

Acts 2:41-47, 5:1-16 – Study Leader’s Questions

1. *What is the ‘church’ (Ephesians 1:21-22, Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:27)?*
2. *What are the two ways that the New Testament generally uses the word ‘church’ (Ephesians 5:23, Colossians 1:18, Acts 8:1, Revelation 2:1)?*
3. *How are we to understand the phrase ‘added to’ (Acts 2:41, 47)?*
4. *In Acts 5 great ‘fear’ seized the church and everyone else (Acts 5:11). What is the purpose of making a distinction (Acts 5:13-14)?*
5. *In Acts 6:3 the church has to respond to an immediate need – who is the ‘you’ that Peter is addressing?*
6. *If there is no membership how do we fulfil Hebrews 13:17?*
7. *What is the responsibility of every believer in their connection with the church (Acts 2:42, 46, Ephesians 4:15-16)?*
8. *What are some of the privileges of church membership?*
 1. *Mark 10:28-30, 1 Timothy 5:1-2*
 2. *Romans 15:1, Galatians 6:1*
 3. *2 Corinthians 1:3-5*
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9. *What are some of the obligations of church membership?*
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Acts 2:41-47, 5:1-16 – Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's book *The Local Church*, his commentaries *The Book of Acts* pp 127-129, 197-206, 219, 247-248, *The Book of Revelation* pp 31-103 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 1433, 1439, 1491, 1554, 1559, 1611, 1625, 1645-1648 for detailed comments and additional information. Note first Acts 2:41, 47:

Acts 2:41

"gladly received his word" is changed to **"accepted his message"** 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs i.e. omitting **"gladly,"** **"accepted what he said"** JB, NJB i.e. omitting **"gladly."**

The 1582 JR, DR, 1881 RV have **"received his word"** i.e. omitting **"gladly."**

The NWT has **"embraced his word heartily"** i.e. changing the words but essentially correct.

The NKJV f.n. omits **"gladly."**

Nestle's 21st Edition has **"welcoming the word"** i.e. omitting **"gladly."**

Ricker Berry's Edition of Stephanus's 1550 Received Text has **"gladly had welcomed his word"** essentially in agreement with the AV1611.

The Farstad-Hodges 'Majority' Text has **"gladly received his word"** in agreement with the AV1611.

The 1385/1395 Wycliffe Bible has **"received his word."**

The Tyndale, Coverdale, Great and Matthew Bibles have **"gladly received his preaching."**

The Bishops' and Geneva Bibles have **"gladly received his word"** in agreement with the AV1611.

The pre-1611 Bibles are seen to be converging toward the AV1611 reading while the post-1611 versions are seen, overall, to be diverging from it.

The word **"gladly"** was clearly established in Acts 2:41 in English Bibles as far back as the 16th century. The 1582 JR, DR, 1881 RV, 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs, NKJV f.n., Ne, JB, NJB have reverted to incomplete pre-16th century texts by omitting it.

The 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs have weakened the text further by alteration of **"gladly received his word"** to **"accepted his message,"** cutting out a reference to **"the word of truth"** Psalm 119:43, 2 Corinthians 6:7, Ephesians 1:13, 2 Timothy 2:15, James 1:18 and breaking important cross references to John 1:12, Acts 17:11 and in particular Matthew 8:16, Luke 4:32, 10:39, John 5:38, Titus 1:3, 1 John 1:10, 2:5 with respect to the expression **"his word"** that equates **"the apostles' doctrine"** Acts 2:42 with **"the word of Christ"** Colossians 3:16 i.e. as authoritative and as powerful as **"the word of the Lord"** that **"endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you"** 1 Peter 1:25.

"souls"

"souls" is omitted by the 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs, JB, NJB.

The 1582 JR, DR, 1881 RV, NWT all have **"souls."**

Nestle's 21st Edition, Ricker Berry's Received Text and the Farstad-Hodges 'Majority' Text together with the NKJV all have **"souls."**

The 1385/1395 Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Great, Matthew, Bishops' and Geneva Bibles all have **"souls."**

The omission of **"souls"** by the 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs is both unusual and decidedly pro-Catholic in the modern era. It is also objectionable in that salvation by faith *now* i.e. **"behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"** 2 Corinthians 6:2 is explicitly the salvation of the *soul*.

"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" 1 Peter 1:9.

Acts 2:47

“the church” is changed to *“them”* 1582 JR, 1881 RV, NWT, *“their number”* 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs, *“their community”* JB, NJB.

The DR has no direct equivalent to **“the church.”**

Nestle’s 21st Edition, NKJV f.n. omit *“the church.”*

Ricker Berry’s Received Text and the Farstad-Hodges ‘Majority’ Text together with the NKJV all retain the words *“the church,”* though Ricker Berry substitutes *“assembly”* for *“church.”*

The 1385/1395 Wycliffe Bible has *“them.”*

The Tyndale, Great, Coverdale, Matthew Bibles have *“the congregation.”*

The Bishops’ and Geneva Bibles have *“the church”* in agreement with the AV1611.

J. A. Moorman notes in *Early Manuscripts and the Authorized Version* p 112 that the majority of Greek uncials and cursives support the AV1611 reading **“the church”** against the minority that support the NIVs reading *“their number.”* The Harclean Syriac and the Peshitta Syriac with some variation also support the AV1611 reading. Three of the five extant Old Latin copies support the AV1611 reading against the two that support the NIVs reading, which Jerome’s Vulgate also supports.

Among the minority supporters of the NIVs reading *“their number”* are Aleph, B, C i.e. the usual suspects.

The AV1611 reading **“the church”** in Acts 2:47 is another case of the faithful pre-1611 Bibles of the 16th century English Protestant Reformation tending towards and attaining the AV1611 reading while the modern versions have by and large regressed to the pro-Catholic reading *“their number”* derived from the corrupt ancient uncials and found in the 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs.

The alteration of **“the church”** to *“their number”* is objectionable because it cuts away the special *spiritual* bond that God has with those of His people now who are **“the Church of God,”** the term occurring 8 times in scripture; Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 10:32, 11:22, 15:9, 2 Corinthians 1:1, Galatians 1:13, 1 Timothy 3:5, 15. **“Their number”** is a term used in scripture usually with respect to numbering Israel and her offerings; Exodus 30:12, Numbers 15:12, 29:18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 37, 1 Chronicles 23:3, 27:1 but the expression can also refer to a wholly secular event, Judges 21:23. The term is never used in a *spiritual* sense in the New Testament with respect to the church and even the similar term **“the number”** is clearly used in a *physical*, not a *spiritual* sense in the contexts where it occurs in relation to the church; Acts 1:15, 4:4, 6:1, 7. Acts 9:31 shows how only the term **“the church”** is appropriate for conveying the right *spiritual* sense, even for local physical bodies of believers.

“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.”

“should be saved” is changed to *“were being saved”* RV, 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs, NKJV, *“being saved”* NWT. The JB, NJB have *“destined to be saved.”*

Nestle’s 21st Edition has *“being saved,”* Ricker Berry’s Received Text and the Farstad-Hodges ‘Majority’ Text have *“were being saved.”*

The 1582 JR, DR have *“should be saved.”*

The 1385/1395 Wycliffe Bible has *“were made safe.”*

The Tyndale, Coverdale, Great, Matthew, Bishops’ and Geneva Bibles all have *“should be saved”* in agreement with the AV1611.

The modern alternative *“were being saved/being saved/destined to be saved”* is a change in the direction of Rome in the modern era, noting that the 1582 JR, DR agree with the AV1611, allowing for

progressive salvation in the Church Age and subverting the Christian's assurance of salvation. See *How to Spot a Counterfeit Bible* tract by Dr Terry Watkins Th.D.

As Dr Ruckman points out, the expression ***"should be saved"*** is one of happenstance, not obligation i.e. ***"the Lord added to the church daily"*** those who happened to get saved through the apostles' preaching. The salvation was complete in the sense that the converts were eternally secure, 1 John 5:11-13, which is what to ***"be saved"*** is with respect to the soul in the context. See remarks above on Acts 2:41 with respect to the word ***"souls."***

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" Acts 16:31.

It is true that salvation, in the sense of sanctification, has three emphases:

Past i.e. the soul *saved*: Acts 26:18, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Hebrews 2:11, 10:10, 14, 29, 1 Peter 1:2, Jude 1

Present i.e. the soul *kept*: John 17:17, 19, Acts 20:32, Ephesians 5:26, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4 with application to the body as well, 1 Corinthians 6:16-19, 1 Peter 1:5

Future i.e. the spirit, soul and body *preserved unto the redemption of the body*: Romans 8:23, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24, 1 Peter 1:5 again, 1 John 3:1, 2.

Note also that the Lord Jesus *is* salvation and sanctification *personified*.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" 1 Corinthians 1:30.

See *Theological Studies* No. 20 by Dr Peter S. Ruckman pp 33-43 with respect to *Sanctification* and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1491.

However, as 1 Peter 1:9 indicates, Acts 2:41 refers to those ***"which are saved"*** 1 Corinthians 1:18, 15:2, 2 Corinthians 2:15 i.e. ***"by grace are ye saved"*** Ephesians 2:5 because *in the context*, ***"they...were baptized"*** Acts 2:41 and therefore *did* ***"receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"*** Acts 2:38. (Salvation now does not require water baptism to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Book of Acts has long been known as a transitional book, see the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 1234, 1427, 1458 and note that after the transitional period has expired, salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Ephesians 2:8, 9, is received as it is now without water baptism, according to Acts 8:37, 15:14, 16:31.)

Acts 2:38, 41 in the context must therefore refer to ***"such as should be saved"*** in Acts 2:47.

The modern alternative makes no sense in the context.

Answers to Questions, Continued

1. What is the 'church' (Ephesians 1:21-22, Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:27)?

"The church...is his body" Ephesians 1:22-23 in that ***"whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's"*** Romans 14:8.

The church is ***"one body in Christ"*** Romans 12:5 in that it has an organic unity with ***"every one members one of another"*** through ***"the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part"*** Ephesians 4:15-16.

The church is expressed by the statement ***"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular"*** 1 Corinthians 12:27 in that each member is still an individual with an individual calling as in the human body ***"we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office"*** Romans 12:4.

That is why Paul can use the plural in 1 Corinthians 3:16 with *each* member of the body being ***"the temple of the Holy Ghost"*** and each member having ***"Christ in you, the hope of glory"*** Colossians 1:27. He is addressing members of the body both individually and collectively.

The church in the sense of the above references is *both* a body of individuals, *worldwide and an invisible, spiritual* body, *not* a visible politico-religious state church. It is principally though a *spiritual* work of the Spirit of God.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" 1 Corinthians 12:13.

2. What are the two ways that the New Testament generally uses the word 'church' (Ephesians 5:23, Colossians 1:18, Acts 8:1, Revelation 2:1)?

Ephesians 5:23 is referring to the church as ***"the body of Christ"*** 1 Corinthians 12:27 spiritually but with an emphasis, Ephesians 5:22-33 on the church as the Lord's bride or spouse.

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" 2 Corinthians 11:2.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" Revelation 19:7.

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife" Revelation 21:9.

Colossians 1:18 states that ***"he is the head of the body, the church"*** and is clearly another reference to ***"the body of Christ"*** 1 Corinthians 12:27 spiritually but with an emphasis again on ***"the church...is his body"*** Ephesians 1:22-23 in that ***"whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's"*** Romans 14:8.

Note however that the above references also apply to the whole body of believers worldwide. They are both a spiritual and a physical entity though that is because they are ***"the body of Christ"*** 1 Corinthians 12:27 *spiritually*.

Acts 8:1 is a reference to a local body of believers, in this case ***"the church which was at Jerusalem."*** A local body can be subjected to *physical* persecution, Acts 8:1-3, whereas ***"the body, the church"*** cannot. Paul writes to every member of the ***"one body in Christ"*** Romans 12:5 ***"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God"*** Colossians 3:3. *Spiritually*, the believer is beyond persecution ***"and that wicked one toucheth him not"*** 1 John 5:18.

Revelation 2:1 is also referring to a local body of believers, in this case ***"the church of Ephesus"*** and of course the recipient of Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. However, the address is specifically to ***"the angel of the church of Ephesus"*** and Revelation 1:20 refers to ***"The seven***

stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

As Dr Ruckman shows in his commentary *The Book of Revelation* Chapters 2, 3, the *spiritual condition* of any local church on earth has an **“angel”** or *appearance* before God in **“the third heaven”** 2 Corinthians 12:2 that is addressed in Revelation 2, 3. Revelation 2, 3 also address *prophetically* the *spiritual* condition of the church as a whole on earth during the Church Age from Acts to the Lord’s Return, 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 but that is beyond the scope of this study.

That said, any local body of believers can test itself against the description of the seven churches given in Revelation 2, 3 and **“by the grace of God”** 1 Corinthians 15:10 follow the Lord’s particular guidance, Revelation 2:5, 10, 16, 24, 3:2-3, 11, 18.

The term **“church”** is also used in Acts 7:38 with respect to Israel as **“the church in the wilderness”** that typifies a local church as a called-out body of believers though in practice it may include unsaved individuals, as Israel did.

“But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness” 1 Corinthians 10:5.

God’s intention of course is that both Israel and the church should be **“an holy nation”** and in that sense God intended that Israel should typify the church consisting of all genuine believers.

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” Exodus 19:5-6.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” 1 Peter 2:9.

In sum, the term **“church”** in the New Testament may be thought of as:

1. **“the body of Christ”** 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27 *spiritually*
 2. **“the body of Christ”** 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27 *as all believers, physically*
 3. **“the bride, the Lamb’s wife”** Revelation 21:9
 4. A local body of believers, Acts 8:1
 5. An appearance before God in **“the third heaven”** 2 Corinthians 12:2, Revelation 1:20
 6. A spiritual condition of the *whole* church during the Church Age, Revelation 2, 3
 7. The spiritual condition of any local body of believers at any time, Revelation 2, 3
 8. **“The church in the wilderness”** Acts 7:38, Israel typifying a local church or what God intended for the whole church, Exodus 19:5-6, 1 Peter 2:5, 9
3. *How are we to understand the phrase ‘added to’ (Acts 2:41, 47)?*

Acts 5:14 explains this phrase as individuals believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and getting saved i.e. **“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house”** Acts 16:31. Acts 5:14 states:

“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”

4. *In Acts 5 great 'fear' seized the church and everyone else (Acts 5:11). What is the purpose of making a distinction (Acts 5:13-14)?*

Paul explains in Philippians 2:14-16 why the church should be distinct. Practically speaking, it is the only source now of ***“the light of the world”*** John 8:12 and ***“that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us”*** 1 John 1:2 provided its members are ***“holding forth the word of life.”***

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.”

Note that Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11 were saved, being among those ***“all filled with the Holy Ghost”*** Acts 4:31 but each was deceived such that ***“Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost”*** Acts 5:3. An unsaved person cannot ***“lie to the Holy Ghost”*** because as the Lord explained of the Holy Ghost in John 14:17 of Whom He said ***“the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.”*** It is not possible to lie, as Ananias and Sapphira did, to someone with whom you have no acquaintance or contact.

5. *In Acts 6:3 the church has to respond to an immediate need – who is the 'you' that Peter is addressing?*

The “ye” and “you” Acts 6:3 refer to ***“the multitude of disciples”*** Acts 6:2. Note Acts 6:5-6.

“And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.”

The apostles pray and lay their hands on the selected men but it is the church members who select them. The principle in operation appears to be that of 1 Corinthians 6:4.

“If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.”

6. *If there is no membership how do we fulfil Hebrews 13:17?*

Hebrews 13:17 states ***“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”***

Hebrews 13:17 applies to those who at all levels willingly obey 2 Thessalonians 2:15, noting also Acts 2:42 and steadfast continuance ***“in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*** That is the basis for church membership.

“Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

7. *What is the responsibility of every believer in their connection with the church (Acts 2:42, 46, Ephesians 4:15-16)?*

Acts 2:42: Steadfast continuance ***“in the apostles’ doctrine”***

That is the basis for ***“fellowship...breaking of bread, and...prayers.”*** See *Question 6* and remarks on 2 Thessalonians 2:15.

Acts 2:46: ***“singleness of heart”***

The aim is unity or ***“being of one accord.”*** Note the similar exhortations of both Paul and Peter to church members and their respective contexts.

“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind” Philippians 2:2, noting that the expression ***“one accord”*** for unity also appears in Acts 2:46. It appears 8 times in the New Testament with respect to the church in Acts 1:14, 2:1, 46, 4:24, 5:12, 8:6, 15:25, Philippians 2:2. Of the remaining 4 occurrences, 3 of them refer to *genuine* united opposition against Christians, like ***“Pilate and Herod”*** Luke 23:12; Acts 7:57, 18:12, 19:29. The remaining occasion is Acts 12:20 and the context, Acts 12:21-23, shows ***“that God is no respecter of persons”*** Acts 10:34 or of public opinion, Acts 12:22, 23. Compare Acts 14:11-18 for a right response to public accolade.

“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous” 1 Peter 3:8.

Note the Lord’s warning in Mark 3:25, which applies to keeping a local body of believers together. See also Matthew 12:25, Luke 11:17 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1460 and Dr Ruckman’s comments on Acts 15:39 to the effect that Baptist churches in the southern USA are notorious for church splits that then split into splinters and the splinters are finally reduced to sawdust.

Mark 3:25 states as follows:

“And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”

Ephesians 4:15: ***“speaking the truth in love”***

This is the basis for trust i.e. to ***“Provide things honest in the sight of all men”*** Romans 12:17. This in turn is the basis for church growth, stability and the ***“effectual working in the measure of every part”*** Ephesians 4:16 i.e. ministry. See ***“the work of the ministry”*** Ephesians 4:12 in the context.

“Speaking the truth in love” including to God was what started Nehemiah’s ministry, which was effective, based on trust in God ***“our God shall fight for us”*** Nehemiah 4:20 and that of the workers in each other ***“for the people had a mind to work”*** Nehemiah 4:6.

See www.timefortruth.co.uk/bible-studies/alan-oreillys-studies.php Nehemiah 1 and subsequent studies in Nehemiah.

Job lamented the opposite effect when trust was lacking. See also the warning of Mark 3:25 above.

“My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away...The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish” Job 6:15, 18.

So will every ministry that does not establish a basis of trust through ***“speaking the truth in love.”***

8. *What are some of the privileges of church membership?*1. *Mark 10:28-30, 1 Timothy 5:1-2*

Mark 10:28-30: Reward from the Lord over and in abundance for anything that was forsaken in order to follow the Lord Jesus Christ as Hebrews 6:10 promises.

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”

1 Timothy 5:1-2: Family ties in ***“the body of Christ”*** 1 Corinthians 12:27 as an outworking of Mark 10:28-30 in contrast to worldly isolation.

“God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land” Psalm 68:6.

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” Ephesians 3:14-15.

2. *Romans 15:1, Galatians 6:1*

Mutual practical support and encouragement

“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it” 1 Corinthians 12:26.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” Galatians 6:2.

“The law of Christ” extends to bearing both burdens and buffeting by association e.g. criticism for fidelity for ***“the scripture of truth”*** Daniel 10:21.

See www.timefortruth.co.uk/why-av-only/ and links.

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me” Romans 15:1-3.

Note the sting in tail in Romans 15:3 with respect to reproach and its implications. Last Sunday, November 4th 2012, was also Persecution Sunday for praying for the persecuted church worldwide www.persecution.org/idop.

3. *2 Corinthians 1:3-5*

Comfort in hardship and difficulty that in turn enables comfort of others

The greatest example is the Lord Jesus Christ.

“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” Hebrews 2:10 and context.

Administration of this comfort may have a practical aspect e.g. the Shoebox Appeal www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk/.

“If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” James 2:15-17.

4. *James 5:14-16*

Mutual prayer support i.e. ***“the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”***
James 5:16

Peter benefitted from prayer.

“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him” Acts 12:5.

God answered ***“exceedingly abundantly above all that”*** the church could ***“ask or think”***
Ephesians 3:20. See Acts 12:6-18.

This writer and his family have benefitted greatly from prayer support from other believers.

“I continue to pray faithfully for you and Gill, Dave and Mike. I have your letter from September 1st 2010 with prayer requests which has been on my bunk before God every night faithfully in prayer since you mailed it. One day we will meet in glory and rejoice. This light affliction is but for a moment [2 Corinthians 4:17]...I hope David is doing his Post-Grad work in England?...God bless all [of you]” – lifer in Attica State Prison, New York State, June 2011.

David is now doing his Post-Grad work in England, in answer in part to ***“the effectual fervent prayer”*** of this brother in Attica State Prison [2015 update; no Auburn Prison].

9. *What are some of the obligations of church membership?*1. *Galatians 6:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, 1 Peter 4:10-11*

Galatians 6:2: See remarks under *Question 8*, with respect to Romans 15:3 and Galatians 6:2.

1 Thessalonians 5:11-15: Mutual encouragement, willing support for leadership and longsuffering without harbouring ill-feeling

“Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend” Proverbs 27:17.

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath” Ephesians 4:26.

1 Peter 4:10-11: Mutual benefit by the proper exercise of individual God-given ministry gifts

“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men...And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” Ephesians 4:11-12.

2. *Hebrews 3:12-14*

Mutual exhortation to consistent right-doing

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” 2 Timothy 2:25-26.

This in part is done by encouraging folk to check out informative KJB material e.g. this writer’s complete works available on CD.

3. *Hebrews 10:24-25, Acts 20:7*

Starting the week by means of a regular assembly *that looks forward to the Lord's Return with special emphasis* **"exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"** *Hebrews 10:25*

Focus on the Lord's Return should be central to every body of born again believers, 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

Note the considerable emphasis on the Lord's Return in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, which are the books that a new Christian is urged to read after the Gospel of John; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 2:19, 3:13, 4:14, 15, 16, 17, 5:2, 3, 4, 9, 23, 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8, 9, 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 3:5.

Note especially 2 Thessalonians 3:5, Paul's last word on this subject to a new believer. (The reading "*patience of Christ*" of the modern versions, 1978, 1984, 2011 NIVs, NKJV, agrees with the 1582 JR, DR, RV, JB, NJB, NWT and is therefore wrong, as usual for modern departures from the AV1611. The 1385/1395 Wycliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew Bibles have the modern reading and, as indicated, the 1749-1752 Challoner's Revision of the DR regresses to it but the AV1611 reading is essentially supported by the Great, Bishops', Geneva Bibles, showing the convergence towards the AV1611 Text of English Bibles as the 16th English Protestant Reformation progresses.)

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

The Lord's Return is the main theme of the scripture. See *Theological Studies* No. 9 *Second Coming of Jesus Christ* by Dr Peter S. Ruckman, Dr Ruckman's commentaries *The Book of Revelation* pp 484-490, *Volume I of the Book of Psalms* pp 13-17 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 571, 1371, 1571, 1576.

Dr Ruckman notes the following scriptures as examples of the many references that depict the Second Advent, whether prophetically or in type or both.

Genesis 3:15, 6, 14:1-10, 19:1-28, 49:9-12, 17, 18, 24; Exodus 4-10, 15:1-19, 17:16; Leviticus 26:1-12, 14-43; Numbers 21-24; Deuteronomy 27, 28, 30:1-9, 32, 33; Joshua 6, 10; Judges 5, 7; Ruth 3, 4; 1 and 2 Samuel; Job, Psalm 2, 45, 68, 69, 72, 74, 78 based on "*a parable*" 78:2, 83, 99, 105, 106, 110, 114, 124, 132; Isaiah 2:1-5, 4:1-6, 11:1-16, 14:12-19, 16:1-8, 21:11-14, 24:1-23, 27:1-6, 34:1, 2, 40:1-11, 52, 54, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64:1, 5-12, 65, 66:6-24, Jeremiah 50, 51, Lamentations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Ezekiel 1, Daniel 2, 7, 9, Joel 2, Micah 4, Zechariah 14, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17:24-37, John 16:16-19, Revelation 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Many other scriptures could be cited with respect to the Lord's Return.

Every time the word "*Selah*" 2 Kings 14:7 occurs in the Book of Psalms, a reference to the Second Advent will occur within two or three verses of the word because "*Selah*" refers to Sela-Petra, the rock city or "*a city of refuge*" Joshua 21:13, 21, 27, 32, 38 in the wilderness south of the Dead Sea where the Jewish remnant will flee to escape the Antichrist just before the Second Advent, noting Psalm 61:1, *a cry of suffering from Jews worldwide in the End Times* **"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."**

See figures on last page.

Note Psalm 3:2, the first mention of "*Selah*" in the Book of Psalms.

"Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah."

Note Psalm 3:1 and the double application to "*Jacob's trouble*" Jeremiah 30:7 i.e. the Tribulation and "*Jerusalem compassed with armies*" Luke 21:20.

“LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.”

Verses on the Lord’s Return number at least 1500 and outnumber those on the local church, the Virgin birth, the Ascension of Christ and the Blood Atonement.

For example, verses explicitly referring to being ***“justified by faith”*** are 8 in number; Romans 3:28, 30, 4:5, 5:1, Galatians 2:16, 3:8, 11, 24 with a further 3 referring explicitly to ***“justification”*** Romans 4:25, 5:16, 18, 11 scriptures in all.

For example, the words ***“redemption,” “redeem,” “redeemed”*** occur 139 times in the scriptures, 20 times in the New Testament.

Readers should draw their own conclusions about the relative emphasis that ***“the scripture of truth”*** Daniel 10:21 places upon the Second Advent compared to basic doctrines of Christian salvation.

It follows that the most important day on God’s calendar is not the day when wicked men murdered His Son, Acts 3:13-15.

The most important day on God’s calendar is ***“the day of the Lord”*** 1 Thessalonians 5:2 the day when His Son literally, visibly, physically comes back to this earth, takes vengeance on His foes and gets what’s rightfully His according to the promise of scripture.

“If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people” Deuteronomy 32:41-43 i.e. the edge that’s whetted will be wetted and those of the Lord’s servants who suffered at the hands of the Lord’s enemies, see *Question 8* and remarks on Romans 15:3, will be avenged:

“For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many” Isaiah 66:16.

The Lord will rule over what’s left:

“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth...and his enemies shall lick the dust” Psalm 72:8-9.

“And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one” Zechariah 14:9.

The Lord will cleanse His land and the whole earth.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land” Zechariah 13:2 especially with Matthew 24:11, 24, Mark 13:2, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 4:1, Revelation 16:13, 19:10, 20:10. Catholics and Mohammedans take careful note.

“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” Matthew 13:41-43.

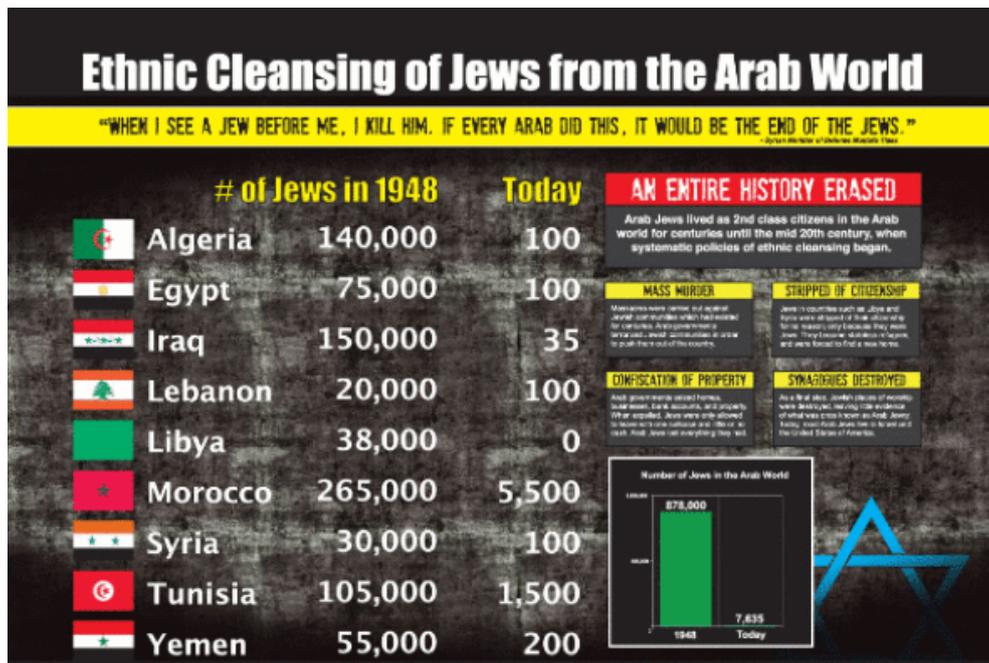
“Wherefore comfort one another with these words” 1 Thessalonians 4:18.

Note that the above verses on the Lord’s Return are not to be spiritualised e.g. into some kind of End Times evangelical revival. Paul summarises that kind of heresy as the teaching that ***“the resurrection is past already”*** 2 Timothy 2:18 i.e. no literal, visible, physical return by

the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth to inflict a global conquest followed by a military dictatorship ***“with a rod of iron”*** Psalm 2:9 *though that is what the scripture says* but just a general judgement at the end of time with believers inhabiting a spiritual realm only.

Paul declares that teaching to be cancerous 2 Timothy 2:17, blasphemous and deserving of the same kind of satanic torment that was meted out to an unrepentant fornicator, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 1 Timothy 1:20.

“Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things” 2 Timothy 2:7.



“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake” Matthew 10:22

See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1252

Just the beginning: *CiF Watch* cifwatch.com/tag/arab-world/.



Sela Petra “city of refuge” Joshua 21:13, 21, 27, 32, 38

thetruth-blog.blogspot.co.uk/2010/08/what-is-importance-of-petra-stone-city.html