

Chapter Two – “Re-Examining Our Concepts of Church – Part I”

What is church? What or who is *the* Church? Depending upon one’s background and Christian training, each of us will answer these questions somewhat differently. What is imperative to uncover, however, is not what each of *us* supposes regarding “church”, but rather what God says! What does the Bible reveal about the concept of church at its most fundamental level? What is essential biblical church and how does it differ from our own concepts of church?

In seeking to rediscover the vibrancy of the early Church, some modern leaders have tried to adopt the first century model of church, assuming it to be the only valid one. But is their supposition correct? Harold Eberle challenges this assumption in his book, *The Complete Wineskin*. He notes that some Christians today are obsessed with the idea of going back to the early Church methods in every way, but opines that such efforts are “vain and unscriptural”.¹ The early Church was actually the church in its infancy. We might ask rhetorically, then, “Does God really want to replicate exactly the same thing today?” Our Creator is continually creating and doing new things – moving, shifting, honing, and transforming. He does not remain static. Trying to pattern what we do after what someone else did is usually a recipe for mediocrity and greater institutionalism. Biblically, God always gave His people a specific plan for each battle or circumstance they faced. We need to get the Lord’s direction and follow His leading. Each group of people in every time and place is somewhat different, with varying personalities and needs. The Lord’s plans and strategies are uniquely tailored to a given time, place and group of people. He will guide by His Spirit our expression of Church and life together *if* we will allow Him the liberty to do so.

Though we are not advocating a replication of the first century church model, it behooves us to understand that there are *principles* found in the New Testament which transcend time and culture. These principles reveal to us God’s ongoing plan and purpose for His Church, and how we are to relate to Him as well as to one another. They essentially define for us what Church is meant to be.

Defining the “Real Thing”

The two of us several years ago watched an episode of the television program “Smallville”, which we found very interesting. For those not familiar with this program, it was the story of Superman’s early days growing up as Clark Kent on a farm in middle America. In this episode, Clark tried to rescue another student during a storm. Both were struck by lightning, resulting in Clark’s superpowers being transferred to the other boy for a period of time. Clark was devastated at having lost something so precious. But his father said some something to him that was rather profound. We believe it is a thought provoking consideration for the Church as well. He said, “Clark, your gifts are a part of who you are, but they don’t *define* you.” His father was explaining to the young man that, although he had always had these superpowers, he existed separately and apart from these accoutrements. Similarly, the trappings that we have ascribed to church may be nice, but they do not define what church is really all about! We have in many instances made the mistake of defining church by these things and missing the real substance of it.

First, let’s look at what how the Bible defines “church”. The word used in the original language of the New Testament is the Greek word *ekklesia*. It means those who are “called out” or a gathering of such people. In the secular world of the first century, an *ekklesia* was a political assembly of citizens

¹ Harold R.Eberle, *The Complete Wineskin* (Winepress Publishing, Yakima, WA, 1993), p. 94.

convened to make decisions or issue judgments.² Christians are citizens of a heavenly kingdom, Christ's ambassadors designed to reveal Him and His will. As such, we are called not to issue our own judgments, but to enforce *His*. Authority has been delegated to His Body to execute His will in the earth. Psalm 150 reveals that even under the old covenant, God's people had authority as executors of His will to enforce His judgments and decrees.^a According to Hebrews 8:6, we now have a *better* covenant based on even *better* promises. God's eternal purpose for the Church in this regard may also be seen in the book of Ephesians. He describes His intent this way:

“ ... to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” (Ephesians 3:10-12)

It is the *ekklesia* who are called to proclaim and demonstrate the mind, heart, will and purposes of God – not only to a lost and dying world, but also to the kingdom of darkness! It is the *ekklesia*, His Body on this earth, who are called to stand as living epistles and vessels of honor through whom His glory might be made known. This does not necessarily happen through the words that we speak or the ceremonies we conduct on Sunday mornings. His glory is more completely revealed to those around us through the transformation of our lives.

The concept of the Church is a New Testament one, although there was a foreshadowing of it in the Old Testament. A foreshadow is a glimpse in the Old Testament of something that would become a spiritual reality through Christ. We see such a foreshadowing in the Israelites as God's “chosen people”. The Father knew from the beginning that they would stray from Him repeatedly and reject His Son, before He ever set them apart as His “chosen people”. However, their history, with all its ups and downs, provided a necessary demonstration of (1) His desire for a people to love, who would freely love Him in return and serve Him with all of their hearts; (2) the inability of man to do so in his own strength and of his own volition; and (3) our need for a Savior and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Through the repeated stumbling of the Jewish nation in this regard, Jehovah was revealing to mankind why it was necessary for the Son to be sent and preparing the world to receive Him! The Jewish people still have a special place in God's heart, however, and every opportunity to be chosen of Him, as they come to Him through the atonement provided by Jesus at the cross.^b Those who come to the Father through Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile, become part of the *ekklesia* or Church.

The New Testament shows us that God actually planned the Church from *before* the beginning! It reveals that the Church existed *before the foundation of the world*.^c Revelation 13:8 and 1 Peter 1:19 reveal that Jesus was the Lamb slain *from the foundation of the world*. Provision was already made for our sin through the blood of Jesus before we ever existed. Isn't that incredible?

► Preparation was made for the birth of the Church, those who would be saved through the shed blood of the Lamb, before the first day of creation. The Church was planned and conceived in the Father's heart and mind before He created the first human being!

The New Testament presents the Church as those who are “chosen” (also “elect” or “called”, depending upon the translation) because they have chosen Jesus.^d They are those who have answered God's call^e and responded to the outpouring of His love by choosing to return it and to follow Him.^f It reveals the *ekklesia* or Church as those who have entered the household of faith through the new and living way provided by the blood of Jesus and His sacrificial death upon the cross.^g

² Steve Atkerson, Ed., *Towards a House Church Theology* (New Testament Restoration Foundation, Atlanta, 1996), pp. 63-64.

► In the New Testament, we find that the ‘ekklesia’ is always a group of people or a gathering of God’s people. The word never refers to a building or a worship service!

Therefore, the phrase “going to church” in its modern usage is technically not a biblical one. We’ve heard some teach that “Jesus commands us to go to church.” Such a statement is inaccurate. We cannot *go to* something that we *are!* We are admonished by the author of Hebrews not to forsake gathering together,^h but this gathering together can - and *should* - take a variety of forms. Yes, there is a biblical precedent for gathering together for the purpose of encouraging, exhorting, teaching, corporate worship and prayer. There were different types of gatherings mentioned in the New Testament – big ones, little ones, evangelistic meetings, meetings that focused on teaching or equipping, ones that met in homes and others that met, more rarely, in halls or outdoors. However, these gatherings had little semblance to what we call “church” today.

It appears that the majority of early Church gatherings were informal, daily, and met in homes. *These meetings were not pastor-led*, at least in the way that we might think. There was no pulpit, no platform, no choir, and no church building. Further, everyone was encouraged to actively participate! Even though there were leaders, it was a gathering of equals, meeting together to strengthen and sharpen one another. *Each* was encouraged to give, share and serve in some way to benefit or edify the others.ⁱ Though there were a variety of giftings and callings in evidence, none of these things elevated one person above another or suggested that one person was “more spiritual” than another. They simply defined the function of that person within the group and how they served to edify and strengthen the group as a whole.

The life of Jesus and the *dunamis* power of the Holy Spirit spilled out of these early Christians because they were transformed, excited, and eager to press more firmly into the Christ life, as well as share this life with others. We see this picture of “church” in the New Testament as *the* Church gathered together.

► They didn’t go to church. They were the Church. What happened when they were together was simply a natural outflowing of who they were in Him!

Jesus now defined their life and their focus. *His* name gave them a new identity as “Christians”. *His* blood translated them from death to life. They had been birthed anew into *His* family. It was now *His* power that enabled them, *His* vision that invigorated them, *His* heart that motivated them and *His* plan and purposes that directed them. When they got together, *Jesus* was lifted up, *Jesus* was glorified and it was more of *Jesus* that they sought. When they gathered, one, two or more, He was in their midst and incredible things happened in His presence. When they joined together, the Holy Spirit orchestrated their meeting and Jesus the Head was revealed in fullness through His Body! Does this describe “church” as you know it?

Some Key Characteristics of Biblical Church

We discover some fundamental tenets of biblical church through studying the New Testament. As we look more closely at the teaching and practice of the early Church, a picture is painted for us of what God’s original intent was, and still is, for the Church.

1. First and foremost, we see God’s purpose for the Church TO BE ... His!!

We are the Lord’s handiwork and creation. He is more interested in who we are and who we are becoming than in what we are accomplishing. While we *are* created for good works in Christ,^j they will never be *His* works until we are rightly related to Him and understand who He is in us.

More specifically, we are called *TO BE* His children,^k His sons,^l His bride,^m His family/household,ⁿ His body,^o His disciples,^p and His heirs^q.

Study of the New Testament also reveals His purpose for us *TO BE* branches abiding in the Vine,^r kings and priests before Him,^s His dwelling place, house or temple,^t an army,^u more than conquerors,^v living sacrifices,^w ambassadors for Christ/ministers of reconciliation,^x ministers of the new covenant/ministers of God,^y living epistles,^z salt and light,^{aa} the circumcision,^{bb} and vessels who carry His presence,^{cc} just to name a few!

As such, we are those called to *reveal* Jesus, *share* the good news, and *make known* the manifold wisdom of God to spiritual principalities and powers.^{dd} We are also those called *to be the executors of His will* in the earth.^{ee} Hallelujah!

2. Secondly, we see God's purpose for the Church (as the BODY of Christ on earth) to be composed of members who ALL relate directly to Jesus the Head, who are EACH enabled and empowered by His Spirit to be able ministers.

Revealed in both the teaching and function of the early Church is God's purpose for EVERY member of the Church to have a part to play and a valuable contribution to offer in the maturing process of the Body as a whole. Ephesians 4:15-16 explains that the Lord desires us to "*grow up in all things into Him who is the Head – Christ*" and that this happens in His entire Body as "*every joint supplies*" and "*as each part does its work.*"

The apostle Paul shares in 1 Corinthians 12:7 that "*the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.*" He then elaborates upon this, concluding in verse 11, "*But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*" In 1 Corinthians 14:26, he expands on this theme and describes how the early Church was intended to function,

"How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation."

In verse 31, he continues, "*For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.*" The picture he paints is one of mutual submission and mutual ministry, with the goal of mutual edification when the Church comes together!

With respect to mutual edification, the English word meaning "to edify" is from a Latin root meaning to build or build up. Building up, strengthening, and encouraging one another was important in the early Church. "*Let all things be done for edification,*" exhorted the apostle in 1 Corinthians 14:26. In fact, some form of the Greek signifying "to edify" is used 20 times in the New Testament.

Frank Viola, in *Rethinking the Wineskin*, shares about the practical outworking of the mutual submission/mutual ministry principle in the New Testament Church. He describes it as being a "round-table" approach where everyone was encouraged to contribute, rather than a "pulpit-pew" approach, which encourages an active few and a passive many.³ Today we offer opportunities for "Body ministry" (where members of the Body are allowed to minister to other members of the Body, with accompanying prerequisites and guidelines) and feel that we are on the cutting edge in doing so. But we have not come close to rediscovering or restoring the kind of "Body ministry" the early Church practiced! Rather than *allowing* the Body of believers to minister as we do today, they were,

³ Frank Viola, *Rethinking the Wineskin* (Present Testimony Ministry, 2001), p. 27.

in fact, the predominant ministers! The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, to which the modern church gives lip service, was actually part of the practice of the early Church.

The New Testament Scriptures are clear that each member of the Body of Christ is called, anointed, graced and gifted to minister in some way. In 1 Corinthians 7:17, the Apostle Paul teaches, “*But as God has distributed to **each one**, as the Lord has called **each one**, so let him walk.*” In Ephesians 4:7 he writes, “*But to **each one** of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.*” Peter had this same understanding and exhorts, “*As **each one** has received a gift [Greek *charisma* – gifting of grace by the Holy Spirit], minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*”^{ff} This same concept is shared a little differently in Ephesians 4:12, where we see an understanding in the early Church that the saints (the Greek meaning those consecrated to God) were called to do the work of the ministry, not a specialized group of professional ministers!

3. Next, we see in the New Testament God’s purpose to LIFT UP JESUS as the Head of the Church and keep Him CENTRAL in everything.

The Greek word *kephale* is used in the Scriptures to refer to a literal and physical head, such as in Matthew 6:17, “... anoint your head and wash your face.” But is also used in a figurative sense to mean “source” or “origin”⁴ Modern scholarship has unveiled other facets to the etymological significance of this word, showing it to also mean “source of life, top or crown, originator and completer.”⁵ So, when the letter to the Church in the city of Ephesus speaks of Jesus as “*head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all,*”^{gg} it is referring to Jesus as the Church’s source of life, the One with whom she is in intimate union, and the One who sustains and completes her. The letter to the Colossian church echoes this concept, “*And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church ... that in all things He may have the preeminence.*”^{hh}

The practical outworking of this in the early Church was that Jesus was central to everything; He *did* have the preeminence! HE was the focus, and room was given to His Spirit to reveal Him in whatever manner He chose. For this reason, the structure of the early Church was fluid and there existed a flexibility to flow with Him that we don’t often find in modern gatherings of the Church. As we read the historical accounts and teachings of the New Testament, it is impressed upon us that the early Church was guided by a fear of the Lord rather than fear of man. They feared missing His will, whereas today we seem to fear the consequences of straying from the program!

Eberle, in studying the difference between modern and early church gatherings, notes that when our focus becomes on what is practical, efficient, and financially feasible ... and when practical thinking replaces faith ... then what was a flowing spiritual body becomes a mechanistic organization.⁶ But because *Jesus* was the focus in the early church, and *His Spirit* the leader and director of Church life, His divine life permeated their gatherings and relationships. Because the structure of the gatherings was fluid and flexible, and each person was contributing what the Holy Spirit had given him or her, the diverse and dynamic gifts of the Spirit were in evidence. Miraculous things happened because people were rightly related to the Head, listening for His direction and given room to be obedient to His leading! We love the way that Jack Gray defines Church on His Pilgrim

⁴ Lawrence O. Richards, *The Word Bible Handbook*, (Word Books, Waco, 1982), p. 685.

⁵ Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, “What Does Kefale Mean in the New Testament?” in *Women, Authority and the Bible*, Alvera Michelsen, Ed. (InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, 1986), p. 105.

⁶ Harold R.Eberle, *The Complete Wineskin* (Winepress Publishing, Yakima, WA, 1993), pp. 74-75.

Path website – he says it is “Christ in living union with His people.”⁷ When He was in living union with His people in the first century, incredible things happened in their midst!

4. We also see God’s purpose for a Church BUILT BY HIM, of living stones built together in COMMUNITY, intimately related to one another and intimately related to Him!

Peter wrote, “*You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*”ⁱⁱ This verse is rich in implication, but let’s look at just a few things related to the idea of living stones. First, this verse suggests that God is doing the building, not men. Secondly, it reveals that the Church collectively is meant to be a dwelling place for the presence of God and a habitation for His glory, much like the Ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament. Next, the implication is that, as living stones built together, we are connected or joined together one to another in some tangible way. And finally, the verse suggests that together we become something, and are able to accomplish something, that we could not be or do alone!

The Apostle Paul counseled the Church in Rome that “*we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*”^{jj} The picture of the first century Church we see in the New Testament is that of a people related to one another through the risen Jesus Christ – He was the mortar holding the living stones together. Though sectarianism, heresies, and division over various things were evident, generally we see a people built together to manifest His glory. We do not see a people pushing and shoving each other to the side, in competition with one another, as we so often do today.

Reading the New Testament, we find descriptions of people in true fellowship – experiencing what the Bible calls *koinonia*. For example, Acts 2:42 tells us that, “*they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship [koinania], in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*” This Greek word conveys a meaning of deep fellowship or communion, with the idea of joint participation, community, and intimacy. They could experience unity because they were united around a Person, not a common vision. Because He was their Head and their Lord, they had the mind of Christ and were related to one another in the way God intended. Acts tells us that the 120 were in “one accord” before the Day of Pentecost,^{kk} on the Day of Pentecost,^{ll} and that the Church remained in “one accord” to a great degree thereafter.^{mmm} This word, according to Strong’s Enhanced Concordance, signifies, “one mind, one accord, one passion.” What if we were similarly in *koinania* and in one accord as the Church today? What an impact we would have on the world around us!

5. Next, God’s purpose for SERVANT LEADERSHIP in His Church is also taught and demonstrated in the New Testament.

Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 23:9-12,

“Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

And in Matthew 20:25-28,

⁷ Jack Gray, *The Pilgrim Path*, <http://thepilgrimpath.co.nz/articles.html#1>.

“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Similarly, Peter exhorted those in leadership not to lord over those entrusted to their care, but rather to lead by example.^{mn} The Greek translated “lord it over” means to exercise control over, hold in subjection or have power over. Like Jesus, the apostle Paul also talked about servanthood, writing in 1 Corinthians 9:19, “*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more.*” He also referred to fellow ministers as servants, as He did Tychicus in Colossians 4:7. Paul, though a strong leader, demonstrated servant leadership in his writings.^{oo}

Jesus identified one aspect of servant leadership as a willingness to serve others and lay down one’s life for the sheep. This is in contrast to our modern idea of leadership - where congregations are expected to serve their leaders! As we already mentioned, Peter identified another characteristic of servant leadership – that of leading by example rather than trying to force others to follow us or submit to us. In Paul’s writings, we see the servant leader’s heart – a heart demonstrating the heart of the Father, motivated by compassion and love for the saints as family.

Perhaps the idea of servant leadership was more easily embraced in the first century because leadership in the Church was not a profession. Gene Edwards points out in *Beyond Radical* that the [city] churches of the New Testament were begun by itinerant ministers, led by lay people, and they flourished.⁸ Leadership rose out of maturity, function and anointing in the Body of Christ. Titles or positions were not given to make people leaders. The elders ordained as servant leaders^{pp} were not people who were recognized as such because of their education. They were viewed as qualified leaders because of the maturity and anointing which rested upon their lives and ministries.⁹ We will discuss more completely the biblical concept of servant leadership, and how it might vary from that of the modern church system, in a later chapter.

6. Finally, the Scriptures reveal God’s purpose for a Church LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, not led by formulas or worldly strategies to reach worldly goals.

Even a cursory reading of the New Testament reveals that the early Church was following the leading of the Holy Spirit, not the latest formula for church growth. They were not focused on church growth at all. They were not trying to build a “biblical church”. In fact, *they were not trying to build a church at all!* The Church happened ... and then experienced a growth explosion ... because people encountered Jesus, received the Holy Spirit, and their lives were changed. It was not because an effective church growth strategy had been utilized! Or because they copied what someone else did, which seemed to have worked for them. They simply submitted to the leading of the Holy Spirit and followed His plan.^{qq}

A First Century Church Parable

Leah hurried along the narrow street, keeping an eye on the early morning sun as she made her way towards the home of Aquila and Priscilla. She fervently hoped that her new friend, Marcus, would be there this morning. Yesterday, when they had met at the home of Tiranus, he had been

⁸ Gene Edwards, *Beyond Radical* (The SeedSowers, Sargent, GA, 1999), pp. 61-93.

⁹ Guy Duffield and Nathaniel Van Cleave, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology* (L.I.F.E Bible College, Los Angeles, 1983), p. 423.

missing from the group. Tiranus told them all that Marc was ill with a fever and they had prayed for his healing. She knew Jesus could heal him because Jesus could do anything! He had certainly healed her heart of its hurt and bitterness after Marc had introduced her to Him last week. She had never felt so light and so free. *Jesus, she mused, what a wonderful Name. What a wonderful Savior You are!*

Within minutes, she was at the door of Aquila and Priscilla's home. Though their places of gathering were varied, Leah had been told, the home of this couple was a frequent meeting place. Though not much had been said about it, Leah understood that they functioned as leaders in this group. They simply radiated the love of God, and there was a quiet air of authority about them that was unique. Others in the group seemed to weigh heavily everything they had to say, and to go to them for counsel about various things. She had spoken with them several times over the past few days and had found them approachable, compassionate and interested in what she had to say.

"Leah!" She turned and saw Marcus gently making his way through the throng of children. "Thanks for praying for me yesterday. My fever broke soon afterwards and here I am, healthy as stubborn burro!"

He peered closely at her. "How are things going? Do you have more questions? Are you finding it any easier now to understand when the Lord is speaking to you?"

They chatted easily for a while. Leah thought Marcus seemed to have taken quite a personal interest in her, ever since they had met at the wedding of a friend and he had shared with her the truth about Jesus. He was always offering his help. She had never felt so loved and cared for, as she had these last few days in getting to know the followers of the Messiah.

Her thoughts were interrupted as Lydia, an older widow, got everyone's attention and shared some prayer needs. The meeting got underway as they sought the Lord together and worshipped, teaching one another through songs and exhortations, encouraging and praying for one another, and enjoying each other's company. Exciting reports were given of what God was doing around the city. Leah had also shared a prayer need with the group for the first time today. It concerned a problem at the vineyard where she worked. They had all laid hands on her and prayed that God would give her wisdom and discernment, as she sought to do His will in this situation. How incredible that had been! She'd felt the energizing power of the Holy Spirit pulse through her as the others prayed. It was awesome!

She'd also prayed for someone else today for the first time. She'd noticed a girl of about twelve over in the corner looking quite weepy. She looked around to see if anyone else had noticed and what they were going to do about it. Aquila caught her eye and smiled. Then he nodded slightly at her and she knew that she should be the one to go over and pray for the girl, whose name was Naomi. With fear and trepidation, she slipped over to the corner of the room and began to quietly pray for Naomi under her breath. At first, her words came hesitantly. But as she continued to pray, they began to roll off her tongue and flow in a beautiful and poetic way. She knew that the Holy Spirit was directing her prayer and that something powerful was happening! When she finished, she looked up and saw that Naomi had quit crying. Her face was radiant as she gave Leah a hug and her whispered thanks.

After the meeting was over and they had all visited for a while, Leah bid the others goodbye and headed off to work. She felt strengthened, encouraged and excited about all that God was doing - not only in her own life, but in the lives of this group of believers and in the city. She wanted to share it all with the people at the vineyard. They were so weighed down with the burdens of life that her heart just broke for them. Perhaps today she would have the opportunity she had been watching for! As she walked, she began to pray for the different co-workers that were coming to mind: Anna, Rebekah,

Miriam, Daniel, young Petros Her soft voice droned on as she made her way through the labyrinth of narrow stone passageways, a peaceful smile illuminating her youthful face.

Food For Thought

1. Which of the fundamental characteristics of biblical Church do you feel is the most important? Why?
2. How do you think someone today could function as a leader without a title or official position?
3. How might an emphasis on titles and positions in the Church slow the maturing of the Body of Christ and hinder individuals from fulfilling their destiny in the Lord?

^a (Psalm 150:6-9)

^b (Romans 10:1-13; Romans 11:7-12,32)

^c (Ephesians 1:4-5; Revelation 17:8; Matthew 25:34)

^d (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 2:4; Revelation 17:14; Matthew 22:1-14)

^e (Matthew 20:16; 22:14)

^f (Matthew 10:38; 8:22; John 12:26; 1 Peter 2:21)

^g (Hebrews 10:19-20; Romans 5:8-9; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:15-21; Ephesians 1:3-14; Acts 4:7-12)

^h (Hebrews 10:25)

ⁱ (1 Cor 14:26; 1 Peter 4:10-11)

^j (Ephesians 2:10)

^k (John 1:12; Rom 8:16; Phil 2:15; 1John 3:1-2)

^l (Rom 8:14; Gal 3:26; 4:5; Eph 1:5)

^m (Eph 5: 25-29, 31-32; Rom 7:4; Matt 25:1-13; John 3:28-30; Rev 21:2,9-10; 22:17)

ⁿ (Eph 3:14-15; Eph 2:19)

^o (Eph 4:15-16)

^p (John 15:8; 13:35; 8:31; Luke 14:26-27,33)

^q (Matt 25:34; Rom 8:16-17; Gal 3:29; 4:7; Eph 1:11,14; James 2:5)

^r (John 15:1-5)

^s (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:10)

^t (1 Pet 2:4-5; Eph 2:20-22; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:2-3,9-27)

^u (Eph 6:13-18; 2 Tim 2:3-4; 2 Cor 10:3-4; Phil 2:25; Philem 2)

^v (Rom 8:37)

^w (Rom 12:1-2)

^x (2 Cor 5:18-20)

^y (2 Cor 3:6; 2 Cor 6:4)

^z (2 Cor 3:2-3)

^{aa} (Matt 5:13-14; Eph 5:8; Phil 2:5)

^{bb} (Phil 3:3; Rom 2:29; Col 2:11)

^{cc} (2 Cor 4:7; 2Tim 2:21; Rom 9:23)

^{dd} (Ephesians 3:10-11)

^{ee} (Psalm 149:6-9)

^{ff} (1 Peter 4:10)

^{gg} (Ephesians 1:22-23)

^{hh} (Colossians 1:17-18)

ⁱⁱ (1 Peter 2:5)

^{jj} (Romans 12:5)

^{kk} (Acts 1:14)

^{ll} (Acts 2:1)

^{mm} (Acts 2:46; 4:24; 5:12; 8:6; 15:25)

ⁿⁿ (1 Peter 5:3)

^{oo} (See 2 Corinthians 12:15,19; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 3: 5-7; 4:14-16; 2 Corinthians 6:1; 11:7; Romans 1:12 and 7:15-25 as just a few examples)

^{pp} (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)

^{qq} (for example, see Acts 8:29; 11:12; 13:2,4; 15:28; 16:6)