

4 God Is Our Lord

GOD LEADS HIS CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST

He is also head of the body, the church...He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Colossians 1.18

JESUS IS IN CHARGE

Jesus came to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. An important expression of the Kingdom is the church. When many people hear the word church, they think of a building, but the New Testament church has nothing to do with buildings!

A church is a local gathering of disciples who obey Jesus and cooperate to achieve God's purpose. God has appointed His Son to have a very special place in the church: Jesus is _____, the one in authority who oversees it and gives it direction.

In the human body, the head controls the rest of the body. The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the _____ of the church which controls the functions of the body (Colossians 1.18). Without the Head (Christ), the church (the "body" of Christ) can never function properly!

THE NEW TESTAMENT AIM OF THE CHURCH

Do you remember the *Three Great Commands* from our first session? Let's review them:

Jesus commands us to _____

MATTHEW 22.37 *Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.*

Jesus commands us to _____

MATTHEW 22.39 *Love your neighbour as yourself.*

Jesus commands us to _____

MATTHEW 28.19-20 *Go and make disciples, baptising them...teaching them to obey.*

These three great commands are foundational practises for every church. Jesus, the Lord of the church, gave these commands so we know how to please God. They give the church meaning and direction.

We must be sure every disciple learns to obey these commands! A simple way to remember them is to think of the words *accountability*, *intimacy*, and *multiplication* (AIM):

Accountability reminds us to "Love your neighbour as yourself"

Obeying this command results in our growth in true partnership together to do God's will.

Intimacy reminds us to "Love the Lord your God"

Obeying this command results in knowing God personally and becoming more like Jesus.

Multiplication reminds us to "Go and make disciples"

Obeying this command results in reaching people and helping God's Kingdom grow.

How have we been practising these three commands in our TFT group?

! Study the "AIM Pattern" (handout) to visualise and understand the pattern we use have been using in our group. What would churches be like if every disciple followed this pattern?

KEY IMAGE: HEAD AND BODY

USE YOUR OWN STORIES TO TEACH THESE POINTS

THE NEW TESTAMENT
AIM OF THE CHURCH IS

to develop *accountability* to one another

to grow in *intimacy* with God

and to bring about the *multiplication* of the Kingdom.

THREE KINDS CHURCHES

USE YOUR OWN STORIES TO TEACH
THESE POINTS

Churches come in all shapes and sizes, but there are three major types:

1 _____ Church

These churches usually have their own building. They generally meet in formal services on Sundays.

They hope church members will share their faith and bring people to services to help their congregation grow. Some believers share the Gospel, but most rely on the minister or church program to reach lost people.

2 _____ Church

This is a church consisting of multiple groups of about 10 people each, called cells. Each cell gathers at a church member's home. Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

They hope that each cell will grow quickly and split into two new groups. Some cells grow, but others do not.

3 _____ Church

These churches are the key to Church Planting Movements (CPMs) which occur in many parts of the world today. They are purposely kept small, simple, and informal so any believer can start them and lead them.

Every disciple is expected to obey God. They hold one another accountable, particularly in sharing the Gospel. Every disciple learns to be a trainer who will train others. Every disciple is taught to depend on God, expecting Him to work powerfully in their lives.

These churches focus on multiplication rather than growth in size. This is the kind of church we are seeking to establish. CPM churches multiply rapidly and reach many people!

A LIFESTYLE OF SACRIFICE

The gospel message is all about the sacrifice of Jesus, who gave His life to save us. Every believer should celebrate what He has done for us, and we should learn to develop a lifestyle of sacrifice to become more like Jesus.

We Celebrate Jesus as a Sacrifice for Us

At the "Lord's supper," Jesus showed us a way to celebrate His work on the cross:

He took _____ and broke it, saying it was His body broken for us.

He took a _____, saying it was His blood spilled out for us.

Whenever a church gathers, we can honour Jesus by celebrating the Lord's Supper. This helps us remember what He did for us on the cross, and it reminds us to be "broken and spilled out" as we serve the Lord.

We Commit Ourselves as a Sacrifice for Jesus

We can demonstrate our love for Jesus through our willingness to sacrifice for Him:

FASTING	This sacrifice involves denying ourselves of something pleasurable (usually food) to help us keep our focus on God. <i>Luke 9.23; Matthew 17.21; Matthew 6.16–18; Acts 13.2</i>
TITHES	This sacrifice involves giving our money for God's work. <i>Malachi 3.8–10; Hebrews 7.1–10</i>
OFFERINGS	This sacrifice involves giving our time, a talent, work, or a gift. <i>Mark 12.41–44; Luke 6.38; 2 Corinthians 8–9</i>
LIVING SACRIFICES	This sacrifice involves giving our whole life to God. <i>Romans 12.1; 2 Corinthians 12.9–10</i>

ASSIGNMENTS

OBEY at least one thing you learned from this lesson:

MEMORISE the three parts of AIM and the commands of Jesus which they help us to remember.

SHARE your personal story or the Gospel story with at least one person this week.

MEMORIZE the memory verse:
Colossians 1.18

READ from the Bible:
Genesis 12.1–4 Psalm 67.1–7
John 15.18–21 Romans 10.8–15

TRAIN at least one believer outside this group, just as you were trained.