

“Come now, let us reason together”

¹⁵But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 1st Peter 3:15

You are probably busy now but when you get time I wish you would give careful, prayerful consideration to these questions.

Was John the Baptist a member of the Bride of Christ (John 3:22-30; Matthew 11:10-15; Luke 7:27-28)? If your answer is yes, please give scripture.

What was the Kingdom that Jesus referred to in Matthew 11:10-11 and Luke 7:27-28 of which John the Baptist was not a member?

What was the one thing that the members of that Kingdom received that John the Baptist had never received (John 4:2)?

Did John the Baptist say in Matthew 3:11 that whoever was immersed in the power of the Sevenfold Holy Spirit of God (Isaiah 11:2) would also be covered with fire?

Were the disciples of Christ (the local church in Jerusalem) ever immersed in the power of The Seven Fold Holy Spirit of God and were they ever covered with fire (Acts 2:1-4)?

Were the disciples of John the Baptist ever immersed in the power of the Seven Fold Holy Spirit of God and were they ever covered with fire?

Approximately how many disciples did Jesus Christ have follow Him from His baptism to the time He ascended back to Heaven (Luke 6:13; Acts 1:21-26; 1st Corinthians 15:3-6)?

Jesus called out to the disciples of John the Baptist and invited them to become fishers of men as part of the assembly He was forming (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:10-11; John 1:35-51). There were some disciples of John the Baptist who chose **not** to follow Christ and chose **not** to become one of His disciples. Will they live on the New Earth through eternity (Revelation 21 & 22)?

Will those disciples of Christ who chose to abandon Him and to **no longer** be one of His disciples (John 6:66) live on the New Earth through eternity (Revelation 21 & 22)?

Then why did not either of those groups receive the power of the Seven Fold Holy Spirit of God on the day of Pentecost and why were they not covered with fire (Acts 1&2)?

What was the purpose of the power of the Seven Fold Holy Spirit of God and the purpose of the gifts that were given by the Seven Fold Holy Spirit of God (Hebrews 2:1-4; 1st Corinthians 14:22; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1st Corinthians 12:28-31)?

Jesus said in Luke 14:26-33 that whoever would not bear his cross, forsake all, and come after Him could not be His disciple. Does that mean that those who had been saved under the ministry of John the Baptist but had chosen not to come to Jesus when He called them were not His disciples? Does that mean that those who chose to abandon Him (John 6:66) were not His disciples?

Could you be a member of the church Christ established without being one of His disciples?

If so, do you know of any scripture that says that a person who was not a disciple of Christ ever became a member of any of the New Testament churches without making that commitment and following Him in scriptural baptism?

Therefore, doesn't that mean that regardless of what the Roman Universal (Catholic) church teaches, you can not be a member of His church without making a commitment to be one of His disciples and following Jesus Christ in scriptural baptism?

Therefore, would that not mean that if a person, under the conviction and leadership of the Holy Spirit, accepted Christ as their Savior but never received scriptural baptism they are not a member of the church that Jesus Christ established?

Were the sins of people who lived before John the Baptist paid for by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:1-7)?

If so, why did John the Baptist baptize those who were converted under his ministry when people had never been baptized before? (Matthew 3:3; John 1:29-34; Matthew 11:1-15; Mark 1:2-3; Luke 1:67-80; Luke 3:4; Luke 7:24-30)

If people were saved before the ministry of John the Baptist and the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, what was the Kingdom that both of them proclaimed was about to come into being, that is to say, “was at hand”?

We find in Matthew 10:1-42, Luke 6:12-13 and Mark 3:13-14 that Jesus sent 12 of His disciples to the lost sheep of Israel. The Greek word is ἀπόλλυμι and could also be translated destroyed or marred or even wandered off or separated as used in Luke 15:4, “³*Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?”* Does that mean that the nation was eternally condemned or does that mean that the nation had been marred, had been destroyed as a nation by God and was then separated (as a nation) from God?

Why did Jesus say in John 12:39-40 that the nation of Israel could not be converted? “³⁹*Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, ⁴⁰He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them”*. Did He mean that a Jew could not be saved or did He mean that the nation of Israel, at that time, could not be converted and restored back to the position they had held before God had rejected them as His wife (Hosea 1:1-9; 4:6; 5:15; 9:15; Ezekiel chapters 8,9,10 &11; Matthew 21:42-43 and Ezekiel 43:1-5).

Did any member of any of the churches in the New Testament become members without being baptized (Acts 2:41)? Please give scripture if your answer is yes.

Why was Jesus baptized? (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34)

Would Jesus have been a member of the church in Jerusalem if He had not been baptized?

What do we call that group that Paul wrote the letter that in your Bible is titled "1st Corinthians"?

The authority to bind or loose (Matthew 16:13-20 and Matthew 18:15-18) must be very powerful because Paul reminded the group he wrote to in 1st Corinthians that they had the authority to judge the people within their membership. In 1st Corinthians 5:5 Paul reminded them that they had the authority to deliver an adulterous member of their group over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

In 1st Corinthians 5:9-11, Paul instructed that group that they were not to company (translated from a combination of Greek words denoting in union with or in union together) with a brother that was a fornicator, was covetous, was an idolater, a railer, a drunkard or extortioner. He then wrote in 1st Corinthians 5:13 that they had the authority to put away (translated from a Greek word which means remove) such a person from their membership.

Paul instructed the group in 1st Corinthians 5:6-8 that the man was like leaven (a boiling, fermenting substance) as long as he was within their membership and they were not to keep (translated from a Greek word meaning observe) the feast (the Lord's Supper) in union with him. Paul repeated this in 1st Corinthians 5:11 when he told them not to eat in union with such a person.

SIDE NOTE!!! That Is Why The Membership Of Each Of God's Churches Must Know The Lives Of Those They Allow To Observe The Lord's Supper With Them. That's A Chilling Thought When You Consider The Number Of Times Some Of Our Larger Churches Have No Idea About The Lives Of The Visitors They Allow To Participate On The Day They Observe The Lord's Supper. The Responsibility Is On The

Churches As Well As Upon The Individual And God Will Discipline Both The Individuals As Well As The Churches. (1st Corinthians 11:28-32)

We find in Matthew 16:13-20 and Matthew 18:15-18 that Jesus Christ told His disciples (the local church in Jerusalem) that He was giving them the keys to a kingdom and whoever they would bind on earth would be bound in Heaven and whoever they would loose on earth would be loosed in Heaven. Was Jesus saying that the church in Jerusalem had the authority to bind a person into the Family of God (salvation) as the Roman Universal (Catholic) church teaches? If so, that would mean that He gave them the authority to loose a person from salvation as the Roman Universal (Catholic) church teaches.

What is the name of that kingdom into which the local church in Jerusalem could bind a person or loose a person on this earth? (Matthew 16:13-19)

What is the name of that group in Heaven into which a person is bound when they are bound into a particular group on this earth by the disciples of Christ? (Matthew 16:13-19)

What method did the disciples of Christ use to bind a person on this earth?

What method did the disciples of Christ use to bind a person in Heaven?

What method did the disciples of Christ use to loose a person on this earth?

What method did the disciples of Christ use to loose a person in Heaven? Please note that Christ did not say they would be loosed **from** Heaven. He said they would be loosed **in** Heaven.

In Hebrews 12:18-24, the writer was giving the Hebrews a mental picture of what they would see on the New Earth. He said they would see:

- 1- Mount Zion.
- 2- The city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem.
- 3- An innumerable company of angels.
- 4- The general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.
- 5- God the judge of all.
- 6- The spirits of just men made perfect.
- 7- Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.

8- The blood of sprinkling that speaks of better things than that of Abel.

If, there is a separate group in Heaven that Christ's scriptural churches could bind a person into or loose a person from, do you suppose that is why Paul listed **two groups** who will be living on the New Earth (Hebrews 12:18-24)?

#4-²³“to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven...”

#6“to the spirits of just men made perfect,”

The Bride of Christ will be living in the Holy City Jerusalem on the New Earth (Revelation 21:9-10) and there will be other saved people living outside the Holy City Jerusalem (Revelation 21:24-26; Revelation 22:1-2). Please note that if all those nations mentioned are all living inside the Holy City Jerusalem, God is a segregationist and He intends to divide people into different groups and give them each a king. If that is so, why will there be gates? Everyone would already be living inside the city.

If, there are two separate groups in Heaven as Hebrews 12:18-24 says there will be, which one of those two groups do the disciples of Christ have the authority to bind a person into and which of those two groups do the disciples of Christ have the authority to loose a person from?

In Matthew 21:43-45, Jesus told the chief priests and Pharisees that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to a people who would produce its fruit. Does that mean that from that time forward neither a chief priest nor a Pharisee could be saved? (2nd Peter 3:9; 1st Timothy 2:1-4)

If the kingdom that was taken from them was not the Family of God (being a child of God), what is the name of that kingdom that was taken from them?

I am a learner and I am very interested in your answers to these questions. Please e-mail them to Robert Tanner at roberttanner@bayourouge.net .