



Fundamental
Beliefs of the
**IGLESIA NI
CRISTO**
(CHURCH OF CHRIST)

Fundamental Beliefs of the Iglesia ni Cristo (Church of Christ)

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Introduction

This book contains the lessons that should be used as guide for the preachers of the Church of Christ (*Iglesia ni Cristo*) in teaching the fundamental doctrines upheld by this Church. All of these basic doctrines are written in the Bible or Holy Scriptures, which is the sole basis of our faith and service to God.

The truths written in the Bible, which should be heard, understood, and believed by all men in order for them to attain eternal salvation, are introduced in the lessons contained herein.

The teachings of God should be taught by the preachers of the Iglesia ni Cristo with complete clarity and fidelity – moved by pure intentions and filled with power – to people who have expressed their desire to be counted as members of the true Church which our Lord Jesus Christ will save.

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LESSON NO. 1

The Bible

Theme: The Words Of God Are Written In The Bible.

Objectives

1. Explain to the candidate for baptism why the Church of Christ believes that the words of God are written only in the Bible.
2. Convince him that only the Bible should be used as the basis in serving God and that the teachings invented by men should be renounced.

Summary

The Church of Christ adheres to the belief that the words of God are written only in the Bible. The Bible should be the only basis for our services to God: this is the truth which will teach man how to be saved from punishment on Judgment Day. Thus, each member of the Iglesia ni Cristo should value the teachings of God written in the Bible by fulfilling them in his life.

Introduction

All the major religions of the world have their own sacred scripture upon which they base their faith. Islam, the religion of the Muslims, uses the *Koran*; the Brahmans have their *Vedas*; the Zoroastrians, *Zend-Avesta*; the Confucianists, the *King*; and the Buddhists, the *Tripitaka*. But over and above all these is the Bible. The Bible teaches not only morals but also, and most important, the will of God, because it is the word of God. The words of God are written in the Bible. Before proving this, we ought first to understand-

Presentation

- Q. How did God reveal His words to man?
 A. Spoken by God..... *Heb. 1:1-2*

- Q. How were the words spoken by God preserved and how were these words handed down to us?
- A. He commanded His servants to commit them to writing *Jer. 30:2*
- Q. Which book contains the words of God?
- A. The Holy Scriptures *II Tim. 3:15*
- Q. What makes the Holy Scriptures unique and above all the other books used by other religions?
- A. The Bible is inspired by God *II Tim. 3:16-17*
Instruction: Thus, when the teachings written in the Bible are taught to us, we should believe that these are God's words, His will for us to obey.
- Q. How were the people commissioned by God to write the Bible prevented from committing errors?
- A. The writers were guided *Rev. 10:4*
Conclusion: Thus the *Iglesia ni Cristo* affirms that the Bible contains no error.

Proof

- Q. How can we be certain that the Bible we now use is itself the true Holy Scriptures? (We should examine whether it has the attribute of the words of God.) What is the characteristic of the words of God?
- A. Truth *Jn. 17:17*
- Q. What does it mean that the word of God is truth and why is it said to be the truth?
- A. Because God's words have fulfillment *Is. 46:11*
Note: The word of God differs from the word of man: the latter is often proven false and goes unfulfilled, while the former has complete fulfillment and therefore it is the truth.
- Q. What are some of the words of God written in the Bible that were uttered in the beginning but destined to take place at some later time and, in fact, have been fulfilled?
- A. (a) The two world wars *Mt. 24:6-7*
 followed by famine and poverty *Mt. 24:7-8*

- (b) Knowledge shall increase *Dan. 12:4*
- (c) Perilous times *II Tim. 3:1-5*
Conclusion: Therefore, we are assured that the Bible we are using now is the true Holy Scriptures because this has the quality of the words of God: What He says will surely happen.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do you accept that the Bible contains the words of God?
2. Do you believe that the Bible does not contain errors?
3. Do you accept also that the Bible is the truth and that it teaches us the way to salvation?

Promise

- Q. What is the value of believing in the words of God written in the Bible?
- A. May have life everlasting *Jn. 20:30-31*

Instruction

- Q. Thus, what is the strict instruction of the Apostles so that we may not fall prey to erroneous faiths?
- A. Do not go beyond what is written *I Cor. 4:6*
Instruction: Reject the teachings contained in the Catholic Catechism, Book of Mormon, and in other such books used by other religions because they are prohibited by God.
- Q. What is God's warning to those who add to or subtract from the words of God written in the Bible?
- A. They will be punished and will not be saved *Rev. 22:18-19*

Conclusion

We should faithfully obey all the teachings of the Bible taught in the Church of Christ because these are God's words.

The True God

Theme: The true God who should be known and worshipped according to the Bible is the Father who created all things.

Objectives

1. Convince the candidate for baptism to have faith in God, the Creator of all things.
2. Correct his commonly-held but false belief concerning the true God.

Summary

The Iglesia ni Cristo believes in the teaching taught by the Bible that the Father Who created all things is the only true God. There are no three persons in one God; thus we should reject the belief in the so-called Trinity. The Bible also prohibits worship of images or idolatry.

Man should not be content with knowing God. He should also enhance his relationship with God and walk in His ways.

Introduction

Almost all religions have as their objective to serve and worship God. But who is that God whom man should serve and worship? Who among the "gods" being worshipped today is the true God? We must first know who is the true God we ought to worship and serve. This, our Lord Jesus Christ teaches.

Presentation

- Q. According to Christ, who is the God that should be known by men?
- A. The only true God Jn. 17:3
- Q. Whom does Christ refer to as the only true God?
- A. The Father alone Jn. 17:1

- Q. And who is the only true God introduced by the Apostles?
- A. The Father from whom are all things I Cor. 8:6
- Conclusion: Therefore, whoever teaches that there are other gods aside from the Father contradicts Christ and His Apostles. Thus, the belief in the Trinity – or the belief that in one God there are three persons – should be renounced.
- Q. Which teaching of the Bible is violated by the doctrine that there are three persons in one God?
- A. He is one God—there is no other God besides Him..... Is. 45:21
- Q. What is the nature of the true God who should be worshipped according to Christ?
- A. Spirit Jn. 4:24
- Q. What does it mean God is a spirit?
- A. Without flesh and bones (no material form) Lk. 24:39
- Conclusion: Therefore, the true God cannot be represented by a picture or graven image because He is a spirit, without flesh and bones.
- Q. Can images graven by man be considered the true God?
- A. No, in fact images for worship are forbidden by God Acts 17:29
- Conclusion: Thus, man should not worship graven images. This is prohibited by God.
- Q. What is the correct way of worshipping the true God?
- A. In spirit and in truth Jn. 4:23
- Q. How is worship of God in spirit and in truth done?
- A. Worship His name — do His will..... Mt. 6:9-10

Proofs

- Q. How do we know that God exists when we cannot see Him with our own eyes?
- A. Manifested through His power which is evident in the things that He has made Rom. 1:19-20

Q. Why is God manifested in the power of His works?

A. Because He is Almighty Gen. 17:1

Note: The true God is invisible in nature, but His almighty power can be clearly seen in His mighty works.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Are the pictures or images before which many people kneel and which they serve the true God?
2. What is the nature of the true God?
3. Can you cite one of the things created by God?

Q. What are some of the things created by God which manifest His power and wisdom?

A. The heavens and the firmament Ps. 19:1-4

Example: What can we see in the heavens created by God? The sun, the moon, the billions of stars, and the planets that move across the heavens not in a disorderly, hit-or-miss manner but harmoniously in their respective orbits with amazing precision. This is undoubtedly a manifestation of the infinite power of God.

Q. What else are some of God's creations?

A. The life and breath of man Job 12:7-10

Q. Why is it wrong to believe that all things were spontaneously generated as a result of natural processes?

A. Every house has a builder Heb. 3:4

Q. Who made the earth where we live?

A. It is God who made the earth as our habitation Is. 45:18

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do you believe that God created you?
2. Do you accept that He owns us and holds our life in His hands?

Obligation

Q. What is the obligation of all men to God?

A. To serve and know Him Ps. 100:2-3

Q. How can we know God according to the Bible?

A. By keeping His commandments I Jn. 2:3

Q. What else is the obligation of all who know God?

A. Worship Him Ps. 95:6-7

Conclusion: Therefore, to worship God is man's greatest obligation. We should not neglect this. Thus, you should start attending the worship services of the Iglesia ni Cristo. Whenever you attend worship service, turn your attendance card. If you attend the worship service in another locale, ask for a certificate of attendance from the secretary designated to give these certificates.

Question for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do you promise to give primary importance to the worship of God? That except for physical inability, you will not miss such worship services?

Q. What is God's warning to those who refuse to know and obey Him?

A. He will inflict vengeance on them on the day of Christ's second coming II Thess. 1:8-9

Conclusion

The Church of Christ believes in the teaching of the Bible that the Father Who created all things is the only true God. The belief in the so-called Trinity, the doctrine that teaches that there are three persons in one God has no biblical basis, hence, it should be renounced. The Bible also prohibits worship of images or idolatry. But knowledge of God should not stop here. Man should develop his relationship with God and walk in His ways.

The True Religion

Theme: Not all churches or religions are of God.

Objective

1. Rebuke the erroneous belief that all churches are of God.
2. Convince the candidate for baptism to believe that the Church established by Christ is only one—the Iglesia ni Cristo.

Summary

The commonly accepted belief that all churches belong to God is false. Christ founded only one true Church—the Church of Christ (Iglesia ni Cristo). Therefore we should value the Church because herein are we able to perform the kind of service acceptable to God that leads us to our salvation.

Introduction

To serve God is man's sacred duty. It is evil to refuse to recognize God, because this is ingratitude to our Creator. But not all forms of service or worship rendered by man to God are acceptable to Him. Likewise, not all Christian-professing churches established on earth belong to God. This, the Bible will prove to us.

Presentation

- Q. Who testifies that not all of those who claim to know God and Christ shall be worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven?
- A. Christ Mt. 7:21
- Q. Isn't it enough that man renders service to God in the name of Christ for him to enter the kingdom of heaven?
- A. Not even if miracles are included Mt. 7:22-23

Note: Even if man uses the name of Christ in his service and even if he can perform "miracles", if it is not the will of God that he fulfills, he would not be made worthy of heaven.

- Q. Will all kinds of worship dedicated to God be acceptable to Him?
- A. Worship based on commandments of men will be in vain Mt. 15:9
- Q. Suppose such services are done with great sacrifice and bodily suffering (like works of penance), will this then make the worship based on the commandments of men worthy before God?
- A. No, not even if it involves harsh treatment of the body Col. 2:22-23 NIV

"These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version: Testament Containing The Old Testament and The New Testament. New York: International Bible Society. © 1978.]

Proof

- Q. Were there people whose service to God were not accepted?
- A. Nadab and Abihu Lev. 10:1-2
- Note:** These men belonged to the nation of God. But when they rendered a worship different from what God had commanded them, they were rejected; they were even punished.
- Q. Who else served God with pious concern but was rejected and punished?
- A. Uzza, even though he was sincerely concerned II Sam. 6:6-7
- Q. Why did God punish Uzza instead of being pleased with his sincere concern?
- A. Uzza transgressed a law Num. 4:15
- Conclusion:** Therefore, it is not true that all forms of service rendered by man to God will be deemed worthy or acceptable. Though worship is important to God, He wants such worship

to be done in accordance with His will. Therefore, man should be sure that his knowledge, love, and faith in God is correct and true.

Procedure

- Q. How is true knowledge of God proven?
 - A. By keeping His commandments *I Jn. 2:3*
- Q. How can we show our love for God?
 - A. Through obedience *I Jn. 5:3*
- Q. What should be included in our faith in God so that such faith will be deemed worthy of bringing us to salvation?
 - A. Faith should be made perfect by works *Js. 2:14*
- Q. How does the Bible consider faith without works?
 - A. Dead *Js. 2:17*
- Q. What kind of faith should we possess?
 - A. Faith made perfect by works *Js. 2:22*
- Q. Which works should be included in faith?
 - A. The Father's will should be done *Mt. 7:21*

Conclusion: Therefore, we should renounce the belief that salvation can be attained by man through faith alone – even without works. Such a belief is against the teachings of the Bible.

Obligation

- Q. What is God's will for all men?
 - A. That they be gathered together in Christ *Eph. 1:9-10*
- Q. How can this will of God be accomplished?
 - A. We should be members of the Church of Christ *Rom. 12:4-5*
Col. 1:18 Rom. 16:16
- Q. Why is membership in the Church of Christ necessary for a person to be able to perform worthy and acceptable service to God?

- A. Because it is the Church of Christ which has been purchased with Christ's blood .. *Acts 20:28 Lamsa*

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

- Q. What was given to those purchased by the blood of Christ?
 - A. The right to serve God *Heb. 9:14*
Note: Man cannot perform worthy service to God unless he is in the Church of Christ.
- Q. How many true Churches of Christ are there?
 - A. There is only one true Church *Eph. 4:4*

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Does the Bible agree or disagree with the belief that all services done by man to God are acceptable to Him?
2. God will accept man's worship and services in whatever church he belongs. Right or wrong?
3. Does the Bible agree that it is enough to have faith in Christ in order to be saved and that membership in the Church of Christ is not necessary?

Conclusion

Therefore, we should renounce the common belief that all churches are of God. There is only one true Church and that is the Church of Christ. It is in this Church that man should perform his services to God so that these services will be made acceptable. Thus, we should value the Church because it is here wherein man can serve God properly and attain salvation.

Instructions

1. Return to God, leave your false religion, and join the Church of Christ.
2. Continue listening to the teachings of God.
3. Do not be neglectful of your obligations to Him.

The Church of Christ

Theme: Christ commands that whoever desires to be saved should join the Church of Christ (Iglesia ni Cristo).

Objectives

1. Show the indispensability of the Church of Christ in man's salvation.
2. Convince the candidate for baptism to believe that the Church of Christ is the Church which Christ will save on Judgment Day.

Summary

Although many people know that the Savior is Jesus Christ, they still do not know how Christ effects the saving act and who are those whom He will save.

It is the Church of Christ that Christ will save because He made this Church His body and heads it Himself—before God, the Church and Christ are one new man. This is the reason why Christ is able to answer for the sins of His Church without violating God's law: whoever commits a sin is the one who should die for that sin.

Hence, false is the belief that salvation can be attained by means of faith in Christ alone, even without membership in the Church of Christ. The Church is necessary not because it is the Church itself that saves but because the Church is that which Christ will save.

Introduction

Many people wonder why it is necessary for man to become a member of the Church of Christ to be saved when they believe that they are already serving God in various ways. Others say that they no longer need the Church because they have already

accepted Christ as their personal Savior. But what they have failed to understand is the manner by which Christ will save man. They also have not known who the beneficiaries of such grace are. In this lesson we will clarify these things.

Presentation

Q. What is Christ's command to those who want to be saved?
A. Enter in Him *Jn. 10:9*

Q. Where can we find those who have entered in Christ?
A. In the flock or the Church of Christ ... *Jn. 10:16*
Acts 20:28 Lamsa

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Note: Therefore, the Savior Himself commands man to enter or join the Church of Christ. Such command should be obeyed by those who want to be saved.

Reason

Q. Why do all people need salvation?
A. Because all have sinned..... *Rom. 5:12*

Q. What is one of the evil consequences of man's sins?
A. Man was separated from God *Is. 59:2*

Q. Besides being separated from God, what will befall the sinners?
A. They are condemned to die *Rom. 6:23*

Q. Which death is the full payment for sin?
A. The second death..... *Rev. 20:14*

Conclusion: Therefore, because all people have sinned, all people need salvation to avoid punishment in the lake of fire.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Is there any person who has not committed sin aside from our Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Therefore, is there anyone who does not need salvation?
3. What will befall a sinner if he is not among those who will be saved?

Q. Why is it necessary for anyone to be a member of the Church of Christ to be saved? Is it not enough that he just believes in Christ?

A. The Church is the righteousness of God.. *II Cor. 5:21*
 Note: To save the sinner, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us." Why? "That we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Q. What is God's righteousness concerning the sinner?

A. A person shall be put to death for his own sin *Deut. 24:16*

Q. Who did not commit any sin according to the Bible?

A. Christ *I Pt. 2:21-22*

Q. What did Christ do in order that He could answer for the sins of those whom He would save, without violating God's law or righteousness?

A. Christ made those whom He would save His body *Eph. 5:23*
Col. 1:18

Q. In the sight of God, how do Christ and His Church stand - related as they are to each other as Head and Body?

A. They stand as one new man *Eph. 2:15*

Conclusion: Therefore, because of the relationship of the Church with Christ, Christ is now able to answer for the sins of the Church. Being its head, Christ is responsible for the sins of His body, which is the Church. This is the only way by which man can be saved without violating God's law. Do not believe those who say that faith in Christ is enough for man to attain salvation.

Proof

Q. Because of this, is there salvation for those who refuse to join the Church of Christ?

A. Those outside will be judged *I Cor. 5:12-13 NIV*

"What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked man from among you.'"

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Will Christ answer for the sins of those who refuse to follow Him by declining His invitation to become members of His body?

A. They will pay for their sins *Jn. 8:24*

Q. What will happen to those separated from Christ or those who did not remain members of the Church of Christ?

A. They will be burned *Jn. 15:6*

Q. If those separated from Christ or those who are not members of the Church of Christ perform acts of service to God, would their services be accepted by Him?

A. They have no right to do so even if they deify Him..... *Eph. 2:12*

Conclusion

The Church of Christ will be saved by Christ because He made the Church His body and He Himself is the head — in the sight of God, the Church and Christ stand as one new man. This is the reason why Christ was able to assume responsibility for the sins of His Church without violating the law of God which states that the sinner himself should die for his own sins.

Therefore, the belief that salvation is attainable by simply believing in Christ, without membership in the Church of Christ, is false and, even worse, unscriptural. The Church is necessary not because it is itself the savior but because it is the one which Christ will save.

Instruction

Therefore, those who are not yet listed as members of the Church should now take steps to be counted among those to be saved.

The History of the Church Built by Christ in the First Century

Theme: Why most of us have been brought up in the Catholic Church and not in the Church of Christ.

Objectives

1. Prove that the first-century Church of Christ had apostatized.
2. Prove that the Catholic Church belongs neither to Christ nor to God, and therefore has no hope of salvation.
3. Convince the candidate for baptism to renounce the Catholic Church even though he may have been brought up in it.

Summary

The Church built by Christ during the first century had apostatized. This was led away from the true faith by the false prophets who arose in the Church after the time of the Apostles. On the other hand, those who remained firm in the faith were slain by ravenous wolves.

The fulfillment of the prophesied false teachers who would lead the Church away from the truth are the Catholic priests.

They introduced false teachings into the Church, until the Church became the Catholic Church — a church essentially different from the Church of Christ as described in the Bible.

Introduction

The Church of Christ believes that the Church established by Christ in Jerusalem in the first century ceased to exist. It had apostatized. Thus, the Church of Christ in these last days is the restoration of the Church founded by Christ. This lesson will give us a brief account of the events that happened to the Church built by Christ in the first century.

Presentation

- Q. What is the history of the Church built by Christ in the first century?
- A. It started as a little flock during Christ's time on earth *Lk. 12:32*

- Q. What is meant by "the flock" as mentioned in this verse?
- A. This is the Church of Christ *Acts 20:28 Lamsa*

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

- Q. What happened to this Church during the administration of the Apostles?
- A. It encountered severe persecution and the members were scattered *Acts 8:1*

- Q. What did the disciples continue to do after they were scattered because of the intense persecution?
- A. They spread the word everywhere they went *Acts 8:4-5*

- Q. What usually is the result whenever the words of God are continuously preached?
- A. The number of disciples increases *Acts 6:7*

- Q. How great was the growth of the Church of Christ which began as a small flock?
- A. The Church reached the Gentiles *Rom. 16:4*

- Q. To what Church did the churches of the Gentiles belong?
- A. To the Church of Christ *Rom. 16:16*

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What is the name of the Church built by Christ?
2. What is the promise of Christ to those who will enter in Him or join the Church of Christ?

The Apostasy was prophesied

Q. What did Christ prophesy concerning the Church which He built in the first century?

A. It would be led astray Mt. 24:4 RSV

"And Jesus answered them, Take heed that no one leads you astray."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press © 1962.]

Q. How many would be led astray by the false prophets?

A. Many Mt. 24:11 RSV

"And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press © 1962.]

Q. What is the meaning of "being led astray" as mentioned in this verse?

A. This means departing from the true faith I Tim. 4:1

Q. How were the disciples led astray by false prophets?

A. By means of the doctrines of the devils I Tim. 4:1, 3 KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. Who profess the doctrines or teachings of the devil?

A. These teachings are in the Catholic Church..... Faith of Our Fathers, 328 (223) Manual of Chr. Doc., p. 317

p. 328

"Although celibacy is not expressly enforced by our Savior, it is, however, commended so strongly by Himself and His Apostles, both by

word and example, that the Church felt it her duty to lay it down as a law.

"The discipline of the Church has been exerted from the beginning in prohibiting Priests to marry after their ordination."

[James Cardinal Gibbons, The Faith of Our Fathers. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons. © 1917. (Book)]

p. 317

"What does the second commandment of the Church order us to do? "It orders us to fast and to abstain from flesh meat on certain days of the year."

[A Seminary Professor, Manual of Christian Doctrine: Comprising Dogma, Moral, and Worship. New York: Lasalle Bureau, © 1949. (Book)]

Q. How did Christ introduce the false prophets who would lead His Church away from the true faith?

A. They are dressed in sheep's clothing .. Mt. 7:15

Q. Who is that sheep whose clothing is to be imitated by the false prophets?

A. Christ, the Lamb of God Jn. 1:29

Q. Who imitated the clothing of Christ?

A. The Catholic priests F.S.I.J., p. 214

"Father S. You have told me that you are attending Mass every Sunday, and I can well understand that you become quite puzzled over many things. You see the priest clad in strange vestments. You hear bells. You see the people alternately kneel and stand and sit down. All this confuses the convert for some time, and wonder whether we will ever be able to learn how to assist at the Mass intelligently, much less participate in it.

"Mr. J. I have observed these things and have been awaiting your explanation.

"Father S. The explanation are not difficult to understand once you realize that the priest deals directly with Almighty God and represents Christ. That is why he is clothed as he is. He wears vestments which are known as the amice, alb, cincture, stole, and chasuble. The vestments he wears are the garments of sacrifice."

[Most Rev. John Francis Noll, D. D., LL. D., Father Smith Instructs Jackson. Nihil Obstat: Rev. Lawrence Gollner, Imprimatur: Leo A. Pursley, D. D., Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Inc., © 1975. (Book)]

Q. What grievous sin do Catholic priests commit before God?

A. They exalt themselves, oppose God's commands, and liken themselves to God II Thess. 2:3-4 NASB

"Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

[Bible. New American Standard Bible. New York and Cleveland: Colliers Publisher, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973.]

Q. Which commandment of God have Catholic priests opposed with the intention of making themselves like God?

A. The command not to call anyone Father Mt. 23:9

Q. What is the kind of Fatherhood of God which the Catholic priests want to imitate?

A. The Father of spirits Heb. 12:9

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. According to the prophecy of Christ and His Apostles, what would befall His Church?
2. According to the prophecy of Christ and the Apostles, who would bring about the apostasy of the Church?
3. Who are the fulfillment of the prophesied false prophets?

Proof

Q. Who indeed are those who made themselves to be called father of spirits?

A. The pope and the priests Radio Replies, Vol. III, p. 75

"Catholics rightly, therefore, call the priest 'father,' not to the exclusion of their Father in heaven, but as a manifestation on earth of the supreme Fatherhood of God in the spiritual order, ..."

[Rev. Dr. Leslie Rumble, M. S. C., *Radio Replies* (Third Volume). Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc. © 1979 (Book)]

Q. What mark or sign is given to those who have been deceived by the false prophets or the priests?

A. The sign on the forehead and right hand Rev. 13:16

Q. What is the sign on the forehead and right hand?

A. This is the sign of the Cross Ext. of the Cath. Ch., p. 218 (179)

"The ordinary method of making the sign of the cross is that which every Catholic learns in early childhood - the putting of the right hand to the forehead, . . ."

[Rt. Rev. Msgr. John F. Sullivan, D. D., *The Externals of the Catholic Church. Nihil Obstat: John M. A. Fearn, Imprimatur: Francis Cardinal Spellman. New York, U. S. A.: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1951. (Book)*]

Q. What does the sign on the forehead and right hand or the sign of the cross symbolize, according to the priests themselves?

A. An inseparable symbol of the Catholic faith 1000 Ques. and Ans. on Cath. p. 240 (513)

"What is the significance of the sign of the cross?"

"The sign of the cross is an inseparable symbol of the Catholic faith."

[Philip O'Reilly, *1000 Questions and Answers on Catholicism. Nihil Obstat: Rev. Msgr. John A. McMahon, Imprimatur: Samuel Cardinal Stritch. U.S.A.: Western Printing and Lithographing Co. © 1963. (Book)*]

Q. According to the Bible, what misfortune awaits those people who possess the sign on the forehead and right hand?

A. They will be punished by fire Rev. 14:9-11

Conclusion: Thus, stop making the sign of the cross.

Q. What did the Catholic Church do to those who refused to be led away from the true faith?

A. They did not spare the flock Acts 20:29

Q. What is meant by the savage wolves not sparing the flock?

A. This means the disciples would be killed Mt. 24:9

Q. Did the Catholic Church really put people to death, a proof that indeed it is the one which led the Church of Christ away from the faith?

A. This was fulfilled in the Catholic Church Modern World, p. 344 (408)

"...the Church created a special tribunal, the Papal or Universal Inquisition. The essential features of its method were fixed by a set of laws passed jointly by Pope Lucius III and Emperor Barbarossa in 1184. The minor details had been added by 1230. Such spiritual courts of justice were established in localities most infected by

erroneous teachings. The state, too, considered heresy as a crime, because it undermined the foundations of public welfare. The penalty fixed by the secular laws for heresy was death by fire. This was never inflicted by the ecclesiastical judge."

[Rev. Francis S. Betten, S.J. and Rev. Alfred Kaufmann, S.J., *The Modern World*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, © 1942. (Book)]

Q. Do the Catholic priests admit that the Catholic Church put to death people as attested by history?

A. Yes T.A.T.I. pp. 49, 47
(671, 669)

p. 49

"The first law of history,' declared Pope Leo XIII, as we mentioned previously, 'is to assert nothing false and to have no fear of telling the truth.' In conformity with that wise principle, we frankly acknowledge the responsibility of the popes in the use of torture and in the burning of thousands of heretics at the stake. Their sanctioning of such cruel and brutal measures is unquestionably one of the blackest stains on the record of the Holy Office and will remain to the end of time a cause of obloquy and shame upon the papacy. Even when it is frankly conceded, as it must be, that their intentions were good and their solicitude was for the welfare of the victim's soul, let it still be affirmed that the cruel and inhuman methods used are beyond all defense."

p. 47

"CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY"

"The Church cannot escape responsibility for the use of torture nor for the burning of victims at the stake. The Church in the person of her pontiffs was responsible for the use of torture; this cruel practice was introduced by Innocent IV in 1252. . . The pontiff tries to defend the use of torture by classifying heretics with thieves and murderers, a mere comparison is his only argument. This law of Innocent IV was renewed and confirmed by Alexander IV on November 30, 1259, and by Clement IV on November 3, 1265.

"Neither can the Church escape responsibility for sending heretics to be burnt to death at the stake. The mere subterfuge of having the victim turned over to the secular arm pain of excommunication and interdict upon rulers enforcing the death penalty against heretics."

[John A. O'Brien, *The Truth About the Inquisition. Nihil Obstat*: Thomas E. Dillon, Imprimatur: John F. Noll, New York: Paulist Press, © 1950. (Book)]

Q. When did the apostasy of the Church built by Christ begin to be revealed, and which would continue as long as there are those who turn away from the doctrines of Christ and of God?

A. After the departure of the Apostles Acts 20:29

Q. Which departure is referred to by Apostle Paul?

A. He would not be seen anymore Acts 20:25

Q. How did the brethren react upon hearing what Apostle Paul had said?

A. They wept Acts 20:37-38

Q. What did Apostle Paul really mean by his departing?

A. His death II Tim. 4:6-8

Conclusion: This is the reason why many of us were born in the Catholic Church and not in the Church of Christ which Christ built in the first century. False prophets led away from the faith the Christians who did not remain firm, and those who remained firm in the true teachings of Christ were put to death.

The call

Q. Thus what should the people in the Catholic Church do for them to be saved?

A. They should come out of the Catholic Church in order not to suffer God's punishment Rev. 18:4

Instruction

Renounce all Catholic teachings and practices because these are against the teachings of God.

Proofs that the Apostasy of the First Church Took Place

Theme: The teachings of God from which the Catholic Church has turned away.

Objectives

1. Prove that the Catholic Church is neither of God nor of Christ because of her false teachings.
2. Convince the candidate for baptism to renounce his former belief in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Summary

The apostasy of the Church established by Christ in the first century was the result of the turning away from the teachings of God taught by Christ and His Apostles. Which is why, the apostasy continues to take place whenever there is a teaching of God being violated by the Catholic Church. In view of this, all the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church should be rejected.

Introduction

Catholic defenders insist that they have not turned away from Christ and God. In fact, they say, "We continue to worship God and Christ." But how did the Catholic Church turn away from God and from Christ? What they have turned away from are the teachings of God and of Christ and this we will prove in this lesson.

Images

- Q. Which teaching of God does the Catholic Church flagrantly disobey?
- A. The making of graven images which they worship and serve Ex. 20:3-5

- Q. Which images has the Catholic Church exchanged for God?
- A. Images of men, birds, beasts, and creeping things Rom. 1:23, 25
- Q. Does the Catholic Church admit her worship of images?
- A. This is admitted by Catholic authorities *Faith of Our Fathers* p. 164-165 (207)

"It is in this sense, I take it, that scholastic writers have spoken of the same worship being paid to images of Christ as to Christ our Lord Himself; for the act which is called the worship of an image is really the worship of Christ Himself, through and in the presence of the image and by occasion of it; . . ."

[James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*. New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1917. (Book)]

- Q. Why can't the Catholic Church deny that what she is doing to the images is really an act of worship?
- A. Kneeling down is an act of worship ... Ps. 95:6
- Q. Do Catholics kneel before images?
- A. They kneel *Faith of Our Fathers*, p.164 (207)

"The doctrine of the Catholic Church regarding the use of sacred images is clearly and fully expressed by the General Council of Trent in the following words: 'The images of Christ, and of His Virgin Mother, and of other Saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches; . . . the honor which is given them is referred to the originals which they represent, so that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads or kneel, we adore Christ and venerate His Saints, whose likeness they represent.' . . . The Pagans looked upon an idol as a god endowed with intelligence and the other attributes of the Deity."

[James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*. New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1917. (Book)]

Note: Hence, what the Catholics say differs from what they do. Even if they deny that they worship images, the fact that they kneel before them proves that they indeed worship images.

- Q. What are the evil consequences of such idolatric practice?
- A. It has caused many evil things in this world Rom. 1:28-31

Q. Does the Roman Catholic Church admit that many of her members have indeed been corrupted by these evil things?

A. It was fulfilled in many Catholics *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 19 (192)

"I am sorry to confess that corruption of morals is too often found among professing Catholics. We cannot close our eyes to the painful fact that too many of them, far from living up to the teachings of their Church, are sources of melancholy scandal. 'It must be that scandals come, but woe to him by whom the scandal cometh.' I also admit that the sin of Catholics is more heinous in the sight of God than that of their separated brethren, because they abuse more grace."

[James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*. New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1917. (Book)]

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do you know of any images of man accompanied by images of animals before which the Catholics kneel and pray?
2. Is this worship of images approved or prohibited by the Bible?

Worship

Q. What is the principal form of Catholic worship and why is it evil?

A. The Mass *Hist. of the Mass*, p. vi (292)

"The Mass is the center of divine worship, of the homage rendered to God by the Church: it is the Church's prayer *par excellence*, Christ's prayer offered by the Church to God, the perfect praise and thanksgiving, the unique source of the divine gifts and graces of redemption, especially for those who participate in it completely by eucharistic communion."

[Francois Amiot, *History of the Mass*. Translated from the French by Lancelot C. Sheppard. *Nihil Obstat*: Johannes M. T. Barton. *Imprimatur*: E. Morrogh Bernard. New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., © 1958. (Book)]

Q. According to Catholic teachings, what is being done by the priests whenever they celebrate Mass?

A. They make an offering out of Christ . *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 254 (219-220)

"This oblation of the New Law is commonly called *Mass*. The word *Mass* is derived by some from the Hebrew term *Missach* (Deut.xvi),

which means a free offering. Others derive it from the word *Missa*, which the Priest uses when he announces to the congregation that Divine Service is over...

"The sacrifice of the Mass is the consecration of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and the oblation of this body and blood to God, by the ministry of the Priest, for a perpetual memorial of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The Sacrifice of the Mass is identical with that of the cross, both having the same victim and High Priest—Jesus Christ."

[James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*. New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1917. (Book)]

Q. Does the Bible approve of the Catholic act of offering Christ whenever their priests celebrate Mass?

A. This is an open violation of the command of God *Heb. 7:27*

Q. Why is it no longer necessary to offer Christ everyday?

A. This was done by Christ once and for all *Heb. 10:10-11*

Q. How does the Catholic Church convince her members that the Mass or the so-called Holy Eucharist is in accordance with biblical teaching?

A. They say, "The Holy Eucharist was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper" *My Catholic Faith*, pp. 274-275 (440)

"What is the Holy Eucharist? - The Holy Eucharist is a sacrament, the supreme gift of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, which really and truly contains His body and blood, soul and divinity, under the appearances of bread and wine. ...

"When did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist? - Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died...

"How did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist? - Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist in this way: He took bread, blessed and broke it, and giving it to His Apostles, said: 'Take ye and eat; this is My body.; then He took a cup of wine, blessed it, and giving it to them, said: 'Drink ye all of this; for this is My blood of the new testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins'; finally, He gave His Apostles the commission: 'do this for a commemoration of me.'"

[Most Rev. Louis LaRavoire Morrow, D.D., *My Catholic Faith*. (A Catechism in Pictures). *Nihil Obstat*: Henricus A. Coffey, S.J., *Censor deputatus*, *Imprimatur*: Michael J. O'Doherty, *Archiepiscopus Manilensis*. Copyright, 1936, 1937, 1951: by Louis L.R. Morrow: Manila, Philippines and The Catholic Truth Society, Manila, Philippines. (Book)]

Q. Are the Catholic priests right in their allegation that the Mass is the Holy Supper instituted by Christ?

A. They are wrong. The Mass and the Holy Supper are two different things Mt. 26:26-28

Q. What is the difference between the Mass and the Holy Supper?

A. In the Mass, they partake only of the bread or the host..... What They Ask About The Church pp. 75-76 (644)

"There were various reasons for the gradual growth of the custom of giving Holy Communion under the form of bread alone: the danger of spilling when it was given under the form of wine; the unsanitary and repugnant practice of all communicants drinking from a common chalice; the time-consuming process of distributing under both forms, which became quite impractical as the number of communicants increased and crowds filled the great cathedrals; and finally, the difficulty of reserving the Blessed Sacrament for Communion under the form of wine."

[Msgr. J.D. Conway, What They Ask About The Church. Nihil Obstat: Rt. Rev. Msgr. A.J. Burke, Censor Librorum. Imprimatur: Ralph L. Hayes, Bishop of Davenport, Iowa, Dec. 23, 1957. Chicago, Illinois: Fides Publishers Association, © 1958 (Book)]

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

- 1. What did the Catholic Church subtract from the Holy Supper established by Christ?
2. What does a person get from hearing the Mass: sin or holiness?

Conclusion: Thus, do not hear mass anymore or receive the so-called Holy Communion.

On Popes and Priests

Q. Does the Bible agree that the Pope and the priests are the vicars or successors of Christ?

A. Christ can never be substituted by another Heb. 7:24-25

Q. Why can Christ never be substituted by another?

A. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever Heb. 13:8

Q. Is it true that Apostle Peter was the first pope? According to Catholic tradition, when did Apostle Peter die?

A. In the year 67-68 A.D. C.E. Vol. 11, 750 (105)

"In the Chronicle of Eusebius the thirteenth or fourteenth year of Nero is given as that of the death of Peter and Paul (67-68) . . ."

[The Catholic Encyclopedia, An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline and History of the Catholic Church. Ed. by Charles G. Herbermann. New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., © 1913. (Book)]

Q. When did the title "pope" become an exclusive title of the Roman Pontiff?

A. In the fourth century C.E. Vol. 12; p. 270 (107)

"The title pope (papa) was, as has been stated, at one time employed with far more latitude. In the East it has always been used to designate simple priests. In the Western Church, however, it seems from the beginning to have been restricted to bishops (Tertulliano, 'De Pud.', xiii). It was apparently in the fourth century that it began to become a distinctive title of the Roman Pontiff. Pope Siricius (d. 398) seems so to use it (Ep. vi in P. L., XIII, 1164), and Ennodius of Pavia (d. 473) employs it still more clearly in this sense in a letter to Pope Symmachus (P. L., LXIII, 69). Yet as late as the seventh century St. Gall (d. 640) addresses Desiderius of Cahors as papa (P. L., LXXXVII, 265). Gregory VII finally prescribed that it should be confined to the successors of Peter."

[The Catholic Encyclopedia, An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline and History of the Catholic Church. Ed. by Charles G. Herbermann. New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., © 1913. (Book)]

Q. What proof is there that even Catholic authors who listed the alleged popes of the Catholic Church had doubts that the Apostle Peter was the first pope?

A. They put a question mark when they listed the name of Apostle Peter C.E. Vol. 12 p. 272 (II-88)

LIST OF THE POPES.

- (1) St. Peter, d. 67 (?)
(2) St. Linus, 67-79 (?)
(3) St. Anacletus I, 79-90 (?) . . ."

[The Catholic Encyclopedia, An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline and History of the Catholic Church. Ed. by Charles G. Herbermann. New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., © 1913. (Book)]

Note: Some assert that what is doubted is the date; this, they allege, is the reason for having a question mark.

Q. What is the evidence that not only Apostle Peter but many others whom they believe to have become popes are not definitely established as popes and are even unknown?

A. The number is not definitely established and others are unknown *Cath. Dict.*
p. 389 (94)

"iii. The number of popes since St. Peter is not certain; there are 262 commonly enumerated. . . . Some of these are uncertain, and a dozen are definitely unknown."

[Donald Attwater, editor, *A Catholic Dictionary*. Nihil Obstat: Georgius D. Smith, S.T.D., Ph. D., *Censor deputatus*. Imprimatur: E. Morrogh Bernard, Vic. Gen. Second Edition, Revised. New York: The MacMillan Company, © 1952, 1931, 1949]

Confession

Q. Should we confess our sins against God to a priest?

A. We should confess to God *Ps. 32:5*

Q. What is God's promise to those who confess their sins to Him?

A. They will be forgiven *I Jn. 1:9*

Q. Who and how many can we approach to mediate for us with the Father?

A. We have only one Mediator *I Tim. 2:5*

Q. Who are the mediators recognized by the Catholic Church?

A. Many mediators *Cath. Catechism*
Book Two, p. 341

"The Confiteor

"I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.

"Therefore, I beseech the blessed Mary, ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

"May the almighty God have mercy on me, forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting. Amen.

"May the almighty and merciful Lord grant me pardon, absolution and remission of my sins. Amen."

[*Catholic Catechism*, Book Two. Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., © 1971]

Conclusion: Therefore, never confess our sins against God to a priest.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. To whom should we confess our sins?
2. Who is the only Mediator between God and man?

The Saints

The Catholic Church affirms that the saints can act as mediators between God and man because they are already in heaven.

Q. Is there truth to this Catholic teaching about the saints being in heaven and their vaunted ability to mediate for us?

A. All the dead are in their graves *Ps. 88:5*

Q. Could it be that the holy ones who are now dead already in heaven?

A. David did not ascend into heaven *Acts 2:29, 34*

Q. Is David holy?

A. He is holy *Ps. 86:2*

Q. Until when will the dead remain in their graves?

A. Until the heavens disappear *Job 14:10, 12*

Q. When will the heavens disappear?

A. On Judgment day *II Pt. 3:10, 7*

Purgatory

Q. Is the doctrine on Purgatory taught by the Catholic Church written in the Bible?

A. We cannot read it in the Bible; in fact such an idea is against God's teachings *Eccl. 9:5-6*

Q. Why can't the dead benefit from whatever the living do?

A. Because the dead have no more thoughts *Ps. 146:4 KJV*

"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. When will the rewarding of men take place?

A. The rewarding of men will take place on the second coming of Christ; on that day there is no third place for men Mt. 25:31-34, 41

Instruction: Thus, do not offer prayers for the dead anymore and do not participate in the activities on the so-called All Souls' Day.

Conclusion

We have understood in this lesson that the apostasy of the Church established by Christ in the first century took place when they abandoned the teachings of God preached by Christ and His Apostles. We have proven that it is the Catholic Church which has abandoned these teachings. Their apostasy continues whenever they disobey a commandment of God. In view of this, we should renounce or reject the beliefs and the practices of the Catholic Church including all their superstitions which might have become a part of our daily lives.

LESSON NO. 7

The Origin of other Churches

Theme: The origin of the multitude of churches that are not of Christ.

Objectives

1. Prove that there is only one true Church that belongs to Christ—the Church of Christ.
2. Show the origin of the many churches that are not of Christ.
3. Impress in the candidate for baptism the importance of the Church of Christ.

Summary

We should not be surprised at the number of churches today that are not of Christ. It is not Christ who established them but the enemy or the devil. These churches that do not belong to Christ are the Catholic Church and her offsprings, the various Protestant denominations and sects. We should not be deceived. Only one Church belongs to Christ, the Church of Christ.

Introduction

Some people have the wrong notion that all of the established churches today belong to Christ. Others wonder why there is such a proliferation of churches that are in conflict with one another when, in fact, there is only one church established by Christ. People also wonder how this could happen since almost all these churches that claim to be Christian use one and the same Bible. The origin of these various churches was taught by Christ in one of His parables.

Presentation

- Q. To what is the Church that truly belongs to Christ likened, and what is its origin according to one of the parables of Christ?
- A. It is likened to the kingdom of heaven.. Mt. 13:24

Q. To whom is the kingdom given, according to Christ?

A. To the flock or Church of Christ Lk. 12:32

Acts 20:28 Lamsa

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Q. Who is the sower of the good seed in his field?

A. The Son of Man or Christ Mt. 13:37

Q. Who is the good seed that was sowed by Christ?

A. The children of the Kingdom Mt. 13:38

Q. How did Christ sow the good seed?

A. Christ built His Church Mt. 16:18

Q. How many churches did Christ build, according to the Apostles?

A. There is one body or Church Eph. 4:4

Q. What name did the Apostles call this church?

A. Church of Christ Rom. 16:16

Origin

Why, then, are there many churches today? How have they come about?

Q. Aside from Christ, was there anyone else who built churches? If so, when did this happen?

A. The tares that were sown by the enemy while men slept Mt. 13:25

Q. Who is the enemy who sowed the tares when men were asleep?

A. The enemy is the devil Mt. 13:39

Q. What did the Lord mean when He said that the enemy sowed tares "while men were sleeping"?

A. What Christ meant by sleep is death.. Jn. 11:11-14

Q. Who were those people who were asleep or dead after whose passing away the devil sowed tares?

A. The Apostles Acts 20:29-30

Q. What did Apostle Paul refer to as his departure?

A. His face would be seen no more Acts 20:25

Q. How did the brethren react when they realized the full meaning of the Apostle's statement?

A. They wept Acts 20:37-38

Q. What did Apostle Paul actually mean by the departure he was talking about?

A. His death II Tim. 4:6

Q. How could we recognize those who turned away from the first-century Church of Christ, and what is the proof that this is the work of the devil?

A. They turned away from the faith I Tim. 4:1, 3 KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. Which church teaches and observes these doctrines?

A. The Catholic Church F.O.F., p. 328 (223)
M. O. C.D., p. 317

p. 328

"Although celibacy is not expressly enforced by our Savior, it is, however, commended so strongly by Himself and His Apostles, both by word and example, that the Church felt it her duty to lay it down as a law.

"The discipline of the Church has been exerted from the beginning in prohibiting Priests to marry *after* their ordination."

[James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith Of Our Fathers*. New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1917. (Book)]

p. 317
 "What does the second commandment of the Church order us to do?"
 "It orders us to fast and to abstain from flesh meat on certain days of the year."

[A Seminary Professor, *Manual of Christian Doctrine: Comprising Dogma, Moral, and Worship*. New York: Lasalle Bureau, © 1949. (Book)]

Note: The Bible mentions doctrines of the devil which are taught and observed by the Catholic Church.

Differences

- Q. What is the difference between the Church built by Christ and the church of the devil?
- A. Like a chaste virgin *II Cor. 11:2*
- Q. On the other hand, how does the Bible describe the church established by the devil?
- A. The one that had apostatized is the mother of harlots *Rev. 17:1, 5*
- Q. What does it mean that the "woman" mentioned here is seated upon many waters?
- A. It is universal *Rev. 17:15*
- Q. Which church claims to be universal?
- A. The Catholic Church *Cath. Cat. II p. 146b*
- Q. By what name is the church that turned away from Christ called?
- A. Babylon *Rev. 17:5*
- Q. What is referred to as Babylon?
- A. Rome *I Pt. 5:13 Douay (fn.)*

"Babylon: Rome. A metaphor probably founded on Jewish usage."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, Douay Version. *Nihil Obstat*: John M. Fearn, S.T.D., *Imprimatur*: Francis Cardinal Spellman, D.D., New York: C. Wildermann Co. Inc., © 1950. (Book)]

- Q. Which church claims to be universal and bears the name of Rome?
- A. This is the Roman Catholic Church *Cath. Cat. II, p. 146a*

"The Church is called Roman Catholic because its chief ruler is the lawful bishop of Rome."

[*Catholic Catechism*, Part II. *Imprimatur*: Rufinus J. Cardinal Santos. Manila: Catholic Trade School, © 1961. (Book)]

Proof

- Q. What other churches branched out from the Catholic Church?
- A. Her offspring is the Anglican Church or the Protestant Episcopal Church *Rel. in the U.S., p. 60*

"The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States is one of the eighteen independent religious bodies that grew out of the Church of England as it expanded during the great age of British discovery and commerce... The principal characteristics of the Protestant Episcopal Church have thus been derived from the Church of England, which in 1534, after a long process of separation, became independent of the Roman Catholic Church."

[Benson Y. Landis, *Religion in the United States*. New York: Barnes & Noble, © 1965. (Book)]

- Q. What about the other Protestant churches? Where did they originate?
- A. Almost from the start of the Reformation and the separation from the Roman Catholic Church, Protestantism subdivided into four major branches *Colliers, Vol. 19, p. 432*

"During the Reformation the new form of Christianity called Protestantism subdivided, almost as it appeared, into four major branches... The fragmentation of Protestantism was subsequently extended by doctrinal disputes within established groups and by claims of new revelation that necessitated the founding of new sects."

[*Collier's Encyclopedia*, (Vol. XIX) U.S.A.: The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company, © 1964. (Book)]

Note: The four major branches of Protestantism that arose during the Reformation are Lutheranism, Presbyterianism, Anglicanism, and the Anabaptists.

Not by Faith Only

Theme: Salvation Cannot Be Attained By Faith Alone.

Objectives

1. Prove that faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ is not sufficient in order for man to be saved.
2. Show the indispensability of the Church of Christ for salvation.
3. Teach people to value their membership in the Church.

Summary

Many Protestant groups uphold the belief that faith alone in Christ is sufficient for salvation. They have excluded other necessary conditions such as baptism, Church membership, suffering for Christ's sake, works, etc. Their faith-alone concept of salvation is in direct conflict with the teachings and plain pronouncements of the Bible that man is not justified by faith only.

Introduction

The belief that it is enough for one to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved continues to grow in popularity. It is said that the Church is not necessary for salvation. That is why many people do not recognize the value of Church membership. Is it true that the Church is not necessary in attaining salvation? Is faith alone sufficient for man to be saved?

Presentation

- Q. According to the Apostles, what should a person do in order to be saved?
- A. Believe in Jesus Acts 16:30-31

Q. What is the extent of the disunity and disharmony in Protestantism?

A. The number of Protestant denominations *Moody Monthly, Sept., 1984, p. 28*

"With 20,800 denominations in the world, supplemented by more than 15,000 distinct parachurch agencies, we have 'something for everyone,' the carnival midway of Christianity. But the competition among these carnival booths is anything but amusing."

[*Moody Monthly*, Chicago, Illinois: Moody Bible Institute (Magazine)]

Q. Is there salvation in these various churches which are not the Church of Christ?

A. There is no salvation in any other Acts 4:10, 12

Conclusion

We should not be surprised at the number of churches today that are not of Christ. You should believe that there is only one Church that belongs to Christ, the Church of Christ or *Iglesia ni Cristo*. Reject the Catholic Church and its offsprings - the various Protestant churches.

Note: This passage is misinterpreted to mean that faith alone, to the exclusion of everything else, is sufficient for the attainment of salvation.

Q. What did the Apostles do to make the keeper of the prison believe in Christ?

A. They preached to him and to the others and baptized them Acts 16:32-33

Note: It is clear from these verses that the preaching of the Gospel by the messenger of God must precede belief.

Q. Why are preaching of the Gospel and baptism necessary conditions for the attainment of salvation?

A. Because this is the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ Mk. 16:15-16

Note: It was from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself that the Apostles learned the requirements for salvation.

Q. Into what are those who believe in the Gospel baptized?

A. Baptized into one body or the Church of Christ I Cor. 12:13
Col. 1:18 Rom. 16:16

Proof

Q. Where does God put people in order for them to be saved?
A. The Lord added them to the Church.. Acts 2:47

Q. How did Christ prove the importance of membership in His Church?

A. Any man who enters in Him shall be saved Jn. 10:9

Q. Where can we find those who have entered in Christ?

A. In the flock or Church of Christ Jn. 10:16
Acts 20:28 Lamsa

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the

Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Q. Is it enough to believe the gospel as preached, receive baptism, and become a member of the Church of Christ to be saved?

A. One should remain Jn. 15:5-6

Q. What did the Apostles exhort the brethren to do in order to remain steadfast until the end?

A. Hold firmly and obey the Gospel I Cor. 15:1-2 NIV

"Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. How does the Bible prove the importance of the Church to our Lord God?
2. How did Christ show the importance of Church membership?

Difference

Q. Will those who possess faith alone, or faith without works, attain salvation?

A. There is no profit in this Js. 2:14

Q. What does the Bible call faith without works?

A. Dead and barren Js. 2:17, 20 RSV

"So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. ...

"Do you want to be shown, you foolish fellow, that faith apart from works is barren?"

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press © 1962.]

Q. Which faith has value and will lead to man's salvation?

A. Faith with works Js. 2:22

Q. What biblical proof can we give to show that man cannot be justified by faith only?

A. Man is not justified by faith only *Js. 2:24*

Q. What is one of the works or deeds that must accompany our faith?

A. The work that should be done is to enter in Christ by becoming a member of His body or Church..... *I Cor. 12:27*
Col. 1:18

Remain and Endure

Q. What does Christ command those who are in the Church to do in order for them to be saved?

A. Endure or remain until the end..... *Mt. 24:13*

Q. Aside from this, what else can we not avoid to do in order to be saved?

A. Suffer also for Christ's sake..... *Philip. 1:29*

Instructions

1. Recognize the importance of the Church for the attainment of salvation.
2. Prove your faith by means of works, that is, by becoming a member of the Church of Christ and obeying the Gospel.
3. Remain in the Church of Christ until the end.

LESSON NO. 9

One Organized Church

Theme: The true believers in Christ are in one organized Church, the true Church of Christ.

Objectives

1. Explain the meaning and importance of the Church of Christ according to the teachings of the Bible.
2. Prove that the true believers in Christ are gathered in only one organized Church.

Summary

Those who do not recognize the value of the Church have two ways of denying the necessity of the Church of Christ. One way is by stating bluntly that the Church is not necessary for salvation. They say that it is enough to accept Christ as one's personal Savior. They say that those who emphasize the need for the Church consider the church as another Savior.

Another way is by saying that the Church consists of all the people who believe in Christ whatever church they belong to. Consequently, they say it is useless to try to find out which organization is the true Church of Christ, since all these churches are of Christ.

Introduction

"Believers in Christ" is an expression used by Protestants in referring to those who allegedly make up the body of Christ, the Church of Christ. To the Protestants, membership in a particular church or religious organization is not important; because they hold that as long as an individual believes in Christ he is a member of the Church.

There are two ways by which Protestants reject the importance of the Church for salvation. One of these is by saying that it is enough to accept Christ as one's personal Savior for one to be saved. To include anything else for salvation is considered

equivalent to adding another savior. Another way is by saying that membership in any one particular Church or organization is not necessary for salvation. After all, for them, the body of all professing Christians worldwide is the Church of Christ.

Presentation

Q. Is there truth to the allegation that the true believers in Christ can be found in different churches? How does one become a true believer in Christ?

A. No one comes to Christ unless the Father draws him..... *Jn. 6:44*

Q. How does God draw people to Christ?

A. By calling him to have fellowship with Christ *I Cor. 1:9 TEV*

"God is to be trusted, the God who called you to have fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1972]

Q. Where are those people whom God called to be in union with His Son?

A. Called in the one body *Col. 3:15 RSV*

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962]

a) The body is the Church *Col. 1:18*

Note: The Church is one religious body.

Q. How can the people who have been called by God into one Church have fellowship with Christ?

A. Christ created the *one* new man *Eph. 2:15*

Q. How do individuals become members of the one body or Church of Christ?

A. Baptized into one body *I Cor. 12:13*

Note: To become a true disciple of Christ one must be baptized into the one body of Christ, the Church of Christ.

Many parts, one body

Q. Why is the true Church of Christ called the body of Christ?

A. To manifest its oneness *Rom. 12:4-5*

Q. What else is the uniqueness of the body of Christ, which is also that of the Church?

A. Even though there are many parts, there is only one body *I Cor. 12:12 TEV*

"Christ is like a single body, which has many parts; it is still one body, even though it is made up of different parts."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1972]

Q. Is this the characteristic of Protestantism? How many denominations constitute the Protestant faith worldwide?

A. There are 20,800 denominations in the world, supplemented by more than 15,000 parachurch agencies *Moody Monthly, Sept. 1984, p. 28 (c)*

"With 20,800 denominations in the world, supplemented by more than 15,000 district parachurch agencies. ..."

[*Moody Monthly*, Chicago, Illinois: Moody Bible Institute (Magazine)]

Q. Because of these divisions, what have the Protestants themselves noticed?

A. They bear little resemblance to the first-century model *Moody Monthly, Sept. 1984, p. 28 (a)*

"...today's churches bear little resemblance to the first century model."

[*Moody Monthly*, Chicago, Illinois: Moody Bible Institute (Magazine)]

Q. What do these divisions in Protestantism signify?

A. Division arose from unfaithfulness to Christ thus marring the body of Christ *Moody Monthly, Sept. 1984, p. 28 (b)*

"Division within the Church arose from unfaithfulness to Christ... has marred the body of Christ..."

[*Moody Monthly*, Chicago, Illinois: Moody Bible Institute (Magazine)]

Note: Protestantism wherein there are divisions does not qualify to be the true body of Christ. It is not of Christ.

- Q. To whom do denominationalism and factionalism belong?
- A. Strife is of the devil *Js. 3:14-16 Lamsa*

"But if you have bitter envying among you or strife in your hearts, do not boast and do not lie against the truth. This wisdom does not come from above, but it is earthly, sensual, devilish. For wherever envy and strife are, there is confusion and every sort of evil."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East. by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Purpose

- Q. Why did God place the true believers in the one body of Christ?
- A. So that there would be no schism *I Cor. 12:20-25*
- Q. What binds the true believers of Christ who are found in one body or Church?
- A. One in all things *Eph. 4:4-6*

Dissimilarity

- Q. Who are the false believers in Christ?
- A. They call upon His name but do not do the will of God *Mt. 7:21*
- Q. What is the will of the Father concerning all men?
- A. Be gathered in Christ *Eph. 1:9-10*
- Q. How are the true believers gathered in Christ?
- A. They become members in one body ... *Rom. 12:4-5*

Note: The true believers in Christ fulfill the will of God. They are members of the one body of Christ – the organization called the Church of Christ.

- Q. What will Christ do to the false believers?
- A. Christ will reject them *Mt. 7:21-23*
- Q. Why will Christ reject those who believe in His name and claim Him to be their "Lord"?

- A. Because their faith is unprofitable *Js. 2:14, 19*
- Q. What kind of people profess this kind of faith?
- A. Fools *Js. 2:20 NIV*

"You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?"

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

- Q. Who are the true believers?
- A. Those who have the perfect faith, that is, with works *Js. 2:22*
- Q. What works should be done by the true believers to prove that they have faith in Christ?
- A. Do what Christ says *Lk. 6:46*
- Q. What has Christ said or commanded which all true believers should follow?
- A. Enter in Him *Jn. 10:9*

Conclusion

The true believers in Christ are found in only one organization, the body of Christ – the Church of Christ. This one body is composed of those who have done the will of God and are thereby certain of salvation.

Instructions

1. Reject the belief that the true believers in Christ are found in various churches.
2. Believe that the true believers in Christ are in one organized Church which is the Church of Christ.
3. Follow Christ's command to enter in Him or become a member of the Church of Christ.

The Church of Christ in the Philippines

Theme: It was Christ who established the Church of Christ in the Philippines by virtue of the fulfillment of prophecy.

Objectives

1. Show the relationship of the Church of Christ in the Philippines with Christ and God.
2. Answer the unfounded criticisms and the false belief of detractors that Brother Felix Manalo is the founder of the Church of Christ.

Summary:

The Church of Christ which emerged in the Philippines (a country in the Far East) in these last days was established by virtue of the fulfillment of the prophecies of God and of Christ. This is the third group of people in the Church established by Christ. This group arose in these last days after the apostasy of the Church built by Christ in the first century as a result of the work done by false prophets. Even the spread of this Church in the Far West is a fulfillment of God's prophecy written in the Bible.

Introduction

The Church of Christ which emerged in the Philippines in these last days was established by Christ by means of prophecy. This we will study in this lesson.

Presentation

- Q. What is the proof that it was really Christ who established the Church in the Philippines?
- A. He prophesied His other sheep which would be made into one flock *Jn. 10:16*
- Q. What did Christ mean that He would make His other sheep into one flock?

- A. They would be made the Church of Christ *Acts 20:28 Lamsa*

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

- Q. Whom does Christ refer to as His other sheep?
- A. The prophesied sheep are from afar off place *Acts 2:39*
- Q. Who were referred to by Apostle Peter as those who were already called?
- A. The Jews and the Gentiles who became members of the Church of Christ *Rom. 9:24*
- Q. Where is this afar off place referred to by the Apostles which will be the origin of the other sheep of Christ?
- A. The Far East *Is. 43:5 Moffatt*
- "From the far east will I bring your offspring, and from the far west I will gather you."
- [Bible. A New Translation of The Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments by James Moffatt. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, © 1950.]
- Q. Which country in the Far East is referred to in the prophecy of Isaiah?
- A. The Philippines *W. Hist., p. 445 (747-8) or Asia and the Phil., p. 169*

v. 2, p. 445
 "The Philippines were Spain's share of the first colonizing movement in the Far East. . ."

[Arthur E. R. Boak, Preston Slosson, & Howard R. Anderson, *World History*. Madison: United States Armed Forces Institute, © 1942. (Book)]

p. 169
 "It cannot be without significance that the country which stands almost at the geographical center of the Far East, the Philippines, should also be that in which Christianity has taken the deepest root. . ."

[Horacio dela Costa, S. J. *Asia and the Philippines*. Manila Solidaridad Publishing House, © 1967. (Book)]

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. *In what part of the East is the Philippines situated? In the Middle East or in the Far East?*
2. *According to the statement of the Apostles that we have read, how many groups of people comprise the Church built by Christ?*

Proofs

Q. What is the proof that the other sheep of Christ in the Philippines would be called by the name Church of Christ?

A. They would be made into one flock or the Church of Christ *Jn. 10:16 Acts 20:28 Lamsa*

“Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood.”

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East, by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. “Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400.”]

Q. Where will the Church of Christ which emerged in the Philippines extend its missions, according to the prophecy?

A. To reach the West *Is. 59:19*

Q. Which part of the West would the gathering of the children of God start?

A. It would start in the Far West *Is. 43:5 Moffatt*

“From the far east will I bring your offspring, and from the far west I will gather you.”

[Bible. A New Translation of the Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments by James Moffatt. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, © 1950]

Q. When will the Church of Christ reach the Far West according to the prophecy written in the Bible?

A. When the East has already proclaimed the glory of God *Is. 59:19 Moffatt*

“ . . . till in the far west men have awe of the Eternal, and in the east they see his brilliant deeds; for his vengeance pours out like a pent-up stream, driven by a blast of wind.”

[Bible. A New Translation of the Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments by James Moffatt. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, © 1950.]

Q. Where in the Far West will the prophecy begin to be fulfilled?
A. In Hawaii and California *World Almanac '76, p. 88*

“Far West

- California
- Nevada
- Oregon
- Washington
- Alaska
- Hawaii. . .”

[The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1976. Ed. by George E. Delury. New York: Newspaper Enterprise Association, © 1975.]

Note: This was fulfilled when the Church of Christ went overseas when Brother Eraño Manalo officiated the first worship service in Hawaii on July 27, 1968. This was followed by another gathering of the brethren in San Francisco, California. These are the official beginnings of the Church of Christ in the Far West.

Q. Was the time of the emergence of the Church of Christ in the Philippines also prophesied?

A. At the ends of the earth *Is. 43:5-6*

Note: The “ends of the earth” is distinct from the “end of the earth”. What is the difference?

Q. When is the “end of the earth”?

A. The second coming of Christ *Mt. 24:3 KJV*

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. What are the signs given by our Lord Jesus Christ which will signify that it is the “ends of the earth”?

A. When these things are already seen, the end is at the very doors Mt. 24:33

Q. What did Christ refer to by "these things" which, when seen, are signs of the "ends of the earth"?

A. The accompanying event is a world war .. Mt. 24:6-7

Note: The prophesied world war is that which broke out on July 27, 1914 which is called First World War. Therefore, the time "ends of the earth" began in July, 1914. This is the prophesied time for the emergence of the Church of Christ in the Philippines. As a fulfillment of this prophecy, the Church of Christ was registered with the Philippine government on July 27, 1914.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:
1. Which country in the Far East is the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the emergence of the children of God in the last days?
2. When did the Church of Christ emerge in the Philippines?

Q. How was Christ able to establish the Church of Christ in the Philippines in 1914 when He was already in heaven?

A. The voice of Christ would be heard Jn. 10:16

Q. How could Christ's voice be heard in the Philippines in 1914 when He was already in heaven at that time?

A. "He who hears you hears me" Lk. 10:16 RSV

"He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Q. Who are those whom, when listened to, it is actually Christ who is listened to?

A. Messengers Jn. 13:20 NEB

"In very truth I tell you, he who receives any messenger of mine receives me; receiving me, he receives the One who sent me."

[Bible. The New English Bible. Oxford: Oxford University Press, © 1961, 1970]

Q. What is the importance of listening and following the words of Christ taught by the messengers?

A. He who listens and obeys is set on a rock .. Mt. 7:24-25

Q. Who is the rock referred to on which are set those who listen and obey the words of Christ that they have heard?

A. Christ Acts 4:10-11

Q. What was built by Christ on Himself?

A. The Church Mt. 16:18

Questions for the baptismal candidate:
1. Who established the Church of Christ in the Philippines?
2. Do you believe that Brother Felix Manalo is the Messenger of God in the last days?

Conclusion: Therefore, through the instrumentality of God's messenger in the last days, Christ was able to build His Church here in the Philippines in 1914. Thus, this Church is of God and of Christ.

Promise

Q. What is the great fortune and privilege of those who belong to the Church of Christ in the Philippines?

A. They are God's children Is. 43:6

Q. What is the value of being counted among the children of God?

A. If children, they are heirs Rom. 8:16-17

Conclusion

Thus, in order to be included among those recognized by God as His sons and daughters in the last days, you should become members of the Church of Christ. You must understand that God is calling you.

This Church which emerged in the Philippines (in the Far East) in these last days was established by virtue of the fulfillment of the prophecies of God and of Christ. This is the third group of people in the Church built by Christ. This emerged in these last days after the Church established by Christ in the first century was completely led to apostasy by the false prophets. Even the spread of this Church in the Far West is also a fulfillment of the prophecy of God written in the Bible.

Brother Felix Y. Manalo: God's Messenger in the Last Days

Theme: Brother Felix Y. Manalo is God's messenger in the last days.

Objectives

1. Show the importance of the authority of Brother Felix Manalo which he received from God.
2. Convince the candidate for baptism to be united with the commissioning in the last days so that he may be united with God and Christ.

Summary

The messenger of God in these last days is Brother Felix Y. Manalo. It was not he who built the Church of Christ but it was Christ Himself by virtue of the fulfillment of prophecy.

Brother Felix Manalo was only utilized by God as His instrument in preaching the pure Gospel of salvation in these last days. He was the first to preach the Church of Christ in the Philippines. His authority as God's messenger is clearly attested to by various prophecies in Scriptures. Hence, it is vital that people have faith in the commissioning of Brother Felix Y. Manalo.

Introduction

Brother Felix Manalo is the Messenger of God whom He sent to bring about the emergence of the Church of Christ in the Philippines. Some may ask, "How did Brother Felix Manalo become a messenger of God?" Are there prophecies in the Bible regarding his commissioning?

Presentation

- Q. What authority did God give Brother Felix Y. Manalo?
 A. Chosen servant with a covenant to deify God *Is. 41:9-10 KJV*

"Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou *art* my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away."

"Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Note: We are assured that this prophecy refers to the messenger in the last days because he was called from the ends of the earth. (Review the lesson about the 'ends of the earth'.)

- Q. Which is this righteousness with which God upheld Brother Felix Y. Manalo?
 A. The Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation *Rom. 1:16-17*
- Q. How would Brother Felix Y. Manalo persuade and lead people to salvation?
 A. Likened to a bird of prey *Is. 46:11*
- Q. What would the messenger do to the people to whom he was sent? Would he devour them, as a real bird of prey does to its victim, although he himself is man and not a bird of prey?
 A. He would bring them near to righteousness and salvation *Is. 46:11-13*
- Q. Why is Brother Felix Y. Manalo likened to a bird of prey?
 A. Because the people to whom he was sent were being held back by the north and the south. *Is. 43:5-6*
- Q. What are being referred to by the prophecy as the north and the south which restrained the people to whom Brother Felix Y. Manalo was sent?
 A. These are Protestantism and Catholicism which held sway in the Philippines *M. Times, p. 346*
The Reformation, p. 366

p. 346

"It will be noted that it was the Teutonic north, which had resisted the Roman Empire, that broke away from the Catholic Church, while

southern Europe retained the old faith. But in these days of religious toleration there are many Catholics in Protestant countries, and many Protestants in Catholic countries. In Germany, England, and the United States there is a mixture, but the Protestants greatly predominate."

[Henry W. Elson, *Modern Times and The Living Past*. Atlanta: American Book Company, © 1945. (Book)]

p. 366

"...In the north the Protestants were in control - Lutheran churches in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, the northern and central states of Germany; Calvinist or Reformed churches in Scotland, the Netherlands, Hesse, the Palatinate, and a few of the western German states. In the south the Catholics were in control - Spain, Italy, Austria, Bavaria, and elsewhere in southern Germany."

[Owen Chadwick, *The Reformation*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, © 1972. (Book)]

Q. What is meant by the messenger's snatching the people from Protestantism and Catholicism?

A. He would snatch people away from these false religions to save them from the punishment of fire *Jude 1:23 RSV*

"Save some, by snatching them out of the fire; on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

[*Bible*. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Q. What would the messenger use in fulfilling his God-given task?

A. God's counsel *Is. 46:11*

Q. Which is referred to as God's counsel?

A. God's words *Ps. 107:11*

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Who is God's messenger in the last days?
2. Do you believe that biblical prophecies prove the commissioning of Brother Felix Y. Manalo as God's messenger?

Proof

Q. To whom would the messenger of God in the last days bring those whom he would persuade or convert?

A. They would be brought to God *Is. 43:5*

Q. To whom would God bring those who were converted by His messenger?

A. To Christ *Jn. 6:44*

Q. And what will Christ do to those brought to Him by the Father?

A. Christ will make them one flock *Jn. 10:16*
or Church of Christ *Acts 20:28 Lamsa*

"Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to feed the church of Christ which he has purchased with his blood."

[*Bible*. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts: Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East. by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]]

Q. Why is a messenger still needed in preaching the Gospel? Cannot anyone just preach the Gospel?

A. Only the messenger of God was given the authority *Rom. 10:15*

Q. Why is a messenger necessary to preach the Gospel when the Bible can just be read by anyone who knows how to read?

A. Because the Bible is hidden in mystery ... *Rom. 16:25*

Q. If those who are not sent by God study the Bible diligently, will they be able to understand and see God's will which He has hidden in mystery?

A. Religion became a confused affair because many have dared to study and interpret God's word, although they have not been sent to do so . *II Tim. 3:7*

Q. What will befall all those who have dared to preach the Bible even though they are not sent, along with all the people who have listened to them?

A. They will be put to destruction *II Pt. 3:16*

Q. What authority do Brother Felix Y. Manalo and the ministers of the Church of Christ have in preaching the Gospel?

A. The bearer of the seal and those who will seal have been prophesied *Rev. 7:2-3*

Q. What is the meaning of the word "angel"?

A. The word "angel" refers to a messenger or one who is sent..... Lk. 1:19

Q. Are there Bible translators who prove that a man may be called an angel?

A. The bishop of the Church is called an angel Rev. 2:1 Douay (fn.)

"Angel: the guardian angel of the Church, or the church itself; or, and this is the common view, the bishop of the church. If St. John addresses the bishops, he regards them as the incarnation of their respective churches."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, Douay Version, Nihil Obstat: John M. Fearn, S.T.D., Imprimatur: Francis Cardinal Spellman, D.D. New York: C. Wildermann Co. Inc., © 1950.]

Q. And what is meant by "seal" and how is "sealing" done?

A. The sealing is the preaching of the Gospel Eph. 1:13-14

Promise

Q. What is the distinctive characteristic of God's messenger?

A. He is given the ministry of reconciliation. II Cor. 5:18-20

Q. What is the value of receiving God's messenger?

A. Those who receive the messenger receive Christ and God Jn. 13:20

Q. On the other hand, what is the evil of rejecting God's messenger?

A. To reject the messenger is to reject Christ and God Lk. 10:16

Instructions

Q. Thus, what are we required to do in order that we may benefit from God's commissioning of His messenger?

A. We should have fellowship with the messenger and with the Administration of the Church of Christ in the last days I Jn. 1:3

Conclusion

Therefore, this Church, the *Iglesia ni Cristo* (Church of Christ), belongs to God and to Christ. Brother Felix Y. Manalo is God's messenger, and this we should accept with faith.

LESSON NO. 12

The Promise for Those Who Endure Persecution

Theme: The reason behind the persecution suffered by members of the Church of Christ and the promise to those who remain faithful and firm in their faith.

Objectives

1. Give hope to the candidates for baptism and encourage them to hold on amidst persecutions.
2. Show that persecution is inevitable and that triumph over it serves as a basis for inheriting the kingdom of heaven.

Summary

Persecution cannot be avoided because overcoming it serves as a basis for inheriting the kingdom of heaven. Thus, whatever kind or extent of persecution a member of the Church of Christ may face, he should not falter or withdraw. He should instead pray to God for assistance in order to overcome any religious persecutions that he may encounter.

Introduction

Fear of persecutions may hinder a person from joining the Church of Christ. There are instances when a man who has just started to listen to the teachings of the Church encounters persecutions immediately and is even prevented from continuing his biblical studies. Such events have caused some to quit from attending Bible Study on Doctrines in spite of their having understood the truth. To prevent such an unfortunate occurrence, it is necessary for us to know what persecution is about and how to overcome it so that it would not destroy our chances of attaining salvation.

Presentation

Q. What would Christ's disciples face in the world as forewarned by Him?

A. **They will be persecuted** *Jn. 15:20*

Q. Why should it not surprise us that we are hated by the world?

A. Christ was hated ahead of us *Jn. 15:18*

Q. Why are we persecuted and hated by the world?

A. Because Christ has chosen us *Jn. 15:19*

Q. What is the reason why we, the chosen people of Christ, are being persecuted and hated by the world?

A. We are persecuted for His name's sake... *Jn. 15:21*

Q. Should we feel bitter when experiencing persecutions because of our membership in the Church of Christ?

A. We may be reviled but we are blessed. ... *Mt. 5:10-12*

Q. Who will be our first persecutors as foretold by Christ?

A. Our own family *Mt. 10:36*

Q. When we experience this kind of persecution, what does Christ expect from us?

A. **We should love Christ more** *Mt. 10:37*

Q. Should we be ashamed when reproached or discredited for being members of the Church of Christ?

A. Blessed are those who are reproached because of Him *1 Pt. 4:14-16 RSV*

"If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a wrongdoer, or a mischief-maker; yet if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but under that name let him glorify God."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press © 1962.]

Q. What is Christ's warning for those who would be ashamed of Him?

A. Christ will be ashamed of them *Mk. 8:38*

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What did Christ say beforehand that would be experienced by His elect in this world?
2. Should a member of the Iglesia ni Cristo lose courage in time of persecution?
3. Are you being persecuted now that you have decided to become a member of the Iglesia ni Cristo?

Stand

Q. How did the first servants of God deal with persecution?

A. The Apostles rejoiced in their sufferings for the name of Christ *Acts 5:40-42*

Q. What if our enemies threaten us with bodily harm or even death for following the will of God, should we be intimidated?

A. Daniel was not intimidated by threats ... *Dan. 6:7-10*

Instruction: We should not quit from attending Bible Study on Doctrines amidst the persecutions we are now experiencing so that the chance of salvation offered to us will not be wasted.

Promise

Q. What is God's promise to those who willingly endure sufferings for following Christ?

A. They will be rewarded with eternal life ... *Lk. 18:28-30*

Q. What can those who endure hardships and persecutions for being members of the Church of Christ expect?

A. They will be made worthy of the kingdom *II Thess. 1:4-5*

Q. What will the Church of Christ members no longer suffer in God's kingdom?

A. They will never again experience hunger, thirst, or pain *Rev. 7:13-17*

Conclusion

Thus, for us to reach our desired salvation, we should endure all kinds of trials and persecutions. Persecutions cannot

be avoided but if we triumph over them, we shall be counted worthy in inheriting the kingdom of heaven. Thus, whatever persecutions a member of the *Iglesia ni Cristo* encounters, he should not falter or withdraw. He should instead pray to God for assistance to overcome persecutions.

Membership in the Church of Christ

Theme: The proper way of becoming a member of the Church of Christ.

Objectives

1. Check for any wrong motives the candidate for baptism may have in joining the Church of Christ.
2. Prevent the occurrence of cases wherein people join the Church but soon become inactive members and eventually get separated from the Church.

Summary

The proper way of joining the Church of Christ is to join because of faith in God and in Christ as well as the recognition and acceptance of the Church and of God's commissioning of His messenger in these last days.

The membership of a person who joins the Church of Christ just because of the wishes of parents, husband or wife, brother or sister, friend, employer, or for any personal gain or selfish interest is considered unworthy before God.

If the motive for joining the Church of Christ is pure and proper, the person who joins the Church would be able to perform all the commandments of God and observe Church disciplines, proving that he is a true member of the Church of Christ. He does not easily get discouraged, and he does not draw back. Instead, he remains firm in his election.

Introduction

Whoever joins the Church of Christ with wrong motives will not remain but will be separated from the Church sooner or later. Such people will not benefit from Christ's work of salvation for the Church. Thus, to prevent such an eventuality, it is necessary for a person joining the Church to know the proper way of

becoming a member as taught by the Bible and to know also the proper motives one should possess in seeking membership in the Church.

Presentation

Q. How should one enter the Church of Christ?

A. Enter by faith..... Rom. 5:2

Jerusalem Bible

"...since it is by faith and through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God's glory."

[Bible. The Jerusalem Bible, With Abridged Introductions and Notes, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, © 1966, 1967, 1968]

Q. What if one enters the Church without faith?

A. This will not please God..... Heb. 11:6

Q. What is God's judgment for those who do not have faith?

A. They are already condemned..... Jn. 3:18 CEV

"No one who has faith in God's Son will be condemned. But everyone who doesn't have faith in him has already been condemned for not having faith in God's only Son.

[Bible. God's Promise For People of Today, Contemporary English Version, U.S.A.: Thomas Nelson Inc., © 1995]

Q. What condemnation does God lay in store for the unbelievers?

A. Punishment in the lake of fire Rev. 21:8

Conclusion: Thus, one should join the Church of Christ for the right reason – not just to give in to the wishes of parents, wife or husband, brother or sister, employer, or for any personal gain or selfish interest.

Example

Q. Are there people mentioned in the Bible who were not motivated by faith in following Christ?

A. Those who sought Him for food..... Jn. 6:25-26

Q. What did Christ say should be the motive of anyone who follows Him?

A. Work for the food that endures
without end..... Jn. 6:27, 28-29 RSV

"Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal.

"Then they said to him, 'What must we do, to be doing the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent'."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Q. Were there people without faith who joined the Church during the time of Christ?

A. Yes, there were Jn. 6:64 CEV

"'But some of you refuse to have faith in me.' Jesus said this, because from the beginning he knew who would have faith in him. He also knew which one would betray him."

[Bible. God's Promise For People of Today, Contemporary English Version, U.S.A.: Thomas Nelson Inc., © 1995.]

Q. How can we recognize those who have no faith?

A. They easily get offended Jn. 6:60-61

Q. Will those who do not have faith remain in their membership?

A. Those who followed Christ without faith
left Him and stopped following Him... Jn. 6:66 CEV

"Because of what Jesus said, many of his disciples turned their backs on him and stopped following him."

[Bible. God's Promise For People of Today, Contemporary English Version, U.S.A.: Thomas Nelson Inc., © 1995.]

Q. What good is there in joining Christ because of faith?

A. Those who do so will not be
separated from Him Jn. 6:67-69 CEV

"Jesus then asked his twelve disciples if they were going to leave him. Simon Peter answered, 'Lord there is no one else that we can go to! Your words give eternal life. We have faith in you, and we are sure that you are God's Holy One.'"

[Bible. God's Promise For People of Today, Contemporary English Version, U.S.A.: Thomas Nelson Inc., © 1995.]

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Will those who join the Church without faith remain in the Church?
2. Should obedience as a virtue be ingrained in the members of the Church of Christ?

Explanation

Q. What is faith according to the Bible?

A. Having full confidence in the things

we hope for Heb. 11:1

Phillips Modern English

"Now faith means that we have full confidence in the things we hope for, it means being certain of things we cannot see."

[Bible. The New Testament in Modern English, translated by J.B. Phillips. Great Britain: Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd., © 1960, 1972.]

Q. Why are the faithful confident in their hope?

A. They rely on God's power Rom. 4:18-21 NIV

"Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead – since he was about a hundred years old – and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. How can the man of faith be recognized?

A. He is strong and firm and cannot be

moved Col. 1:23 RSV

". . . provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Q. How can one be made firm in his faith?

A. He listens and obeys Mt. 7:24-25

Q. What is the evil consequence if we do not obey what we have heard?

A. The member who does not

obey will eventually fall Mt. 7:26-27

Instruction: All the teachings and rules of discipline of the Church should be followed because obedience to all of these is the mark of a true member of the Church.

Q. Who are the foremost ones whom we should believe?

A. 1) God and Christ Jn. 14:1-2

2) The Gospel Mk. 16:15-16

3) God's messenger Jn. 6:29

Conclusion

The proper way of becoming a member of the Church of Christ is through faith in God and in Christ. This should be accompanied by the recognition of the importance of the Church and of God's commissioning.

If a man joins the Church of Christ properly he can obey all the commandments, and this proves that he is a true member of the Church. He is not easily offended; he will not draw back. Instead, he will remain firm and strong in his election.

The Lord Jesus Christ (Part I)

Theme: The attributes of Christ and His true nature.

Objectives

1. Teach the baptismal candidate the belief of the members of the Church of Christ concerning Christ's attributes and that such belief is taught in the Bible.

2. Prove that despite His attributes, Christ is truly man in nature according to the Bible.

Summary

Christ is highly honored and worshipped by members of the Church of Christ because this is the will of God. Christ should be recognized as the Son of God, Lord, Savior, Mediator, and a holy man who did not commit sin. This is the proof that the Church of Christ does not in any way degrade Him. The attributes mentioned here that belong to Christ are just attributes; in no way do they indicate His nature. As far as Christ's nature is concerned, we believe that He is a man and not the true God. The belief that Christ is the true God should be rejected by man because this is against the teachings of the Bible. Man should also renounce the belief in Christ's alleged dual nature, or that he is both true God and true man.

Introduction

It is important for everyone to know the belief of the Church of Christ concerning Christ because God has placed Christ in the position of Redeemer and Savior of man. He is the founder and head of the Church of Christ. Thus, it is of prime importance that anyone who joins the Church of Christ should know the attributes of Christ and how we should recognize Him. What His attributes are and what His nature is, are the things we shall study in this lesson.

The attributes of Christ

- Q. How do members of the Church of Christ recognize Christ?
 A. Son of God – according to the Father
 Himself Mt. 3:17

Note: Never has any correct translation of the Bible said that Christ is God the Son. What can be read in the Bible is the fact that Christ is the Son of God.

- Q. Aside from being the Son of God, what else did God give Him as attributes?

- A. 1) He was made Lord Acts 2:36
 2) He was made Savior Acts 5:31
 3) Mediator I Tim. 2:5
 4) Placed above all creatures Eph. 1:20-22

Note: These attributes of Christ which the Bible teaches are recognized and accepted by the Church of Christ. The accusation that we are degrading Christ has no factual basis.

- Q. In view of the attributes given to Christ, what has God commanded every man?

- A. God highly exalted Him and commanded that He be worshipped Philip. 2:9-11

- Q. What else are the other attributes of Christ which is why the Father gave Him this honor?

- A. He is humble and obedient Philip. 2:5, 8

- Q. Thus, even if God has placed all things under Christ, what will God do to Him at the end?

- A. He will be subjected to God I Cor. 15:27-28

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Whose will is it that Christ should be worshipped?
2. State one of the attributes and honorable titles God has given Christ.

- Q. What makes Christ greater and above other ordinary men though He Himself is man by nature?

- A. All men have sinned Rom. 5:12

Q. Who has not sinned among men according to the Bible?
 A. Christ I Pt. 2:21-22

Q. Is Christ holy or without sin because of His own power?
 A. Because He is made holy by the Father... Jn. 10:36

Conclusion: All the honors and great attributes of Christ mentioned in the verses we have read are not indicative of His nature.

The nature of Christ

Q. Despite the great attributes of Christ, what is His true nature, according to Jesus Himself?

A. Christ is a man according to Himself..... Jn. 8:40

Note: In this instance Christ clearly introduced Himself as a man. Christ has never said that He is the true God. If He were the true God, He would have introduced Himself as such.

Q. According to His Apostles, what is the true nature of Christ?

- A. 1) Man Mediator, according to
 Apostle Paul I Tim. 2:5
- 2) Man, according to Apostle Peter Acts 2:22
- 3) Man, according to
 Apostle Matthew Mt. 1:18, 20

Q. Does the Bible teach that Christ has dual nature – that He is true God and true man?

A. God is not man Hos. 11:9

Q. Does God allow that man be God also?

A. Man is not God Ezek. 28:2

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What is the true nature of Christ: God or man?
2. Does the Bible teach that Christ is both true God and true man?
3. Do you believe in the biblical teaching that Christ is man?

The Catholic invention

Q. Who created the teaching that Christ is true God?

A. The Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. A. Creed, p. 206 (24)

“Thus, for example, it was not until 325 A.D., at the Council of Nicaea, that the Church defined for us that it was an article of faith that Jesus is truly God.”

[Rev. Clement H. Crock, *Discourses on the Apostles' Creed. Nihil Obstat:* Arthur J. Scanlan, *Imprimatur:* Patrick Cardinal Hayes. New York City: Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., © 1938.]

Q. Is it surprising that after the time of the Apostles there would arise teachers who would preach a different Jesus, contrary to the one preached by the Apostles?

A. A warning was already given concerning false teachers who would do this II Cor. 11:3-4

Conclusion

Therefore, the Bible teaches that we should honor and worship Christ, recognize Him as the Son of God, Savior, and the only Mediator between God and men, and the only holy man who has not committed sin. But, in spite of these attributes, the truth remains, as declared by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that He is man.

(In the next lesson the Bible will show us the differences between God and Christ and the errors of those who teach that Christ is God in their manner of using the Bible.)

The Lord Jesus Christ
(Part II)

Theme: The distinctions between God and Christ and the biblical proofs that the true God is not Christ.

Objectives

1. Show the distinctions between Christ and God which prove that Christ is not the true God.
2. Refute the false belief that the true God is Christ.

Summary

The clear distinctions of Christ from God are proofs that the true God is not Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ possesses attributes that place Him over and above the ordinary man but this does not mean that He is God. God has attributes which we do not find in Christ. If Christ can do wonders such as miracles, all these are done by God through Him as God's instrument. By Himself alone Christ cannot do anything. Christ Himself admits: "I can of my own self do nothing."

Introduction

If all people would rely solely on the Bible in their belief about the nature of Christ, no one would have fallen into the false belief that Christ is the true God. This is so because it is shown clearly in the Bible that God and Christ are two different beings.

Presentation

- Q. What are the differences between God and Christ?
- A. 1) God has no beginning Ps. 90:2
while Christ came from God Jn. 8:42
- 2) God is immortal..... I Tim. 1:17
while Christ died Jn. 19:30, 33
- 3) The true God does not recognize
any other God besides Himself Is. 44:8
while Christ deifies God Mk. 15:34

- 4) God does not get tired Is. 40:28 NIV
while Christ got tired Jn. 4:6 NIV

Isaiah 40:28

"Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom."

John 4:6

"Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. . ."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Question for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do the verses that we have read showing the differences between Christ and God prove that Christ is God or that He is not God?

Proof

- Q. What further proves that Christ is different from God?
- A. Christ will be subjected to God I Cor. 15:27-28
- Q. When Christ was resurrected from the dead, what false impression did His disciples have of Him which our Lord Jesus Christ immediately corrected?
- A. They thought He was a spirit
or God Lk. 24:36-37
Jn. 4:24
- Q. Did Christ ever approve of His disciples' wrong notion that He is God? How did Christ show that He is different from God?
- A. He proved that He is not a spirit or God but a man with flesh and bones, the same man they knew before He died and was resurrected .. Lk. 24:38-39
- Q. Is it true that when Christ ascended into heaven He became God?
- A. Christ will ascend to God who is
our God Jn. 20:17
The Father is the only true God Jn. 17:1, 3

Miracles

- Q. **If Christ is not God, then why is He able to perform miracles?**
 A. **It is God who works in Him** Acts 2:22
- Q. **What is the evil in accepting that Christ is God, simply because in Him is shown the wonderful works done by God?**
 A. **Many would qualify to be gods – miracles were also shown by means of Paul**..... Acts 19:11-12
- Q. **What greater proof shows that the miracles performed by Christ cannot be used to validate the teachings that He is the true God?**
 A. Christ admitted:
 "I can of my own self do nothing" Jn. 5:30

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do you know of people mentioned in the Bible who performed miracles?
2. Were they able to perform miracles because they were gods?

- Q. **If Christ is not God, how did He rise from the dead? Did He resurrect Himself by His own power?**
 A. God resurrected Him Acts 2:23-24
Note: Christ's resurrection demonstrates that He died while the Bible proves that God is immortal. The Bible is clear on the fact that Christ was resurrected by God, the reason why He was brought back to life.

Conclusion

The clear distinctions between Christ and God prove that the true God is not Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ possesses many attributes which surpass those of ordinary men but these do not show that Christ is God. The true God has attributes not found in Christ. If Christ did wonderful things like miracles, all these were done by God through Christ.

(In the next lesson we will study how biblical verses are misinterpreted and used erroneously by those who teach that Christ is God).

LESSON NO. 16

The Lord Jesus Christ
(Part III)

Theme: Erroneous interpretations and wrong translations of biblical texts are the bases of those who teach that Christ is the true God.

Objective

Refute the wrong bases used by those who teach that Christ is God.

Summary

Teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine also use the Bible. But we should not allow ourselves to be deceived by them because we cannot read any text in the Bible where Christ says He is the true God. If that is the case, why do they have biblical texts to prove their contention? Those biblical texts have been given erroneous interpretations or wrong meanings or are based on verses wrongly translated.

Introduction

Teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine also use the Bible. They cite verses to prove their contention. But we assure you that if the biblical texts being used are correctly translated, there would be nothing in the Bible that shows Christ is the true God. We will examine now some of the verses used by these preachers and find out how they use such verses.

John 1:1, 14

- Q. What biblical verse is given erroneous interpretation by the preachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine?
 A. The Word was God who became man .. Jn. 1:1, 14
Note: The verse does not say Christ is the true God.
- Q. Does the Word refer to a pre-existent Christ? What does "the Word" refer to according to Catholic priests themselves?
 A. A thought emanating from God Jn. 1:1 Douay (fr)

"St. John employs the term *Word*. It is so used only by St. John and designates the Son as a kind of intellectual emanation from the Father."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. Douay Version. *Nihil Obstat*: John M. Fearn, S.T.D., *Imprimatur*: Francis Cardinal Spellman, D.D. New York: C. Wildermann Co., Inc., © 1950.]

Note: What the verse says is that the Word was with God. If the Word which was with God were God in nature, and the God Who had the Word was also God in nature, there would be two Gods. This contradicts biblical teachings.

Q. Why is it said that in the beginning the Word was with God?

A. Because Christ did not exist yet in the beginning though the idea concerning Christ was already in God's mind..... I Pt. 1:20 Douay

"Foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but manifested in the last times for you."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. Douay Version. *Nihil Obstat*: John M. Fearn, S.T.D., *Imprimatur*: Francis Cardinal Spellman, D.D. New York: C. Wildermann Co., Inc., © 1950.]

Conclusion: Therefore, Christ had no existence in the beginning but the idea concerning Him was already in the mind, or plan, of God, hence only a word.

Q. When did the Christ, who was only a plan or word in the beginning, come into existence?

A. When He was born of a woman Gal. 4:4

Q. If it was the word which became flesh and not the God Who spoke the word, why does the text say the Word was God?

A. For no word of God is without power.. Lk. 1:37 ASV

"For no word from God shall be void of power"

[Bible. The Holy Bible. American Standard Version. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Christian Reformed Publishing House.]

Q. What does the Bible say concerning God and His power? Is God and His word of the same quality?

A. Almighty Gen. 35:11

Conclusion: Thus, in the statement "The Word was God", the term "God" is not used as a noun but as an adjective. The term is used to describe the term "Word".

Q. What does the statement "And the Word was made flesh" mean?

A. The Word was fulfilled and its fulfillment is a man..... Mt. 1:18, 20

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. If the Word mentioned in John 1:1 were God in nature and the God who had the Word was also God in nature, how many Gods would there be?
2. Does the Bible teach that there are two Gods?
3. Was there Christ in existence in the beginning, or was He just a thought or plan, according to the Bible?

I John 5:20

Q. Is Christ the true God mentioned in I John 5:20?

A. The true God is the One introduced by the Son I Jn. 5:20

Q. Why are we certain that Christ is not the true God mentioned in I John 5:20?

A. No verse in the Bible states that Christ introduced Himself as the true God.

Note: If Christ were the true God, there should have been a clear statement from Him that He is introducing Himself as the true God because, according to I John 5:20, the reason for the coming of the Son of God (Christ) is to introduce to the world the true God. If He was not able to do this, then His coming would have been in vain. But we know that one of the reasons of His coming was fulfilled because He was able to introduce to the world who the true God is.

Q. Who is the true God introduced by Christ?

A. The Father Jn. 17:3, 1

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Can we read from the Bible a single passage where Christ introduced Himself as the only true God?
2. On the other hand, can we read a verse in the Bible wherein Christ introduced Himself as a man? (John 8:40)

Romans 9:5

Q. What wrongly translated verse have the teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine used?

A. "God blessed forever" Rom. 9:5 KJV

"Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. Why do we say that this verse is wrongly translated?

A. The Father is the God who is above all.. Eph. 4:6

Q. And who is the God blessed forever according to Apostle Paul?

A. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ..... II Cor. 1:3

Q. So what is the correct translation of Romans 9:5?

A. In Romans 9:5 of the Revised Standard Version, Christ is not the one referred to as God.. Rom. 9:5 RSV

"to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed forever. Amen."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962]

Note: In the Revised Standard Version the part that says, "God who is over all be blessed for ever" – is written as a separate sentence. It is a doxology or praise which refers to our God, the Father.

Q. Do other scholars of the Bible agree that this is the correct translation?

A. The majority accepts the RSV rendering..... *The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. IX, p. 540*

"This half verse has been the center of interminable controversy. The issue appears from a comparison of our two English texts. Is **God over all, blessed for ever** (or the one **who is over all, God blessed for ever**) a phrase in apposition with "Christ" and belonging in the same sentence as the rest of vs. 5 (so the KJV and the RSV mg.), or is this phrase grammatically separate, a doxology to God at the end of the recital of the privileges of Israel (so the RSV and most modern translators)? The question cannot be answered on the basis of the Greek since it is a matter almost entirely of punctuation, and Greek MSS in the early period were not punctuated.

"... but the choice is probably to be made between the KJV and the RSV translations. The majority of modern commentators favor the latter because of the unlikelihood of Paul's having here referred to Christ as 'God'..."

[*The Interpreter's Bible*. The Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with General Articles and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition For Each Book of the Bible. In Twelve Volumes. Nashville: Abingdon. Vol. IX. (Book)]

Conclusion: Thus, Christ is not the one referred to as God in Romans 9:5. This verse as wrongly translated is being used as a basis by the teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. How many true Gods are there? (one)
2. Who is the true God? (The Father)
3. Who is Christ? (The Son of God)
4. What is the nature of Christ? (Man)

Isaiah 9:6

Q. What other biblical passage is being given wrong interpretation by those who teach that Christ is God?

A. They say that Christ is the one referred to as the Mighty God..... Is. 9:6

Q. Why is the claim that Christ is "the Mighty God" mentioned in Isaiah 9:6 a wrong interpretation?

A. Because what is called "Mighty God" in the verse is also being called "Everlasting Father" Is. 9:6

Q. Who is being prophesied by Isaiah in this verse, a "Father" or a "Son"?

A. A son Is. 9:6(a)

Note: Since the prophesied one is not the Everlasting Father, hence, He is not the Mighty God.

Q. In that case, which is referred to as the "Mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6?

A. The government that would be placed on His shoulders..... Is. 9:6

Romans 9:5

Q. What wrongly translated verse have the teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine used?

A. "God blessed forever" Rom. 9:5 KJV

"Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. Why do we say that this verse is wrongly translated?

A. The Father is the God who is above all.. Eph. 4:6

Q. And who is the God blessed forever according to Apostle Paul?

A. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ..... II Cor. 1:3

Q. So what is the correct translation of Romans 9:5?

A. In Romans 9:5 of the Revised Standard Version, Christ is not the one referred to as God.. Rom. 9:5 RSV

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Conclusion: Thus, Christ is not the one referred to as God in Romans 9:5. This verse as wrongly translated is being used as a basis by the teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. How many true Gods are there? (one)
2. Who is the true God? (The Father)
3. Who is Christ? (The Son of God)
4. What is the nature of Christ? (Man)

Isaiah 9:6

Q. What other verse of the Bible is being given wrong interpretation by those who teach that Christ is God?

A. They say that Christ is the one referred to as the Mighty God Is. 9:6

Q. Is Christ the one referred to as the "Mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6?

A. The verse does not say that the child being prophesied will be called by the name "Mighty God". The child shall be called not by many names but by only one name. Hence, the verse says, "His name", and not "His names" as what is implied in the New King James version's rendition of the verse, where the terms "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" were mentioned individually. This is the reason others have mistakenly thought that the mention of "Mighty God" is one of the names by which the child will be called.
Note: The name by which the child shall be called is mentioned after it has been stated, "And the government will be upon His shoulder." Therefore, the name refers to the government or office that will be given to the child, and not to His true nature.

Q. What is the proof that the expression "Mighty God" refers to the child's government or office and not to His true nature?

A. In the English rendition of the Old Testament by the Jewish Publications Society of America, it is stated that the name, in the Hebrew language, is "Pele-joez-el-gibbor-Abi-ad-sar-shalom" Is. 9:6 JPSA

Q. Why is the government that would be placed on the shoulders of Christ called Mighty God and Everlasting Father?

A. Because this came from the Father ... Mt. 28:18

Q. According to prophet Isaiah himself, what is the nature of the one he prophesied in Isaiah 9:6?

A. A man of sorrows Is. 53:3

Conclusion: Thus, the teachers of the "Christ is God" doctrine give wrong meanings or interpretations to these verses as they use them in their teachings. We should not allow them to deceive us.

The Holy Spirit

Q. Is the Holy Spirit God as taught by the Bible?

A. No, but is sent by God Jn. 14:26

Q. Who else sends the Holy Spirit?

A. Christ also sends the Holy Spirit Jn. 15:26

Q. How many spirits are sent by God?

A. He sends seven spirits Rev. 5:6

Q. What is the source of the teaching that the Holy Spirit is God?

A. The Council of Constantinople Apos. Creed, p. 206

"In 381, at the Council of Constantinople, it was defined that it is an article of faith that the Holy Ghost is God."

[Rev. Clement H. Crock, *Discourses on the Apostles' Creed. Nihil Obstat*: Arthur J. Scanlan, *Imprimatur*: Patrick Cardinal Hayes. New York City: Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., © 1938. (Book)]

Conclusion

Therefore, we should not allow ourselves to be deceived by the teachers who say Christ is the true God even if they use biblical verses to back up their contentions. This is because we cannot read from the Bible any verse which states that Christ affirms He is the true God. Why then are they able to use some biblical verses? These verses are given erroneous meanings or false interpretations by false teachers or they are translated incorrectly.

Leading a New Life

Theme: It is the obligation of the members of the Church of Christ to lead a new life.

Objectives

1. Convince the candidate for baptism that joining the Church of Christ is not a sufficient condition for one's salvation. Leading a new life is a prerequisite to become a member of the Church.

2. Show that the members who lead a new life are truly of Christ and of God.

Summary

It is not enough for man to join or become a member of the Church of Christ to be saved. He should lead a new life, too. Members who lead a new life are truly of Christ and of God. Thus, all sinful ways should be renounced by a member of the Church of Christ, and he should live by the teachings he has received.

Introduction

To attain salvation, it is not enough that a person simply joins and becomes a member of the Church of Christ. Our Savior Jesus Christ demands that we follow the fundamental change in way of life He has set up for us. This renewal is the subject of the present lesson.

Presentation

Q. What distinctive characteristic should be possessed by a member of the Church of Christ?

A. A new creature – the old has passed away II Cor. 5:17

Q. Which old things should be left behind so that one becomes a new creature as a member of the Church of Christ?

- A. **Abandon the old self that is corrupt ... Eph. 4:21-22**
- Q. **What should members of the Church of Christ put on after leaving the former evil ways?**
- A. **Be renewed in the spirit of their mind. Eph. 4:23-24**
Instruction: You should lead a completely new life.
- Q. **Why is it wrong for a member of the Church of Christ to continue living in evil?**
- A. **Because the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God I Cor. 6:9-10**
- Q. **Are they not in the Church of Christ? How come they will not inherit the Kingdom of God?**
- A. **They shall be cast out into the world when the darkness comes Job 18:5, 18**

Obligation

- Q. **What should we do with the works of the flesh?**
- A. **Put them to death or do away with them Col. 3:5-9**
- Q. **What are these works of the flesh that should be suppressed or avoided?**
- A. **Enumerate the works of the flesh Gal. 5:19-21**
Instruction: If you used to get drunk or you used to drink liquor or take drugs, you should, from now on, refrain from indulging in any of these vices. God forbids them.
 If you used to gamble, you should know that all forms of gambling are prohibited in the Church of Christ, like racing, lotteries, card or dice games, slot machines, etc.
 If you are involved in an adulterous relationship, you should stop this right away. God forbids adultery.
 If you are unlawfully employed, committing fraud or any illegal acts, this is not allowed. We should live decently and righteously.
 You should cease from doing any vice or sin in your life.
 Refrain from swearing or using foul language and do not perform the kind of dances popularized in the world, characterized by provocative and sensuous behavior.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Are you prepared to lead a completely renewed life?
2. Are you ready to leave all loose living and vices?

- Q. For this reason, what should a person do before he becomes a member of the Church of Christ?
- A. He should bear fruits worthy of repentance *Mt. 3:8, 10*
- Q. Should one hide or deny his sins? What should we do to our sins?
- A. Confess and declare them to God *Ps. 32:5*
- Q. How can one prove his sincere desire to return to God?
- A. By abandoning the former evil ways .. *Is. 55:7*

Promise

- Q. What blessing will be received by those who repent or who confess their sins to God?
- A. They will be forgiven and cleansed *I Jn. 1:9*
- Q. What if the sins we have committed in the past are serious ones? Can they still be forgiven?
- A. No matter how grave the sin is *Is. 1:18*

Warning

- Q. What is God's warning to those who refuse to lead a new life?
- A. They will be destroyed *Is. 1:19-20*

Conclusion

We have learned that it is not enough just to be in the Church of Christ; one should undergo a complete renewal of life. The member who has turned a new life truly belongs to Christ and to God. Put into practice the commandments we have received.

Worship Services

Theme: It is the responsibility of the members of the Church of Christ to attend worship services on the days set for them.

Objectives

1. Teach the candidate for baptism that he should be motivated by love in attending the worship services on all the days set for them.

2. Show how serious is the sin committed by one who disregards or neglects the attendance of worship services.

Summary

Each member of the Church of Christ believes that regular attendance in worship services is one of his obligations. Great blessings are being received by those who constantly attend worship services while great sins are committed by those who disregard this responsibility.

Introduction

Twice a week, members of the Church of Christ hold worship services. Such congregational worship is conducted in the chapel or house of worship. We should give great value to this duty and not disregard or neglect it. On any day that a worship service is set by the Church, we should attend it as it is our duty to worship God.

Presentation

Q. Why is it the duty of all members of the Church of Christ to worship God?

A. This is sought by the Father Jn. 4:23

Note: God our Father seeks the true worshippers. There are, of course, worshippers who are not true. The true worshippers are those who have the right and privilege to worship God because they have been redeemed or cleansed

by the blood of Christ, and **these are the members of the Church of Christ.**

Q. What power has God to require us to worship Him?

A. He created us and we are His people... Ps. 95:6-7

Note: It is really the obligation of all people created by God to worship Him as their Creator. But because the world has turned away from God, the ones expected by God to render Him true worship are the members of the Church of Christ, who are His people in these last days.

Q. Where do the people of God worship Him?

A. In His holy temple Ps. 5:7

Explain: The temple referred to in the verse is equivalent to our present chapel or house of worship.

Q. Which is this worship performed in the house of worship and how is this done?

A. This is the gathering together with singing, prayers, and teachings I Cor. 14:26, 15

Explain: The program of our congregational worship is not something new. This is also the program of congregational worship of the first Christians. They had prayers, singings of hymns, and studies of God's words.

Q. What is the Apostle's strict instruction concerning our gathering together as the members of the Church to worship God?

A. Do not forsake attendance Heb. 10:25

Conclusion: Thus, no one can insist that he will just perform his worship to God in his own house because the strict instruction is not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together or our attendance at gatherings.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Are you prepared to always attend worship services any day they are set?

2. Are you ready to do this with love and faith as fruits of your understanding of these truths?

Q. When did the first Church perform their gathering together or worship services?

A. On the first day of the week Acts 20:7

Q. Why is it that in the Church of Christ, aside from Sunday, there are other days set also for worship services? Were there instances that the first Church performed worship services on other days aside from the first day of the week?

A. There was a time when they worshipped everyday Acts 2:46

Q. What authority does the Church Administration have in setting the day for worship services?

A. Confirmed in heaven Mt. 18:19

Explain: The Church Administration has the authority to decide on matters concerning the service of God, such as setting the days for worship services. Their decision is confirmed by God in heaven. This is why, if we neglect such services, we will not be simply accountable to man but to God Who seeks us to worship Him.

Obligation

Q. What if we have to transfer residence for reasons of livelihood? What is God's strict instruction to us?

A. Look for the house of God wherever it is.. Deut. 12:5

Instruction: Wherever we go, we should look first for the house of worship. Wherever we may be, we should bear in mind that we are members of the Church of Christ and people of God. Therefore, He expects us to devote time for worshipping Him.

Q. What is God's warning to those who neglect worship services?

A. He will punish them in the lake of fire... Heb. 10:25-27

Explain: To neglect the worship service is considered a serious sin. God will inflict terrible punishment on those who do so. From now on never miss attendance, unless you are seriously ill and physically incapable.

Q. Will Christ accept the various excuses offered by those who neglect worship services?

A. Those who offer excuses are not worthy of the kingdom of God..... Lk. 9:59-62

Instruction: You should not be hindered by your employment or profession or any personal interest in performing this duty. God should be given priority over anything or anyone in the world.

Worship God in proper attire

Q. How should each one of us present ourselves before God whenever we gather together to worship Him?

A. With reverence Ps. 89:7

Q. Why should we present ourselves in our worship of God in the house of the Lord with utmost reverence?

A. Holiness befits the house of the Lord Ps. 93:5 NASB

"Thy testimonies are fully confirmed; Holiness befits Thy house, O LORD, forevermore."

[Bible. New American Standard Bible. New York and Cleveland: Colliers Publishers, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973.]

Q. Why should we strictly observe reverence and holiness during the worship service? To whom is this reverence rendered?

A. The Lord is in His holy temple..... Habak. 2:20 TEV

"The LORD is in his holy Temple; let everyone on earth be silent in his presence."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Note: According to this verse, everyone should be silent in His presence: thus, worship in the Church of Christ is a solemn occasion. We do not behave in an unruly manner. We do not engage in useless conversation; neither do we come and go anywhere at leisure. And this orderliness should be maintained.

Q. Is this command still in effect during the Christian era? Isn't it out of date? What did the Apostles teach to preserve the solemnity of the worship service?

- A. The proper and orderly worship service *I Cor. 14:26, 40 TEV*

"This is what I mean, my brothers. When you meet for worship, one person has a hymn, another a teaching, another a revelation from God, another a message in strange tongues, and still another the explanation of what is said. Everything must be of help to the Church.

"Everything must be done in a proper and orderly way."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition, Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

- Q. What is one of the things that ought to be observed in a holy, proper, and orderly worship service?

- A. Worship Him in holy array *Ps. 96:1-3 & 8-9 RSV*

"O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

"Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts! Worship the LORD in holy array; tremble before him, all the earth!"

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., © 1962.]

Note: Holy array during worship service is part of the command of orderliness. If we obey the command to sing, to pray, to give offerings, and to enter the house of worship, we should also, in like manner, obey the command to be in holy array.

We do not present ourselves to our fellowmen in underwear. The kind of attire we wear when we present ourselves before a person indicates the degree of respect we have for that person. If for other people we show our respect in the kind of clothing we wear, the more we should show respect in the attire we wear whenever we present ourselves before God in the worship service.

- Q. What does the expression "holy array" mean in the context of the verse?

- A. An expression indicating proper attire *The Interpreter's Dict. of the Bible, Vol. I, p. 231*

"ARRAY, HOLY ... An expression indicating 'proper attire'."

[*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Vol. I, p. 231]

- Q. What is proper attire?

- A. Holy array – garments that are clean and fitting for the sacred occasion *Ps. 96:9*

Interpreter's Bible Commentary

Ps. 96:9

"Worship the LORD in holy array; tremble before him, all the earth!"

Commentary

"Worship. . . in holy array, i.e., garments that are ritually clean and fitting for the sacred occasion."

[*The Interpreter's Bible*. The Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Standard Versions with General Articles and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition For Each Book of the Bible. In Twelve Volumes. Nashville: Abingdon. Vol. IV]

Note: The attire we wear should befit the sacredness of the occasion. Worship service is a formal occasion and it calls for formal attire. There are still others who have not yet recognized the sanctity of our congregational gathering with due respect. Teaching us the things that we should do is part of preparing us to be presentable to God.

Promise

- Q. What is Christ's promise in our worship services?

- A. He will be with us in our gatherings *Mt. 18:20*

- Q. How can Christ be with us in our worship services?

- A. By means of the Spirit *Gal. 4:6*

- Q. What is the value of the Spirit's dwelling in us?

- A. This strengthens our spiritual life and we will be firm in our love *Eph. 3:16-18 TEV*

"I ask God from the wealth of his glory to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long, how high and deep, is Christ's love."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Emphasize: Great blessings will be received from God by those who attend worship services because the Spirit Who strengthens their spiritual life dwells in them and confirms them in their love.

Conclusion

We believe that attendance at worship services is an obligation to God. We receive great blessings from worship services because we experience the Spirit of Christ Who strengthens and confirms us.

Instruct the baptismal candidate:

1. When you attend services in your own locale, do not fail to turn your own name tag (not somebody else's) before you enter the house of worship.
2. If you will attend in another locale, do not forget to ask for certificate of attendance from the Secretaries before you leave.
3. This certificate should be submitted promptly to your group leader or group secretary so that you will not be counted among the absentees.
4. You should attend the worship service in proper attire or in an attire that befits the sacred occasion.

Our Voluntary Contributions

Theme: It is God's command that we give contributions and Thanksgiving offerings.

Objectives

1. Teach the candidate for baptism the value of keeping God's command to give contributions and thanksgiving offerings.
2. Save them from being misled into believing the false and malicious criticisms of the detractors of the Church regarding contributions and thanksgiving offerings.

Summary

The Church of Christ believes that it is God Who gave the command to contribute and give thanksgiving offerings to support the needs of the Church. To fulfill these obligations is to lay up a good foundation for the attainment of eternal life.

Introduction

One of the obligations of the members of the Church of Christ is the giving of contributions and thanksgiving offerings. But we must understand clearly that the giving of contributions by members of the Church is not in any way similar to the giving of alms to beggars. If we hear some people criticizing our giving of contributions and thanksgiving offerings, we must realize that these are but attempts to destroy our belief. We do such not because the ministers command it on their own authority but because this is based on the truth written in the Bible.

Presentation

Q. What is the basis of our giving of contributions?

A. God's command that we should not forget *Heb. 13:15-16 RSV*

"Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not

neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Note: The command to give contributions is written in the Bible and is not a man-made commandment preached by the ministers of the Church. If this is fulfilled by His servants, God will be truly pleased.

Q. Whom does God command to give contributions and how should this be fulfilled?

A. Each one should give as his heart so desires *II Cor. 9:7*

Conclusion: It is the duty of every member of the Church of Christ to give contributions. We should do this wholeheartedly and cheerfully knowing that this truly pleases God.

Obligation

Q. How should we regard our act of giving contributions? Should we liken this to the act of giving alms to beggars?

A. This is a load or an obligation *Gal. 6:5*

Q. What is the proof showing that the giving of contributions is one of our loads or obligations?

A. Those who are taught the word should share with him who teaches *Gal. 6:6 RSV*

"Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Q. How can we share with or help those who teach the Gospel?

A. By means of contributions *II Cor. 9:12-13 RSV*

"For the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God. Under the test of this service, you will glorify God by your obedience in acknowledging the gospel of Christ, and by the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Explain: Giving contributions is an obligation or responsibility to God. To fail to do this is to commit a sin.

Q. How should we prepare our contributions?

A. Set aside an amount in proportion

to what one has earned *I Cor. 16:2 TEV*

"Every Sunday each of you must put aside some money, in proportion to what he has earned, and save it up, so that there will be no need to collect money when I come."

[Bible. Good News Bible. The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Instruction: We should prepare beforehand our contributions. We should set aside a certain portion of our income for this. We should not give just what is in excess or what is left of our income after budgetting for our needs but set aside our contributions in the same manner we set aside for our needs. Considering the fact that this is for God, we should consider it more important than the rest of our needs.

Q. Why should we prepare beforehand or set aside the amount for our contributions?

A. To make it voluntary and not forced - hence the term contribution *II Cor. 9:5*

Q. What are the uses for the contributions given by the members of the Church of Christ?

A. For the propagation of the Gospel and for the needs of the saints *II Cor. 9:12-13*

Q. What else are our contributions used for?

A. Construction of houses of worship *Hag. 1:8*

Conclusion: The contributor is the first beneficiary of his contribution. By means of his contributions, worship services are held, the message of God is delivered, and worship of God is done in well-constructed and decent houses of worship.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

- 1. Is the giving of contributions in the Church of Christ similar to the giving of alms to beggars?
- 2. Is there truth to the accusation of our detractors that contributions in the Church of Christ are done forcibly?
- 3. What are some of the uses of our contributions?

Q. Why should we not be offended or tight-fisted in giving contributions?

A. What we give really belongs to God ... I Chron. 29:11-12

Q. Thus, what does God expect from us?

A. Joy and willingness to give I Chron. 29:9

Q. Do economic hardships prevent the true servants of God from giving contributions?

A. Despite economic difficulties, they are generous in their giving and they even give more than they can II Cor. 8:1-3 TEV

“Our brothers, we want you to know what God’s grace has accomplished in the churches in Macedonia. They have been severely tested by the troubles they went through; but their joy was so great that they were extremely generous in their giving, even though they are very poor. I can assure you that they gave as much as they could, and even more than they could. Of their own free will”

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today’s English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Conclusion: Thus, poverty is not an excuse to God for failure to give contributions. Poverty of even greater proportions were suffered by the early Christians, but they still gave contributions. The same thing is being done by many members of the Church of Christ today.

The Offering of Thanksgiving

Q. Why do we still have Thanksgiving with offerings at the end of every year?

A. God’s command Ps. 50:14

Q. Is thanksgiving still commanded in the Christian era? And why is thanksgiving also done during the anniversary of the Church?

A. It is God’s will to give thanks in everything..... I Thess. 5:18
Note: It is commanded that we give thanks for everything. The anniversary of the Church is a great thing for us and hence an occasion to be thankful for.

Q. What do we render unto God when we offer our thanksgiving to Him?

A. Giving thanks honors God Ps. 50:23 TEV

“Giving thanks is the sacrifice that honors me, and I will surely save all who obey me.”

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today’s English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Q. How is thanksgiving done?

A. By means of praise..... I Chron. 16:8-9 NIV

“Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.”

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Why do we still bring offerings on thanksgiving?

A. It is commanded to bring offerings I Chron. 16:29

Conclusion: Thus, on thanksgiving day, whether at the end of the year or the anniversary of the Church, we hold special worship services to praise God and to bring offerings.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

- 1. Do you believe that the giving of contributions is God’s command?
- 2. Do you also believe that the giving of offerings and thanksgiving are commandments of God as well, and that these are written in the Bible?
- 3. Do you promise that, despite whatever destructive criticism you may hear against the giving of contributions, you shall go on fulfilling this commandment of God because this pleases Him?

Q. How should we prepare our offerings for thanksgiving?

A. For a period of one year II Cor. 9:2

Q. Why should we prepare our offering in this manner?

A. To be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation II Cor. 9:5

Instruction: The easiest way to prepare our offering for thanksgiving is by weekly savings. (Teach how this is done.)

Promise

Q. What is God's promise to those who contribute and give offerings?

A. God can pour abundant blessings II Cor. 9:7-8

Emphasize: The brethren who set aside something for their offering to God do not lose anything nor do they stand to lose, because God has prepared for them blessings even in this life.

Q. What great blessing awaits those who give offerings?

A. The true life I Tim. 6:18-19 NIV

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Conclusion

Thus, we should believe that we, members of the Church of Christ, have obligations to give contributions and offerings. We should do this wholeheartedly, freely and gladly. But, to enable us to give our offerings in this manner, we should set them aside. We should not be offended in doing this because God commanded such and the amount that we give really comes from Him. Most of all, if we contribute, we are laying up a foundation for the attainment of true life.

The Brotherhood

Theme: God commands that the brethren should love one another.

Objectives

1. Teach the baptismal candidate how to keep brotherly love in the Church in accordance with the will of God.
2. Instruct the candidate for baptism on what he should do if he has a misunderstanding or quarrel with any of his brethren in the Church.

Summary

The Church of Christ believes that it is the will of God for us to love one another as true brothers and sisters. Hence, if anyone has sinned against us, we should forgive him and we should reconcile with those who are mad at us.

Introduction

Members of the Church of Christ have a very unique relationship with one another. They constitute a brotherhood established by Christ and willed by God. Thus, the members of the Church should associate and relate with one another in accordance with the teachings of Christ so that the brotherhood He envisioned will be fulfilled in the Church He founded.

Presentation

Q. What is the Bible's teaching regarding the brotherhood in the Church?

A. Love the brotherhood I Pt. 2:17

Q. Why is it vital to love the brotherhood? What is the relevance of our love for the brethren to our relationship to Christ?

A. The true disciple of Christ loves his brothers Jn. 13:34-35

Q. Why is the person who loves his brethren in the Church recognized as a true disciple of Christ?

A. He made us all brothers Mt. 23:8

Conclusion: Therefore, you should regard all members of the Church, including ministers, as your brothers (or sisters, as the case may be). Let us treat one another as equals within the Church.

The Method

Q. How should we practice our love for the brethren?

A. Do not withhold help from those in need I Jn. 3:17 NIV

"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?"

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Instruction: We should bear with one another. Let us help the less fortunate brethren and let us not withhold from them whatever good things we can do for them.

Q. Who among the brethren do not deserve our help?

A. Those who do not live according to the teaching but rather lead disorderly lives II Thess. 3:6 NIV

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Who are those who lead disorderly lives?

A. Those who do not work or those who refuse to earn a living II Thess. 3:11-12

Q. Why should we not help those who are lazy or those who refuse to work or earn a living?

A. Such people do not deserve to eat II Thess. 3:10

Q. How can we safeguard the brotherhood in the Church?

A. Grudge not one against another Js. 5:9 KJV

"Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Instruction: This grudging against each other is the work of the people of the world and not of the true disciples of Christ. We should not do it.

Q. Supposing a brother or a sister has done us wrong, what is forbidden of us to safeguard the brotherhood in the Church?

A. Do not return evil for evil I Pt. 3:8-9 RSV

"Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love of the brethren, a tender heart and a humble mind. Do not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling; but on the contrary bless, for to this you have been called, that you may obtain a blessing."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Q. What else is forbidden of us so that the brotherhood in the Church may be always upheld?

A. Stop evil tongues and speak no guile.. I Pt. 3:10

Instruction: We should not speak evil things against the brethren in the Church. We should not destroy their reputation.

Q. What should not be done to anyone especially to our brethren in the Church?

A. We should not defraud anyone I Cor. 6:8

Instruction: We should not do what others do who borrow without returning what they borrowed or asking for a loan of money and never paying it back. We should avoid doing evil to brethren in the Church.

Q. If a brother or a sister in the Church commits evil against us, what should we not do against him or her?

A. Suing him or her in a civil court is forbidden I Cor. 6:6 TEV

"Instead, one Christian goes to court against another and unbelievers judge the case!"

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Instruction: If somehow a brother or a sister in the faith has done us wrong, we should not sue him or her in court. God does not allow us to do this.

Q. What should we do instead of suing the brother or sister in a civil court?

A. Bring the case to the Church Administration..... I Cor. 6:4 TEV

"If such matters come up, are you going to take them to be settled by people who have no standing in the church?"

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Conclusion: If conflicts arise among us, the proper thing to do to settle or resolve them is to bring them to the attention of the Administration of the Church.

Q. Therefore, what does Christ ask us to do first whenever a brother or a sister sins against us?

A. Go to him or her and talk privately ... Mt. 18:15 TEV

"If your brother sins against you, go to him and show him his fault. But do it privately, just between yourselves. If he listens to you, you have won your brother back."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Note: The offended party is told by Christ to approach the offender. We are not told to avoid whoever offends us, much less to detest him or her. Christ commands instead that we talk privately first with those who offend us.

Q. What should be done if he refuses to hear us?

A. Bring one or two others as witnesses.. Mt. 18:16 TEV

"But if he will not listen to you, take one or two other persons with you, so that 'every accusation may be upheld by the testimony of two or more witnesses,' as the scripture says."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Instruction: If he or she does not listen to you, you may bring an elder or two in the Church to serve as witnesses in your talk for the sake of reconciliation. Do this instead of going to court.

Q. Should he or she refuse to listen, what should be done?

A. Tell it to the Church, and if he or she still refuses to listen, consider him or her a Gentile..... Mt. 18:17 RSV

"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Instruction: If despite the steps that you have taken, he or she still refuses to be reconciled, bring the matter to the Church Administration. If he or she still refuses to listen to the Church Administration, Christ tells us to regard him or her as a Gentile.

Q. Who are referred to as "Gentiles"?

A. The Gentiles are separated from Christ.. Eph. 2:11(a), 12

Conclusion: Therefore, he or she who refuses to be reconciled with his or her brethren in the Church, in spite of the mediation of the Church Administration, will be expelled from the Church.

Q. Thus, what then is the obligation of the brethren in the Church who have conflict with each other?

A. Be reconciled at once Mt. 5:23-26 RSV

"So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Instruction: We should not allow ourselves to go on harboring hatred or anger against anyone. It does not mean we should not attend worship services while we are still angry with someone but that we should be reconciled at once with him or her.

- Q. How should those who are angry with each other reconcile?
- A. Forgive each other Eph. 4:32

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What should you do when you learn that a brother or a sister has anything against you?
2. If after all your efforts he or she still refuses to listen to you, what should you do?
3. What should be done to the brother or sister who refuses to be reconciled despite the mediation done by the Church Administration?

Warning

- Q. How evil is the act of harboring hatred for the brethren?
- A. This is equivalent to committing murder.. I Jn. 3:15

- Q. Where do murderers abide?
- A. In death I Jn. 3:14

Conclusion: Whoever harbors hatred against his or her brethren is in danger of damnation.

Conclusion

We must observe and safeguard the brotherhood in the Church not only by means of calling each other "brother" or "sister" but more so by love and concern for our brethren's welfare. We should be reconciled at once with whomever we have differences and we should not harbor hatred against anyone.

Other Prohibitions

Theme: God forbids the eating of blood and intermarriage with a nonmember.

Objectives

1. Teach the candidate for baptism the fear of God and obedience to the commandment prohibiting the eating of blood.
2. Explain to him that a member of the Church of Christ cannot marry someone of another religion and that eloping is a sin.

Summary

The members of the Church of Christ believe that it is God who forbids the eating of blood and prohibits marriage with those of other faiths. Elopement is an act of disrespect for parents and this is a sin in the eyes of God.

Introduction

Members of the Church of Christ are prohibited from eating blood and from contracting marriage with those of other faiths. These prohibitions are criticized by our detractors especially in the Philippines where the eating of blood and mixed marriages are commonplace. We are undaunted, however, in observing such prohibitions because we know too well who their author is.

Presentation

- Q. Who forbids the eating of blood and since when has this prohibition been enforced?
- A. God has forbidden it since the time of Noah Gen. 9:1-4

Note: God stated clearly which things may be eaten and which should not be eaten. He forbids the eating of blood.

- Q. Has this prohibition continued to be enforced until the Christian era?

A. Do not eat blood Acts 21:25 TEV

"But as for the Gentiles who have become believers, we have sent them a letter telling them we decided that they must not eat any food that has been offered to idols, or any blood, or any animal that has been strangled, and that they must keep themselves from sexual immorality."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

The Reason

Q. Why does God forbid the eating of blood?

A. Blood is life Deut. 12:22-23

Note: Blood is not given as food.

Q. For what did God reserve blood?

A. For the forgiveness of sins
and redemption of life Lev. 17:11 TEV

"The life of every living thing is in the blood and that is why the LORD has commanded that all blood be poured out on the altar to take away the people's sins. Blood, which is life, takes away sins."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Explain: During the time of the Israelites, they offered the blood of animals on the altar to atone for their sins. The purpose for which God intended blood to be used is holy and not for purposes of eating.

Q. What was being foreshadowed by the blood of animals being offered by the people of Israel?

A. They foreshadowed the good things
to come Heb. 10:1

Q. What is this good thing foreshadowed by the offering of animal blood by the people of Israel?

A. The redemption by Christ by means
of His blood Heb. 9:13-14

Q. Thus, what does God command us if we slaughter animals for food?

A. Pour out the blood and cover it
with dust Lev. 17:12-13

Instruction: In preparing or dressing fowls and animals prior to cooking, make sure to pour out the blood.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Who forbids the eating of blood?

2. Are you prepared to follow this prohibition of God and are you now determined not to eat any food mixed with blood?

Warning

Q. What evil is committed before God by a person who eats blood?

A. He becomes God's enemy
and is expelled Lev. 17:10

Conclusion: Therefore, we should now stay away and refrain from eating blood or whatever food mixed with blood if we do not want to become an enemy of God and be expelled from His people.

On Marriage

Q. Why is a member of the Church of Christ forbidden to intermarry with someone from another religion?

A. God forbids it II Cor. 6:14-15 Lamsa

"Do not unite in marriage with unbelievers, for what fellowship has righteousness with iniquity? Or what mingling has light with darkness? Or what accord has Christ with Satan? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever?"

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts; Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East. by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Q. When did God start prohibiting His servants from marrying anyone who is not from His own people?

A. In the olden times Deut. 7:3-4

Note: Even engagement with anyone who is not a member of His people is also forbidden.

Q. Is it a small sin against God to marry a nonmember?

A. A great sin Neh. 13:27, 26

Q. What will we lose if we love the world?

A. The love of the Father I Jn. 2:15

Conclusion: Therefore, it is such a great sin for a member of the Church of Christ to marry a nonmember. This will mean losing God's love for us.

Question for the baptismal candidate:

1. Will you obey God's command that if you marry, it should be with a member of the Church and not of another religion?

Q. Is it right for a member of the Church of Christ to elope with the one he or she wants to marry?

A. This is a sin against God because this is an insult to the parents..... Mt. 15:4

Instruction: If you desire to get married, show your respect for your parents by informing them of your intentions to do so. Do not elope just to get married. Be sure to get permission from your parents. Just courting or being engaged with a non-member is already prohibited by God. Those of you who are still single, should not marry an unbeliever.

You are also commanded to avoid joining organizations or labor unions whose principles run in conflict with biblical teachings.

LESSON NO. 22

On Baptism

Theme: Baptism is necessary for one to become a disciple of Christ.

Objectives

- 1. Explain the true baptism taught by the Bible.
- 2. Teach the value of baptism.

Summary

The Church of Christ believes that baptism is necessary for one to become a disciple of Christ and for the attainment of eternal salvation. But this should be done in accordance with the teachings of the Bible.

Introduction

Although many of those who become members of the Church of Christ have been baptized already in their former religions, they should realize that the baptism they received is not the kind commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ: those who administered it have no authority to preach and to baptize. Hence, those baptized by them have not received the blessings associated with the baptism commanded by Christ.

Presentation

Q. What should be done to those who are being made disciples, according to Christ's command?

A. Baptize them Mt. 28:19 RSV

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Note: For one to become a disciple of Christ, he cannot avoid being baptized.

Q. What other blessing is received in the true baptism?

A. Forgiveness of sins Acts 2:38

Q. What did Christ assure those who receive the true baptism?

A. Salvation..... Mk. 16:15-16

Conclusion: Therefore, it is vital that we receive the true baptism so that not only will we become disciples of Christ but also have our sins forgiven and attain salvation.

On the mode of Baptism

Q. Which baptism commanded by Christ did the Apostles preach?

A. Baptism unto death Rom. 6:3 NIV

"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Why is the baptism preached by the Apostles called baptism unto death?

A. We have been united with him in His death Rom. 6:5 NIV

"If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. How do we become united with our Lord Jesus Christ in His death?

A. By means of baptism..... Rom. 6:4 NIV

"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Note: Those who receive the true baptism are "buried" according to Apostle Paul. Therefore baptism is likened to a burial. Thus the person baptized is immersed in water as though he is being buried.

Q. Thus, where is the true baptism done?

A. Where there is plenty of water Jn. 3:23 NIV

"Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptised."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Why is plenty of water needed for the performance of the true baptism?

A. Because both the one baptizing and the person to be baptized will go into the water Acts 8:38

Q. Do Catholic authorities agree that the true baptism is conferred or done by immersion?

A. Even the Catholic priests agree that it should be so..... Cath. Ency., Vol. II p. 261-262

"The very word 'baptize', as we have seen, means a washing. . . . The most ancient form usually employed was unquestionably immersion. This is not only evident from the writings of the Fathers and the early rituals of both the Latin and Oriental Churches, but it can also be gathered from the Epistles of St. Paul, who speaks of baptism as a bath (Eph. v, 26; Rom. vi, 4; Tit., iii, 5). In the Latin Church, immersion seems to have prevailed until the twelfth century."

[The Catholic Encyclopedia, Edited by Charles G. Herbermann. New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1913.]

Conclusion: Thus, in the Church of Christ, baptism is done by immersion in water because this is the manner taught by the Bible and even Catholic priests agree that this is so.

Q. Why is the baptism done in the Catholic Church different from what the Bible teaches?

A. They changed it Faith Of Our Fathers p. 228 (213)

"For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity Baptism was usually conferred by immersion; but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by infusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than Baptism by immersion."

(James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, © 1917. (Book))

Q. What is wrong if we change the commandment of God by adding to or subtracting from what He has commanded?

A. Adding to or subtracting from His commandments is sin Deut. 12:32

Q. What will happen to those who add to or subtract from what is commanded by God?

A. They will not be saved Rev. 22:18-19

Who should be baptized

Q. Who should be baptized, according to the Bible?

A. Those who are taught and who believe .. Mk. 16:15-16

Note: A person must first be taught and then made sure that he believes what he has been taught before he can be baptized. Therefore, before you can be admitted into the Church of Christ, you must first be taught the fundamental teachings of the Church and undergo screening to make sure that you truly understand and believe. Even if you have been taught the Gospel but you do not understand and believe, you cannot be baptized.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Do you believe in all the things that have been taught to you by the Church of Christ?
2. Are you prepared to fulfill all these not only now but for the rest of your life?

Q. What else is expected from the candidate for baptism?

A. Repentance of his sins Acts 2:38

Q. What is sin?

A. Transgression of the law I Jn. 3:4 KJV

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Conclusion: Thus, in the Church of Christ, infants are not baptized because they cannot believe yet and they have not transgressed any law. Therefore, they have nothing to repent of.

Q. What is done to the infants in the Church of Christ?

A. They are prayed for or offered Mt. 19:13-14 RSV

"Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people; but Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.'"

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Instruction: Do not allow your children to be baptized or confirmed in other religions. If you are already baptized, offer them so that they may be prayed for if they are not yet ready to listen to teachings.

Obligation

Q. What is the obligation of those who will receive baptism?

A. They should be dead to sin Rom. 6:11 NIV

"In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Why should the candidates for baptism be dead to sin?

A. So that the old self may be crucified with Christ Rom. 6:6 NIV

"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. What is this old self that should die and share in the death of Christ on the cross?

A. The corrupt way of life Eph. 4:22 NIV

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. How do we put to death the old self?

A. Rid ourselves of all the works of the flesh Col. 3:5, 8-9 NIV

"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy languages from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Instruction: We should prepare ourselves to receive the holy baptism by means of a complete renewal of life. Let us leave behind our old ways which are against the will of God. Let us repent from our sins so that when we receive baptism God will forgive us.

Q. What does God expect with regard to our way of life after our baptism?

A. Lead a new way of life Rom. 6:4 TEV

"By our baptism, then, we were buried with him and shared his death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of the Father, so also we might live a new life."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Q. How can the recipients of the true baptism lead a new way of life?

A. Put on Christ Gal. 3:27

Q. How can we put Christ on?

A. Live the faith of Christ Gal. 2:20 KJV

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Q. How can we live the faith of Christ?

A. Acquire the habit of obedience and humility Philip. 2:5, 8 RSV

"Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus,

"And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Conclusion

Therefore, if we want to become true disciples of Christ we should first receive baptism to have our sins forgiven, and to attain salvation. Let us prepare ourselves for this very holy undertaking by means of leading a righteous way of life which is in accordance with the will of God.

Missionary Work and Praying

Theme: Each member of the Church of Christ is obliged to do missionary work and should learn how to pray.

Objectives

1. Make the candidate for baptism realize his own obligation to share his faith with others.
2. Teach him how to pray and show him the value and importance of prayer.

Summary

The Church of Christ believes that each member should do missionary work or share his faith with others. Each one should learn how to pray to God so that he would not weaken in faith and thus be able to resist temptations.

Introduction

The blessing of becoming a member of the Church of Christ is immeasurable. As a member of the Church of Christ a person not only acquires the right and privilege to serve God but also attains the salvation of his soul. This good fortune, however, must not be kept to ourselves. It is our obligation to share it with our fellowmen. Thus, each member of the Church should take part in missionary work.

And because our membership in the Church of Christ is such a valuable thing, we also should learn to pray properly to God so that we may be able to keep and retain this great blessing.

We will study these two responsibilities of the members of the Church of Christ in this lesson.

Presentation

- Q. Why is it our duty to do missionary work and to share our faith with our fellowmen? Should we not rather keep our membership in the Church of Christ to ourselves and not bother other people concerning their religious life?

- A. We are made the light of the world Mt. 5:14

Q. Why are we made the light of the world?

- A. To give light to people Mt. 5:15-16

Q. Why is it that by doing good we fulfill the purpose of our being made as the light of the world?

- A. The world is a crooked and perverse generation Philip. 2:15

Note: The world in which we live is in total darkness because over this world reigns all kinds of crookedness and evil. As members of the Church of Christ we are made the light of the world. We should show our distinction from the people of the world through our good deeds. This is how we should serve as light amidst a dark world.

Q. Why are we obliged to do missionary work?

- A. We are likened to the salt of the earth Mt. 5:13

Q. Why are we likened to the salt of the earth? What is the condition of the people of the world?

- A. They are slaves of corruption Rom. 8:21

How missionary work is done

Q. What is an effective way to do missionary work?

- A. Follow the example of the Samaritan woman – invite people to listen to Bible studies Jn. 4:28-30

Q. What proves that this method is effective?

- A. Many believed Jn. 4:39, 41-42

Instruction: We also should do what the Samaritan woman did – invite people to listen to the Gospel. Invite first your relatives and friends who are not yet members of the Church of Christ.

Q. Why should we consider missionary work an important obligation?

- A. This is saving people from fire Jude 1:23 NIV

"... snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear - hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh."

[Bible, The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1962.]

Explain: The people of the world are condemned by God to die in the lake of fire which is the second death. The only way to save them from such condemnation is to bring them into the Church. Thus, we must guide them to listen to the teachings of God.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Are you prepared to persuade your friends and relatives to join the Church of Christ?
2. What should we strive to do in order that those who are still outside the Church of Christ may be able to listen to the teachings of God?

Praying

Q. Who commanded us to pray and what is the value of prayer?
A. Christ commanded us to do so in order to not lose heart..... Lk. 18:1

Q. What else is the value of prayer?
A. In order to triumph over temptation.. Mt. 26:41

Q. What else is prayer for?
A. To make known to God our requests.. Philip. 4:6

Note: We all have needs in this life, and thus we must learn how to pray to make these known to God and to overcome worries.

Q. What else is the value of prayer to us?
A. Healing of the sick Js. 5:14-15

Instruction: If somebody is sick among you, you may call on the minister or the Church leaders so that they may pray for you and anoint you with oil. Let us believe in the promise of God that He will cure our illness.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What should we do in case we find ourselves in dire need and difficulties?
2. Whom may we call upon to pray for us in case we are sick so that we may be healed?

When to pray

Q. When do God's people usually pray?
A. Morning, noon, and evening..... Ps. 55:17

Q. What other instances should we pray?
A. Before eating..... I Cor. 10:31

Instruction: We should not forget to pray -

- Before eating
- Before leaving for work, before going to school
- Upon arrival from work or school or wherever we come from
- Before sleeping at night
- Upon waking up in the morning
- To seek forgiveness of sins and to ask God to increase our faith; to ask for assistance in your livelihood, to ask to be safeguarded from temptation and from the many worries of life
- At all times depending on our needs and situations

Q. Should the true servants of God get tired of praying?
A. Pray always..... Acts 10:2

Obligation

Q. Which prayer will surely be answered?
A. That which is done with faith..... Mk. 11:24

Q. Why should the person praying have faith?
A. Those who doubt will not receive Js. 1:6-8

Note: Thus, there are people who pray but do not receive what they ask for from God because they doubt and do not believe.

Q. Is it enough for the person praying to have faith?
A. He should also obey God's commands .. I Jn. 3:22

Note: We should be able to fulfill these conditions to ensure that God will answer our prayers. If we become obedient to God's commandments and do what pleases Him, He would surely respond whenever we call on Him.

Q. Who are those who pray but do not receive what they ask for?
A. Those who ask wrongly for the satisfaction of their pleasures *Js. 4:3*

Q. What is one of the valuable things we should ask for in our prayers to God?
A. Ask for faith *Lk. 17:5*

Q. What is strictly forbidden of us whenever we pray?
A. Vain repetitions *Mt. 6:7*

Instruction: Therefore, members of the Church of Christ do not recite their prayers. We should not do what Catholics do - repetitious prayers.

Q. What is the instruction to us whenever we pray?
A. Ask in the name of Christ *Jn. 15:16*

Instruction: All things we ask from God in our prayers should be asked in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

He who participates in missionary work and knows how to pray properly will become stable and strong in the faith. Both of these works are commanded by God and should be valued by all members of the Church of Christ.

LESSON NO. 24

The Church Administration

Theme: Each member of the Church of Christ should be listed with the Church and should submit to the authority of the Church Administration.

Objective

Teach the candidate for baptism concerning submission to the authority of the Church Administration by obeying the rules of discipline and orderliness imposed on the members such as the getting of a "certificate of transfer", attendance on committee prayers, getting certificate of attendance whenever attending worship service in locales other than the one he is registered in, etc.

Summary

Each member should submit to the authority of the Administration placed by God in the Church by means of total agreement with the teachings and rules of conduct and discipline observed in the Church of Christ.

Introduction

We should know that to ensure our salvation, we should remain members of the Church of Christ. For this reason, it is important that we know how to keep and maintain our membership in the Church. What is our duty as members to prevent our link with the Church from being cut off and to ensure our salvation?

Presentation

Q. What is the obligation of each member of the Church of Christ to keep him in the Church?
A. Submit to the authority of the Church Administration.. *Heb. 13:17 NIV*

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their

work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Explain: It is God who placed the administration in the Church and has given it the responsibility to watch over us. It is our obligation to submit to and obey the Church Administration. Unlike in other religions, members of the Church of Christ are lovingly cared for and that their service to God is administered properly.

Q. Who are administering us and why should we submit to their authority?

A. The ministers given the task to make known the words of God Col. 1:25
*Rotherham Emphasized Bible
A Literal Translation*

“Of which I will have become a minister – According to the administration of God which hath been given unto me to you-ward To fill up the word of God.”

[Bible. Rotherham Emphasized Bible. A translation designed to set forth the exact meanings, the proper terminology, and the graphic style of the sacred original, Grand Rapid, Michigan: Kregel Publications.]

Explain: In the Church of Christ there is someone whom God gives the authority to administer His people and to make His words known to them. The present Executive Minister of the Church of Christ is Brother Eraño G. Manalo.

Q. Aside from the over-all administrator or Executive Minister, to whom else should we submit ourselves?

A. To those who help the Administration..... I Cor. 16:15-16 NASB

“Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints), that you also be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors.”

[Bible. New American Standard Bible. New York and Cleveland: Colliers Publishers, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973.]

Note: The Executive Minister has assistants in administering us. Thus, there are ministers, evangelical workers, and locale Church leaders overseeing us and administering our service to God. Each of us should submit to the authority of the Church Administration so that they may continue to administer us in our services to God.

Q. How are we placed under the administration of the Church?

A. We should be bound on earth so that we may also be bound in heaven Mt. 18:18

Note: On this occasion, Christ was speaking to the Apostles to whom He gave the Administration of His Church in the first century. Christ made sure that whomever the Apostles would bind on earth would also be bound in heaven, and whomever they would loose on earth would also be loosed in heaven. In these last days, God has also placed an Administration in the Church. Whomever the Church Administration binds on earth will also be bound in heaven and whomever the Administration will loose on earth will also be loosed in heaven.

Q. What is this bind taught by the Bible which only the Church Administration has the authority to use to bind the Church members?

A. The commandments of God..... Prov. 3:3, 1
Note: The commandments or the words of God are likened to a bind by the Bible. Thus, those with the authority to bind God's words on man is the Church Administration because this bind is given to them alone to reveal to man the words of God (Col. 1:25).

Q. How is this binding by the words of God done on man?

A. Preach His words – so that those who believe may be saved Mk. 16:15-16

Explain: Not all those who listen to the preaching of the words of God are bound. Only those who believe in the Gospel being preached are bound, and these are the ones who will be saved according to Christ.

Q. What does the Church Administration do to ensure that we indeed have been bound, have become obedient to the Gospel, and will remain serving God?

A. They set decisions or rules Acts 16:4 TEV

"As they went through the towns, they delivered to the believers the rules decided upon by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, and they told them to obey these rules."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press © 1979.]

Explain: In the first-century Church, the Apostles set decisions or rules to ensure that the brethren were obeying the Gospel being preached. In our times there are also rules and regulations set by the Administration to ensure that the doctrines are fulfilled and that our services to God are properly administered. This does not mean that we create new doctrines.

Instruction: What is one of the regulations being set by the Administration which we should obey so that we may remain within the Administration or bound by it?

Each and every member must be listed in the Church so that he may be properly administered in his services to God. Whoever is not listed in the Church registry is not recognized as a member.

Q. How important is being listed in the Church which is one of the rules for those bound by the law?

A. Those listed will be saved *Dan. 12:1*

Q. What book is referred to where those who will be saved are listed?

A. The book of life in heaven *Rev. 20:12*

Q. How can we be certain that we are listed in heaven?

A. We are bound by the Administration on earth *Mt. 18:18*

Note: If your name does not appear in the Church's registry on earth, it does not appear in the registry in heaven (the Book of Life). If you are not listed with the Church, you are not considered a member and therefore you will not be saved on the Day of Judgment.

Q. And what is the equivalent of being loosed?

A. Being expelled from the Church *I Cor. 5:13 NIV*

"God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked man from among you.'"

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament, New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Note: If those bound on earth are those who remain members of the Church then those who are loosed are those removed from membership or expelled from the Church. Remember that those loosed on earth are also loosed in heaven.

Q. To whom are the expelled given?

A. To Satan *I Tim. 1:19-20*

Q. Can those who do not remain bound or are expelled from the Church expect salvation?

A. They will be burned *Jn. 15:6*

Conclusion: Whoever does not remain a member of the Church will not be saved. Therefore, let us avoid those things that can cause our separation from the Church or those that can cause our names to be delisted from the Church registry. Those not listed are not counted as members and will not be saved.

Q. Will the services to God done by those separated from the Church have any value?

A. Those separated have no God *Eph. 2:12 RSV*

"remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1962.]

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Who is the Executive Minister of the Church of Christ today?
2. What is one of the regulations we should follow as proof that we indeed have submitted ourselves to the authority of the Church Administration?
3. Whose command is it that we should submit ourselves to the Church Administration?

Remaining in the Church

Q. How can we remain in the Church of Christ?

A. **Remain in Christ and remain in the word..** *Jn. 15:7 NIV*

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."

[Bible. The Holy Bible. New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. How can we remain in Christ?

A. **Remain as a branch or a member** *Jn. 15:5 NIV*

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. And how do we remain in the words of Christ?

A. **Keep the commandments** *Jn. 15:9-10*

Q. What else should be obeyed by each Church member?

A. **Rules set by the Administration** *Acts 16:4 TEV*

"As they went through the towns, they delivered to the believers the rules decided upon by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, and they told them to obey these rules."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Q. Until when should we remain obedient members of the Church of Christ to ensure our salvation?

A. **Until the end** *Mt. 24:13*

Conclusion: Therefore, to ensure our salvation, we should remain in the Church of Christ until the end (end of our life or end of the world).

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Are you prepared to remain a member of the Church of Christ until the end of your life?
2. Are you set to obey all the teachings taught you and all the rules and regulations set by the Church Administration wherever you may be?

Carefully give the following instructions to the baptismal candidate:

1. After your baptism, you should list your name with the Secretariat in your locale and inform them of your present address.
2. If you change residence, do not forget to inform your group overseer. If your new residence is outside the jurisdiction of the locale where you are listed, get a certificate of transfer from the secretariat of the locale before you move. Look for the address of the locale of the Church in your new residence and have yourself listed immediately. Always remember that the moment you are not registered, you are not a member of the Church of Christ anymore, and those who are not members will not be saved.
3. The following are the occasions when a member may be delisted from the registry of the Church:
 - * When he is expelled by the Administration because of sin incurred. Therefore you should leave behind and avoid sin or any kind of transgression that would lead to expulsion from the Church.
 - * When he stops attending the worship services and becomes inactive. Therefore, do not stop attending the worship service whatever trials you may encounter.
 - * When he leaves his locale without informing the locale Secretariat — by not obtaining a certificate of transfer.
 - * When he obtains a certificate of transfer but fails to register with the locale he moves to.

Unity

Theme: It is God's teaching that unity should prevail in the Church of Christ.

Objectives

1. Inculcate in the mind of the candidate for baptism the value of unity in the Church and the evil of being divided.
2. Implement unity not only in the exercise of suffrage but more so in the activities of the Church in the service of God.

Summary

The Church of Christ believes that unity is God's teaching and that division within the Church is an evil thing. This unity is observed by the Church of Christ not only during election time but also in all its works in the service of God.

Introduction

One of the most noticeable characteristics of the Church of Christ is its unity. The unity of the Church is most visible during election times because all the members vote as one. Although many acknowledge and admire this unity, others criticize it because they fail to understand the whys and wherefores of this unity; they do not know the basis of the unity observed within the Church of Christ.

Presentation

- Q. What is the basis of the Church of Christ in implementing unity among its members?
- A. God's teaching Ps. 133:1
- Q. Did Christ also teach unity in the Church?
- A. He taught that we should be one Jn. 17:9, 11
- Q. What is the distinctiveness or uniqueness of the unity found in the Church?

- A. God and Christ are included in this unity Jn. 17:21, 23
- Note: There are many other organizations in this world which strive also for unity. However, they can never duplicate the unity in the Church of Christ because such unity is not only among its members but includes God and Christ.

- Q. Did the Apostles also teach unity in the Church?
- A. Be perfectly united in one mind and in one thought I Cor. 1:10 Lamsa

"Now I beseech you, my brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be of one accord, and let there be no divisions among you but be perfectly united in one mind and in one thought."

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts; Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East. by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Conclusion: It should not surprise anyone that the members of the Church of Christ act as one because this is God's teaching, written in the Bible and taught by Christ and His Apostles. Even though others may try to find fault with this unity, we should remain firm and never go against this teaching.

The Reason

- Q. How does God regard the Church of Christ which is the reason why it is being exhorted to be one or united?
- A. One body Rom. 12:4-5
or church Col. 1:18
- Explain: A body, although composed of many parts having different functions, is one and its many parts are not fragmented or divided against one another. Each part functions for the common good or for the good of the whole body.
- Q. Who arranged and made the Church into one body although it is composed of many parts or members?
- A. God I Cor. 12:18 NIV

"But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Why has God made it so that the members of the Church should be together in only one body?

A. So that there should be no division.... I Cor. 12:25 NIV

"...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, New International Version containing the Old Testament and the New Testament. New York: International Bible Society, © 1978.]

Q. Why does God disapprove of divisions in the Church of Christ?

A. Strife or divisiveness is of the flesh I Cor. 3:3-4 RSV

"...for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving like ordinary men? For when one says, 'I belong to Paul,' and another, 'I belong to Apol'los,' are you not merely men?"

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1978.]

Q. What is evil about being of the flesh?

A. That which is of the flesh does not belong to Christ Rom. 8:9 RSV

"But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

[Bible. The Oxford Annotated Bible. The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version. ed. by Herbert G. May and Bruce M. Metzger. New York: Oxford University Press, © 1978.]

Q. Are things of the flesh like strifes or divisions of God?

A. These things are of the devil Js. 3:14-15 Lamsa

"But if you have bitter envying among you or strife in your hearts, do not boast and do not lie against the truth. This wisdom does not come from above, but it is earthly, sensual, devilish"

[Bible. The Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts; Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated from the Peshitta, The Authorized Bible of the Church of the East. by George M. Lamsa. Philadelphia: A.J. Holman, © 1957. "Reprinted under Authority of Presidential Decree No. 285 as amended by PD 400."]

Q. Thus, what did the Apostles advise us in order that God may remain with us?

A. Be of one mind or stay united II Cor. 13:11

Q. Why is it bad to have divisions and thus lose unity in the Church?

A. This destroys the total unity in everything..... Eph. 4:4-6

Conclusion: Therefore, unity should at all times be kept in the Church. Staying united as taught by God is the condition for Him to stay with us.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Who has taught that the Church should be united?
2. What is unique in the unity found in the Church of Christ which distinguishes it from that of other organizations?
3. To what is the Church likened so that it has been exhorted to be united?

Voting

Q. Why does the Church Administration implement unity even in voting?

A. Let nothing be done through strife Philip. 2:2-3 KJV

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

[Bible. The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, translated out of the original tongues and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, set forth in 1611 and commonly known as the King James Version, New York: American Bible Society, 1970.]

Note: Whatever is being done by the members of the Church of Christ (voting included) there should be no strife or taking sides.

Q. How is the Church of Christ united even in voting?

A. Be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment I Cor. 1:10

Q. What does a citizen do when he votes? What does vote mean?

- A. Expression of judgment **Webs. New Int'l Dict., p. 2295**

"Vote - expression of judgment. ..."

[Webster's New International Dictionary, © 1913.]

Q. What is the teaching of the Apostles whenever we express any judgment?

- A. Be perfectly united in mind and judgment *I Cor. 1:10 Goodspeed*

"But I urge you all, brothers, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, to agree in what you say, and not to allow factions among you, but to be perfectly united in mind and judgment."

[Bible. The Bible. An American Translation. The Old Testament, translated by a group of scholars under the editorship of J.M. Powis Smith. The New Testament, translated by Edgar J. Goodspeed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, © October 1935 Eight impression April 1945.]

Conclusion: Therefore, even in the exercise of suffrage we remain united because the command is to be of the same or one judgment. Voting is an expression of judgment and thus we should be one in voting. Hence, individual members of the Church of Christ do not select their own candidates during election time because this destroys the unity of the Church.

Q. For the Church to be united and one in judgment, who should give the decision? How was unity preserved in the first-century Church of Christ?

- A. "Therefore I judge..." *Acts 15:19*

Note: Only one gave the decision: the over-all administrator of the Church.

Q. Does this mean that the judgment made by the Executive Minister for the whole Church to follow is just his personal decision?

- A. The decision is inspired by the Holy Spirit *Acts 15:28*

Q. Who was the Executive Minister at that time?

- A. Apostle James *Acts 15:13*

Q. What were the circumstances that necessitated such a decision by the Administrator of the first-century Church?

- A. There was a dispute *Acts 15:1-2*

Note: This kind of dispute created divisions among the Church members because of differences of opinion. Each one had his own opinion. Therefore, in order to prevent divisions in the Church, they went to Jerusalem where the Executive Minister was.

Q. What did they do when they were in the presence of the Executive Minister of the Church?

- A. Each side presented their cause and the Executive Minister handed down his decision *Acts 15:12-13*

Conclusion

Unity in the Church is quite significant and unique because our unity includes God and Christ. It is evil to destroy this unity. Thus, God discourages factionalism and disunity in our midst. We become united not only in voting but most importantly in our services to God. Give your best efforts to preserve Church unity for the sake of God's glory. Do not attempt to violate Church unity, whether in voting or in other activities, for this is a sin that will lead to expulsion from the Church.

Judgment Day

Theme: On Judgment Day will be the resurrection of the dead and the granting of the promised inheritance to the members of the Church of Christ.

Objectives

1. Make known the great hope which the Church of Christ will surely receive.
2. Teach the candidate for baptism to prepare for the return of Christ.

Summary

The Church of Christ believes that God has appointed the Day of Judgment which will take place on the second coming of Christ. This is the great day when the Church of Christ will receive the reward promised by God — the everlasting home for God's chosen people.

Introduction

In this world, evil and iniquity are commonplace. Many people of the world are suffering under the spell of calamities, hunger, and hardships. Where will these tribulations of man lead? What will be the end for this world? What do members of the Church of Christ hope for so that in spite of what they suffer in this world they still strive to remain in the service of God?

Presentation

- Q. What has God appointed for the world?
 A. The Day of Judgment *Acts 17:31*
- Q. What is the proof that this will happen?
 A. Death is also appointed by God *Heb. 9:27*

Note: Just as death is fulfilled and experienced by man, so will the Day of Judgment be because the God who appointed death is the same God who appointed Judgment Day.

- Q. When will the Day of Judgment be?
 A. On the return of Christ *Jude 1:14-15*
- Q. How are we to know that the Day of Judgment or the end of the world is near?
 A. There will be visible signs *Mt. 24:3, 33*
- Q. What are the visible signs which show that the Day of Judgment is approaching?
 A. Wars, earthquakes, famines, sorrows *Mt. 24:6-8*
- Conclusion:** We are very near the Day of Judgment because we have already seen the signs given by our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Q. What calamity will befall the world on the Day of Judgment?
 A. The perdition of ungodly men *II Pt. 3:7, 10*
- Q. But whom does the Bible assure will be saved from judgment?
 A. Those in Christ or the members of the Church of Christ *Rom. 8:1 Mt. 16:18 Rom. 16:16*

Conclusion: For those outside the Church will come perdition on the Day of Judgment; for the members of the Church of Christ, however, this day will be a great day of salvation.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Who appointed the Day of Judgment?
2. What are some of the visible signs showing that the Day of Judgment is fast approaching?
3. Who are assured of salvation on the Day of Judgment?

The Good Fortune

- Q. What is the good fortune that awaits those in Christ on the Day of Judgment?
 A. They will be resurrected first *I Thess. 4:16*
- Q. And what will happen to those in Christ who are alive on the Day of Judgment?

- A. They will be caught up together and will not taste death anymore *I Thess. 4:17*
 - Q. What is the promise of God to those who will be resurrected first?
 - A. The second death will have no power over them *Rev. 20:6*
 - Q. When will the rest of the dead be resurrected and what will be done to them?
 - A. After 1,000 years - they will be cast into the fire *Rev. 20:5, 7-10*
 - Q. Where will the members of the Church of Christ dwell and what kind of life will we experience there?
 - A. In the Holy City where the former things have passed away *Rev. 21:1-4*
- Conclusion:** Therefore, it is only right that we make sacrifices and endure whatever hardships for the sake of our membership in the Church of Christ.

Responsibility

- Q. What is the responsibility of each member of the Church of Christ while waiting for the Day of Judgment?
- A. He should be ready for it *Mt. 24:44*
- Q. Why should we ready or prepare ourselves for the Day of Judgment?
- A. No one knows the day or the hour *Mt. 24:36*
- Q. How should we prepare ourselves for the Day of Judgment?
- A. We should be found in peace *II Pt. 3:14*
- Q. What does it mean "to be found in peace?" Where is peace?
- A. In the body or the Church *Col. 3:15; 1:18*
- Q. Thus, what is required of us to be assured of salvation?
- A. Remain and endure until the end *Mt. 24:13*

Conclusion

Whatever you will experience and encounter in this life, you should not separate from the Church of Christ. Strive to be found here when the end comes so that you can be assured of salvation on the day of Judgment.

LESSON NO. 27

The Probation

Theme: The candidate should pass through tests to ascertain if his faith is genuine or sincere.

Objectives

1. Prepare those who have already finished all the Bible study lessons, for them to know what they should do while they are in their probation period and waiting for their baptism.
2. Strengthen the baptismal candidates and teach them how to be more courageous in the face of whatever trials that they would encounter for them to reach their baptism and, above all, be ready for the attainment of salvation.

Summary

You need to prove first that you truly believe before you can be counted among those worthy of receiving baptism. You can prove this by passing all tests while you are in your probation period. You should not fear persecution or ridicule; neither poverty nor any worry of this world should hinder you. Rather, you should live a completely holy life as proof that you have really learned. Do not fail to attend the worship services. Do not turn back. Instead, prepare yourself to receive baptism and to remain until the end of your life.

Introduction

After you have heard the fundamental teachings upheld by the Church of Christ (*Iglesia ni Cristo*), the next step for you to be included among the recipients of salvation is baptism. But before you receive baptism, you need to prove first that you have complete faith in the teachings you have received. You have to pass through tests to know the genuineness and sincerity of your faith. One way to prove your sincerity is by attending, on

consecutive Thursdays and Sundays (or other designated days of worship in your locale), the worship services of the Church within a given period designated by the Church Administration. Likewise, you should consistently attend the weekly committee prayer meetings. You may also encounter other trials while on probation. In the face of these trials, you should prove that you truly believe so that you will be included among the deserving recipients of the holy baptism. Why is it necessary for you to prove your faith?

Presentation

Q. Who among those who have been taught and have completed the Bible study lessons should be baptized?

A. Those who believe *Mk. 16:15-16*

Make the baptismal candidate understand:

This is the procedure taught by our Savior. A person should be baptized in order to be saved; but he has to believe before he can be baptized; before he can believe, he first should hear the preaching of the gospel.

Q. How can we determine whether the candidate for baptism has reached the quality of believing?

A. Faith must be tested *1 Pt. 1:6-7 TEV*

"Be glad about this, even though it may now be necessary for you to be sad for a while because of the many kinds of trials you suffer. Their purpose is to prove that your faith is genuine. Even gold, which can be destroyed, is tested by fire; and so your faith, which is much more precious than gold, must also be tested, so that it may endure. Then you will receive praise and glory and honor on the Day when Jesus Christ is revealed"

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Make the baptismal candidate understand:

Therefore, trials are inevitable. These are necessary for us to prove our faith. Thus, instead of trials causing us to feel discouraged they should be our cause for rejoicing according to the apostles.

Q. What should be proven by those who have been taught the words of God?

A. That they would not be overcome by ridicule, persecution, or poverty; they would not stumble or be weakened by the cares of this world.

Instead, they bear fruit *Mk. 4:14-20*

Make the baptismal candidate understand:

If we have been overcome by the things of this world, this signifies that we do not yet believe – we cannot be baptized. Thus, we should prove that the words that have been sown or taught to us have borne fruit.

Q. What is the fruit that we should bear?

A. Fruits of righteousness *Philip. 1:11*

Make the baptismal candidate understand:

We should live our life in holiness.

Q. What is another proof that the one who has been taught God's teachings has learned?

A. Another proof of learning is when a person leads a new way of life..... *Eph. 4:21-25 TEV*

"You certainly heard about him, and as his followers you were taught the truth that is in Jesus. So get rid of your old self, which made you live as you used to — the old self that was being destroyed by its deceitful desires. Your hearts and minds must be made completely new, and you must put on the new self; which is created in God's likeness and reveals itself in the true life that is upright and holy."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Q. How could one who believes prove that he is firm in his hope and does not doubt?

A. Not forsaking the assembling together or the worship service *Heb. 10:23, 25*

Q. What is God's warning to those who forsake the worship service?

A. They shall be punished *Heb. 10:26-27*

Q. If problems arise and, because of these, your service to God is being hindered, what should be your hope?

A. You will receive God's protection and guidance Ps. 27:4-5, 1 TEV

"I have asked the Lord for one thing; one thing only do I want: to live in the Lord's house all my life, to marvel there at his goodness, and to ask for his guidance.

"In times of trouble he will shelter me; he will keep me safe in his Temple and make me secure on high rock.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one. The Lord protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid."

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Make the baptismal candidate understand:

We should put our trust in God.

Q. What conviction is being sought by God from the believers for them to be certain of salvation?

A. Do not draw back Heb. 10:38-39

Make the baptismal candidate understand:

Thus, you should not draw back or quit no matter what trials you encounter. You need to receive baptism for you to become a true member of the Church of Christ. But is it only until the day of our baptism that we should remain faithful?

Q. Until when should we continue serving God?

A. Until death Rev. 14:12-13 TEV

"This calls for endurance on the part of God's people, those who obey God's commandments and are faithful to Jesus.

"Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Happy are those who from now on die in the service of the Lord!'

"'Yes indeed!' answers the Spirit. 'They will enjoy rest from their hard work, because the results of their service go with them.'"

[Bible. Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version, Catholic Study Edition. Nashville, U.S.A.: Catholic Bible Press, © 1979.]

Q. Which is this rest and where will we enjoy such rest?

A. The eternal rest in the Holy City Rev. 21:1-4

Conclusion: You should be firm in spite of whatever trials that you may encounter in life. When moments come that you seem to lose hope and courage, pray to God and ask Him to give you strength and courage for you to remain in His calling until the end.

Overall Instructions

I

Things to do after baptism

What is the first thing you should immediately do after your baptism?

- See the locale secretary who will officially register you as a full-fledged member of the Church of Christ.
- You shall be assigned a permanent tag indicating your name and the number of the area and group to which you belong. You will find this tag at the chapel lobby or entrance.

Remember your tag number and where it is placed. Everytime you attend the worship service, please turn your name tag to indicate proof of your attendance. Be careful not to turn somebody else's tag.

If the day of the worship service has ended and you have not turned your tag, it will be assumed that you were absent or you attended in another locale. Therefore, expect a visit from your group overseer who would ask why you were absent or where you attended the services. He will remind and counsel you not to neglect this extremely important duty to God. If your absence is due to illness, it would be better for the overseer to pray for your recovery and anoint you with oil as the Bible teaches. If there were other reasons, like any of life's problems, the overseer would be there to counsel you. You can likewise seek guidance from God through prayer.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What will the overseer assigned to your group do in case you fail to attend the worship service?
2. What did the Apostles teach us in case any of us is sick?

- The locale secretary will give you the name of the overseer assigned to your group. Please see your overseer as soon as possible. He is your closest link to the Administration of the Church. He will preside over the weekly prayer meetings of your group in the designated homes of the brethren. Please try not to be absent in such prayer meetings.

Eventually, you will be asked to have the prayer meeting held in your home. You should consider it a blessing because it will bring abundant spiritual graces which you need to increase your faith. In such occasions you will also receive significant messages from the Church Administration concerning locale activities which you should join.

Question for the baptismal candidate:

1. What do we call the weekly meeting of the members of the group presided over by the overseer?

- You should also know the pastor or minister assigned to your locale, as well as the brethren constituting the locale leadership.

To what organizations of the Church of Christ should you belong?

Within the Church, the Administration established organizations to foster closer ties among brethren and to strengthen their faith.

All married brethren should belong to the **Buklod**. Those who are single, 18 years of age or more, are members of the **KADIWA**. The youth from 13 to 17 years of age are to be included in the **Binhi**.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. Which organization in the Church should married members belong to?
2. Which organization in the Church should unmarried members with ages 18 years and above belong to?
3. Which organization in the Church should unmarried members with ages ranging from 13 to 17 years belong to?

Whatever organization you shall belong to, please know -

- who are the president and officers in your locale;
- when the regular meetings of the organization are held in your locale. Oftentimes you will hear announcements after the worship services as to the date and time of the monthly meetings;
- what projects and activities are being sponsored by the organization so that you may actively participate in them.

II

You and the Church Administration

The Church Administration

The locale of the Church where you are registered has a locale leadership headed by a minister or evangelical worker. The leadership also comprises five head deacons, the presidents of the locale organizations, and the locale secretary.

The locales of a province (or state, or region, as the case may be) constitute an ecclesiastical district being supervised by a minister who is entrusted the office of district (or supervising) minister. The district minister is directly responsible to the Executive Minister concerning all Church activities in his ecclesiastical district. The present Executive Minister of the Church of Christ is Brother Eraño G. Manalo.

Every locale is divided into areas (each administered by an area leader), which are further subdivided into groups (each supervised by a group overseer who may be a deacon or someone being groomed for deaconship).

Every group is composed of several families in the Church and that is where you belong.

Thus, your closest link to the Church Administration is your group overseer, then your area leader, finally the resident minister or worker, including the locale leadership.

To the brethren mentioned above, please consult any problem regarding your faith and membership, for they are God's instruments in helping you.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What do we call the church officer who is in charge of a group?
2. Who is the present Executive Minister of the Church of Christ?

III

Worship Service in the Church of Christ

Twice a week the Church of Christ holds a congregational worship service. This is normally held every Thursday and Sunday (some locales of the Church, mostly in the West, have Wednesday or Friday services instead of Thursdays). There are occasions when the Church observes special worship services on days other than Thursdays and Sundays.

You are required to attend these Church assemblies. The Bible says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25)

The Lord God shall expect your presence in the house of worship every service day, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him." (John 4:23)

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. How many times do we hold worship services in a week?
2. On what days do we usually hold congregational worship to God?
3. Who expects our presence in the worship service?
4. Are we obliged to attend even the special gatherings of the Church?

What activities constitute our congregational worship service?

Our worship begins with congregational hymn singing, led by the choir members, and ends with the benediction.

This is the program or order of activities during a regular worship service:

- Congregational hymn singing led by the choir
- Congregational prayer led by the minister or evangelical worker who shall preach or by the assigned head deacon
- Congregational hymn singing
- The sermon
- Prayer
- Collection of Offerings
- Prayer for the Offerings
- Doxology
- Benediction

You are expected to participate in all these activities during the service. That you may perform them with dedication:

- You are supposed to arrive early at the chapel every worship service. You should participate in the hymn singing from the very first hymn to be sung by the congregation up to the last number or the recessional hymn. Sing with all your heart and soul.
- While waiting for the sermon or the study of God's words to begin, be at peace in meditation and silent prayer.
- Open your heart during the assembly's prayers, whoever may be leading. Please stand properly and close your eyes all throughout the prayer. Remember that we stand in the presence of God, therefore we should behave with extreme reverence. Indicate your participation by responding at proper intervals, with "Yes, Father" or "Amen."
- Follow intently the course of the preaching of the words of God. Strive hard not to fall asleep and overcome all other hindrances that might prevent you from receiving the message. The best question you can ask yourself to guide you during the study, is: "What does God want me to fulfill in my life at this moment?" Thus, your efforts will be concentrated at fully understanding the message at hand.
- Your contribution should be prepared in advance, so that during the collection you may give it as a voluntary offering and not as something forced on you. Fulfill this obligation with all your heart and soul.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. How does the worship service of the Church of Christ start?
2. What should we do during the congregational prayer in our worship service?
3. Why should we take part in the congregational hymn singing?

If you attend the worship service in another locale, you should obtain a certificate of attendance from the secretariat of said locale. They will ask your name, the locale where you are registered, and the number of the area and group you belong to. Please provide the information requested, for these will be included in the certificate of attendance. Do not lose this certificate because you are expected to turn it over to your group overseer when he visits you. It is certain that he will visit you if you are not able to attend the worship services in your locale. This visit should make us happy for it is a proof of concern and interest for your welfare.

Questions for the baptismal candidate:

1. What should you not fail to do whenever you attend worship services in your locale as proof of your attendance?
2. If you are attending the worship service in another locale, what should you get from the secretariat to certify your attendance?
3. To whom should you submit this certificate?

During the worship services, as mentioned before, you stand in the presence of God; not as a spectator in a theater audience but as an active participant – as a worshipper. You are there to praise God for all His goodness to you and to offer worship. He waits for you to entrust all your troubles and anxieties unto Him; and it is in the worship service that He is ever willing to answer all your pleadings.

It is only proper that you present yourself in deep reverence before God. Your entire appearance, including your attire, should befit the holiness and majesty of our God. The finest and most appropriate clothing we have should be worn when we worship God.

Likewise, when we walk, sit and stand inside the house of worship, we should observe proper decorum. Please follow the instructions of the deacons and deaconesses who are in charge of the orderliness of the occasion.

Avoid causing any damage on any part of the chapel and please do not litter. Yet, more than the physical cleanliness that should be accorded the worship service, is the spiritual purity, that is, the purity of our lives. Be earnest to follow the righteous way of living which you have been taught, so that the worship you offer shall always be pleasing to God.

Every worship service must result in the edification of your faith. Thus, everytime you attend, you should feel the power of God that will strengthen you amidst your weaknesses, comfort you in times of sorrows and miseries, encourage you to overcome all trials and enable you to endure in your calling as one of God's chosen ones.

All these you shall experience when you sincerely devote yourself in worshipping God and when you fully prepare yourself to receive God's abundant blessings.

IV

How you should obey the teachings you have received

As a review of the basic doctrines you have just learned, here is a summary together with the instructions on how to fulfill them.

About the Bible. The Church of Christ believes that the words of God are written only in the Bible. Thus, the Bible should be the sole basis of service to God; in it is the truth which teaches man how to be saved from punishment on the Day of Judgment.

Therefore, renounce all belief in Catechism books, the Book of Mormon, and all other books by other religions, because God prohibits such (I Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19).

Follow steadfastly and faithfully all teachings from the Bible which you have learned in the Church of Christ.

About God. The Father alone is the true God, the Creator of all things.

You should now reject the doctrine of the Trinity; this is against the teaching of the Bible. Do not worship images, for these are not the true God.

You should acknowledge the Father as the only true God. But your recognition of Him should not stop there. Your relationship with Him should grow, He should, indeed, be your Father and friend, and you should walk with Him all the days of your life.

About Christ's natural state of being. You must discard the idea that Christ is the true God. This is a sinful belief because it is contrary to Biblical teaching. You should also reject the belief that Christ is both true man and true God.

Those who preach that Christ is God use the Bible also. Be not deceived by them because nowhere is it recorded in the Bible that Christ says that He is the true God. But why are they able to quote verses from the Bible? They either give those verses a wrong interpretation or they use passages that have been erroneously translated.

Never believe that there is at least one Bible verse (correctly translated) which states that Christ is God. Whoever preaches such is a false teacher (II Cor. 11:3-4).

You should reject the doctrine that there are three persons in one God. The Father is the only true God.

You should, however, acknowledge and worship Christ, recognize Him as our only Mediator with God and the only man who is holy and sinless.

About the true religion. The popular belief that all churches belong to God is false. Christ founded only one true Church – the Church of Christ. Therefore, you should value the Church because herein you are able to perform the kind of service which God shall accept and through which you shall be saved.

About the Church of Christ. You should recognize and have complete conviction in the significance of the Church for salvation.

Always have faith that Christ will save the Church of Christ.

Do not let others deceive you when they say that faith alone in Christ is enough to gain salvation.

About the Church founded by Christ in the first century.

The Church established by Christ in the first century fell into apostasy. Most of the members were led astray from the truth by the false prophets who arose within the Church with the passing away of the Apostles; the rest, those who remained faithful, were put to death by the ravenous wolves.

Those who were forewarned as the false prophets who would mislead the Church were none other than the Catholic priests. They introduced false beliefs into the Church until it ceased to be the true Church and became the Catholic Church – a religion vastly different from the Church of Christ recorded in the Bible.

Thus, the Catholic Church is not of Christ and definitely not of God, and there is no salvation in it.

If you are a former Catholic, do not make the sign of the cross anymore. Renounce all Catholic teachings for they are against God's word.

If you used to be a Catholic, discard all images, crosses, crucifixes, and idols.

Do not listen to mass anymore, and do not receive communion.

Do not confess to a priest anymore.

Do not say prayers for the dead and never celebrate "All Saints' Day" or any Catholic feast day anymore. Do not participate in any way in any celebration honoring Catholic saints.

About the Church of Christ's emergence in the Philippines. The Church of Christ that emerged in the Philippines (in the Far East) during these last days is the fulfillment of the prophecies made by God and Christ. This is the third part of the Church founded by Christ. It arose in these last days after the Church founded by Christ in the first century was completely led astray by the false prophets. Even the spread of this Church in the Far West is also the realization of God's prophecies in the Bible.

About God's Last Messenger. God's messenger in these last days is Brother Felix Y. Manalo. He did not establish the Church of Christ; Christ Himself did that through prophecy.

Brother Felix Y. Manalo was God's instrument in preaching the gospel of salvation in these last days. He was the first one to proclaim about the Church of Christ in the Philippines. That is why this Church which you have joined is of God and of Christ.

Do not ever believe those detractors who allege that it was only Brother Felix Y. Manalo who founded the Church in the Philippines and that this is supposedly the church of Brother Manalo. Those are simply lies and slanderous statements. Never let yourself be called a member of the Church of Manalo.

Believe instead in the commissioning of Brother Felix Y. Manalo as God's messenger.

About persecutions. You cannot avoid to overcome persecutions because this is one of the foundations for inheriting the kingdom of heaven. You should not give up when you encounter harassments. Instead, pray to God for help so that you may overcome all persecutions.

About enduring as a member of the Church of Christ. You should strive to obey all Church rules and regulations, for by doing so, you prove that you are a true member of the Church of Christ.

Your motive in joining should never be because of your parents, spouse, brothers and sisters, friends, employers who are Church members, or out of personal profit.

About renewing your life. It is not enough just to become a member of the Church; you should undergo a full renewal of life.

Those members who have turned a new life truly belong to Christ and to God. We should put into practice the commandments we have received.

If you used to get drunk or you used to drink liquor or take drugs, you should refrain from any of these vices now. God forbids them.

If you used to gamble, you should know that all forms of gambling are prohibited in the Church of Christ, like: racing, lotteries, card or dice games, slot machines, etc.

If you are involved in an adulterous relationship, you should stop this right away. God forbids adultery.

If you are employed in a dishonest occupation, committing fraud or any illegal acts, this is not allowed. We should live decently and righteously.

You should cease indulging in any vice or sin in your life.

Refrain from swearing or using foul language and do not perform the kind of dances popularized in the world, characterized by provocative and sensuous behavior.

On worship service. As previously discussed in a separate section, you should, out of love, always attend the worship service.

To neglect the worship service is considered a serious trespass. From now on never miss attendance, unless you are seriously ill and physically incapable.

You should not be hindered by your employment or profession or any personal interest in performing this duty. God should have priority over anyone and anything in the world.

When you attend the worship services in your own locale, do not fail to turn your own name tag (not somebody else's) before you enter the house of worship.

If you shall attend in another locale, do not forget to obtain a certificate of attendance from the secretaries before you leave.

This certificate should be submitted promptly to your group overseer or group secretary so that you will not be counted among the absentees.

About the offering. The giving of offering or contribution in the Church of Christ is not a rule created by the ministers but it is the will of God. It should not, however, be given like alms for the poor.

Every member of the Church of Christ is responsible to give offerings.

Do this with all your heart, willingly, and joyfully.

The offering should be saved and set aside. Do not offer only what is in excess or whatever is left of the money you earned after spending it for yourself.

As you budget your personal needs, be more concerned about setting aside your offering to God.

It is likewise the duty of the Church of Christ members to perform thanksgiving to God and to bring thanksgiving offerings every end of the year.

We have to prepare our thanksgiving offering for one year. Be like many members of the Church of Christ who save regularly through the Church's system. This is the most convenient method, because without realizing it, we are able to save.

On brotherly love. The members of the Church of Christ have a very unique relationship. They constitute a brotherhood established by Christ and willed by God.

You should call all members of the Church, including ministers, your brothers (or sisters, as the case may be). We treat one another as equals within the Church. Follow Christ's command that we should love one another.

You should avoid doing evil to brethren in the Church.

You should not defraud anyone.

If somehow your brother has wronged you, do not sue him in court. God does not allow us to do so.

Bring all your complaints to the Church Administration, for they shall be the ones to settle and decide on the matter.

Anyone who will bring his brother to court or who will refuse reconciliation shall be expelled from the Church.

Brethren who have disputes should settle their differences at once. They are expected to forgive one another.

Other prohibitions. In the Church of Christ, we are forbidden to eat blood (or food using blood as an ingredient) and we are prohibited to marry a nonmember.

When preparing or dressing fowls and animals prior to cooking, make sure to pour out the blood.

It is a grievous sin before God for a Church member to marry a nonmember.

Just courting or being engaged with a nonmember is already prohibited by God. If you are still single, do not marry an unbeliever.

Do not elope just to get married. Be sure to get permission from your parents.

You are also instructed to avoid joining organizations or labor unions whose principles run in conflict with biblical teachings.

About baptism. Baptism is an act of burying sins; thus, after baptism you should walk in the newness of life.

If you have children or will have some in the future, do not have them baptized because that is against God's law.

In the Church of Christ, infants and children who still have innocent minds are never baptized but simply offered to God to dedicate them into His service. In due time, when they reach the right age in which they could be taught and they are able to believe, shall they then be baptized.

While these children are growing up (from 4 to 12 years of age), they are required to attend the children's worship services held once a week (or twice weekly in some locales) at designated times and places. If you have young children whom you want to raise in the Church, have them offered and when it is the proper time, let them attend the children's worship services. When they come of age, capable of making intelligent choices, let them receive instructions in fundamental doctrines of the Church so that they could be baptized.

About prayer and missionary work. He who participates in missionary work and knows how to pray properly eventually becomes stable and strong in faith. These works are both commanded by God and should be valued by all members of the Church of Christ.

Therefore, you should help in the propagational work of the Church by inviting people to attend Bible studies and distributing reading materials like pamphlets, leaflets and our magazines, *Pasugo*, *God's Message*.

In the Church, the Administration organized the **Light of Salvation**. This organization is composed of missionary helpers in every locale. You could join this group, to further enhance your participation in the propagation of faith.

In every aspect of our life, we should walk with our God. You should learn how to pray in order to effectively communicate with God. You must pray:

- Before you eat
- Before you leave home for work or school
- Upon reaching home from work, school, or any other place
- Before you sleep at night

- Upon waking up in the morning
- When you ask to be forgiven of sins and to be strengthened in your faith; when you need help in your livelihood, and when you plead to be saved from temptations and innumerable troubles in life.
- And in every moment, as the need and opportunity may arise. Do not forget to attend your group prayer meetings.

About being registered. If your name does not appear in the Church's registry on earth, it does not appear in the registry in heaven (the Book of Life). If you are not listed with the Church, you are not considered a member and therefore you will not be saved on the Day of Judgment.

The following are the occasions when a member may be delisted from the registry of the Church:

- When he is expelled by the Church Administration because of sin.
- When he stops attending the worship services and becomes inactive.
- When he leaves his locale without informing the locale Secretariat, by not obtaining a certificate of transfer.
- When he obtains a certificate of transfer but he fails to register with the locale he moves to.

Always remember: the moment you are not registered, you are no longer a member of the Church of Christ, and he who is not a member will not be saved.

On unity. Unity in the Church is extremely significant, because our unity includes God and Christ. It is wrong to violate this unity. Thus, God discourages factionalism and division in our midst.

We become one and united not only in voting but most importantly in our services to God.

Show your best efforts to preserve Church unity, for the sake of glorifying God.

Do not attempt to violate Church unity, whether in voting or in other activities, for this is a sin that leads to expulsion from the Church.

About continuing in our hope. Remain in the Church of Christ, obedient till the end, that you may receive that great hope of those who are in Christ when He comes again.

Continue to attend the worship services, join other Church activities, and endure whatever sufferings may come.

Do not withdraw from membership in the Church of Christ, whatever may happen to your life or to this world, so that you may not lose the privilege to inherit God's promises.

May our great God bless you all the days of your life.