

SEMBRADOS  
EN BUENA TIERRA  
Planted in good soil

LEARNING TO BE  
**THE CHURCH**

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Semilla  
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To all our dear **semillosos** that had the patience to wait until God finished His project. We thank each and every one of you, in hope that this material will edify your lives and the lives of many others.

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## PLANTED IN GOOD SOIL

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# 1. A Dependent Church: God Works when we Rest in Him

In a time when many people are looking for a way to live out the Great Commission (*Mt. 28:18-20*) and the Greatest Commandment (*John 13:34-35*) through novel methods, we need to bear in mind that the Scriptures, especially in the book of Acts, provide us with the most reliable fount of knowledge. The Scriptures have been inspired by the Holy Spirit and tested throughout the years, and they are used to teach the timeless principles regarding God's plan, as well as His desire for the church. We must understand first that the church is not an organization, but a living organism, comprised of members, and of which the head is Christ (*1 Cor. 12:12*).

## **Objective:**

Understand that the church should depend on the power of God and the word of His grace, because God works when we rest in Him.

## **Verse to memorize:**

“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” *Acts 20:32*

The word of God teaches us in 1 Corinthians 3:14 that the success of a church is found when the church focuses on making *disciples* (*John 8:31-32; Mt. 28:18-20*).

The only effective method to *be* and to *make disciples* is to remain in His word, allowing that the word act in us and through us.

Before going to the cross, our Lord Jesus prayed to his Father for his disciples (*Jn. 17:20-24*), asking “that all of them may be one”, “just as you are in me and I am in you”. He prayed that they would love each other in a mature way, with a common vision, and that the world would see the glory of God though each one of them.

The desire of Jesus is that we reflect Him, just as He reflected God (*John 1:12,18; Col. 1:15; John 14:7-9*). *We* should point to Him as the doorway to knowing God.

This is the work that God has given to the church in this age—reflect the image of the invisible God to the world. We must also understand that he is NOT interested in us *going* to church, but rather that we *be* the church.

The result of our dependency on the power of God and the word of his grace is that we have fellowship with our brothers and sisters (*1 John 1:6*).

It is therefore necessary, in order for us to live out this marvelous experience that the first apostles also lived, that we learn to **depend on the power of God and the word of His grace**. This is not only for those in leadership positions, but also for the most recent members of the church—in other words, it is for everyone.

## As leaders:

We must learn to depend on God—starting with ourselves, and then we can teach this same principle to our disciples.

### As members:

We must set our eyes on Christ, avoiding focusing on the leader's personality. We must learn to study the word for ourselves and spend time seeking his will through daily devotional time.

In the same way that physical life needs three elements to develop, in our spiritual lives, as we become a new creation, we also see three elements:

1. The word of His grace (sperm) (*Luke 8:11*)
2. The power of the Holy Spirit (ovule) (*John 14:17*)
3. Fellowship with the church (uterus) (*Mt. 18:20; Heb. 10:24-25*)

The church is the "uterus" where our spiritual life develops, which is conceived by the word and the Holy Spirit, whose objective is to form the image of Jesus in each one of us and to prepare us to do good works.

Each member, with a pure heart and correct motives, needs to desire that the kingdom of God be planted in his heart, and in the hearts of those whom he is guiding. He must also bear in mind the two elements that Jesus asks of Peter in the chapter of His rehabilitation (*John 21:15-18*):

#### **1. Tend**

To **tend** to someone is to ensure that he satisfies his needs in the green pastures of the word of God, building him up and aligning him to the truth. This is done through a personal relationship with God and so that this person might receive and transmit spiritual life (*Acts 20:28*).

#### **2. Feed**

Everyone in a leadership position within the body of Christ should serve, modeling a relationship of dependence on the power of God and the word of his grace with:

Integrity. A life that is coherent with the word, sustained by daily fellowship with God (*Titus 2:7-8; Phil. 3:17*).

Interest. Carrying out his function as a builder of the kingdom of Christ in the lives of his brothers and sisters. This is done through genuine acts of service, in prayer, and in providing spiritual food through the word of God (*John 12:26*).

### **A dependent church learns to:**

#### **1. Depend on God through personal communion with the word**

This will give your life direction, rest, revelation of His will and also fellowship with the body of Christ.

An example of personal communion can be found in **Mark 14:3-9**, the story of Mary of Bethany.

What was it that distinguished Mary of Bethany, with regard to other disciples?

Instead of worrying and becoming upset like her sister Martha, Mary chose "what is better, and it will not be taken away from her" (*Luke 10:38-42*). Mary preferred to sit at the feet of her Lord and listen attentively to His words; when the moment arrived later, this understanding permitted her to honor Christ's sacrifice by anointing His body in preparation for burial. In contrast, James and John sought positions (*Mt. 20:20-22*) and Thomas wanted to see and touch (*John 20:25*), without remembering that faith comes by hearing the word of God (*Rom. 10:17*).

## **2. Depend on the power of God made manifest through the Holy Spirit**

When Jesus ascended to the Father, He left in His place the Holy Spirit to be with us every day until the end of the world. Let's examine its marvelous functions:

**It helps us** to live in the truth; dwelling in and being with us, giving us encouragement at all times (*John 14:17*).

*Function: Helper*

**It teaches us**, reminding us and giving us discernment to understand the Scriptures and the teachings of Jesus (*John 14:26*).

*Function: Teacher (Luke 12:12)*

**It gives testimony** of the presence and the purpose of the Lord Jesus to our hearts and in our lives, and it gives us the ability to witness (*John 15:26*).

*Function: Witness (Acts 1:8)*

**It shows our need** for forgiveness of our sins, based on the justice in the sacrifice of His son Jesus Christ, which proclaims our innocence on the day of judgment (*John 16:8*).

*Function: Corrector (Acts 2:38)*

**It guides us** in all areas with regards to the Son and points us toward them, with the purpose of revealing Jesus through our daily lives (*John 16:13*).

*Function: Guide*

## **3. Depend on God through fellowship with the church**

The work of the word of God complements that of the Holy Spirit, permitting us to apply what we have learned and giving us the opportunity to know the invisible God.

We can conclude, therefore, that as a result of a personal relationship with God through the Holy Spirit, and the word of His grace, we will be added to the body of Christ as members. Then, God will complete the rehabilitation of our identity as children of God.

## Questions

### 1: A Dependent Church: God Works when we Rest in Him

#### *I. The needs of the body of Christ*

Consult your manual and respond:

1. What are the three elements that are necessary to develop a spiritual life?

The \_\_\_\_\_ of His grace

The \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God

Having \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_

2. "Now I \_\_\_\_\_ you to God and to the \_\_\_\_\_ of his \_\_\_\_\_, which can \_\_\_\_\_ and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." *Acts 20:32*

3. What is our function as leaders? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What does it mean to "tend" and who are responsible for doing so?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What does it mean to "feed" and who are responsible for doing so?  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### *II. The needs of God's children*

Read Luke 10:38-42 and answer the following questions:

6. What did Mary do when she sat at the feet of Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. But Martha was \_\_\_\_\_ by all the \_\_\_\_\_ that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ about many things, but \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will \_\_\_\_\_ be \_\_\_\_\_ from her."

#### *II. The needs of all people*

Read John 4:13-14 and answer the following questions:

8. Is there anything in this temporary world that can satisfy our need? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is the only thing that can bring satisfaction to our lives?  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. When Jesus ascended to the Father, what did He leave in His place? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Consult your manual and list the five functions of the Holy Spirit:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. A Unified Church: God Works in Agreement

From the time of the Tower of Babel and until today, man has tried to become unified through different organizations; for example, through politics, such as the UN; the economy, such as globalization; or through religions, such as ecumenism. All of these attempts have failed, because these organizations promote the false idea of giving honor to man as the center of the universe, as well as the idea of egoism (*Rom. 1:21-23*). Nevertheless, a correct way does exist—a way created by God, with respect to unity, which can be found in His word: “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*Rom. 15:5-6*).

### **Objective:**

Discover, understand, and apply the principles of the early church in the book of Acts—a unified and unanimous church, which are indispensable factors that worked together to impact the world in its time, and to fulfill the purpose of God.

### **Verse to memorize:**

“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all.” *Acts 4:32-33*

People from all different backgrounds—fishermen, tax collectors, doctors, men, distinguished women, government officials, and more—experienced the power of being a unified church when they were under the power of God and the word of His grace.

We will begin our study by understanding the meaning of the word **unanimous**:

### **#3661 jomodsumadon: in common agreement**

A unified, or unanimous, church, is a church that develops the same way of thinking; a church that has a defined objective in which every member is in agreement, in order to arrive at the same destination and fulfill the same purpose.

In Acts 4:32, two key concepts that caused the early church to be a unified church. The word says that the people were “one in heart and mind”; in other words, of the same way of thinking. This should be our desire as a church, since this unity—which is also the fulfillment of the Greatest Commandment (*John 13:34-35*)—permits us to visibly reflect the glory of our invisible God, and thereby manifesting the effects of His love, forgiveness, mercy, and grace to all people.

Now, it is important that we not confuse the idea of **unity** with **uniform**.

God has created us to be different and unique, and the church, as an organism comprised of many members, reflects these characteristics. These characteristics have been designed by God in order that His word may reach all people, even to the ends of the earth.

Unity means in common agreement, not only when we are together, but also in carrying out our different functions. We should all be striving to complete the same project despite individual differences.

God works where there is agreement, through a unified body that develops the same way of thinking and the same way of feeling (*Mt. 18:19*).

Let's observe the manner in which unity is expressed in the early church in the book of Acts:

**1. Being together in the same place**

**“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.”** (*Acts 2:1*)

In order to live lives as powerful Christians, as the first church did, it is necessary to have a relationship with our brothers and sisters and to have a feeling of belonging. This leads us to submit to leadership and to a common vision.

**2. Joining together constantly in prayer**

**“They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”** (*Acts 1:14*)

Intercessory prayer requires a state of unity. God has given us power to tie and to untie, but this is only possible where there is a state of agreement (*Mt. 18:18-20*).

**3. Listen attentively to the word of God**

**“When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said.”** (*Acts 8:6*)

The church is made up of members with differing opinions and characteristics; therefore, it is necessary that we pay close attention to the word of God. In doing so, we can unify our mindset by recognizing that the Bible is our only standard of faith and conduct, and the maximum authority over the body of Christ.

**4. Developing one heart and one mind**

**“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.”** (*Acts 4:32*)

It is important to understand that when we are together, praying with the same mindset, and diligently studying the Scriptures, God reveals to every church a specific strategy to take—the how, when, and where applies to its location and time in which it is planted. This strategy will help the church carry out the works for which it has been assigned.

In our church, for example, we discover, share, reflect, and live out the treasures of the Bible in an orderly way, week after week. This includes the service on Sundays, leadership training meetings, cell groups in homes, the children's and youth ministry, and even family devotionals—everyone meditates upon the same passages with the same focus each week. Through this method, God speaks to us through our studies, and He works in our hearts little by little to help us become one in heart and mind.

**5. Announcing the word with courage**

**“On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. ‘Sovereign Lord,’ they said, ‘you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them.’ ”** (*Acts 4:23-24*)

**“Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” (Acts 4:29-30)**

When we are together, praying in common agreement, studying the word of God, and developing one heart and mind, the objective of our lives centers around being a reflection of the image of God and announcing His word with courage. God, in response, will extend his hand and give backing to the Good News, which glorifies our Lord Jesus Christ.

The result of our dependency on God’s power and on the word of His grace is **unanimity** in heart and mind, as well as the desire to create and maintain the **unity** of the body of Christ. **“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:2-3)**

Let’s reflect a bit more on these concepts by studying Psalm 133:

***When we are together:***

- It is good and pleasant to be with our brothers and sisters
- It is like medicine that is given to all of the members
- God gives blessing and eternal life

**Agreement >> Blessing >> Eternal Life**

# Questions

## 2. A Unified Church: God Works in Agreement

1. What does unanimous mean?

Jomodsumadon: in \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Romans 15:5-6

“May the \_\_\_\_\_ who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of \_\_\_\_\_ toward each other that \_\_\_\_\_ had, so that with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ you may \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ and Father of our \_\_\_\_\_.”

3. According to these verses, what is the purpose of our unity?

\_\_\_\_\_

### *How is unity expressed in the book of Acts?*

4. Being \_\_\_\_\_ in the same place.

#### **Acts 2:1**

When the day of Pentecost came, they were \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Joining together constantly in \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Acts 1:14**

They all joined \_\_\_\_\_ constantly in \_\_\_\_\_, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

6. Listen attentively to the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Acts 8:6**

When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they \_\_\_\_\_ paid \_\_\_\_\_ to what he said.

7. Developing one \_\_\_\_\_ and one \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Acts 4:32**

All the \_\_\_\_\_ were one in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.

8. Announcing the \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Acts 4:23-24, 29**

On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard this, they \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. ‘Sovereign Lord,’ they said, ‘you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them.’ ... Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.

9. According to what you have learned, what is the definition of a **unified church** in your own words?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. According to Psalm 133, what are the benefits of being together as brothers and sisters in harmony?

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. An Orderly Church: God Works where there is Harmony

In order for an orchestra to be successful, it must be made up of experienced musicians. These musicians should not only be well trained in playing their instruments, but also people who perfectly understand the meaning of the word “concert”.

Each one of them should know what section he pertains to: strings, woodwinds, brass, or percussion. Also, each one should know how to read his part, in order to know when to begin playing and when to be silent. Most importantly, each musician must know how to follow the conductor’s baton—in all, how, when, and where to participate in a concert.

In the same way, the body of Christ should work together in harmony, with each part knowing its responsibility and following the baton of the conductor in this concert of praise. This is done in order to exalt our Redeemer, whose name is above all names: *Jesus*.

#### **Objective:**

Offer our lives to glorify the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as each one of us executes our function in harmony as members of His body.

#### **Verse to memorize:**

“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” *Ephesians 4:16*

The body of Christ needs to work together in harmony.  
What does the word “harmony” mean?

**Harmony:** *Sunarmologeō* (Strong’s #4883)  
*Unify closely, well-organized, well-coordinated, united.*

As a church, our purpose is to reflect the invisible God. In order to do this, we must learn to become closely united and to work together in a coordinated and organized way, supported by the principles that we learn from the word of God.

One of these indispensable principles is **grace**. What does the word **grace** mean?

**Grace:** *Jarīs* (Strong’s #5485) Divine influence over the heart and its reflection in one’s life.

Grace is not just the undeserved, unattainable gift of eternal life that we have received, but it is also the element that operates through our lives in order to manifest Christ in us.

Through grace, we received functions in the body—this could mean ministry, gifts, or operations of the Holy Spirit. In the word of God (*Eph. 4:1*), we are exhorted to carry out these functions in the following ways:

#### **In humility and gentleness**

Recognizing that what we have received is a gift, not a result of our abilities or efforts.

#### **Diversity**

Understanding that our function is among many different functions, and it is limited. Our function is to participate in the edification of the church and not to compete or compare ourselves with others. Rather, we must exalt the One who gave His life for us—Jesus Christ.

**Conserving unity in:**

- **The bond of peace**  
We must understand that the only way to form this bond is to reconcile ourselves with God through Jesus Christ, and applying this reconciliation to every area of our lives.
- **One body**  
In this body, the only part that should stand out is the head—in other words, Jesus Christ—while we carry out the functions that have been entrusted to us.
- **One spirit, one hope, one Lord...**  
We receive the Holy Spirit as a foreshadowing of eternal life, which the Lord Jesus Christ won for us, giving us the hope to one day see Him face to face.
- **One faith, one baptism**  
Our faith is made manifest in our obedience to God’s will for our lives, which is revealed in His word and helps us to be unified with one another. One baptism refers to when we voluntarily give up our rights, putting to death our old self and being born again to new life, where we no longer live, but Christ lives in us.

Now let’s identify the ministries and gifts that we are given through which God equips the body for the work of His ministry:

**1. The Head of the body: Christ** (*Eph. 4:7-10*)

Jesus purified us from our sins by giving of Himself, in His atoning work at the cross of Calvary. This put Him as the head of the body—that which imparts different functions to the members of the body with a goal to provide all of the necessary elements. It is important to emphasize that this work is carried out by all of the members working together.

**2. The vital organs of the body: Deacons or Ministers** (*Eph. 4:11-16*)

These functions are carried out by those who have received a calling to serve God in full-time ministry, and for that reason these people serve at the forefront of leadership in the church.

The five “organs”, or ministries, which are called to equip, disciple, prepare, train, and purify are:

**1. Apostles**

In the strict sense of the word, these are “church-planters”.

In the early church, the apostle Peter begins his apostolic work by evangelizing to the Jews (*Acts 2*). In Acts 8, he reaches out to the Samaritans, and then in Acts 10 and 11, the Gentiles.

The apostle Paul is sent by God to plant local churches for the Gentiles (*Acts 9:15*), and in the entire known world, from Antioch of Syria to Rome (*Acts 13-28*). He is recognized for his ministry in the church in Acts 13:1-3.

## **2. Prophets**

The prophet of the New Testament is an instrument inspired by God to minister to the church, proclaiming the revelation of God; that is, applying the truth of the Gospel, in order to edify, encourage, and console other believers.

*(1 Cor. 14:1-3, Acts 21:9-11, 15:32)*

## **3. Evangelists**

Evangelists are traveling missionaries whose role is to proclaim the Gospel, principally to those who have not received it. In Acts 8:12-15 and Acts 21:8, we see the example of Philip and we can observe that his ministry began by serving amongst the Greek widows. This experience allowed him to develop the character of Christ, which is necessary for anyone who serves Him.

In order to be called to the service of Christ, Philip had to fulfill the following requirements: he needed to have a good testimony, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and have wisdom (to put into practice what he knew).

## **4. Pastors**

Pastors are ministers of local congregations, who, through teaching the word of God and modeling it in their own lives, minister to their flock. Additionally, pastors are responsible for praying for the members of the church. *(Acts 20:17, 28; John 21:15-17)*

## **5. Teachers**

Teachers serve in local congregations and teach children, youth, or adults through the study of the word of God and its application in their lives.

The purpose of these five ministries as “offices” in the church is to equip the members of the body of Christ, so that they may receive training to reach full maturity and fulfill their functions in the church. By doing this, they are carrying out the work of the ministry, for which we are all responsible.

It is indispensable that each member of the body exercise its specific function for which it was created and that it not waste away from lack of use. In Ephesians 4:14, we see the consequences of failing to understand the principles stated above—being immature believers, infants tossed back and forth by the waves, deceived by false doctrines and schemes of men that set traps and lead us to error.

The Lord calls us to “[speak] the truth” and “grow...in every respect” (*Eph. 4:15*); this means in that we grow every area of service and every function of the body, always submitting to the head, that is Christ. We are bound together by ligaments to help each other, not to gossip, criticize, or destroy, but instead we should pray for each other and understand that everyone has a different and unique function. By understanding this, we can carry out our functions with humility, remembering that we are limited and diverse and always seeking to exalt Christ and not ourselves.

## **3. The arms of the body: Charismas or Spiritual Gifts (Rom. 12:4-11)**

God gives us spiritual gifts so that we will voluntarily surrender ourselves to service, under the authority of Christ and for the edification of the church.

These gifts are irrevocable, and they are given so that we can reach all people with the arms of God:

1. Prophecy (declaring the word)
2. Service (living out the word)
3. Teaching (defining the word)
4. Exhortation (demanding the word)
5. Giving generously
6. Leading others
7. Showing mercy cheerfully

#### **4. The legs of the body: functions or operations** (*1 Cor. 12:6-10*)

In the verses following 1 Corinthians 12:7, we are given a list of operations, which are carried out by different members of the body of Christ under special circumstances. In these circumstances, the Holy Spirit distributes functions as He desires, when He desires, and how He desires—always for the benefit of the body of Christ and not so that we can boast.

1. Message of wisdom
2. Message of knowledge
3. Faith
4. Gifts of healing
5. Miraculous powers
6. Prophecy
7. Discernment between spirits
8. Speaking in different tongues
9. Interpretation of tongues

We have the privilege of being called to fulfill our function like an orchestra in a great symphony that announces the Good News.

We are called to be united in the purpose of exalting and glorifying the name of our Lord in a way that is not only audible, but also visible.

We must help each other so that His kingdom may be established in us and through us, making known to the world the Good News of salvation.

## Questions

### 3. An Orderly Church: God Works where there is Harmony

1. "From him the whole body, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by every \_\_\_\_\_ ligament, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, as \_\_\_\_\_ does its work." (*Ephesians 4:16*)

2. What does the word "harmony" mean? (sunarmologeio)

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3. What is our purpose as the church, or the body of Christ?

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4. What does the word "grace" mean? (charis)

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5. How should we carry out our function within the body of Christ?

a) In \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

b) D \_\_\_\_\_ c) D \_\_\_\_\_

6. What are the four elements in which we conserve the unity of the body of Christ?

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7. Who is the head of the body?

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8. Give a brief explanation of the five "organs", or ministries, of the body of Christ.

a) Apostles

b) Prophets

c) Evangelists

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d) Pastors

e) Teachers

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Name the seven "charismas", or spiritual gifts, from Romans 12:4-11.

P \_\_\_\_\_ S \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_

E \_\_\_\_\_ G \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_

Take time to pray and ask the Lord to reveal your spiritual gifts that He has given you to benefit the body of Christ to which you belong.

9. The nine "functions" mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:6-10 are manifestations of the Holy Spirit that work in special circumstances, when God \_\_\_\_\_, how He \_\_\_\_\_, for the benefit of the body of Christ and not so that we can \_\_\_\_\_.

List the nine functions:

M \_\_\_\_\_

M \_\_\_\_\_

F \_\_\_\_\_

G \_\_\_\_\_

M \_\_\_\_\_

P \_\_\_\_\_

D \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. A Witnessing Church: God Works when we are Bold

If we go through the Scriptures, we will find that the great men of God paid a high price to testify to their faith. Announcing the arrival of the Messiah meant that they often had to risk their own lives.

In our times, few people will probably have this privilege. But the truth is that all of us will need to suffer, by some means, to proclaim the name of Jesus. After all, the word of God states that those who have been called to believe in Him are also called to suffer for Him (*Phil. 1:29*). This is a truth that is not commonly preached these days, yet Jesus Himself stated: “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (*Mt. 5:10-12*)

Happy and blessed are those who are willing to pay a price to proclaim the name of He who said, “I am the light of the world”, in this world that is in darkness. The Lord will support us to carry out this task:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (*Acts 1:8*)

### **Objective:**

Understand that we have been called not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him. (*Phil. 1:29*)

### **Verse to memorize:**

“...Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. ‘We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,’ they said.” *Acts 14:22*

Throughout the past classes, we have been able to realize that, as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is necessary that we:

1. Depend on having daily, personal communion with God. (*John 6:63*)
2. Are careful to maintain the unity of the body of Christ. (*John 17:23*)
3. Carry out the function that each one of us has been given through God and the church. (*Eph. 4:16*)

The finality of understanding these principles is that we be a church that is prepared to carry out our work as the body of Christ—be witnesses (*Acts 1:8*).

**Witness:** Martus = Martyr (Strongs #3144)

The word “witness” or “martyr” first developed its meaning in the early church. It reminds us that everything that is worth it in the kingdom of God entails sacrifice (*Mt. 10:39*), because it causes faith to grow and develop even amidst tribulation.

This is one of the reasons for which Jesus requires that we be baptized—so that we understand and publicly testify that we believe in Him. Baptism allows us to declare to the world that we are willing to die to ourselves, sacrificing the rights we have in our own lives, to live for Him and through Him.

Let's look at seven aspects of the life of a witness:

**1. The calling to be a witness** (*Acts 9:3-6, 15-16*)

When Jesus's name and His divinity are revealed to us, it will also become our purpose for living.

1. "Who are you, Lord?" (v. 5)
2. "What do you want me to do?" (v. 6)

Accepting Christ's sacrifice in our place not only covers our sins, but also gives us a new responsibility that we have to follow and obey.

**2. The provision to be a witness** (*Acts 4:23-31*)

Our role as witnesses can only be carried out with the power of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, we must learn to live depending on the Lord, asking Him for boldness so that we can proclaim the Gospel. This is done in subjection to our position in the body of Christ to which we belong.

**3. The honorable price of being a witness** (*Acts 5:40-41*)

It is a reality that following Jesus often includes suffering from insult, mockery, and threats; it also requires that we avoid people or situations that do not glorify God. Paying this price, however, will always lead to joy that will make all suffering worthwhile and will make us become true disciples (*Luke 14:26-27*).

**4. The commitment of being a witness** (*Acts 4:19-20, 5:29*)

Jesus spoke of giving to Cesar what belongs to Cesar and to God what belongs to God.

All men should submit to authority (*Rom. 13:1-2*), as long as this authority does not oppose the fulfillment of the Great Commission (*Mt. 28:18-20*). In this case, it is necessary to obey God before obeying man, proclaiming "what we have seen and heard" through our new lives in Christ.

**5. The joy of being a witness** (*John 15:20; Acts 4:13*)

The joy of being a witness is in reflecting God, and people around them become inspired to know God because of his life. There is no greater privilege that a witness can have in this world than that of being recognized for "having been with Jesus".

**6. The result of being a witness** (*Acts 2:37-38, 4:4*)

When a witness speaks with boldness, backed by the Holy Spirit and supported by the message of the Scriptures, in spite of persecution, those who receive the word of God understand that their conversion implies not just a change in behavior, but a change in purpose for their lives.

After his first missionary journey, Paul the Apostle returns to the cities in which he had had the most trouble proclaiming the Gospel. He brings the disciples a message of encouragement, telling them, "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God" (*Acts 14:22*).

**7. The companion of a witness** (*Acts 5:32; Mt. 28:18-20; John 12:26-27; Prov. 1:23*)

If we can be sure of anything, it is that the Lord will be with us throughout all of our days and until the end of the world for as long as we are obedient witnesses to Him. The companion of a witness is the Holy Spirit.

**"For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."**  
(*2 Tim. 1:7*)

## Questions

### 4. A Witnessing Church: God Works when we are Bold

1. *Verse to memorize:*

“...Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to \_\_\_\_\_ to the faith. ‘We \_\_\_\_\_ go through \_\_\_\_\_ to enter the kingdom of God,’ they said.” **Acts 14:22**

“But you will receive \_\_\_\_\_ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my \_\_\_\_\_...” **Acts 1:8**

2. Witness: Martus = \_\_\_\_\_ Strongs #3144

#### *Seven Aspects of the Life of a Witness:*

1. The calling to be a witness (**Acts 9:5-6, 16**)

“Who \_\_\_\_\_, Lord?” (v. 5) “What do you want \_\_\_\_\_ to do?” (v. 6)  
“I will show him how much he must \_\_\_\_\_ for my name.” (v. 16)

2. The provision to be a witness (**Acts 4:29**)

“Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great \_\_\_\_\_.”

3. The honorable price of being a witness (**Acts 5:41**)

“The apostles left the Sanhedrin, \_\_\_\_\_ because they had been counted worthy of \_\_\_\_\_ disgrace for the Name.”

4. The commitment of being a witness (**Acts 5:29**)

“Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must \_\_\_\_\_ God rather than human beings!’”

5. The joy of being a witness (**Acts 4:13**)

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they \_\_\_\_\_ that these men had been with Jesus.”

6. The result of being a witness (**Acts 2:37-38**)

“...‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will \_\_\_\_\_ the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”

7. The companion of a witness (**Mt. 28:18-20**)

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of \_\_\_\_\_, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to \_\_\_\_\_ I have commanded you. And surely I am with you \_\_\_\_\_, to the very end of the age.’”

**“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”**

(2 Tim. 1:7)

## 5. An Evangelical Church: God Works in His Covenant

Because of ignorance regarding the Scriptures and to growth of the false concept of humanism, we often confuse the true mission of the church. This mission is to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ and thereby providing social help, works of charity, political and economic negotiations, etc. If the church really were to focus, however, on its eternal purpose, it would be much more effective in the social, economical, and political realms. In attempting to solve temporal problems by using strategies of this world, we fail to find the solution due to man's eternal problem: sin.

### **Objective:**

Understand that the church was purchased with the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel—our reconciliation with God through faith made possible in the vicarious sacrifice of His Son.

### **Verse to memorize:**

“We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.” *2 Cor. 5:20*

The ministry to which the church of Christ has been called is the ministry of reconciliation (*2 Cor. 5:18*), which consists of preaching the Good News of the Gospel:

**Gospel:** Euangelion (Strong's #2097) = proclaim good news  
**Eu** = good, **Aggelos** = message, notice, news

In order to reach the world, just like the early church did, the proclamation of the Gospel should include the principles used by Peter in his first speech after he was filled with the Holy Spirit. These principles are found in Acts 2:14-39:

### **1. Support from the church and the Scriptures** (*Acts 2:14-21*)

- ***Support from the church***  
“Then Peter stood up with the Eleven...”  
Peter did not act alone, but with the backing of the church to which he belonged. They were in agreement and in unity, of the same heart and mind.
- ***Support in the Scriptures***  
Peter referenced the word of God, not his own opinions, because faith comes from hearing the word and hearing the word from the word of God (*Rom. 10:17*). People need to hear the word of God, because it is like the rain and the snow, which makes faith grow and bud in our hearts. The word of God does not return empty, but it accomplishes its purpose for which it has been sent (*Is. 55:10-11*).

Jesus himself made references to the word of God throughout His entire ministry. He referenced the word in the many different situations that He experienced, which is what we ourselves should do.

## 2. Why Jesus? (Acts 2:22-35)

- **Approved by God**  
Jesus was the sacrifice that was approved by God to make the payment for our sins. He was the only one who was tempted as a man, but remained sinless.
- **Sacrificed by the Father**  
Jesus was given over to death with the prior approval of God, since no other sacrifice was sufficient to pay the price for our sins. Death did not surprise Him; rather, He was willing to give His life for us (*Phil. 2:5-8*).
- **Nailed to a cross (Numbers 21:4-9)**  
Jesus reveals to Nicodemus what Moses's prophecy meant when he says, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him" (*John 3:14-15*). It was necessary that the serpent was lifted up on a piece of wood to symbolize the terrible price that Jesus would be making for us by being nailed to the cross.
- **Resurrection**  
Jesus was resurrected through the Father, to confirm that He was the Messiah.
- **Exalted**  
Jesus was exalted by the Father because He made Himself nothing, taking the nature of a servant, and he humbled Himself, making Himself obedient to death on a cross (*Phil. 2:5-11*).

## 3. Our guilt and the rule of Christ (Acts 2:36-39)

- **The guilt of man**  
It is necessary for us to be confronted with our sin in order to understand our need for repentance.
- **The need to receive the rule of Christ**  
The repentance to which we are called is not a change in behavior, but rather a change in purpose, in which we receive the rule of Christ in our lives. We voluntarily give up our rights, desires, and dreams to Him, and we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, which helps us to be witnesses.

An evangelical church cannot lack any of these qualities that we have examined, if it is to impact its surroundings in the same way that the early church did.

We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and it is necessary that we carry out the work that has been entrusted to us: the ministry of reconciliation.

## Questions

### 5: An Evangelical Church: God Works in His Covenant

#### *Verse to memorize:*

“We are therefore Christ’s \_\_\_\_\_, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be \_\_\_\_\_ to God.” *2 Cor. 5:20*

Gospel: Euangelion (Strong’s #2097) = proclaim \_\_\_\_\_ news

#### *1. Support from the church and the Scriptures (Acts 2:14-21)*

- ***Support from the church***

“Then Peter stood up \_\_\_\_\_” (Acts 2:14)

- ***Support in the Scriptures***

Peter referenced the word of God, not his own opinions, because faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard from \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 10:17)

The word of God is like the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_, which produces faith in our hearts and does not return empty, but it fulfills the purpose for which it was sent (Isaiah 55:10-11).

#### *2. Why is Jesus the only one who can reconcile us with God? (Acts 2:22-35)*

- A \_\_\_\_\_ by God (*Acts 2:22*)
- S \_\_\_\_\_ by the Father (*Acts 2:23*)
- N \_\_\_\_\_ to a cross (*Acts 2:24*)
- R \_\_\_\_\_ (*Acts 2:32*)
- E \_\_\_\_\_ (*Acts 2:33*)

#### *3. Our guilt and the rule of Christ (Acts 2:36-39)*

- ***The guilt of man***

It is necessary for us to be \_\_\_\_\_ with our sin in order to understand our need for repentance. (*Acts 2:37*)

- ***The need to receive the rule of Christ***

“R \_\_\_\_\_ and be b \_\_\_\_\_, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the \_\_\_\_\_ of your sins. And you will r \_\_\_\_\_ the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

It is necessary that we carry out the work that has been entrusted to us: the ministry of \_\_\_\_\_.

## 6. A Discipling Church: God Works when we Know Him

The Great Commission, which God gives us in Matthew 28:18-20, consists in not only evangelizing, but also teaching all of what God has commanded us—teaching the disciples to guard all things they learned, knowing that God promised to be with us all of our days while we carry out our work.

Each member of the body needs to be totally prepared for God’s work to be carried out in his life and through his life. For this reason, it is essential that both those who disciple and those who are being disciple receive all of the commands of God. That way, they can better all the areas of their lives and be able to make decisions that will allow them to fulfill God’s purpose.

In John 17:3, Jesus reveals to us that eternal life depends on us knowing Him; in John 10:10, He promises us “life in abundance”, which is the result of knowing Him, receiving Him and permitting His word to have effect in our daily lives.

**“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”** *Philippians 1:9-11*

### **Objective:**

Recognize the importance of making known God’s complete plan, by understanding the Bible to be the owner’s manual that can rehabilitate all areas of our lives.

### **Verse to memorize:**

“For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.” *Colossians 1:9-10*

Let’s analyze the instructions that God gave us in the Great Commission (*Matthew 28:19*):

### **“Go and make disciples”**

#### **1. “Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit”**

This is because baptism is the public and voluntary rendering of our rights and our lives to the will of God.

#### **2. “Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”**

Once we have received what Jesus did for us to forgive us our sins (the Gospel), it is necessary that His work in our transform all areas of our lives (discipleship), which can happen only if we are supported by the word of God.

The Great Commission must be carried out in all nations, teaching them all things, trusting that God will be with us all of our days that we do it.

Our brothers of the early church carried out this work under the apostle Peter’s leadership. We can observe that those who received the word: 1) were baptized, adding to the numbers of the church; and 2) devoted themselves to the doctrine of the apostles (*Acts 2:41-42*).

## **The commitment of the person who disciples**

Instruct his disciples in the word of God:

**“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Paul the apostle understood this responsibility clearly, and for this reason, he returned to the places where he had proclaimed the Gospel. He encouraged his disciples in the word, taking care to proclaim all of God’s message (*Acts 20:27*), even when putting his own life at risk.

In Acts 14:21-22, we can observe a sequence of verbs that help us to understand the work for which we have been called:

- Preach all of the commandments of God
- Win disciples (not just believers)
- Return to strengthen and encourage them

Paul was so passionate about making true disciples that when people became obstinate and publicly maligned the name of Jesus, he decided to separate himself and his disciples in order to address their doubts personally over the next two years (*Acts 19:8-10*).

This was the beginning of the formation of those who would later become the first church leaders in the churches founded by Paul. These disciples completed their instruction in three years (*Acts 20:31*).

It is interesting to note that in a similar lapse of time, Jesus prepared His disciples. This shows us that being and making disciples takes time. We need to be patient, assuring ourselves that those who will be taking positions of leadership are developing the three indispensable characteristics that are identified in Paul’s ministry:

### **1. Integrity**

Being a role model not only in knowledge, but also in wisdom, applying the principles of the word of God to our own lives (*Acts 20:18-20, 24, 33-35*).

### **2. Interest**

Worrying about the spiritual needs of one’s disciples, investing resources, time, and effort to instruct them in the word of God (*Acts 20:27-31, 36*).

### **3. Focus**

Helping them to know and depend personally on the power of God and the word of His grace, and not on us personally as a leader (*Acts 20:20-21, 32*).

### **The commitment of being a disciple**

The orderly process of the verbs mentioned in Acts 2:41-42 shows us the normal and healthy development in the life of a disciple:

- They received the word
- They were baptized
- They were added to the church
- They devoted themselves to the doctrine
- In communion with the church
- In prayer

Two other elements also stand out which anyone who would like to be a disciple should consider:

- Remain firm in the word
- Be willing to pass through many tribulations

# Questions

## 6. A Discipling Church: God Works when we Know Him

**Objective:** Recognize the importance of making known God's complete plan, by understanding the Bible to be the owner's manual that can rehabilitate all areas of our lives.

**Verse to memorize:**

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the \_\_\_\_\_ of his \_\_\_\_\_ through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives." *Colossians 1:9*

**1. Matthew 28:19:**

"Go and make \_\_\_\_\_".

1. "\_\_\_\_\_ them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."  
Baptism is the public and \_\_\_\_\_ of our rights and our lives to the will of God.

2. "Teaching them to obey \_\_\_\_\_ that I have commanded you."  
"\_\_\_\_\_ Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ and is \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly \_\_\_\_\_ for every good work."  
(2 *Timothy 3:16-17*)

3. What is the complete work that we are called to according the Acts 14:21-22?

Preach \_\_\_\_\_ of the commandments of God.  
Win \_\_\_\_\_ (not just believers)  
Return to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ them

4. What are the three characteristics of Paul's ministry?

**1. I** \_\_\_\_\_  
"...You know how I \_\_\_\_\_ the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord with great \_\_\_\_\_..." *Acts 20:18-19*

**2. I** \_\_\_\_\_  
"For I have not \_\_\_\_\_ to proclaim to you the \_\_\_\_\_ will of God." *Acts 20:27*

**3. F** \_\_\_\_\_  
"You know that I have not \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ anything that would be \_\_\_\_\_ to you but have \_\_\_\_\_ you publicly and from house to house." *Acts 20:20*

**2. The commitment of being a disciple**

The orderly process of the verbs mentioned in Acts 2:41-42 shows us the normal and healthy development in the life of a disciple:

- They received the \_\_\_\_\_
- They were \_\_\_\_\_
- They were \_\_\_\_\_ to the church
- They devoted themselves to the \_\_\_\_\_
- In \_\_\_\_\_ with the church
- In \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. A Church with Authority: God Works in our Obedience

God has given the church the capacity to represent Him to the world, carrying the message of God's reconciliation with man through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For this reason, God has given the church authority.

The church needs to exercise the authority that God has given it to carry out the Great Commission (*Mt. 28:18-20*) and the Great Commandment (*John 13:34*).

With this purpose, it is necessary that every member of the body learn to live under authority as well as exercise it, since God works in our obedience.

### **Objective:**

Learn that we cannot live in the kingdom of Jesus Christ without being under the authority that has been delegated by God.

### **Verse to memorize:**

“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.” *Romans 13:1-2*

**Authority:** *exusia* (Strong's #1849) = strength, capacity, privilege, delegated influence, right, jurisdiction, power, authority.

Jesus carried out the redemption for our sins while under the Father's authority: “**This command I received from my Father**” (*John 10:18b*).

“**Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”** (*John 5:19*)

In the character of Jesus we see a clear model of how we should submit to authority, how to exercise authority, and how to recognize it.

### **I. How to submit to authority**

#### ***1. In voluntary submission: “He made Himself nothing...”*** (*Phil. 2:5-9*)

We as humans are required to live under authority during our lives. Only those who are willing to live under authority learn how to exercise it correctly. Jesus left us His example when He left His position of authority with the Father and made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant.

#### ***2. Through sufferings: “even to death”*** (*Phil. 2:8-9*)

Jesus was obedient even to death, and death on a cross. Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name.

There will be occasions when submitting to authority causes suffering, but God permits this with

the purpose of forming the image of His Son in us. We must remember that God works for the good of those who love Him.

### **3. In obedience: “He learned obedience” (Heb. 5:7-9)**

Through His sacrifice and submission to His Father, Jesus learned obedience as a human, becoming the author of eternal salvation for everyone who obeys Him.

The word of God encourages us to have the same attitude that Jesus had, being willing to submit voluntarily to God’s authority, even when doing this causes suffering. This way, we learn obedience, which brings blessings to our lives and the lives of those around us.

When a person resists authority, he brings condemnation upon himself.

We can conclude that we should submit to authority:

1. In voluntary submission
2. Through sufferings
3. In obedience

## **II. How to exercise authority**

The Lord chose the Last Supper with the disciples as an ideal moment to teach them, through His example, how they should exercise the authority that would be given to them soon as a church. This teaching can be found in John 13:1-17.

### **1. Knowledge: “knowing” (John 13:1)**

It is necessary to know that the purpose of God is that we be formed in the image of Christ, and that we multiply His image by creating disciples. This helps us remain focused, even throughout difficult circumstances.

### **2. Commitment: “He loved them to the end” (John 13:1)**

It is our commitment to do everything that is possible to help the disciples we make to develop a living and personal relationship with God.

We must teach them to depend on God, loving each other with a love that comes from a commitment, not just a feeling. We must also give them the opportunity to repent and surrender their lives to Christ, just as Jesus Himself did—even when He knew that Peter would deny Him, and giving Judas the opportunity to repent “until the end”.

It is also important to understand that this committed love is not giving people what they want, but rather what they need.

### **3. Teaching: “Unless I wash you” (John 13:8)**

In order for the disciples to recognize authority, a leader must take the responsibility of washing them continually with the word of God, sharing the vision and mission that he has received. This

will generate respect and recognition of his authority.

This same concept appears in Ephesians 5, referring to marriage. Here, the husband is urged to exercise his authority as the spiritual leader of the home, washing his wife continually with the word of God, with the purpose of presenting her to himself as pure and stainless.

In order to take part with the master in His kingdom, we must all be “washed” with the word of God.

Finally, it is necessary that disciples have a **teachable attitude**, so that they may be transformed into the image of Jesus.

#### **4. Service: “after” (John 13:12)**

Before our disciples can recognize our authority, we must first serve them; we must show a real interest in transforming their lives and supporting them through this process.

In these verses, it is emphasized that Jesus puts on His robe and assumes His authority **after** having washed His disciples’ feet.

We can conclude that authority must be exercised with:

1. Knowledge
2. Commitment
3. Teaching the word
4. Service

### **III. Recognizing authority (John 13:13-17)**

Once Jesus, knowing His purpose, has fulfilled His promise to love His disciples to the end, teaching them the word and serving them, He then has authority over them as their “master and Lord”.

In the same way, if we know these things and put them into practice (*John 13:17*), we will be recognized in the function of authority which has been delegated to us—whether it be as a pastor, teacher, coordinator, worship leader, etc. ...and we will do it!

From the above, we learn that authority is not forced or demanded; rather, it is *recognized by the body of Christ*.

In Acts 15, we see that in the case of Paul and Barnabas, they were *recognized* by the church. It also mentioned “some” people who tried to take the authority upon themselves.

#### ***Who are these “some”?* (Acts 15:1, 2, 5)**

The “some” are undefined people who, without authority given by the Holy Spirit or the church, infiltrated the church, bothered the brothers, caused division and sought only their own glory and not the glory of God. They did all this instead of seeking to edify the body of Christ and be a blessing as Paul and Barnabas were. (*Gal. 4:17*)

The “some” are characterized by not submitting to authority and attempting to demand or impose it.

In contrast, Paul and Barnabas are subject to their brothers’ advice and *submissive* to the authority of the apostles and the elders. They go to the church of Jerusalem to seek advice and are received by the church (*Acts 15:2*), while “some” are excluded from the meeting.

In this passage, we also observe that true leaders—among whom stand Peter, Barnabas, and Paul—not only give testimony to their faith, but also seek unity in the body of Christ (*Rom. 15:5-7*). In response, the multitudes are silenced, recognizing their authority (*Acts 15:12*).

Finally, James, who gives advice, is guided by the Holy Spirit and recognized by the church as he determines what is to come. His advice is approved by the apostles and by the elders, resulting in a unanimous church (*Acts 15:22*).

We can conclude that authority is recognized:

1. When applying the principles of:
  - Knowledge
  - Commitment
  - Teaching
  - Service
2. Being integrated in the body of Christ.
3. Seeking unity and unanimity.
4. Submitting to authority.

Dear brothers, we conclude this module, praying that these principles will rehabilitate the church that the Lord has entrusted into our hands. We pray that we can be leaders with a clear concept of what service means, guiding others to the liberty that is found in the word of God.

We understand that God is not interested in that we go to church, but rather that **we are the church**.

“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” *Acts 20:32*

# Questions

## 7. A Church with Authority: God Works in our Obedience

**Objective:** Learn that we cannot live in the kingdom of Jesus Christ without being under the authority that has been delegated by God.

**Verse to memorize:**

“Let everyone be \_\_\_\_\_ to the governing authorities, for there is no \_\_\_\_\_ except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is \_\_\_\_\_ against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring \_\_\_\_\_ on themselves.” *Romans 13:1-2*

### I. How to submit to authority

1. In \_\_\_\_\_: “He made Himself nothing” (*Phil. 2:5-7*)
2. Through \_\_\_\_\_: “even to death” (*Phil. 2:8-9*)
3. In \_\_\_\_\_: “He learned obedience” (*Heb. 5:7-9*)

### II. How to execute authority

1. \_\_\_\_\_: “Knowing” (*Jn. 13:1*)
2. \_\_\_\_\_: “He loved them to the end” (*Jn. 13:1*)  
Committed love is not giving people what they \_\_\_\_\_, but rather what they \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_: “Unless I wash you” (*Jn. 13:8*)  
A disciple must have a \_\_\_\_\_ in order to be transformed into the image of Jesus.
4. \_\_\_\_\_: “After” (*Jn. 13:12*)

### III. Recognizing authority (*John 13:13-17*)

1. Authority is \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, but rather it is \_\_\_\_\_ by the body of Christ.
2. Who are the “some”? (*Acts 15:1*)  
\_\_\_\_\_ people who cause \_\_\_\_\_ and seek the \_\_\_\_\_ for themselves (*Gal. 4:17*).
3. True leaders seek the \_\_\_\_\_ of the body of Christ, resulting in a \_\_\_\_\_ church (*Rom. 15:5-7*).

*We conclude that authority is recognized:*

Applying principles of k \_\_\_\_\_, c \_\_\_\_\_, t \_\_\_\_\_, and s \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Being \_\_\_\_\_ in the body of Christ.
2. Seeking \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. S \_\_\_\_\_ to authority.