

bodies there is of heads. How many heads? He is THE HEAD. That means just one head, doesn't it? All right. "He is the head of the body, the church." So there is one head, one body, one church. And since Jesus is the head of only one, somebody else must be the head of every other. Do you believe that a church of which man is the head is as good as the church of which Jesus is the head? You must believe this if you believe that one church is as good as another.

I do not believe that I could found a church that would be as good as the one founded by Jesus, but I believe I could come as near doing that as any other uninspired man. But no uninspired man, or even inspired man, could do that. Jesus died that he might establish his church - he purchased it with his

own blood. If man could establish one just as good, without even dying for it, as the one Jesus purchased with his blood, then Jesus died in vain. This would give man more power than the Lord had. So if your preacher has been telling you that one church is as good as another, just ask him for the scripture that says so. And while he is finding that for you, you might ask him how many churches are mentioned in the New Testament, anyway.

4. Ask your preacher where the Bible says to "join the church of your choice." In view of what has just been said regarding point No. 3, it is not necessary to say much about this point. But does the Lord allow men to have their choice in matters of this kind? If man is allowed to choose the church that

suits him best, then the Lord has no choice in the matter. But since Jesus built but one church, do you think he will allow you to choose one that some uninspired man built in preference to the one he built? The Lord gives you the choice of accepting him or rejecting him, but if you reject him, he will see that you do not go unpunished. Why not let the Lord have his choice instead of choosing our own way? But if your preacher has been telling you to join the church of your choice, he ought to be able to give you the passage of scripture that says so. So go to him and ask him for it. ~

[This series will be continued in future issues.]

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Ask Your Preacher

Editor's note: I will include here the Foreword supplied by the author of the following:

This series of fifteen minute sermons has been preached over a number of radio stations. Without manuscript they were preached over station KOCA, Kilgore, Texas, and over station KLCN, Blytheville, Arkansas. In manuscript form they have been delivered over station KTUL, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and over station WMBH, Joplin, Missouri. Portions of them have been proclaimed over other stations. They have always created much interest, elicited many commendations, and resulted in many requests for them to be published in booklet form. In response to such requests they are now being offered to the reading public with a prayer that they may serve the cause of truth and enlighten the souls of men who have been blinded by the doctrines of men.

-- W. Curtis Porter, 1947



Sermon I:

Preachers have an important place to fill with respect to lost souls. God saw fit to use them in making his gospel known, which is the power of God to save men. Hence, Paul said in I Cor. 1:21: "For after that in the wisdom of

God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Thus we are told that it is God's plan to save men by preaching.

This plan may seem foolish; so it is called "the foolishness of preaching." But it is God's plan. Remember, however, that it is "the foolishness of preaching" that God chose, and not the preaching of foolishness. We might conclude that some have misunderstood God's plan and have used the preaching of foolishness instead of "the foolishness of preaching." But in order for God's plan to be carried out preaching must be done, and preaching is done by preachers. So preachers have an important place to fill. In harmony with this idea Paul said in Rom. 10:14: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" In view of such state-

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Bible Class for all ages ___ 9:00 AM
Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM
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ments we should not minimize the work of the gospel preacher.

However, we must not lose sight of the fact that preachers are required to preach the gospel. Since the gospel is God's power to save men, the gospel must be preached by the preacher. If he preaches something else, he is going contrary to the will of God, and what he preaches will not result in the salvation of the hearers.

In fact, God pronounces condemnation of the preacher who preaches that which is contrary to divine truth revealed through the apostles. In Gal. 1:8 we read this statement from the pen of Paul: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." This places a great responsibility upon a preacher and condemns him if he preaches the theories and doctrines of men instead of the gospel of Christ as delivered by the apostles.

Preachers are looked upon as leaders of men; and that they should be. As preachers are spiritual leaders of men, they are expected to know more about the Bible than any other class of men. This is but the natural thing to expect, for preachers should study the Bible that they may be qualified to preach the gospel to others.

When you have some question that troubles your soul, something about the Bible that you wish to know, you often turn to the preacher for help. And if it is something that is found in the Bible, he should be willing to give his assistance; or if it is not found

in the Bible, he should be able to tell you so. This is the reason I have selected the title for this sermon that I have -- ASK YOUR PREACHER. I have some questions that I want to present to you that you may present them to your preacher to find out just what the Bible says. These questions which I shall present are important questions; they are questions that you have often thought about; and your preacher should be willing to help you find an answer to them. Take your pencil and write them down as we go along. Are you ready?

Well, here is the first:

1. Ask your preacher where you can find the name of your church in the Bible. I do not know the name of the church to which you belong, for I do not know who you are that are listening to me at this time. Doubtless many churches are represented among my listeners today. But you know what church you are a member of, if any, and you know the name of the church. So just go to your preacher and ask him to give you the book, chapter and verse in the Bible that mentions it. If it is there, he will certainly know where to find it; if it is not there, you have a right to know it. So ask him to help you.

I have read the language of Paul in I Cor. 1:2 in which he addressed "the church of God which is at Corinth." And when he made his farewell address to the elders at Ephesus he said: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. In these

two passages we have reference to "the church of God." Then Paul wrote Timothy after this fashion: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." I Tim. 3:15. And here reference is made to "the church of the living God."

When Paul wrote the church in Rome he said: "The churches of Christ salute you." Rom. 16:16. In the section from which Paul was writing there were a number of congregations, and they were sending their greetings to the church in Rome. Hence, Paul said: "The churches of Christ salute you." It is an evident fact, of course, if a number of congregations were called "churches of Christ," one of them would be a "church of Christ." Taking all of these Scriptures together, we read of the church of the living God, and the church of Christ. These were not different religious organizations but were simply different designations for the same body of people.

But is it possible to read anywhere in the Bible of any mention of the name of the church to which you belong? This is an important matter, for the Bible is our guide book from earth to glory, and we should not want to belong to something the Bible says absolutely nothing about. So ask your preacher to help you find the name of your church in the Bible. He should not become offended if you ask this favor of him.

2. Ask your preacher where the Bible says the church is not necessary to salvation. So many times the statement is made that

the church does not save you. Of course, we know that the church is not the Savior. Jesus is our Savior. But the statement as used simply means the church is not necessary to your salvation; that you can be saved on the outside of it as well as on the inside.

Now, you have likely heard your preacher make that very statement many times; and as he is your teacher in spiritual things, he should be glad for you to want to know where to find any such statement in the Bible. Do you not look upon him as a Bible teacher? Certainly you do. Then, if there is any such statement in the Bible, he should know where it is; or if he does not, it should not take him but a little while to find it for you.

I have often read the statement of Paul in Eph. 5:23 which says: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body." If you will read the verses that follow in this chapter, you will readily see that the term "body" refers to the church. So Christ is the savior of the church. This statement could not be true if he saves men out of the church and before they enter the church. In that case he would be the savior of men out of the church but not the Savior of the church. Yet Paul says he is the Savior of the church. If the Lord saves one man out of the church, he evidently saves all who are saved out of the church. Hence, every person who goes into the church is saved before he enters. Then how could Jesus be "the Savior of the church?" It just wouldn't be possible. So the statement shows us that the Lord saves men who enter the church,

not those on the outside. And while the church is not the savior, it is the institution in which the Savior saves men. We, therefore, read in Acts 2:47: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Every saved person in the city of Jerusalem was added to the church. There was not a saved person in all that city that had not been added to the church. And what was true of the city of Jerusalem has, throughout the ages, been true of every other place. The Lord has added to the church everywhere such as should be saved. And if any one from that time to this has been saved out of the church, he was saved when he should not have been. But in spite of all these statements, you will hear preachers constantly say that you can be saved out of the church. If you have heard your preacher say this, please ask him to tell you where it is found in the Bible.

3. Ask your preacher where the Bible says one church is as good as another. Perhaps no statement has been made by religious people more often than this. On every hand, from the pulpit and in the pew, you will hear the statement: "One church is as good as another; so it makes no difference which one you belong to." Maybe you have said this over and over; and you have heard your preacher preach it all of your life. Then it must be something that both you and he are interested in, and you should want to know just where the Bible makes the statement. I am not asking too much when I ask you to ask your preacher about it, am I? That is what your preacher is for - to tell you where you can find in the Bible the things he preaches. So why not use him? I expect my

brethren to use me in this way. And they feel free to make such demands of me.

In Eph. 4:4 I find recorded this statement: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of your calling." This passage plainly says: "There is one body." Yet in the face of it we have hundreds of conflicting religious bodies in the world. Well, one body can't mean two hundred bodies. But what does Paul mean by the one body? In Eph. 1:22, 23 he said: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." So the body is the church. But Paul says there is "one body." Furthermore, when Jesus promised to build the church, he said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." Matt. 16:18. He did not say: "upon this rock I will build my churches." He mentioned only one - "my church" not churches, If the Lord built but one, and he certainly did for that is all he promised to build, then somebody else must have built all the others. And are we ready to say that any church that man built is as good as the one the Lord built? This is what we will have to say if we contend that one church is as good as another. In Col. 1:18 Paul also declared: "He is the head of the body, the church." Look at this passage in your Bible - Col. 1:18 - and see just what it says. I don't want you to take my word for it, but it will certainly be alright for you to read it yourself and take just what it says. Now, does it say, "He is the head of the BODIES the CHURCHES?" It does not read that way in your book, does it? But it says: "He is the head of the body, the church." There is the same number of