the terms of admission into the Church of Christ?
67. Q. What are the members of the Church of Christ called, in the New Testament Scriptures?
68. Q. What does the word "Christian" mean?
69. Q. What names are given to the Church itself, in the New Testament Scriptures?
70. Q. By what four great metaphors is the Church described, in the New Testament Scriptures?
71. Q. What great lesson should we learn from these metaphors of the Church?

Lesson Forty-Five

WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH THE CHURCH

Scripture Reading: Matt. 28:16-20, 24:3-14.

Scriptures to Memorize: "That thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

72. Q. Who is the Administrator of the Church of Christ?