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THIS NEWSPAPER**

COMPARE & CONTRAST

COMPARE & CONTRAST, "The Holy Spirit dwelling in you" phrase in these Scriptures. .. 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 1 Corinthians 3:16



1 Cor. 6:19 - This verse is referring to the Holy Spirit indwelling an individual, a human being. When one is saved and redeemed from his sins, the physical body is indwelt by the Holy Ghost. This is where we get the phrase "ask Jesus into your heart". (Rom. 8:18-27; 1 Cor. 15:51-55) This physical body is adopted and entered into by the Holy Ghost. He is "within" those of us that are saved. When one is saved, Jesus does not leave the right hand of His father and dwell in that person's soul. However, the Spirit of God does indwell the believer upon **PAGE 8** receipt of God's salvation. This

passage in chapter 6, specifically verses 15 through 20, is specifically speaking about our physical bodies. It points out that our bodies are the physical dwelling place of the Holy Ghost and whatever things we expose or subject our body to, either good or evil, we are submitting and subjecting God and His Spirit to them as well.



1 Cor. 3:16 - This verse is referring to the Holy Spirit dwelling in and amongst a New Testament church body. The New Testament church is also the temple and the dwelling place of the Holy Ghost, in His office as Comforter. Verse 17 tells us this body is "holy". It has been bought, purchased, and separated by Jesus Christ, its Husband, Founder, and Purchaser. This

verse is not speaking about an individual, human body, because our bodies of flesh are not "holy". Verse 9 refers to this body as God's husbandry and using the plural word "laborers". This indicates more than one subject. Again, not an individual human, but many members making up God's building. (1 Cor. 12:12-14, 20-27)



We know that members of a local church are all members of the same body. The Holy Ghost indwells this body, the church, as Comforter. He works and performs His duties, as Comforter, here within this body. (John 14:16-18, 15:26-27, 16:7-15; Acts 1:8) Jesus promised the church body would receive another Comforter once He departed.

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" 1Corinthians 14:8

The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls..." Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith March 2013 Issue

TATTOOING

This modern trend of the world has begun to creep into the LORD'S New Testament churches. As we consider the Biblical position and historical position on this practice of tattooing, let us search our hearts to see if God is pleased with His people taking part in this practice.

As a preface to this article, we are considering people who are members of one of the LORD'S bodies beginning to practice tattooing, and not the people of the world that come to the LORD'S churches already having practiced this. However, it will be made clear by Scripture how the LORD feels concerning this, and historically how it has not been so among His people. Therefore, it should not be praised or uplifted before our young people as something that is "beautiful" or accepted.

First of all, let's look into the Old Testament for God's standard for His people, Israel. **Leviticus 19:26-31** says, "Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times. Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard. Ye shall not make any cuttings in

your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD. Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness. Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD. Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God." Let's first consider verse 28. The word "cuttings" means "an incision; cutting". It comes from another word meaning "to gash; make cuttings". The word tattooing is defined as "to mark a person, or a part of the body, with an indelible design by inserting pigment into punctures in the skin". By definition and harmonizing of the Scriptures, we understand this verse is directly referring to tattooing. God never intended His people, Israel, to participate in tattooing.

Let's consider the whole passage now in order to understand why God was dealing with tattooing at all. As you read verses 26-31 in Leviticus 19, you find a whole array of commands that on first blush seem to be random, without association. However, if

one looks into some historical facts of that time period, you will find that all of these things listed: enchantments, observing times, rounding corners of hair and beard, tattooing, prostitution, familiar spirits, and wizards, were all a part of the "pagan" and "heathen" worship of this time.

There have been many documented findings that show this practice of tattooing being used for thousands of years before Christ in the Egyptian culture. Other discoveries have shown that tattooing was used in Greco-Roman culture with evidences found in Crete, Greece, Persia, Arabia, and the areas of today's modern Italy, Austria, Siberia, Southeast Asia, as well as many others. In some of the most early findings, the Dacians, Thracians, Illyrians, and Pazyryks were all involved in Paleo-Balkan Mythology and used these practices, including tattooing, in their religious rituals. God included all of these practices in Leviticus 19 because the false worshippers of that day were using them as a celebration and "rite" in their idolatry. Their pagan worship included worshipping the creation more than the

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MAJORING MINORS

Does a time of church services make a church Scriptural? Or do the teachings, the practices, and the origin make a church Scriptural?

We see in the Word of God that God spends a great deal of time admonishing his people to focus on what's really important. God's teachings of what a Scriptural New Testament church is to teach, God's teaching on what a Scriptural N.T. church is to practice, and God's teaching of where a Scriptural N.T. church is to come from is what makes a church Scriptural. (Eph. 4:5; 2:20-22; Col. 1:17-23; Acts 11:19-20; 8:14-17) In fact, we are admonished by God not to be tossed. "... That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;" (Eph. 4:13-14) "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the LORD, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:6-8) There seems to be more and more philosophy (man's beliefs) that is put forth as doctrine.

The time of services has nothing to do with the Scripturality of a church, ("Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday. . ." (Col. 2:16) but the doctrines that are taught, practiced, and the origin of a N.T. church. News flash! In every Scriptural church, all the way back to the first church that Christ started, (Matt. 4:12-22; 18:18) each independent body decided at what time, and day, and when they would meet. They de-

ecided that based upon, no doubt, the example in the Scriptures about the first day of the week, (1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7) traditions of when times were held, and what worked the best for that independent body.

If you want to address a growing trend amongst the LORD'S N.T. churches that is dangerous and can effect the Scripturality of a church, it's the practice of dropping Sunday School and Baptist Training Course (BTC) at night, as well as mid-week services. Did all our Baptist forefathers have these? No. Do they add and strengthen a church? Yes. Is there a danger in dropping these? Yes. (Heb. 10:25-31) Are these services dropped mainly because the LORD'S people allow the world to take precedence over our lives and God's will is not the preeminence? Yes. (Col. 1:17-18; Matt. 6:33) Could a church that begins down this road eventually fall away from the truth? Yes. The less influence the LORD has in our life, the greater influence Satan and the flesh have.

Let us focus on what's important for a church to grow and stay Scriptural. "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." (Acts 16:5) That faith is a system of doctrine and teachings that are found in the Word of God. Matthew 15:9 warns us about teaching our ideas for doctrines. If we follow down this road the next teaching might be that we can't take the LORD'S Supper on Sunday morning because it's called "supper", or there is no leadership of the Holy Spirit because the message was only twenty minutes long and not an hour? The LORD expects His churches to serve Him according to the Scriptures. Let's stick to the Scriptures and allow the Holy Spirit to direct our paths instead of the way of man's ideology.

SURRENDERING IS THE HARDEST PART

The realization that the LORD was actually calling you into the ministry didn't really make its impact upon you until you had single-handedly torn up three churches, caused the early retirement of four preachers, talked eight deacons into surrendering their ordination papers, sent the wife and kids to her mother's house, bought a new car, wrecked it, got out of the hospital after eight weeks in traction, went home to discover your house had burned down and the only things the firemen could save was your Bible, suit, and new pair of shoes.

Upon realizing that this is what the LORD had been gently nudging your conscience with, you grudgingly accepted the call to preach. It was going to be hard having to swallow all of those statements about how you would never be a preacher.

The church was very supportive and encouraging though, when you told them, of course, it took fifteen minutes to get order restored among the congregation and another ten minutes to get the deacons off the floor and their laughter subsided.

You went through the usual stages of a young preacher. You know, the part where your head would barely fit in the auditorium, seven new suits, trying to prove how much more knowledgeable you were in the Scriptures than your pastor. Those first "sermons", preaching on everyone else's sins, insisting your wife dust your pedestal in front of the church, so everyone could see she was in subjection to you, and generally convincing the membership that in your case, maybe God should have used the donkey, instead of you.

Now you are four years down the road, pastoring your first church. Remember how much you wondered the past four years when the LORD was going to judge you for running from the ministry? Yep, those four preachers in early retirement and eight deacons that surrendered their papers are in your congregation - so is your mother-in-law, and half of the mem-

bers from the three churches you tore up.

It's a frightening thing to stand before the membership of your first church, (especially this one), and preach your first sermon as their new pastor. However, you made it through with only a few problems. Four of the ex-deacons were rolling in the aisle laughing when you got to the part in your sermon about everyone sticking with their commitments in the church. One of the retired preachers fell asleep during the opening prayer, another debated with you for twenty minutes on a doctrinal issue, and the other two joined the four ex-deacons in the aisle.

Undaunted by the few obstacles in your path, (thirty-six members from the churches you tore up), you set about fulfilling your duties as "pastor". You start at five a.m., a quick shower, and a cup of coffee. Sixty minutes of study, clean shirt, and you are ready to face the day. By six-thirty a.m. your day is lined out. You have two marriages to salvage, nine sick members to visit, (They've been ill since the church voted to call you as their pastor.) the thirty-six disgruntled church members to encourage, eight ex-deacons to admonish, and supper with your mother-in-law at six p.m., Bible study at seven p.m., and in your spare time, you have to visit the visitors that were in services.


The years speed by and you finally feel you are making progress. Naturally, attendance has slacked off somewhat, but you expected that. Now you are down to the core of the church - the committed ones. Actually, all that is left is your wife, kids, mother-in-law, four retired preachers, eight ex-deacons, and thirty-six disgruntled church members. You think the LORD is about through judging you by now. You're pretty proud of yourself for coming through all of this and not quitting during the "rough" times.

Your hair is turning white, you've got a few more wrinkles, you aren't quite as energetic as you once were, but all in all, you

have fared pretty well. Things are getting better.

One night, while delivering one of your well-prepared sermons, you notice one of your ex-deacon's sons. He seems to be extremely troubled. After services, you attempt to counsel with him and perhaps help him in some manner. He shuns your attempts at conversation and continues on his way. After three months of this, you decide the young man is just going through some stage of growth and turn it over to the LORD to deal with.

Two weeks later, at four a.m., you are awakened by an angry crowd outside of the parsonage. You quickly send your wife and kids to her mother's house, then look out the window and see your thirty-six disgruntled church members, four retired preachers, eight ex-deacons and one man leading all of them. You can't quite make out who he is, but you figure that maybe you better just sneak out of the house and deal with them after they have calmed down. You jump in the new car you just bought and speed down the street. Lying in the hospital bed, after six weeks in traction from the automobile accident, you receive a visitor. It's the ex-deacon's son that was so troubled a few months before. He comes in looking rather sheepish, and begins apologizing. He explains that he was the one that was leading the angry church members the night of the accident. It seems he had been having some problems and really couldn't understand how he could have gotten the thirty-six disgruntled church members, four retired preachers and eight ex-deacons to tear the church apart and burn the parsonage. He left the room and returned shortly with your best suit, Bible, and new pair of shoes - it was all the firemen could save. Oh, by the way, he finally realized the LORD wants him in the ministry.

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TATTOOING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 FUNCTIONS OF THE GATE



take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.” (Amos 5:10,12)

The gate area was also a place for justice to be decided and done, as we see in the time of Ruth and Boaz: “Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such an one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.” (Ruth 4:1-2)

During Judah’s captivity in Babylon, we see from a reference in Zechariah how the gates were used: “These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.” (Zechariah 8:16)

The six cities of refuge during the early days of national Jewish history show this same function of the gates of each city: “And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, . . .” (Joshua 20:4)

In times of the divided kingdom when Judah’s King Jehoshaphat came to Israel’s defense (King Ahab), the two kings formed their plan in a public ceremony in the gate of the city of Samaria. (I Kings 22:1-28)

Even gates in Persia were fashioned as a gathering place, to sit and “people-watch,” as Mordecai did in the book of Esther: “In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king’s gate, two of the king’s chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to

Creator as Romans 1:18-25 says, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”

As we have now seen, tattooing began as a direct practice related to false worship, paganism, and heathenism. II Corinthians 6:16-18 says, “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty.” There are those that will try to argue that Leviticus is under the Old Testament law and is not in effect today. As we read here in the New Testament, we, as God’s people

today, are not to have anything to do with the worship of idols. Can we be in agreement with the “temple of God”, one of the LORD’S New Testament churches, and be involved in these practices that are originated and centered around idolatry? According to these verses in II Corinthians 6, we absolutely cannot!

II Thessalonians 5:22 says, “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” Can we appear Godly while participating in this ritual of false worship? Can we abstain from appearing evil while being a part of the pagan religious rite? I Corinthians 6:13-30 says, “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the LORD is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Can we glorify God with that which pertains to the devil by false worship and idolatry? No, we cannot.

I Corinthians 10:20-23 says, “But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the LORD, and the cup of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the LORD’S table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the LORD to jealousy? Are we stronger than He: All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.” We must choose.

We can’t glorify God while holding on to the world at the same time. We cannot glorify God with that which pertains to devils. We are under the New Testament law of grace, but not all things are expedient because they do not edify to more Godliness. Considering the history of tattooing, and how the LORD feels about His people being like the world, how does a tattoo edify the LORD and His work? It cannot. Besides, God doesn’t want anything to do with those things that have fellowship, or agreement, with the things of the devil.

As we have considered the Word concerning this modern day practice, we should understand that God would not have His people to engage in tattooing. God’s people down through the ages have rebuked and denied tattooing as a “Godly” practice because the Word of God in examples and teaching denies it. Hebrews 10:26 says, “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” If we purposefully plan to go against the Word of God it is a willful sin. God takes willful sin very seriously. James 4:17 says, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” When a member of a N. T. church participates in tattooing, it is grievous. It causes the world to see that the espoused bride of Christ is no different than the world.

According to I Corinthians 6:19-20, after someone is born again, they belong to God. As members of one of the LORD’S churches, we have been bought with a price. We should not be “marked” or “identified” with the world. Do we have the “right” to do as we please in this time of grace and freedom? No, according to the Word we are purchased. It is time to consider and choose to “whom” we belong and then show that difference.

“And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it [the city]: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.” (Revelation 21: 24-25)

From the above verse, we can see that the nations of the saved will live outside of the holy city, and we know from a later verse that those not in the Bride of Christ will not be allowed in the city. Yet the above verse says that kings do bring their honor and glory into it. They can’t bring something in without coming in themselves. Since God never contradicts Himself, it is up to us to dig deeper to understand how these two supposedly opposing statements can both be true.

How can the kings of the earth bring their honor and glory into the city when they will not be allowed in? The answer lies in the function of the gate of Biblical cities. To understand the significance of the twelve gates of the new city, Jerusalem, we must take an in-depth look at the gates of cities in Biblical times.

Since the gate to a city was a potential weak point in its defense, it was a heavily guarded and fortified spot in the city wall. Often the gates had towers to serve as lookout posts. We know this to be true in the case of Sodom because by bedtime, the men of the city knew about the two men that had come into the city, even though Lot had greeted them at the gate and taken them immediately to his house. Later, during David’s time, David is sitting between the gates of Mahanaim, and the watchman in the tower sees a runner coming with news of the approach of Absalom’s forces. (Genesis 19: 1-4; II Samuel 18:24-26)

The gates of ancient cities became more sophisticated as time went on. Pairs of gates were positioned at ninety degrees to one another so the rushing attackers

would have to make a blind turn. Archaeological digs reveal that even more complex designs of zigzag entry, involving three gates instead of two, were developed. Looking at artists’ reconstructions of ancient cities, as well as pictures of archaeological digs, the gates of the cities were even sometimes cased in their own building, with one exit to the outside and one into the city itself. (The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times, Ralph Gower, 2004, pages 174-177)

The acoustics of the gate area with its high walls made it ideal for public speaking, and benches were positioned around the perimeter. “And he [Hezekiah] . . . gathered the people together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them. . .” (II Chronicles 32:6)

The complex and sophisticated design of the gate served a purpose in peacetime, as well. The gate area was a good place for public meetings and announcements. “She [wisdom] crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates; in the city she uttereth her words. . .” (Proverbs 1:21-22)

The gate area was a place for social gatherings, as we can see in Psalm 69:12 during King David’s time. “They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.”

This was still true even much later when Amos was penning Scripture, during the time of King Uzziah: “They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.” “For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they

WHO - HOW - WHERE - WHAT

In this world there is a lot of confusion about what a "church" is. There are just so many different churches out there and they all seem to have a good reason why they are "serving" God. With so many different view points and ways to believe, it has never been more important to search the Scriptures. ["Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39](#)

What a New Testament church is and does really can't be explained in one article. There is, however, a very good definition of what a New Testament church is:

"A local, legal, visible called out assembly of Scripturally saved, Scripturally baptized believers, covenanted together under New Testament law, with the Holy Spirit as Comforter dwelling in their midst, and an unbroken lineage back to the first church that Jesus started on the sea shores of Galilee, with the purpose of carrying out the great commission."

This is quite a mouthful, but as we break it down, we can understand what a N. T. church is, **who** makes it up, **how** it has life, **where** it started, and **what** it is supposed to do on this earth. Let's break it down to understand this definition better.

WHO

MAKES UP A CHURCH

The first phrase: "A local, legal, visible called out assembly". Local, being in one place; legal, being in accord with the Bible teaching; and visible, being able to be seen.

Local bodies - [Gal. 1:2](#) "...unto the churches of Galatia:" [1 Cor. 1:2](#) "Unto the church of God which is a Corinth..." [Rom. 16:3-5](#) "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have **PAGE 4** for my life laid down their

[own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house...](#)

Many times the Bible is so simple that it takes us by surprise and we miss the very obvious. In these three passages we see a very simple truth. These letters in the Bible were written to, or spoke about "local, legal, visible bodies". Galatia is a region or an area like Oregon. If I were to write a letter to the churches of Oregon, I would be talking to multiple, local, visible churches. In the book of Corinthians, we see that the letter was addressed to a specific church, and not the whole town. ("the church which is at Corinth") Finally, we see in Romans that Paul talks about multiple churches of the Gentiles, and a specific church in someone's house. You can't get more local or visible than inside somebody's house.

The phrase "legal" sometimes throws people off. Don't let it; it really is simple. [2 Tim. 2:5](#) "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." The Bible makes it very clear if you want to please and serve God, you have to serve Him according to His laws.

The next phrase, "called out assembly", is also very easy to understand. When Jesus started His N. T. church, He called people to enter His assembly. Likewise, a body or group of individuals that call themselves a church have to be called by God. The next question you might ask is, "How does a group of individuals get called?" In [Acts 8:14-17](#), we see that the only way for a group of individuals to be a "called out assembly" is to start from another church. A group of individuals in Samaria wanted to follow Jesus to serve Him, but before they

were able to do this, they had to be a church. The church in Jerusalem sent two brothers from the local body in Jerusalem with the authority to start a brand new church in Samaria. We see this same process all throughout the book of Acts. The most well known is Paul being sent with the authority from the church in Antioch. [Acts 13:1-3](#)

"Scripturally saved, Scripturally baptized" - In order for a church to be one of Jesus' churches, it must have members who are saved and baptized as the Bible teaches. Salvation. [Eph. 2:8-9](#) "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." This is the only way to have Scriptural salvation. Scriptural baptism can be summed up in 5 points.

*1 PROPER CANDIDATE - One must be saved before he can be baptized. [Acts 8:36-37](#)

*2 PROPER MODE - One must be fully immersed in water. [Rom. 6:4](#); [John 1:33](#)

*3 PROPER MOTIVE - In order to join yourself to a N. T. church. [Acts 2:41](#)

*4 PROPER ADMINISTRATOR - Only a God-called ordained man can perform a baptism. [John 1:6](#); [Acts 19:1-5](#)

*5 PROPER AUTHORITY- A New Testament church is the only institution on the earth that has the authority to baptize. (and the only way that Jesus approved of) [Matt. 28:18-20](#)

"covenanted together under New Testament law" - This little phrase of the definition is quite a large and deep subject to understand. It can, however, be summed up fairly easily. In [Heb. 9:9-28](#), we see that Jesus instituted a New Testament. (contract binding upon one's death, as the phrase "last will and testament") Take these

verses, then add [John 1:17 and Rom. 5:2](#). We see that it is grace that Jesus brought and grace is how we stand. This New Testament is the testament of grace. To put it another way, you and I stand and abide on Jesus. Being covenanted together, in a church, abiding under this New Testament, leaves out a lot of things that churches today like to live by, namely works. The Old Testament law was a physical or carnal covenant. The New Testament is not about the carnal works, but how you surrender to Jesus to let Him do the work through you.

HOW

THE CHURCH HAS LIFE

The next phrase is perhaps the most divisive phrase out of this definition. "with the Holy Spirit as Comforter dwelling in their midst" - This statement declares that not every church has God in their midst. It also declares that although you may be saved,

FUNCTIONS OF THE GATE

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Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen;. . ." (Esther 2:21-22)

The gates of cities in Bible times, more aptly named "gate areas," during peacetime were places of social gathering, buying and selling, justice, and just hanging around. It is easy to see that the gates were large areas where people congregated, outside of the narrow and often dark streets within the city itself. (Manners and Customs of Bible Times, Ralph Gower, 2004, pages 176-178)

Biblical cities shed light on the verse in Revelation concerning the new city, Jerusalem. The twelve gates of that city will be large areas, elaborate and ornate. There, in

and have the Holy Spirit within you, if you are not a part of one of Jesus' N. T. churches, you do not have the Comforter. He is the only life inside a N. T. church. These are two very bold statements that make a lot of people very nervous, but the truth is not about making someone comfortable. It's about following what God says, not what I feel. To understand this subject, you will need to break down John chapters 13-17. There is no time to do this in this article, so I will sum it up. In John chapter 13, Jesus begins to speak only to His N. T. church and continues until the 16th chapter. [John 14:16-17](#) "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall

[be in you."](#) (JESUS IS SPEAKING TO HIS CHURCH, SO "BE IN YOU" REFERS TO THE N. T. CHURCH) In these two verses, Jesus declares that there is a Comforter, that He is given only to His N. T. church, this Comforter gives truth, and the world cannot receive this Comforter. This is not saying that salvation is in the church. Salvation is not in the church. Jesus' churches preach salvation, but salvation is not in the church. What is in a church is the life of a N. T. church, the Holy Spirit as Comforter.

WHERE

THE CHURCH STARTED

"and an unbroken lineage back to the first church that Jesus started on the sea shores of Galilee" - This phrase really doesn't need much explanation. To be a true church, you have to have an unbroken chain back to the first church that Jesus started. [Matt. 4:12-17](#) Jesus started His N. T. church. All throughout the book of Acts we see one church starting another such, as in [Acts 8:14-17](#) where the church in Jerusalem started the church in Samaria.

WHAT

THE CHURCH IS TO DO

The last phrase *"with the purpose of carrying out the great commission"* can be seen in [Matt. 28:18-20](#). This last commandment given by Jesus gives a N. T. church a purpose, a reason to be. It's not to feed the poor; it is to preach the gospel. Although by feeding the poor you might be able to reach people with the gospel, the purpose is to Go, Teach (salvation), Baptize, and Teach. (all things)

Study this out for yourself. Find out if what I have written is in accord with the Bible. If the Bible declares it, make sure that you are in one of the LORD'S N. T. churches.