



## NUPTIAL PREPARATIONS

ABCtoAD Series  
By Timothy Ministries

# LIFE IN THE Apostolic Church

The Servant Bride Makes Herself Ready For Her Gracious Bridegroom

## Leadership

1. The church was led by a \_\_\_\_\_ of overseers (elders) and deacons (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1.5-9; Acts 20. 17).
2. Overseers and deacons had to meet \_\_\_\_\_ qualifications, including the ability to manage their own families well (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1.5-9).
3. Church overseers (elders) were characterized as \_\_\_\_\_ (= pastors) because they were responsible to feed and protect God's flock (Acts 20.28,29).
4. Overseers had to be \_\_\_\_\_ and able to teach (1 Tim. 3.2; 2 Tim. 2.24; Titus 1.8-9).

## Teaching

1. The first pastors taught their flock both publicly and in the believers' \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 20.20).
2. Pastors taught both by word and \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 4.12; Titus 2.7).
3. Pastors prioritized teaching their people how to live with \_\_\_\_\_ and character (Titus 2).

## Meetings

1. The first Christian meetings were held in the Jerusalem temple and in \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2.46).
2. When they could no longer meet in the temple, Christians met in homes (Rom. 16.5; 1 Cor. 16.19).
3. The first Christian meetings were devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2.32).
4. "Breaking bread" apparently involved eating a \_\_\_\_\_ together, during which bread and wine were partaken of as an ordinance within the meal (cf. Jude 12).
5. Praying for people, including \_\_\_\_\_ remained a priority as new churches formed outside of Palestine (1 Tim. 2.1-8).



ANCHOR TRUTHS

By a high adoption price, Jesus has elevated us from servants to friends (John 15.15) and from friends to brothers (John 20.17), thus making us partners and heirs.



FOR DISCUSSION

If the church is called to be a family rather than a "corporation" or a "small business," what are the implications for how we evangelize and make disciples?

**In line with the family principle in the epistles, we are:**

<i>_____ at great cost</i>	Rom. 8.28-32; Heb. 2.9-15
<i>Like a biological _____</i>	1Tim. 3.4,5
<i>The _____ of God</i>	Ephesians 2.19; 1 Tim. 3.15
<i>Bearers of God's _____</i>	2Chron. 6.32,33; Acts 15.17; Eph. 3.15
<i>Ruled by the _____</i>	Hebrews 3.6
<i>Being _____ to the Son</i>	Rom. 8.29
<i>Living _____</i>	1Cor. 3.19-17; Eph. 2.19-22; 1 Pet. 2.5
<i>Worthy of _____ respect</i>	1Tim. 5.1-3
<i>To invest in _____</i>	Galatians 6.7-10
<i>_____ to one husband</i>	2Cor. 11.2
<i>Where _____ begins</i>	1Pe 4.17

**Since we are corporately the family of God, what are the implications for each of our nuclear families?**



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## The NT Doctrine Of *Ekklesia*

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### EKKLESIA Defined & CHARACTERIZED

Reference	Key Idea	Implications
<i>Mat. 16.18</i>	<i>Christ's irresistible building.</i>	
<i>Mat. 18.17</i>	<i>The place of spiritual accountability.</i>	
<i>Acts 7.38</i>	<i>Existed in the desert with Moses.</i>	
<i>Acts 12.5</i>	<i>Source of corporate prayer.</i>	
<i>Acts 14.23; 20.17; 1 Tim. 5.17</i>	<i>Led by elders.</i>	<i>A continuation of the OT congregation, Psa. 107.32; Joel 2.16</i>
<i>Acts 20.28</i>	<i>The flock purchased by God's own blood.</i>	<i>See Eph 5.25; Heb 10.1-4.</i>
<i>1 Cor. 1.2; 14.33; 2 Cor. 1.1</i>	<i>Those sanctified and called to be holy, i.e., the corporate body of the saints.</i>	
<i>Eph. 1.22,23</i>	<i>The Body of Christ of which He is the head, His fullness in the world.</i>	<i>We are members of one another (Rom. 12.5).</i>
<i>Eph. 2.16; 3.2-6; 4.4</i>	<i>The ONE body, made up of both Jews and Gentiles.</i>	
<i>Eph. 3.10-11</i>	<i>The vehicle for vindicating God's wisdom and judging the heavenly powers.</i>	<i>We will judge angels (1 Co 6.3).</i>
<i>Eph. 4.11-16; Col. 2.18,19</i>	<i>The venue for spiritual growth.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A man who isolates himself</li> <li>• seeks his own desire;</li> <li>• He rages against all</li> <li>• wise judgment.</li> </ul>
<i>Eph. 5.23-27</i>	<i>The nuptial counterpart of Christ, for which He gave Himself to make her holy.</i>	<i>Proverbs 18.1 (NKJV)</i>

Reference	Key Idea	Implications
<i>Col. 1.24</i>	<i>Christ's Body for which His servants continue to sacrifice.</i>	
<i>1 Tim. 3.5</i>	<i>The Church is like a family.</i>	<i>We cannot reject one another!</i>
<i>1 Tim. 3.15</i>	<i>The household of God, that functions as the pillar and foundation of the truth.</i>	<i>Heb 3.6; 1 Pe 2.5; 4.17. House of God always the building in LXX, but see Heb 3.2,5; Num 12.7.</i>
<i>1 Tim 5.16</i>	<i>The helper of the destitute.</i>	
<i>Heb. 2.12 (KJV)</i>	<i>= "the congregation of the Lord" in the OT era.</i>	<i>"kahal" in Heb. OT = "ekklesia" in LXX.</i>
<i>Heb. 12.23</i>	<i>The heirs (firstborn) whose names are written in heaven.</i>	
<i>James 5.14</i>	<i>Place of healing.</i>	
<i>Rev. 2.7,11,17,etc.</i>	<i>The corporate body addressed by the Spirit.</i>	

## Ministry In The New Testament Church

1. From the beginning, Christians provided for the \_\_\_\_\_ of one another (Acts 2.44-45).
2. The first Christians prioritized meeting the practical needs of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 6.1; 1 Tim. 5.3-16; 6.17-19; James 1.27).
3. Ministry also involved the \_\_\_\_\_ reading of Scripture, preaching the Word and teaching (1 Tim. 4.13; 2 Tim. 4.2).
4. Another ministry responsibility in the early church was the training and appointing of \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Tim. 2.2; Titus 1.5).
5. The overseer (pastor) also had to patiently \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ those who opposed biblical teaching by their words or immoral behavior (2 Tim. 4.1-4).
6. Ministry also involved direct \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Tim. 4. 5).



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## CLARIFYING The Gospel

### The Servant Bride Makes Herself Ready For Her Gracious Bridegroom

#### Vocabulary

Betrothed  
Church; ἐκκλησία  
Deacon = Servant, Minister  
Epistle  
Filial  
Firstborn = Heir  
Gospel; εὐαγγέλιον  
Great Commission  
Heretic (Titus 3.10, KJV)  
Love Feast (Jude 1.12)  
Overseer; ἐπίσκοπος  
Pastor (verb) = Shepherd

#### List the four imperatives of the Great Commission:

1. Joh 20.21-22:

2. Mark 16.15-18:

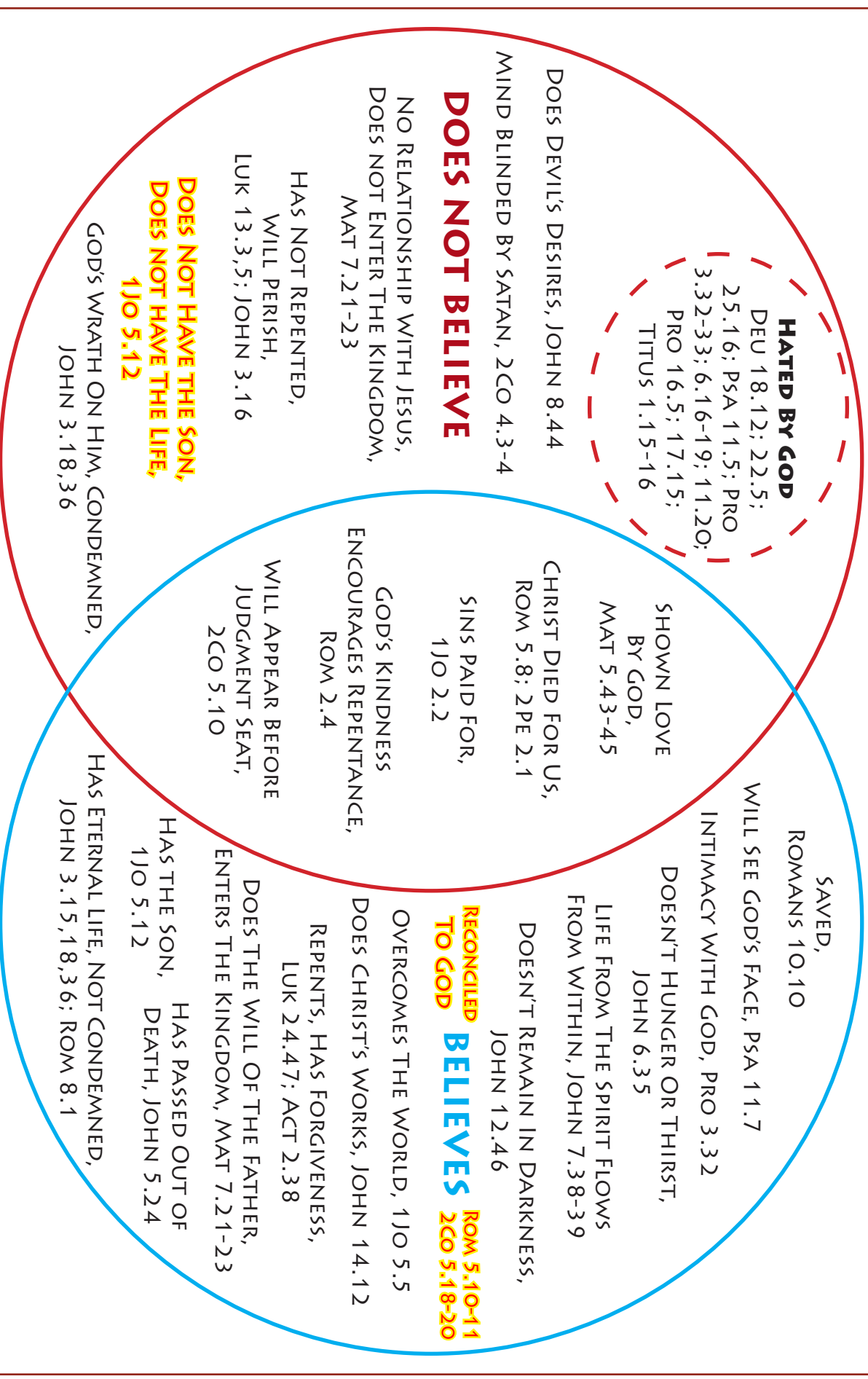
3. Matthew 28. 19-20:

4. Mat 28.20:

List the four historical facts of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 15.3-8):

# DIFFERENCES AND COMMONALITIES

## IN TWO SPIRITUAL STATES





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## Establishing Faith In Hebrews

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#### Vocabulary

Age (αἰών)  
Apostasy  
Assurance  
Evidence  
Faith  
Hapax legomenon  
Wage Payer (μισθαποδότης)

#### First-Century Choices

The first-century Hebrew who considered the gospel faced the following choices:

1. To interact with God through the Scriptures given through the prophets and written on scrolls (Heb 1.1), or through the \_\_\_\_\_ written in flesh and blood (Heb 1.2; 4.12-13).
2. Live by the Law \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb 2.2), or by a new law given by One “much better than the angels (Heb 1.4).
3. Remain loyal to the Jerusalem Temple and Levitical Priesthood, or embrace the temple of the Holy Spirit and \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb 5.6, etc.).
4. Keep hoping for a political kingdom, or submit to a kingdom that cannot be \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb 12.26-29).
5. Retain an earthly Jerusalem-centered faith ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), or embrace a heavenly-Jerusalem faith (Gentiles too; Heb 12.22-24)
6. Stick to the Old Covenant of \_\_\_\_\_ (Col 2.17; Heb 10.1), or receive the actual Lamb of God (Heb 9.11-12).
7. Remain a member of a *religio licita*, or face \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb 13.13).

#### Warning Against Apostasy

Heb 6.4-8 has caused concern to many contemporary Christians. To many it seems these verses imply that a person who has received the Spirit can subsequently fall away, and then will never be allowed to repent. However, the fact is that this passage, like so many others in the New Testament, is meant to be read from a corporate rather than an individualistic perspective. The author wrote to a Jewish-Christian



synagogue that apparently included “seekers” not yet entirely committed to Christ. As a corporate body, everyone in this synagogue had experienced two important things (expressed twice in chiasmic fashion):

**Been enlightened**

**Tasted of the heavenly gift**

**Made participants with regard to the Holy Spirit**

**Tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come**

Those who were unsaved but had witnessed these evidences of Jesus’ lordship in the corporate gathering, and then dissociated themselves (παραπίπτω) from the believers, testified by so doing that they agreed with Pilate’s sentence upon the Son of God — and were left with no means of salvation.

## Faith, Hope, & Confession

### What Faith Is

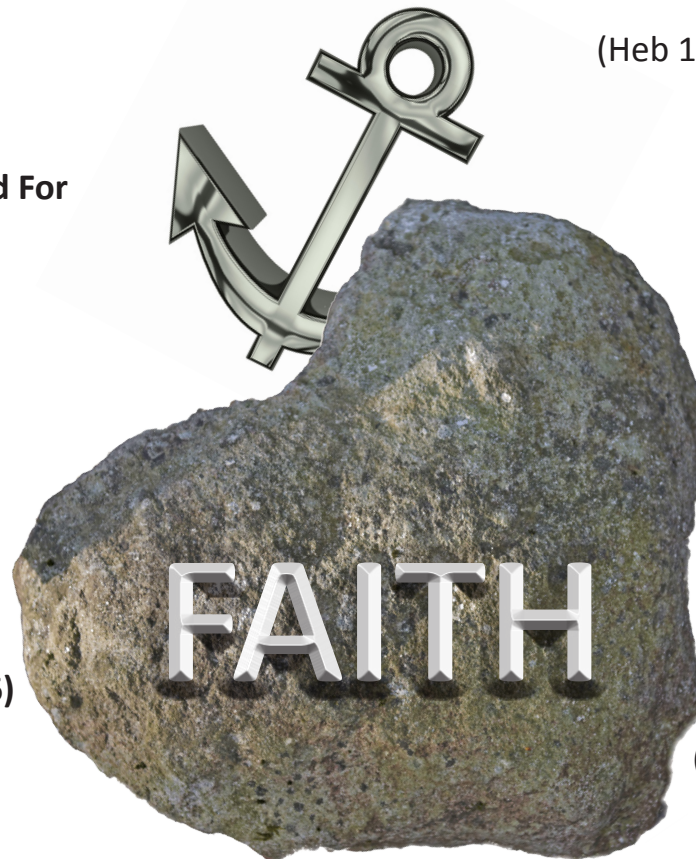
1. (Heb 11.3)
2. (Heb 6.1; 11.1,6)
3. (Heb 10.22; 11.1)

### The Things Hoped For

1. (Heb 6.11-12)
2. (Heb 4.1)
3. (Heb 9.15)
4. (Heb 10.36-37)
5. (Heb 11.9-10; 13-16)

### What We Must Believe (Heb 11.6)

1. (Ex 23.14; Psa 49.7)
2. (cf. Ruth 2.12)







## **NUPTIAL PREPARATIONS**

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## **ETERNAL LIFE IN First John**

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### **The Test**

### **How To Pass The Test**

- 1. Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 1John 5.1**
- 2. We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. 1John 5.18**
- 3. If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him. 1John 2.29**



ANCHOR TRUTHS

**John wrote his first epistle, not to tell people how to be saved, but to tell them how they could be assured that they already had eternal life (1 John 5.12-13).**



FOR DISCUSSION

**If God loves the world (John 3.16), why does He command us **not to** (1 John 2.15)?**

## The Test

## How To Pass The Test

4. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

1John 3.14

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

1John 4.7

5. ... for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

1John 5.4

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1John 2.15



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## A Crisis Addressed In The Epistle of Jude

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### Salutational Wishes (Jude 1.2)

Cf. 2 Peter 1.2

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Actions Of Infiltrators (Jude 1.4)

Cf. 2 Peter 2.1

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



### Like Sinners Of The Past And Their Punishments (Jude 1.5-7)

Cf. 2 Peter 2.4,6

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### More Actions Of The “Dreaming” Infiltrators (Jude 1.8)

Cf. 2 Peter 2.10

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Reasons For Their Woe (Jude 1.11) Cf. 2 Peter 2.15-16

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **Character Of The Infiltrators (Jude 1.12-13) [Cf. 2 Peter 2.17](#)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## **Things The Lord Will Do And Why (Jude 1.14-15)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 
- 

## **Infiltrators' Characteristic Activities (Jude 1.16) [Cf. 2 Peter 2.18](#)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## **Further Character Of The Infiltrators (Jude 1.19)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## **How We Must Contend For The Faith (Jude 1.3; 20-23)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.



## NUPTIAL PREPARATIONS

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## The Safeguards Against Heresy

Adapted from Roderick Graciano,  
*Magic Baptism And The Invention Of Original Sin*

### The Servant Bride Makes Herself Ready For Her Gracious Bridegroom

**T**o understand the devolution of biblical doctrines in Christian history, we must realize that as members of a fallen race we all have difficulty perceiving truth (Joh 18.38), and difficulty preserving it once perceived (Pro 23.23). When it comes to grasping and holding onto biblical truth, we must contend with the world, the flesh, and the devil (Joh 8.44; Gen 3.1; cf. 2Co 11.14). The community of the faithful, once having believed biblical propositions, is subjected to intense pressure to liberalize, reinterpret, or even jettison their scriptural beliefs. For this reason, Christian communities, like those of Galatia and Colossae, began to slide into heresy within a decade of their inception, even while their founding apostles still lived! For the same reason, the Church has had to battle a constant parade of heresies since.

### The Safeguards Against Heresy

Thankfully, God has always given safeguards to protect the truth from His own people's propensity for heresy and apostasy. During His earthly ministry, our Lord Jesus, the very personification of the truth (Joh 14.6), served as both the ultimate corrective to heresy and the supreme guardian of the right understanding of Scripture. He corrected the bad theology of the Sadducees regarding the afterlife and resurrection (Mat 22.23-32). He also reprimanded the wrong application of Scripture practiced by the scribes and the Pharisees (Mar 7.5-13). While with His disciples, He guarded them from error and apostasy, and they kept God's word (Joh 17.6,12). When Jesus ascended to heaven, other safeguards remained to preserve the true doctrines of Scripture. The seven safeguards were:

- 1.
2. (cf. Eph 2.20; 2Pe 3.2; Jud 1.17).
3. (Joh 16.13; cf. 1Jo 2.27).
4. (1Ti 3.15).
5. (Joh 7.17).
6. (2Ti 3.16).
7. (see Isa 8.20).

Let's remember Paul's prophetic warning to the elders of Ephesus (Act 20.28-30):

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you over-seers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

# How A Church Can Mutate From Loving Family To Damaging Cult

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Leadership			
<div>SHEPHERDING</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sacrifices in order to serve</li><li>• Prioritizes people over agenda</li><li>• Works for success of others, willing to see others elevated above self</li><li>• Able to receive warnings and constructive criticism</li><li>• Works hard to restore strays</li></ul>	<div>Orthodox</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dominated by a strong personality insensitive to subordinates; sees people as assets</li><li>• Has diminishing tolerance toward dissenters and strays; becomes isolated from followers</li><li>• Begins to violate family authority structures</li><li>• Growing focus on material gain</li><li>• Becomes increasingly secretive</li></ul>	<div>Legalism</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Controlling, accountable to no one</li><li>• Gets special, self-serving revelations</li><li>• Completely intolerant of criticism</li><li>• Assumes absolute authority</li><li>• Imposes beliefs on followers, exploits them materially &amp; emotionally</li><li>• Justifies immorality</li></ul>	
Church Culture			
<div>GRACE</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emphasizes serving one another</li><li>• Patient with the immature</li><li>• Includes all believers in fellowship</li><li>• Practices the Priesthood of the Believer; values personal views</li><li>• Disciplines with brokenness</li><li>• Emphasizes giving all to Christ</li><li>• Gifts balanced by fruit of the Spirit and biblical disciplines</li></ul>	<div>The Danger Zone</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prioritizes the organization over individuals</li><li>• Legalistically emphasizes externals</li><li>• Adds rites of initiation</li><li>• Replaces personal discernment and counsel with dependence upon gifted leaders</li><li>• Testing of “all things” deemed superfluous</li><li>• Emphasizes giving to the organization</li><li>• De-emphasizes biblical disciplines while prioritizing the exercise of gifts.</li></ul>	<div>The Danger Zone</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loses “one another” love</li><li>• Becomes completely elitist</li><li>• Judges actions <i>and attitudes</i> severely</li><li>• Silences dissent by marginalization</li><li>• Claims all possessions for the group</li><li>• Allows leaders to dictate all financial and relational decisions of individuals</li><li>• Those with gifts of prophecy dominate others</li></ul>	
Teaching			
<div>ORTHODOX</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proclaims the deity and atonement of Christ, justification by faith, and the primacy of The Bible</li><li>• Encourages personal discovery of biblical truth</li></ul>	<div>Orthodox</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposes new rituals as means of grace</li><li>• Increasingly emphasizes authority of leaders</li><li>• Discourages independent thinking and outside counsel</li><li>• Adds other authoritative books</li><li>• Flirts with novel doctrines</li></ul>	<div>HERETICAL</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Denies Christ’s deity and atonement</li><li>• Pushes a form of works justification</li><li>• Emphasizes submission to leaders, accuses the rebellious</li><li>• Suppresses independent thinking</li><li>• Proclaims revelations superior to Bible</li><li>• Adopts other heretical doctrines</li></ul>	