

# “Will The Lord Find Faith? #1”

**Introduction.** In Luke 18:8, Jesus asked, “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” God is concerned about the future and we must be too. He warns that He visits “the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me” (Exodus 20:5; 34:7). In contrast we read, “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children” (Psalm 103:17; 128:6).

The church will always exist in the future, but to what extent? Both testaments emphasize the indestructible nature of the church (Daniel 2:44; 7:14; Matthew 16:18-19; Hebrews 12:28-29). How reassuring! But, to what extent and to what depth? Will the church be strong, vibrant, thriving, and growing when Christ comes, or will there be just a remnant remaining? Will the Lord find faith on the earth?

## ***I. It Depends On The Church’s Attitude Toward The Scriptures***

- A. The church must stand on the fact that the scriptures are verbally inspired (1 Corinthians 2:9-13), all sufficient (2 Timothy 3:16-17), authoritative (2 Corinthians 5:10), and final (Jude 3).
- B. The scriptures constitute the source of our faith (John 17:20-21; Acts 17:11-12; Romans 10:17). If we abandon the scriptures, faith is impossible.
- C. In years past, the Disciples of Christ forsook the Bible, giving no credence to biblical authority for faith and practice; and, accordingly, have virtually merged themselves out of existence as an independent body. In fact, many denominations really no longer have any distinguishing characteristics anymore.

## ***II. It Depends On The Quality Of Preaching The Church Receives***

- A. There is a maxim that states, “As goes the pulpit, so goes the church. We are no stronger than our diet.” Hence, if the present and future church is fed a tasteless diet 52 Sundays of the year of conversational-secular-narrative preaching wherein a personal trait of character is discussed, the future is bleak (2 Timothy 4:1-2). The same could be said of constant negative preaching to the neglect of Bible subjects that build faith such as prayer, trust, Heaven, etc.
- B. Surely God knew the type and quality of preaching needed to establish and maintain His church. The Holy Spirit supervised such preaching on Pentecost (John 14:26; 16:13). So what kind of preaching was done on that day in Acts 2?
  1. It had a constant appeal to the scriptures (vv. 17-21).
  2. It was centered on Christ (vv. 22-24).
  3. It reached a conclusion and definitive deduction (v. 36).
  4. It convicted of sin (v. 36).
  5. It called for a change in conduct (v. 37).
  6. It gave the plan of salvation (v. 37).
  7. It resulted in membership in the Lord’s church (vv. 41, 47).

## ***III. It Depends On How Well The Church Is Indoctrinated***

- A. The gospel begins with doctrine (Romans 6:16-18) and continues on doctrine (Acts 2:42). Doctrine is the key word of three epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and

Titus). This doctrine must be put in the hearts and minds of all church members (Psalm 119:11; 1 John 3:9).

- B. A Christian ignorant of the Bible is the target of every wind of doctrine that blows (Judges 2:10-15; Matthew 22:29). How many could prove there is a God, prove that believing and being baptized is tantamount to the new birth, or prove that the use of mechanical instruments of music is sinful?
- C. The fundamentals of the gospel must be taught. How one enters the church, how one worships, how one lives, etc. must constantly be taught and repeated. We will lose the battle unless these are emphasized again and again (2 Peter 1:12-13, 15; 3:1).
- D. In our Bible classes we must cease teaching only stories. When the account of Noah is taught, children need to know that there was one ark, it had to be built according to the pattern, a person had to get into it to be saved, etc. Then, in the antitype, children learn about the one church.

#### ***IV. It Depends On How Well The Church Retains Its Uniqueness***

- A. The Lord's church is unique in its existence, its designations, its worship, its mission, its organization, its terms of membership, and in its destiny.
- B. However, this uniqueness can be challenged and destroyed. When these characteristics just mentioned are disparagingly reflected on, when they are not adhered to, when they are not jealously guarded, apostasy is imminent and mixture with denominations is inevitable. The Bible writers warned us that falling away is inevitable (Acts 20:29-30; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-5; 1 Timothy 4:1-3).
- C. Seeds are being sown literally as we speak. Many recent practices show just how far we have moved toward the denominational world. Interdenominational meetings, ministerial alliances, participation in retreats and homecomings demonstrate the closeness we now share with other apostate groups in the religious world.

**Conclusion.** When the Lord comes again and examines His church, what part will we individually play? These four areas are crucial to the church's continued existence, and we want the next generation to experience the New Testament church in its purest form. Our next lesson will analyze four more necessary points of agreement which demonstrate if the Lord can find faith in His church when He comes again.