

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Lesson Six

Memory Verse: *Hebrews 10:25*

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"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."
Hebrews 10:25

I. Introduction

God established **three** foundational institutions on this earth: the family, civil government, and the group of Bible believing Christians that He calls "the church." Each group has a specific design, and is no less important than the other. Our focus in this lesson is on the local church which has been commissioned by God to carry out His commands of reaching the lost, and maturing the saved. Therefore, God's plan for a Christian's life will always be connected with a local body of believers called ***the church***. The purpose of this lesson is to show the disciple the role which their church will play in their everyday life. Without a good understanding of what Christ's church is all about, religions have been able to abuse and confuse, and turn so many people away from the Gospel!

II. The New Testament Kind of Church

A. What It Is, and What It Is Not

1. According to *Hebrews 10:25*, it is referred to as the "_____ of ourselves together" – The purposeful getting together of Christians to encourage, and minister to each other as we grow, and reach the surrounding area with the Gospel.
 2. A New Testament church therefore is *not* a building. If you are looking for a temple to worship in, the Bible says "your _____ is the temple of ... God" (*1 Cor 6:19,20*). Your place of worship is in your heart!
 3. A church is *not* a denomination, or religious organization run by a central headquarters. It is local, and run under the authority and instructions of the word of God through its pastor, and for its own people (*Titus 1:5-9*). *It also is not a social club - i.e., just for fun and pleasure!*
 4. A church is more than just a group or fellowship - it is a body of ***committed*** believers, seeking to worship and serve Christ together. It's called a "_____ of saints" (*Ps 149:1*, see also *Eph 1:1; Col 1:1,2*).
 5. The church is something that _____ started Himself, builds, and nurtures as a visible testimony of His grace for sinners (*Matt 16:18*).
6. In short, a church is a group of people who ***faithfully assemble*** (that means every week) because they are saved, baptized, and purposed in their hearts to fulfill "_____" that Christ commanded them to do in the Bible (*Mt 28:19,20*).
7. This "group" of believers is called the "***body of _____***" in *1 Cor 12:27*, because it represents His "body" (His physical presence) on earth today (like ambassadors, *2 Cor 5:20*), and operates ***like a human body*** in the following ways (*1 Cor 12:12,13,17-27*):
 - a. Each member (part) of the body of believers has a different function - each ministering to each other's needs as a whole.

- b. No one member can function alone - we need each other! When a Christian is not committed to others, especially to other believers, then they are hindering Christ's work in the world today.
 - c. Each member's contribution is vitally important to the well-being of the entire body of believers - we can't go it alone!
 - d. A properly functioning body operates as a single unit – a team.
 - e. All this shows that the church that Jesus started is a *living organism* constantly growing, and maturing under the never changing, and always perfect Head, Jesus Christ (Eph 5:23).
- B. The local church is also called “*the _____ of God*” (Eph 2:19), or in other words, the “family” of God (as His children). As part of His family, Christians MUST be able to get along (John 13:35) under the authority of the _____ (Acts 2:41-47; 20:32).
- C. Remember that all members of God's family must be _____ into His family by the new birth (John 3:3; John 1:12,13)

III. The Purpose of the Local Church

- A. The three-fold purpose of the church in Mt 28:19,20 is for Christians (three action words):
1. To **GO** - The world is not commanded to go to church, but the church is commanded to go into the world (see also Acts 1:8) with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and compelling them to come to " _____ " (Mt 11:28-30). Every Christian needs to be involved!
 2. To _____ - The world needs to be **instructed** about Jesus through preaching, discipleship, and teaching (Acts 20:25-27).
 3. To _____ - People need to turn away from their *birth-religion*, and begin following Christ only, according to the Bible, and that starts when a person is baptized!

These are the core reasons for the existence of a church. If there is a fault in churches, it is because they have other priorities besides these!

- B. The church is to be a place for _____ and teaching the doctrine (truth) about Jesus Christ, and the Christian life (1 Cor 1:17; 2:1-5)!
- C. The church is to provide Christians with _____ with other believers (Acts 2:42) – you can't find this at the local pub or disco!
- D. The church must focus on praying with one heart about the needs of its own people, and also of the lost around them (Acts 2:42) - Christians should pray together about everything – it keeps our hearts united!
- E. The church meeting is a time to remember the three main " _____ " (1Cor 11:2), which are not “sacraments,” but *commandments* that the Lord left specifically for the church to remember Him by. These ordinances are:
1. **Baptism** (Acts 2:41) - Baptism is vital to mark the commitment of a new believer to Christ, and to living separated from the old life and religions of their past.
 2. The **Lord's supper** (“*the breaking of _____*,” Acts 2:42) – is meant to remind us of the high price Christ had to pay for our forgiveness! A church can remember this event as often as they want, but usually it happens about every one or two months.

- 3. **Loving** _____ (Jn 15:17). This may sound a bit unusual, but Christ commanded the people of a church to love the people of that church. By doing this, God keeps us humble, and godly as a people!
- F. The church is to openly, publicly and consistently testify of God's grace and power to the world (Acts 2:43; 1:8) - it is NOT a secretive society that locks its doors! A true church will boldly evangelize a lost world to Jesus Christ!
- G. The church makes it possible for people to minister to each other's needs (Acts 2:44,45). Your greatest ministry will always be one word – OTHERS!
- H. It encourages, and enables Christians to love and enjoy God (Acts 2:46,47).
- I. It edifies (builds up, strengthens) the saints (which is *all of us*, Eph 4:11-16).
- J. All with the focus of reproducing itself throughout the world through soul-winning, baptizing, training, and then repeating (Acts 1:8)! A true New Testament church is not what it ought to be until it has *reproduced itself* somewhere else.

IV. Each Person's Function in a Local Church

- A. During your Christian life, you should grow in three general stages:
 - 1. **Observe and learn** - Your first priority should be to submit to the teaching of the word of God to learn how to be the man or woman that God designed you to be (Matt 11:28-30). Be teachable. Discipleship is the beginning of this stage. *The key is not to stagnate!*
 - 2. **Participate** - In time, you will naturally grow to the point where you can begin to serve and take on basic functions through the ministries of your church (Matt 4:19; James 1:22-25).
 - 3. **Lead** - As your growth continues, you should reach the point where you can begin to minister to others in the same way that you have been ministered to (2 Tim 2:2; 1Pet 3:15).
- B. These three stages can be roughly compared to the stages of growth physically: child, youth, adult.
- C. Be patient! It all takes time. Work hard as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and watch yourself grow!

V. The Structure (Blueprint) of the New Testament, Local Church.

All believers are to be _____ (John 8:31) – students and followers of Jesus Christ, and committed to living just like He would if he were in your shoes.

- A. The **guide and final authority** of a church is always the _____ (Acts 20:32; John 17:17). In Christ's church, the final authority is not placed in people, pastors, or princes, but in the living and pure words of God! As disciples, we must follow the Bible's design for Christianity, and not try and improve on it, or adjust it – just live it!!!
- B. A church has five positions of authority under the Word of God (Eph 4:11):
 - 1. **Apostles**: It means “*someone specially chosen and sent out by Jesus.*” Twelve apostles were chosen by Jesus personally (Mt 10:1,2) who would be the first **to establish Chris-**

Truths About the Church	
❖	Every local Bible-believing church is <i>Christ's Church</i> , where He is Head!
❖	A true church is subject unto God's word in everything - we can't pick and choose.
❖	Christ's church is family-oriented - not self oriented.
❖	We love to give of ourselves so others get the Gospel.
❖	A true church is evangelistic - on the go for souls!
❖	Every Christian must be a committed part of a local church! <i>We are not loners!</i>

- tianity throughout the world** - they laid the foundation by writing and preaching God's word. The twelve were made apostles by the supernatural empowerment of Jesus Christ. Their powers were specific only to themselves (2Cor 12:12), and not to all of Christianity. Once the apostles died, their powers died with them!
2. **Prophets:** A special class of people used by God to declare His word until the completion of the Bible (1Cor 13:8-10). The Apostles were also prophets, but there were some prophets who were not apostles, like _____ (Acts 11:27,28; 21:10).
 - a. The Old Testament was written by _____ (Rom 16:25,26)
 - b. The New Testament was written by prophets *and* apostles.
 - c. Now that the Bible is completed, the role of prophets and apostles has ceased (see again 1 Cor 13:8-10).
 3. **Evangelists:** These are Church-starters (like the Apostle Paul), who *evangelize* the lost to a surrendered faith in Jesus Christ, and then group those believers into a local church fellowship (a flock), that is dedicated as a group to obeying and living by all the commands of the Lord under their own pastor (Mt 28:19,20). The evangelist moves on and starts more churches as each church obtains its own permanent pastor.
 4. **Pastors:** These are Shepherds, the Bishops, the Overseers of the “flock” of Christians that seek to serve Christ. They have the primary job of leading the flock of Christians to serve God, and of protecting that flock from spiritual danger. They are “coaches” training Christians to shine as lights in this dark world!
 5. **Teachers:** These labour in teaching the word along-side pastors. No pastor can do all the work to keep a church going, so God gives people a heart to minister *with* the pastor, so that the Gospel can go further!

Of the five groups listed, only *the last three* are in operation today (Eph 2:19-22). The first two groups laid the foundation (until the Bible was finished), with Christ being the cornerstone of everything. The rest of us build upon that finished foundation (1 Corinthians 3:10,11).

- C. The primary leadership in the church is provided by the _____ (1Tim 3:1-5; see also Titus 1:5-9). A Biblical bishop is *different from modern bishops*.
 1. A bishop is a *shepherd* over a “flock” (1 Pet 2:25; 5:1-4). That is what “pastor” means. **Pastor, bishop and shepherd** are all the same thing. He is to minister, preach, care for, instruct, and equip the believers.
 2. Every church is to be lead by a pastor. If a church has no pastor, then its primary goal should be to pray for, and get one, and then follow him.
 3. A pastor/shepherd does the following (Acts 20:28-31):
 - a. He _____ his flock with the word of God (Bible teaching).
 - b. He _____ his flock - knows them; cares for their needs. This is where he keeps them in line with the Bible, and keeps them in motion, always serving the Lord.
 - c. He warns them - that is what preaching and teaching is for! He has a responsibility not just to the “flock” but to the Great Shepherd who called him to preach (Ezek 3:17-19; Col 1:28)!

- d. Therefore, a pastor is to **oversee** and spiritually care for those to whom he ministers (by living like them, among them, and for them)! He is not to dominate their lives, but **guide**, love, protect them, and if need be, give his life for them as Christ did!
- e. The pastor is not to be a _____ (1Tim 3:1,6), but an _____ (1Tim 5:17) - He should be **mature** in the Lord, and should be respected, and followed (2Tim 2:2; Jam 1:22). All pastors *first* are elders (mature Christians), but all elders are not pastors.
 - 1) Every young as well as older man in a church needs to be surrendered to the Lord if He should call them to be a pastor.
 - 2) If a man is called of God to preach, then his local church is his training ground to prepare him to pastor someday!
- f. Christians are to _____ the instruction of a godly pastor, knowing he watches for your _____, and will give an account to God for how you lived your life (Heb 13:7,17). God has given him the responsibility to instruct you as you grow, and to rebuke you when you don't grow (1 Tim 4:12). Every Christian needs a godly pastor.
- g. One of the jobs of pastors is to train more pastors (2Tim 2:2). Pastors come from within a flock. That is how God supplies men to go and reach the world with the gospel – through godly men training faithful men!

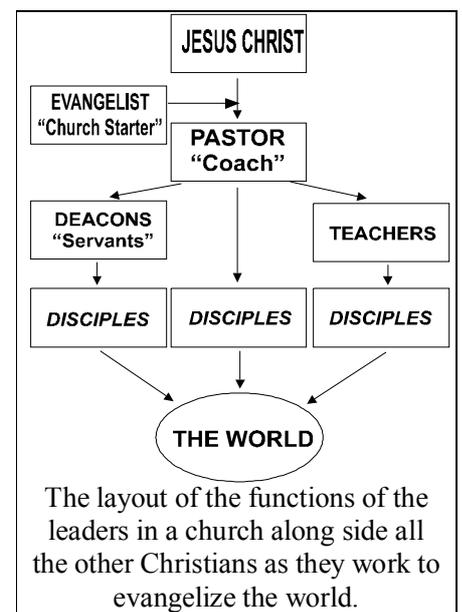
D. Every church must have lots of helpers - called _____ (1Tim 3:8)

- 1. A deacon is ***a dedicated servant***, who takes care of the needs of folks like widows, allowing the pastor to labour in the study and teaching of the word of God (Acts 6:1-4).
- 2. All Christians are deacons - they are servants in the local body!
- 3. Some deacons are *ordained* (specially chosen and paid by the church) like the pastor is, so they can serve full-time (Acts 6:5,6)! They serve along side the pastor, and take some of the load from off him, so that he can minister without being crushed by the work-load. A deacon must see his role as very important, and be committed to serving - not being served, even though being paid!

E. **Teachers** are people God calls to work along with a Pastor to train and mature believers in a church (Eph 4:11-12).

- 1. Teachers of the word need themselves to know the word! They need to be disciplined, so that they can disciple others!
- 2. Everyone needs to be available should God need them to teach a Sunday School class, help with a Bible Club, or disciple a new Christian!

F. Beside the above “official” positions, God refers to all Christians as _____ (Mt 20:25-28; 25:21), committed ***as a team*** to obey our Lord's command to reach this world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!



- G. Notice what is NOT in a church: priests, canons, altar boys, Monsignors, prelates, clergy, popes, cardinals, nuns, etc.! Every religion has to “add” to God’s clearly defined standard – but these additions are only destructive.

VI. How can you tell if the church to which you belong (or wish to join) is a true New Testament type of church (meaning, that it matches the pattern found in the New Testament)? Below are key marks of Christ’s Church!

- A. **Evangelism** - They will be involved in _____ to the lost (**Acts 1:8**)!
- B. **Bible Believing** - They will believe the Bible *not criticise it* (**2 Tim 3:15-17; Act 24:14; Lk 24:25**)
- C. **Doctrine** - They will pay careful attention to _____ – making sure it is right, and only from the Bible (**Titus 1:9; 2 John 1:9,10**).
- D. **Separation** - They will be *different* from the world (**1 John 2:15; Tit 2:13,14; 2 Cor 6:14-17**). Not only just in beliefs, but in LIVES (clean and separated).
- E. **Discipleship** - They will be involved in discipling new Christians, preparing them to serve God, and not be babies or selfish anymore (**2 Tim 2:1-3**)!
- F. **Spiritual Warfare** - They use _____ weapons (not fists or guns) to fight temptation, sin and the devil (**2 Cor 10:3-5**)!
- G. **Three Church Ordinances** - baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and loving one another (**1 Cor 11:23-26; Mt 28:19,20; Jn 15:12**)
- H. **Immersion** - They *immerse*, not sprinkle, when they baptize new believers (**Acts 8:36-38**)
- I. **Fellowship a Lot** - They ALL meet together every Lord’s day, and as often as possible throughout the week (**Heb 10:25; Acts 5:42**)!

VII. What is a Baptist Church?

- A. A group of believers that base every belief and every aspect of Christianity solely on the Bible – to the exclusion of all traditions.
- B. A group of believers that were first branded with the name “**ana-baptists**” (which means *re-baptizers*) because they always required people who got saved to get re-baptized, and to come out of the catholic church or any church that did not follow the Bible. The Baptists down through history were tortured and burnt at the stake by the tens of thousands during the dark ages – all because they would not submit to a pope or king who required people to either worship himself, or follow an unbiblical belief. Please realise that what we take for granted as freedoms today, were totally against the law just a few hundred years ago – like the right to own a Bible; the right of free assembly; and the right of disagreement with the government.
- C. What Baptists generally believe can be summarized as follows:
- B** – Biblical Authority Only. The only source for absolute truth about God, and what is right and wrong is the written word of God. All questions are settled according to “*Thus saith the Lord.*”
- A** – Autonomy of the local church – a local church is fully able to make its own decisions, and govern itself. There is no hierarchy in Christianity.
- P** – Priesthood of the believer. Every Christian is able to go directly to God as a priest because Jesus Christ as their High Priest has made it possible.
- T** – Three ordinances given by Jesus for the Church to obey: To regularly have the Lord’s Supper, Baptize, and Love one another.

- I** – Individual Soul Liberty – a Christian answers only to God concerning his or her faith! A person must learn the truth of the Bible, act on that truth, and is ultimately held responsible by God according to what they did with that truth. No human has power over your faith.
- S** – Saved and Secure Membership – only born again believers are able to be members of a church, and they are eternally secure in Christ.
- T** – Three Church Offices: Evangelist (Church Starter), Pastor, and Deacon.
- S** – Separation of Church and State – the church is under the control of the word of God, not a government. We obey the laws of the land – but when those laws go against the Bible, a Christian ignores those laws!

D. All Bible-believing and Bible-practicing churches are ‘baptistic’ in that they hold many if not most of the above beliefs. Some churches just don’t have the name “Baptist” – but they ought not be ashamed of the name.

VIII. The Financing of a Local Church (More about this in *Lesson Fifteen*)

- A. The giving of our *tithes* (1/10th of our income), and *offerings* to our local church is God's way of supporting your local church and its ministries. Faithful stewardship (the responsible handling) of our possessions involves giving the "*firstfruits of our increase*" to _____ (Pr 3:9,10)! Not because He needs our money (Ps 24:1), but rather, out of obedience to His word by faith.
- B. According to **Malachi 3:8-10**, the Lord is very serious about the Christian making sure money does not become a “god” (**1 Timothy 6:10**). He helps by requiring us to keep **Him** in first place with our finances. This is called *the tithe*. If a person does not tithe, no matter how hard it may be, **he or she is _____ God**, and are worse off by keeping their money, than by giving it!
- C. Giving our money to the Lord is like the giving of our time, and our love - *it always costs us something* - and it should! Giving demonstrates the proof of our love for _____ (**1 John 3:18; John 14:15**). If a person has a problem with giving, then it is because they do not love Jesus Christ supremely, or they are not willing to follow the word of God by faith.
- D. So, why give regularly to my local church (**1 Cor 16:1,2**)?
 1. To obey God (**Prov 3:9,10**) - do it first out of *obedience*!
 2. So that it can be self-sufficient (not dependent upon the government, bazaars, or bake sales, but upon the people who assemble together).
 3. So that God’s man (the pastor) can be full-time for serving the Lord, serving you, and reaching the lost, instead of having to work both a job, and do the ministry (**1 Tim 5:17,18**)!
 4. And also, so that God can bless you, knowing that you seek _____ to bless and honour Him (**Matt 6:33**).

IX. How Does A Person Join a Local Church? Every Christian is to be a dedicated member of a local Bible believing church (**Heb 10:25**).

- A. **Fulfill God's requirements.** There are only two requirements to be added to a church: _____ (salvation) and _____ (**Acts 2:41**).
- B. **Know whether it is God's will** to join that church (**Acts 2:47**). Every Christian must be associated with a Bible believing local church, and committed to getting the Gospel out to

- everyone in their area. Ask the Lord where you should commit yourself, and your family, and then go for it!
- C. **Request membership.** Don't expect to be a part by *osmosis* (just by attending). You have to **ask**, or people won't think that you are serious.
- D. **Be accepted.** *The local New Testament church is exclusionary* (it does not have to accept everyone). You will only be accepted if you have a testimony of your salvation, been Scripturally baptized, and are in agreement with the doctrines of the church you wish to join yourself to.
- E. **Make the church, YOUR church!** Be there for every meeting, pray for your pastor, and for the other people there, and ask God where He needs YOU to work so that souls get saved, and young Christians grow!

Are you a dedicated member of a church that believes the Bible and *practices* it? If so, where? _____ . If not, is there anything keeping you from joining with your Disciple's church? _____

X. **Finding a Place to Serve the Lord in Your Local Church (Acts 13:1,2).** When the Lord places you in a Bible believing church, it ought to become “your” church, where you dedicate your life, efforts, and talents in service to God so that souls get saved, and Christians are fed. Look around you and see where the pastor, or someone needs help teaching in Sunday School, or picking people up for church, or cleaning up the church, etc. Find SOMETHING to do, like:

- A. Teaching a Sunday School Class, or helping another person teach it.
- B. Going out soul-winning regularly with other believers.
- C. Helping the pastor with secretarial tasks like sending out birthday cards.
- D. Start up a Bible study at your workplace during lunch.
- E. Correspond with missionaries to encourage them and pray for them.
- F. Singing special music, or even starting a choir.
- G. Playing a musical instrument.
- H. Holding Bible Clubs in your home and back-garden.
- I. Going with the pastor on visitation calls to people's homes.
- J. Visiting people who are sick and in the hospital.
- K. Helping in a puppet ministry.
- L. Picking up folks who need a ride to church.
- M. Ministering to older folks by mowing their grass, or repairing their homes.
- N. Hosting a Ladies' Coffee Morning in your home for Christian women to fellowship and give testimony so that other lost women can hear the gospel!
- O. And the list goes on... Just add your own ideas, and get started – right away!

XI. Why Are There So Many Churches?

- A. The Bible warns that not only does God have *His* church (Matt 16:18), but so does _____ (2 Cor 11:13-15). It is called "**religion**" and it is *not* Christianity. Satan's "*church*" is full of: False _____ (Matt 7:15); False believers (Matt 7:21); Traditions (Col 2:8); and doctrines (Jude 3,4)
- B. When comparing "Religion" with *Christianity*, it is important to find out whether it is founded upon what God said (the Bible), or what **man** said (*tradition*, see Mark 7:1-9).
- C. There are lots of different churches today – they all claim to be “churches”

1. Baptist Churches
 2. Roman Catholic Churches – allegiance to Rome and tradition
 3. Presbyterian Churches – protestant, and baby sprinklers
 4. Methodist Churches – believe a Christian can lose their salvation
 5. Church of England, Church of Ireland – just barely above catholic
 6. Pentecostal Churches – emphasis on miracles and experiences
 7. Non-denominational Churches – no real doctrinal stand at all
 8. Then there are others – which are clearly **cults**:
 - a. Mormons – all of them are working at becoming gods ([Gen 3:4,5](#))
 - b. Jehovah’s Witnesses – working their way to heaven without the new birth ([John 3:3](#))
 - c. Seventh day Adventists – keeping the Sabbath ([Rom 10:4](#)).
 - d. Church of Christ – baptismal regeneration ([Eph 2:8,9](#)).
 9. Never mind the fact that there are lots of different religions
 - a. Buddhism – China - belief in the eight-fold path to nothingness
 - b. Islam – Middle East - believe in Allah and his prophet Mohammed
 - c. Hinduism – India - believe in about 2 million gods
 - d. Shintoism – Japanese - believe in dead ancestors
 - e. Judaism – Israel - believe in God of the Bible, but not Messiah
 - f. Evolutionism – fools - the belief in almighty dirt!
 - g. Atheism – fools – believe only in almighty SELF!
 10. In simple terms, there are only two kinds of religions: Either it is DONE, or it is DO, DO, DO, and then DO it some more,
- D. All throughout Church history, the people who were determined to only go by the Bible, were side-lined, vilified, hunted and tortured, even by the Protestants all because they would not obey the church and baptize their infants, and would not confess to priests, etc. These groups of Christians had various names, but most of them were Baptist in their doctrine and practice.
- E. Every year there are new “cults” and flavours of “faith” for people to choose from. Bible believers (from the time of the apostles on) have never been a part of the religious "system" listed above, but have always been separate from it, and required anyone who believed the Bible to separate themselves from it ([2 Cor 6:14-18](#)). Whenever the religious system caught a Bible believer, they tortured them, and even burned them at the stake for their beliefs ([Acts 8:3; 9:1; 24:14](#))
- F. The answer to why there are so many churches lies in the fact that people believe that there can be so many different approaches to God and the Bible, which is not true ([Rev 22:18,19; John 14:6](#)). People must take God’s word literally and completely, and come to God, only God’s way - the Bible way. *Religion* has no authority other than itself, instead of the word of God. Therefore, religions are constantly changing, while in Biblical Christianity, believers are always **anchored** to the unchanging words of the living God!

G. Below is a brief History of “Churches,” beginning with the New Testament Church!

Early Christianity	33 AD	The Crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and His sending out His disciples into all the world to preach and establish Christianity by getting people to repent and believe!	
	65	The apostle Paul says all of the then known world had heard about Jesus Christ (Col 1:23)! New Testament style churches were spread throughout the Roman empire in every major city!	
	95	The apostle John finished writing Revelation, and completes the Bible - no more prophecy! Right after this, the Bible was published as one Book of 66 books in Latin.	
	...	Intense persecution against Christianity by the Roman Empire for over 200 years!	
	313	The Roman Emperor Constantine gives in, and organises a central state-church in Rome with him at the head. This becomes known as the ROMAN CATHOLIC Church. <u>He becomes the first POPE!</u> Before that time, all "churches" were local, independent, and <i>illegal</i> . After this time, only the “baptistic” churches were illegal.	
Church and State	375	The use of " <u>images</u> " was introduced along with the <u>veneration of saints and angels</u> – the catholic church just borrowed all the images of the pagans and made them into “Christian” symbols (idols)! God forbid in Exodus 20 the veneration of ANY image or picture!	
	394	“ <u>Mass</u> ” was forced as THE method for salvation. Religious leaders made the crucifixion into a ritual that had to be constantly repeated.	
	593	<u>Purgatory</u> was introduced as a temporary punishment of sinners. No other religious doctrine produced as much money for the catholic coffers than the teachings about “purgatory!”	
	850	<u>Holy water</u> is introduced as having special powers of healing and cleansing.	
	The Dark Ages	1054	The GREEK ORTHODOX church split from Rome over the issue of Papal authority. Now there were two “holy apostolic catholic” churches, neither of which follow the Bible!
		1079	<u>Celibacy</u> of the Catholic priesthood was made mandatory. Before then, most members of the clergy were married.
		1090	The <u>rosary</u> was adopted as a method of praying - it was also borrowed from the pagans. The Hindus and the Buddhists also have rosary beads.
		1190	<u>Sale of indulgences</u> (paying a priest for your sins in money) began. It allowed people to pre-pay for sins that otherwise would have to be paid for in purgatory.
		1215	<u>Confessions to Roman priests</u> started, and was made mandatory to all people for salvation. The gift of Salvation was just constantly being added to!
	The Reformation	1525	Martin Luther broke away from the Roman Catholic Church - started the Lutherans . Martin was a good monk, but wanted to get the Bible into the hands of the common people – he found he had to leave the “church” in order to live by the Bible.
1534		Henry VIII took the English church away from Rome and started the Church of England .	
1541		The Presbyterian church was formed by Christians breaking away from Church of England. They made a big step in attempting to return to Biblical Christianity – but still carried a lot of “baggage” from Catholicism and the church of England.	
1791		The Methodist church broke away from the Church of England - by John Wesley. They for the most part went back to Biblical Christianity.	
1827		The Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints) began "their church" (with their own "Bible").	
Apostasy	1854	The <u>Immaculate Conception of Mary</u> (not of Jesus) was declared as doctrine.	
	1896	The Jehovah's “Christian” Witnesses were organized (with their own "Bible").	
	1900’s	A non-stop race to create new religions and moralities like the world has never seen before	
	1950	The <u>Assumption</u> (ascension into heaven) <u>of Mary</u> proclaimed as doctrine.	
	1980+	Even fundamental Christians no longer believe and practice the Bible (Judges 21:25)	

Bible-Believing Re-Baptizers (Ana-Baptists)

H. How can a Bible believer identify *false* religions?

1. They have another authority besides the Bible. Either it will be in place of the Bible (i.e., Book of Mormon, Koran), along side *with* the Bible (having equal inspiration), or they will produce their own translation!
 - a. In the Catholic church, the authority is in about 135 volumes of church traditions and writings, along side the Bible.
 - b. In other churches, the authority is in visions, or secret revelations.
2. They require blind obedience to a human leader – like a pope, or charismatic leader, or miracle worker.
3. They have a history of killing and suppressing those who do not agree with them (i.e., Islam, Catholicism in the Dark Ages, religious wars).
4. They usually emphasize obscure passages in their Bible instead of clear ones (i.e., **Matt 24:13** and **Acts 2:38** instead of **Rom 10:13**).
5. They emphasize *secret* societies and special revelations from God that cannot be verified! (Mohammed’s visions, Fatima, Joseph Smith, etc.)

The Bible believer promotes an honest and clear revelation from God in the form of a Book that can be tested, and verified as authentic!

I. List some cults you now know about:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

<i>Date Lesson Completed</i> _____	<i>Discipler</i> _____
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