

One Faith

Lesson 2:

Can Everyone Be Right?



Discovering God's Word

Bible Study Series

One Faith

Lesson 2: Can Everyone Be Right?

Learn that everyone who practices a form of "Christianity" cannot be right when they do not all believe, teach, and practice the same thing

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Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

Study Number: DGW34

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My plea: It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

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Lesson 2: Can Everyone Be Right?

In our first study, we discovered the truth from Ephesians 4:1-6 that there is only one faith (system of religion) that is acceptable to God. We also discussed why there are so many different churches today and considered a brief overview of “church history.”

Certainly there are many *different* religious beliefs and practices. There is Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and many others. Additionally, there are many *different* (so-called) “Christian” churches (i.e. Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Pentecostal, Lutheran, etc.).

Therefore, the question, “Are all churches equally acceptable to God?” is an important one. If the answer is “Yes, all churches are equally acceptable to God,” then you are free to belong to whichever church you desire. You can join a local Catholic Church, Baptist Church, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, Christian Church, Lutheran Church, Pentecostal Church, a “non-denominational” church – or any of the other churches in town! It doesn’t matter. Join whichever church you would like to join (whichever one fits you and your family best) – **if all churches are the same**, because your salvation will not be negatively impacted by your decision!

However, if the answer is “No, all churches are not equally acceptable to God,” then your soul’s salvation will be affected by your choice (so choose wisely)! Therefore, you will need to spend your time

searching for the truth so that you can be part of the church you can read about in the Bible!

I understand that, for many, this will be a consequential study. You may have life-long ties to one particular church. You may have family ties to one particular church. To accept the truth on the matter (as we will continue to see throughout this study), therefore, may make you unpopular among your peers, relatives, friends, etc. However, please understand that **nothing and nobody is more important than serving the Lord** (please take the time to read Matthew 10:34-39, Luke 14:25-33, and Matthew 16:26)!

So, what must be your guide in religion? What standard should you use to determine which church you should be a member of? Certainly it must *not* be your family members, friends, popular opinion, the majority, or your conscience. Rather, it must be God’s word – and God’s word only (since God’s word will be the criteria by which we will be judged, John 12:48; Revelation 20:11-15)!

As we continue our study of “One Faith,” let’s now ask a second question to investigate during this lesson: “Can everyone be right?” That is, are the Catholics as right as the Methodists – even though they believe and practice their “Christianity” differently? Are Baptists as right as Lutherans – even though they believe and practice their “Christianity” differently? Are Pentecostals as right as Jehovah’s Witnesses – even though they believe and practice their “Christianity” differently? What does the Scriptures teach about this important question? Let’s evaluate....

What Does God Expect?

In our first study, we saw that God did not create all of the religious diversity that currently exists in the world. Instead, the Scriptures indicate that there would be an apostasy (a falling away) from the one faith which would occur. It was this apostasy that led to the development of the many “Christian” churches we have in the world today – which all believe, teach, and practice different forms of “Christianity.” So, does God approve of this

religious diversity? Let's consider what God expects from those who claim to follow Him.

Unity!

We have clearly seen that God is not the origin of this religious diversity. He has designed a system in which there could be unity and has given His followers the responsibility to eagerly maintain this unity (Ephesians 4:1-6). In addition to this responsibility for unity that God has given us in Ephesians 4, let's consider some additional passages to see this same truth.

(1) John 17:20-23: "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

As you consider this passage, please appreciate the fact that these are the words of Jesus, as He is praying to His Heavenly Father. Also, please appreciate the fact that this prayer is offered shortly before Jesus is betrayed and arrested. Now, consider what you would be praying about – if you knew that you were going to experience severe persecution and death in the very near future. Certainly, you would be praying for the things that were most important to you.

In John 17, Jesus does exactly that. This prayer can be divided into three parts. In the first five verses, Jesus prayed for Himself. In verses 6-19, Jesus prayed for His current disciples (i.e. His disciples who were living at that time). Then, in verses 20-26, Jesus prayed for all those who would believe on Him through the word of His disciples. Therefore, Jesus was praying for those who would even be His disciples *today* (as we have all believed on Him through the teachings of the inspired writers who were living at that time)!

Now, consider what it was Jesus was so concerned about. Notably, verses 20-23 records

Jesus' prayer that these individuals would all be united! In fact, the degree to which Jesus wanted them (us) to be united is that they (we) would be as united as He and the Father are united! But, why would Jesus have such a concern about His followers being united?

Notice the reasons Jesus says this unity among His followers would be so important. In verse 21, Jesus said, "that the world may believe that You sent Me." In verse 23, Jesus said, "that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me." Notice how Jesus said the unity among His followers would have an influence on whether others would believe in Him or not! Therefore, Jesus knew that if His followers were united, it would help others to follow Him; but, if His followers were not united, it would hinder others from following Him.

Certainly, all of the religious division that is in existence throughout the world today has hindered the cause of Jesus Christ! Today, unbelievers look at this division – and they often think that the Bible cannot be understood (since they see so many disagreements among those who all profess to use the Bible as their guide). In addition, someone who is searching to follow Jesus Christ often does not know where to begin and which church to assemble with. So, Jesus' concern about division has become reality – as this division has negatively impacted His cause!

(2) 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

As Paul wrote the letter of 1 Corinthians, he addressed a number of different problems that had come to his attention. One of these problems was that of division in the church. Specifically, these individuals were dividing into different groups by saying that they were followers of different men (i.e. perhaps claiming to follow the ones who baptized them). So, verse 12 says that some of the Corinthians were claiming to follow Paul, some were claiming to follow Apollos, some were claiming to follow Peter (Cephas), and some were claiming to follow Christ.

There is simply no good reason to follow after any man. Notice the rhetorical questions Paul asked in verse 13: “Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” The obvious answer to these questions is, “No!” Jesus did not have a divided purpose. No mere man was crucified for our sins. And, baptism in any man’s name does no good! So, the only one we must follow is Jesus Christ! And, since Jesus Christ is not divided, there is no room for division among those who follow Him – and they must certainly never follow any men!

Therefore, in this section of Paul’s letter to the Corinthian Christians, He instructs them to be united! But, notice specifically the degree to which these individuals were to be united. They were to “speak the same thing,” there were to be “no divisions” among them, and they were to be “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

However, the religious division that exists in the world today makes it appear as if Jesus Christ was divided – and that God has permitted man to follow after other men. Certainly, the religious division in the world today does not demonstrate a desire to all be speaking the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment! Even the ecumenical movement that encourages unity among professing “Christians” (even though they are divided from one another) does not accomplish this!

(3) 1 Corinthians 12:25: “that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.”

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 is another section in the book of 1 Corinthians that encourages unity among the followers of Jesus Christ. Specifically, this section compares the church to a body, saying that each Christian is a member of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27) and has a special role/function within the body. Therefore, all of the members are not the same; but, they are all valuable to the overall health and function of the body.

In fact, the problem that Paul is attempting to correct in giving these instructions is that some of the Corinthian Christians believed that they were more

important to the church than others (because they had certain spiritual gifts). However, Paul says that each member has an equally significant contribution to make to the well-being of the church!

Therefore, Paul encourages them not to be divided; but, says that there must be no division (“schism”) in the body of Jesus Christ. Now, consider how many divisions currently exist in (so-called) “Christianity” today! Each separate denomination/church represents a division. And, there are even many divisions that are present within each church. Yet, Paul said that there should be no (zero) divisions in the body of Jesus Christ (remember, Jesus is not divided)!

(4) Philippians 1:27: “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

Notice the level of unity that was commanded of these Christians. They were to be working at unity – standing fast and striving for it! Again (like we have already seen), they were to be of “one spirit” and “one mind.” This language simply does not leave any room for division among Christ’s followers in their religious doctrines and practices.

Now, notice what they were to be united in: They were to be standing fast in one spirit, striving together with one mind for “the faith of the gospel.” Therefore, they were to be united in God’s word (the gospel, which reveals the one faith)! They were not to be united in the opinions, traditions, or teachings of men. They were not to be united in their agreement to disagree. They were to be united in their pursuit of the absolute truth that is contained within the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Clearly, as you consider all four of these passages, God commands and expects unity of those who profess to be His followers. And, it should also be clear that all the different (so-called) “Christian” churches and organizations that exist in the world today is evidence of the failure to be united in the faith of the gospel! So, after considering these passages, please understand that God is *not* pleased with the religious division that exists today – because He desires complete unity among those who follow

Him (as they should be striving together for the faith of the gospel)!

How can unity be accomplished?

In this world that is full of religious confusion, many would question whether unity is even possible. “Everyone has their own interpretation of what the Bible says.” So, can unity be accomplished? Can we understand the Bible alike?

Let’s begin to answer this question by observing the fact that God’s word is truth (John 17:17) and it is perfect (Psalm 19:7; James 1:25). Therefore, God’s word cannot teach opposing sides of the same issue (i.e. it does not teach baptism as being unnecessary for salvation *and* as being necessary for salvation). In addition, God did not give us a law that was too complicated to obey. As we have already seen, God expects us to be united. Why, then, would God (who is a just and fair God) give us law to follow that would breed nothing but confusion and division? Certainly, “God is not the author of confusion but of peace” (1 Corinthians 14:33) – and He has given us a law that can be understood and followed (see Ephesians 3:3-5 and Ephesians 5:17).

So, the problem of religious division (as we demonstrated in lesson 1) did not originate with God; but, with men. Therefore, when God commands unity, unity can be accomplished – if we will do what is required of us in order to achieve unity! Consider some important elements to achieving unity.

(1) Unity can be accomplished only when there is an agreement on the Scriptures as the standard (John 12:48). (2) Unity can only be accomplished when we establish Bible authority for all that we believe and practice in religion (Colossians 3:17). (3) Unity can only be accomplished when we do not hold to prefabricated conclusions and traditions (Matthew 15:8-9). (4) Unity can only be accomplished when we practice love and pursue peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).

If Everyone Is Right...

Clearly, God commands unity of His followers – and unity among His followers is possible. Yet, there are thousands upon thousands of divisions within “Christianity” today. Now, please take a moment to consider whether everyone (all of these different religious organizations) can be right – if they are all preaching and practicing different things.

I would like to take a few moments to consider some necessary conclusions *if* everyone is right. For, if everyone is right, then it does not matter what you believe or practice and the Bible teaches all sides of the various issues at hand!

If everyone is right, then...

Think about the various doctrines about which divisions exist within “Christianity.” Now, as I list these points, I will not attempt to state which (if any) are the correct views (according to the Scriptures). Instead, I simply want you to observe how divided the “Christian” world is today – and understand that it is not possible for everyone who holds to these conflicting views to be right in God’s sight. Remember, God’s word is perfect (James 1:25) and God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). Therefore, God’s word simply *cannot* teach contradicting doctrines! Yet, these are some of the things the “Christian” world is divided about.

- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that God is a loving God who will not condemn anyone to Hell and He is a loving God who will condemn many to Hell.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is not God and He is God.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that baptism is unnecessary for salvation and is necessary for salvation.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches divorce for any cause and teaches only one cause for divorce.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that homosexuality is not wrong and that homosexuality is sinful.

- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that those who die will simply cease to exist and they will continue to live beyond this earth.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that those who die in their sins will simply be annihilated and will spend their eternities in Hell.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that an individual is once saved always saved and can fall from God's grace.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that we are born in sin and that we are born sinless.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that Jesus did not die for everyone and that Jesus did die for everyone.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that God has predestined some individuals to be saved and to be lost and that God has given everyone free will to either be saved or lost based on their own choosing.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that men can still perform miraculous gifts of the Spirit today and that those miraculous spiritual gifts have ceased to exist.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that only 144,000 people will go to Heaven and that as many as will be obedient to God will go to Heaven.
- If everyone is right, then the Bible teaches that Jesus will reign on the earth for 1,000 years and set up His earthly kingdom and that this world will be destroyed whenever Christ returns.

Do you see the problem?

If you believe in the Bible as being inspired of God, then you must believe that it is truth and that anything which contradicts the truth is error. Please understand: The Bible does *not* teach one thing as truth and then uphold the exact opposite as being truth (as in the examples given above). Yet, many religious organizations teach such contradictory doctrines – and they all claim to be right!

However, the conclusion must be: ***Everyone can't be right!*** The Bible is right! Therefore, if we

establish what the Bible says on any matter, we have reached the truth of God's word! Let us never be guilty of listening to man's doctrines and opinions rather than listening to God! Romans 3:4 says, "...let God be true but every man a liar."

Do All Roads Lead To Heaven?

It is not uncommon to hear someone say, "You go to your church, I'll go to mine; and we'll all end up in Heaven together - because all roads lead to Heaven." Yet, do all churches that claim to be "Christian" lead to the same place (i.e. to Heaven)? Let's see what the Bible says. Though there are many different passages we could consider, Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:13-27 provides a good amount of information that will help us answer this question.

Two paths in life (Matthew 7:13-14)

Matthew 7:13-14 says, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

You will be walking on one of these two roads during your life. One road leads to Heaven – and few will travel this road (because it requires great discipline to follow the Lord). One road leads to Hell – and many will travel this road (because it is the easy way of living). Therefore, not all roads lead to Heaven. This fact ought to make you evaluate yourself: "Which road am I walking on?"

Yet, some may think, "This passage just shows us that there are few who will profess 'Christianity' so as to be saved; while many will deny Christ and be lost." However, let's continue to evaluate what Jesus teaches throughout this section of Scripture to see if such a statement is accurate....

Beware of false prophets (Matthew 7:15-20)

Matthew 7:15-20 says, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know

them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”

There are those who claim to speak in the name of the Lord, but, are actually speaking lies! That’s the idea of a false prophet. However, Jesus said that you can know them by their fruits (i.e. by evaluating what they are teaching according to what God has said).

There are many false teachers today. False teachers are simply those who teach false doctrine – while claiming to speak words of truth! John wrote about those who come to you and do not bring the doctrine of Christ (2 John 1:9-11). Paul wrote about those who preach “another Jesus whom we have not preached...or a different gospel which you have not accepted” (2 Corinthians 11:4). Paul said that such individuals were ministers of Satan who had “transformed themselves into ministers of righteousness” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Paul warned the elders of the church at Ephesus that there would be individuals who would arise “speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:30). Peter said that there would be false teachers, just as there were false prophets previously; and that these false teachers would lead many away from the truth (2 Peter 2:1-3).

The Bible is clear: There will be individuals who claim to speak the truth, but are actually speaking lies – and many will be deceived by them! Therefore, if you follow these false teachers, you will **not** be walking on the road that leads to Heaven!

Not everyone who says “Lord, Lord...” (Matthew 7:21-23)

Matthew 7:21-23 says, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I

never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

There are many people today who profess Jesus Christ as Lord and attend a “Christian” church, but have not done the things that Jesus has instructed of them in order to be saved (i.e. baptism). Sadly, they believe they are on the right road (i.e. the narrow road) – and are not looking to correct their lives. In fact, they are the ones who have often been deceived by the sorts of false teachers Jesus mentioned in Matthew 7:15-20!

However, Jesus says that these individuals (despite the fact that they professed Him as “Lord”) will hear the words in Matthew 7:23 on the Day of Judgment: “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!” Therefore, this great warning of Jesus should cause us to make sure that we are on the right path and that we are being obedient to God’s instructions (not just professing Him as “Lord”)! We must be evaluating our lives by the standard of God’s word; not just *thinking* or *hoping* that we are on the right road!

The hearer and doer will be saved (Matthew 7:24-27)

Matthew 7:24-27 says, “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Notice what Jesus Christ is saying in this passage very carefully! He is telling us that there will be many people who hear God’s instructions; but, will not be obedient to it! He tells us that such individuals (who fail to obey God’s word) will be destroyed! Paul also teaches this truth in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 when he says that those who do not know God or obey the gospel of Jesus Christ will be “punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His

power.” In contrast, those who hear God’s word and are obedient to it are the ones who will be saved!

Not all roads are the same!

I hope these passages have demonstrated the truth that not all roads (even roads that are identified as being “Christian”) are equally pleasing to God! You must walk on the road that God instructs you to walk on. This is the only road that leads to everlasting life. This is the road of hearing and doing God’s Word – not just believing in Jesus and professing Him as “Lord”!

One Way!

I want you to think about the thousands upon thousands of different (so-called) “Christian” churches that are in existence today. Make a list of the different churches that are present even within your own community (i.e. within a 30 mile radius). We have already established the fact that God expects unity of His followers, that everyone cannot be right (while believing, teaching, and practicing different forms of “Christianity”), and that every road does *not* lead to Heaven. Now, let’s carefully observe the fact that God expects unity from His followers – because He has only established one Way!

John 14:1-6

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.’ Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’” (John 14:1-6).

The problem

It is perplexing to me how there can be tens of thousands of various denominations and religious organizations when Jesus Christ said He was “the Way”! There is only one Way – Jesus Christ. I am sure many would accept this truth. All “Christian” churches I know about would claim that Jesus Christ is the one Way – and would all claim to be following Him.

However, please remember that Jesus Christ is not divided (1 Corinthians 1:13). Therefore, those who are following Jesus Christ, the Way, cannot be divided into different organizations based upon their varying religious beliefs and practices! To follow Jesus Christ (the Way) means that we must follow God’s instructions – as revealed in the pages of the Bible! Then, if you will follow His word, you will be part of the church. But, *which church is that?*

Christ only established one church

Again, there are thousands of different “Christian” churches – all of which have different names, doctrines, organizational structures, and religious practices. But, have you ever asked the question, “How many churches did Jesus establish?”

The Bible answers this question! In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” So, Christ only promised to build *one* church! Then, in Acts 2 (the chapter that records the establishment of this church), only one church is identified as being in existence: “...the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). Therefore, since Christ only promised to build one church and only one church was established, there is only *one* church (body of the saved). Remember that this is what we observed in lesson 1 (from Ephesians 4:4) – that there is only *one body*. According to Ephesians 1:22-23 and Colossians 1:18, the body is the church. Therefore, there is only *one church!*

This one church of Christ is composed of those who are saved. Again, Acts 2:47 says that “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” Therefore, the saved compose *this* church (and only *this* church). Those who are lost are outside

of *this* church (many are even in the churches of men).

Yet, some might ask, “Aren’t all ‘Christian churches’ part of this church that has been built by Christ?” **No – because they do not all teach Christ’s doctrine or keep His commandments!** Although all “Christian” churches believe in Jesus and profess to follow Him, they simply do not all keep His commandments! This is just what we had observed in Matthew 7:21-23 – that these individuals professed allegiance to Jesus Christ; but, they failed to be obedient to Him. And, you recall, that Jesus said He would tell such individuals to “depart” from Him on the Day of Judgment – because they had not done the will of the Father!

Becoming a member of this church

So, since the Bible teaches that there is only one church that was built by Jesus Christ – and the saved are only found in this church, how does an individual become a member of this church? In order to become a member of this church, you must be obedient to God’s plan of salvation (according to the instructions of the New Testament). Again, Acts 2:47 said that the “Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

How do you do that? The steps are as follows: (1) Hear God’s word. Romans 10:17 says that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (2) Believe. In John 8:24, Jesus said, “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.” However, “faith only” (a popular doctrine among many “Christian” churches today) is *not* enough according to James 2:14-26. (3) Repent of your sins. Acts 17:30 says that God “now commands all men everywhere to repent.” (4) Confess your faith in Christ. Romans 10:9-10 says, “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Acts 8:37 records an example of an individual who made the confession (prior to his baptism), “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” (5) Be baptized/immersed in water. Mark 16:16 says, “He who believes and is baptized will be

saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” Acts 2:38 commands both repentance and baptism as being necessary “for the remission of sins.” 1 Peter 3:21 says that baptism “now saves us.” Then, Romans 6:3-4 helps us to see that the only acceptable method to accomplish this baptism (according to God’s word) is immersion in water – as the passage identifies this baptism as a burial. Whenever individuals in the New Testament book of Acts took these steps, they were added to the church (Acts 2:47). If, therefore, you have not taken these steps, you are not saved; and, consequently, you are not a member of Christ’s one true church!

Choosing a local church that follows the Biblical pattern

Upon your obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Lord adds you to His one true church (Acts 2:47). However, the Lord has given you the responsibility to seek out a faithful local church to join yourself to (as seen in the example of Saul in Acts 9:26). Though we will not discuss the local church in detail at this point in our study, we will study it in some more detail in a later lesson.

For now, please realize that local churches are composed of New Testament Christians (i.e. those who have obeyed the commandments previously identified). Yet, these are *not* different denominations. Rather, they are locally organized churches of Christ (Romans 16:16), composed of Christians who have joined themselves together to work and worship together in local geographical areas. Still, these local churches are expected to follow the Biblical pattern in every aspect of their existence (i.e. their work, organizational structures, assemblies) – and they must be united for the faith of the gospel (see 1 Corinthians 1:10 and Philippians 1:27)!

Conclusion

It is my hope that you are beginning to see that everyone can’t be right (even among those who profess to be “Christians”) and just how much of a problem the religious division that is prevalent in the

world today really is! *Everyone can't be right!* Therefore, there are many ways that are wrong – and only one way of truth! Remember, there is only “one faith” (Ephesians 4:5).

Therefore, a choice is developing for you as we continue in this study: Will you choose the way of error – or the way of truth? Will you choose to be part of a man-made church – or the one true church Jesus Christ established?

As we have seen in this lesson, this choice is one that will impact your soul's salvation! You must be obedient to God and be part of Jesus' church! I hope and pray that you will not allow anything or anyone to hinder you from obeying the way of truth! Remember, *everyone can't be right!* Therefore, “let God be true but every man a liar” (Romans 3:4)!

List some things that must *not* be our guide in religion. Then, identify what must *be* our guide in religion.

Study Questions

1. What Does God Expect?

Discuss God's purpose for unity among His followers from the following passages:

1. John 17:20-23 –

2. 1 Corinthians 1:10 –

3. 1 Corinthians 12:25 –

4. Philippians 1:27 –

Can unity be accomplished? If so, *how* can unity be accomplished?

2. If Everyone Is Right...

List some necessary conclusions *if* everyone is right.

Do you see the problem? Explain.

3. Do All Roads Lead To Heaven?

Have you ever been told that “...all roads lead to Heaven”? What does this mean?

What does Jesus say about there only being two ways in life (Matthew 7:13-14)?

What does Jesus say about false prophets (Matthew 7:15-20)?

What does Jesus say about many who say “Lord, Lord” (Matthew 7:21-23)?

What does Jesus say about being hearers and doers of the Word (Matthew 7:24-27)?

So, are all roads the same?

4. One Way!

List some observations from John 14:1-6.

What is the problem?

How many churches has Christ established?

How do you become a member of this church?

Why is it important to choose a local church that follows the Biblical pattern?

***Is everyone right? If not, will you choose the way of truth or error? Will you be part of a man-made church – or the one true church Jesus Christ established?**