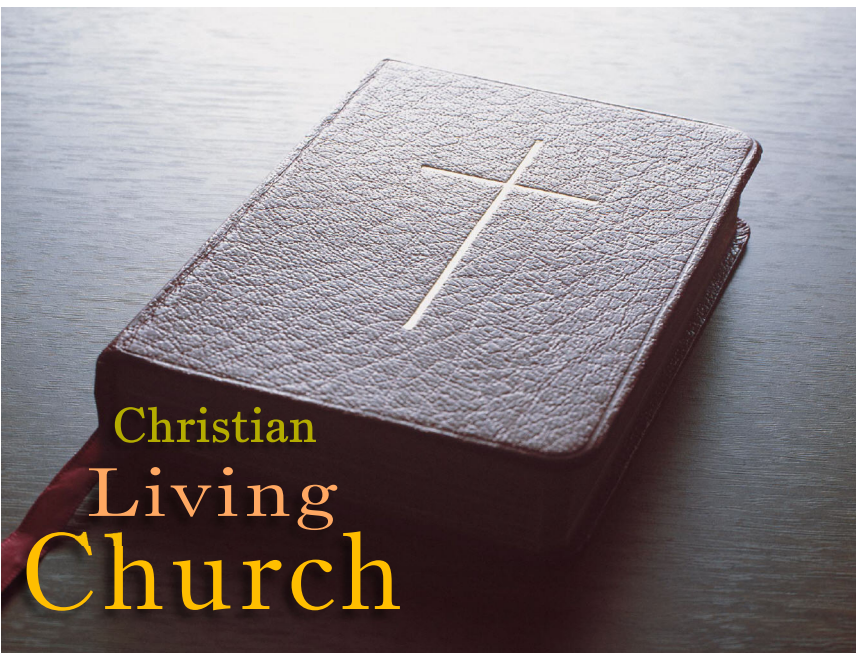


Organization

“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.”



Christian
Living
Church

Organization



This series of lessons has been designed for private study or classroom presentation. The purpose of this foreword is to explain certain conventions utilized throughout the program. The overall concept is to begin with the basic concepts necessary for the new convert to understand and progress toward more complex doctrine. The lessons are numbered in order to maintain the proper sequence of study.

When Scripture references are encountered in the text, various actions are recommended. When in parenthetical bold (**Genesis 1:1**) the verse is to be looked up and read right away. Frequently, the next textual statement will comment on that verse. Reading verse and text in proper order will enhance one's understanding of the verse. Direct quotes from Scripture will be "***bold italicized and contained in quotation marks***" and, unless otherwise noted, will be from the King James Bible. When the reference is in parenthetical non-bold (Genesis 1:1) it is to provide the Scriptural basis for the statement if confirmation is desired. References in blue [Genesis 1:1](#) will be listed in the lesson section entitled **FURTHER STUDY**.

FURTHER STUDY is the "homework" section. Its purpose is to encourage Bible study at home. The referenced verses have a short summation to assist the student desiring more knowledge about a subject to find what they are looking for.

The **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** section is primarily for classroom use. Open discussion with the exchange of ideas produces growth for all involved. Most of the time the answer is contained in the referenced Scripture but sometimes the question is offered for open discussion. Even in private Bible study, analysis of the question and the search for its answer can be rewarding.

This work is offered to anyone with a desire to better understand God's Word. It is our hope and prayer that the person studying these lessons will come away with a better understanding of God's will and a closer walk with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With Loving Concern for all those seeking God's Message
The Church of God Rocky Mount
Rocky Mount, Virginia

Key Verse: Ephesians 4:16



“ 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.”

Discussion Question:

What does this Key Verse mean to you?

The church is the spiritual body of Christ, a group of persons called out by God and endowed with His Holy Spirit. As a spiritual body, the church is made up of baptized, Spirit-led individuals who are scattered around the world. This is the doctrine of this church as presented in its Statement of Beliefs.

The fourth chapter of Ephesians could be considered the handbook for setting up and instituting a church. The mission of the church is presented step by step. God's church is not only a common

junction for Christians to meet for the purpose of joining in congregational worship and praise of our Creator, but it is also a training ground to prepare them for service to the lost of the world and to each other (**Ephesians 4:12**). “Perfecting” is defined by Strong's Concordance as “complete finishing.” The “work of the ministry” is to make disciples and help each other, and the “edifying of the body of Christ” is the effort of the members to assist and encourage each other.

The goal of striving for this “complete finishing” is for the congregation to unify into a mutual faith and understanding (**verse 13**), bringing about a complete (perfect) and mature (stature) comprehension of the overall (fullness) gospel of

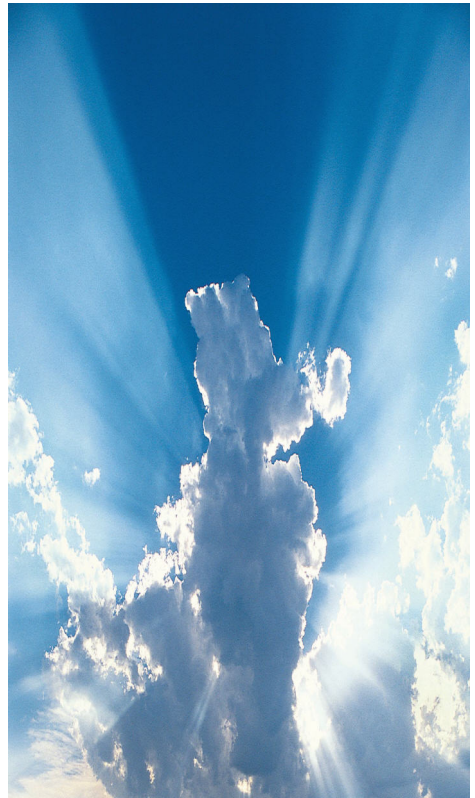
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Christ. As this unity matures into established doctrines of Christ, the church will be able to resist false ideas that will be brought in and presented by others (**verse 14**). The study, research, and discussion that leads to this “growing up” must be conducted in love (**verse 15**), for the purpose of it is to bring brethren together in a united doctrine of mind and faith, not to rend God’s church with dissension. As the church grows and new disciples enter, some will bring their own favorite agendas with them and try to incorporate them into the church (**Ephesians 5:6**). Be open minded but alert! Subject their ideas to study (**1 Thessalonians 5: 21**) and accept only that which does not compromise the truth you already have (**Titus 1:9-11**).

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church (**Colossians 1:18**). All things are to be believed, taught, and lived according to that which He lived and taught.

His authority is absolute and is ordained by His resurrection (**Romans 1:4**). The ministers of God’s church have authority to administer the affairs of the church because such authority is commissioned by the will of God (**2 Corinthians 1:1**). By this authority the shepherd of the congregation has the power to select individuals to assist him in the work of the church.



Organization



This should be done prayerfully and carefully (**Luke 6:12-13**). With delegation of some of the many duties and obligations of and for the congregation, the shepherd has the time to devote to his main task, the ministry of the word. The precedence for this action was firmly established by the early church (**Acts 6:1-4**). Some of the principle offices of service are apostles (an ambassador of the Gospel, not to be confused with a “commissioner of Christ” as were Peter, Paul, etc., who had miraculous powers), prophets (an inspired speaker or poet), evangelists (a preacher), pastors (shepherd), and teachers (**Ephesians 4:11**).

The qualifications for service in the church are generally the same for each office, although Paul’s instructions to Timothy are focused on that of bishop (**1 Timothy 3:1-7**). Peter, an apostle, refers to himself as an elder, but the term can be ap-

plied generically to any office of service in the church (**1 Peter 5:1-3**). Those who serve are exhorted to do so willingly with a positive attitude (ready mind), not for reward or power, but assuming the responsibilities of leadership to present themselves as a good example to the church.

In addition to the bringing in and teaching of new members, preaching God’s word, baptizing, the performance of service to the needy and giving assistance to each other, singing is an important part of the church (**Ephesians 5:19**). This is the one act of the worship service in which the entire congregation participates. Each member lifts up his voice in praise of the Creator, making a personal communication of love to Him, expressing devotion in the words of the hymn. Whether in flesh on Earth or on a throne in Heaven, a father is well pleased when his children

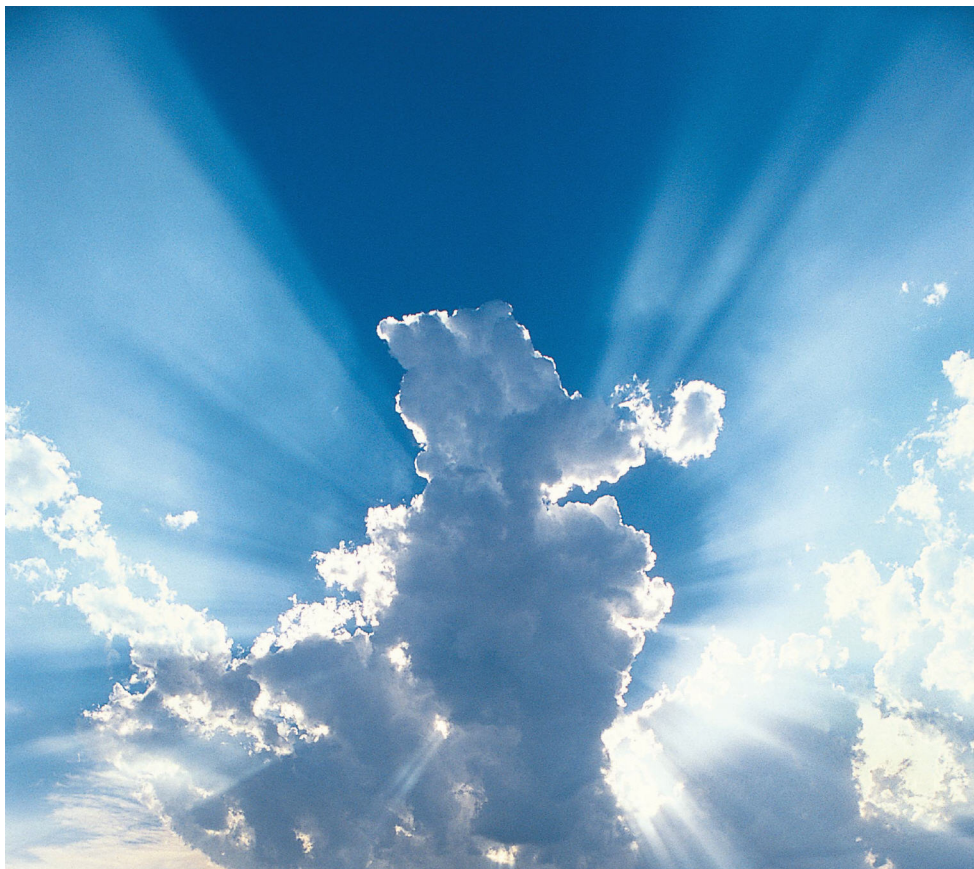
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sing his praises.

The full realization of the goal of the church requires one essential ingredient: cooperation among the membership. In a church filled with gossip, backbiting and vindictiveness the work of our Savior will go undone and the lost we are com-

missioned to lead to salvation will remain lost. The energy expended in such worthless activity would be put to much better use if love rules and all of the Christian membership respect and submit to each other in a holy fear of God (**Ephesians 5:21**).



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Discussion Questions:

1. What is supposed to be the general attitude of the church leadership? **Mark 9:35**

2. Was this the attitude of Jesus? **Mark 10:45**

3. What are some of the areas where the church leadership is supposed to serve as a good example? **1 Timothy 4:12**

4. What level of respect should the congregation exhibit toward the shepherd of the church? **John 13:20**

FURTHER STUDY:

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 The church is one body with many members.

2 Corinthians 8:23 (apostolos rendered messengers) Paul introduces Titus and others as ambassadors of the churches.

Philippians 2:25 (apostolos rendered messenger) Paul sends Epaphroditus as an ambassador of the Gospel to the Philippians.

Colossians 3:15 The church, as one body, should let the peace of God rule in their hearts.

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