

## *Beyond the Basics of Theology*

Theological Series

Series 1.0

The Bible Based Teaching Series of Passover Ministries, Inc.

This article explains in detail a brochure with the same title. We released the brochure some years back.

We received interest in its content and we decided to release this teaching as topic number one in this new series on the **Beyond the Basics of Theology**.

**“Church leadership must be able to trace their chain of authority back to direct contact with the one person who is the Head of the World Wide Church.”**

The title of our topic is ' **Who is the Head of the Church?**'

We will also look for a practical application to decide how the Universal Church actually does submit itself to Christ?"



The scripture we will use today:

**Ephesians 5:** <sup>22</sup>Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

### **PART 1**

We know that the Bible teaches that Christ, our Messiah, is the Head of the Universal Church. This foundational scripture is quoted every day as a basis for our teachings about authority in the church and in the home. It is a guideline to show how the Lord desires husbands and wives to interact in their daily living.

This scripture implies that the church universal is to submit to the Messiah and then it commands that the head of the wife is the husband and compares him to the Messiah who is the head of the Church. I like the last phrase given above, "in everything."

We seem to be very good in asking our wives to submit to their husbands and setting order in the church. The thought remains... "just how good are we (men and leaders) in submitting to the real Head" as suggested above? Do we follow our wives' examples?

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ (our Messiah) is the Head of the Body of Christ here on planet earth. We believe this means that He is the real boss of the Church.

Lets read past our original scriptures and add versus 25 through 27:

<sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup>to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup>and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

What does this mean to you and I?

In the corporate world today, we hear that location is everything. We know that we, the Body of Christ, are to be successful in our endeavors as disciples. The question is how do we accomplish a successful life while understanding the location of our authority that is implied in the scriptures? The ruler we use to measure our successes is located in heaven.

### **Part 1A. Searching for Location:**

Our Head is currently located in a royal palace. There He has the opportunity to send messages to members of his command. This palace is located in a country that is called the Kingdom of Heaven. It is in a capital city where the Lord Almighty has HIS throne. We believe that after a thorough search of the scriptures that our HEAD uses two different locations within the capital city to rule the church and to fulfill his duties as the Lamb of God.

The first place we want to discuss is His highest and most honored location that is reserved for Him. This location was given to Him since he was found to be without spot or wrinkle for completing His assignment in the great plan of redemption. This place is the rightside of the Majesty on HIGH. He has a throne, a place of authority next to the main throne of His and our Heavenly Father. It is mentioned in the Gospels when two disciples made a special request.

Mark 10:

<sup>35</sup>Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

<sup>36</sup>"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

<sup>37</sup>They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

<sup>38</sup>"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?"

<sup>39</sup>"We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, <sup>40</sup>but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

The second place of authority that He has been given is the room described in the scripture below. We believe it functions as the command room.

The room of LIGHT filled with stars and lampstands. A place of decision-making and the communication of those decisions to the Universal Church.

In Revelation chapter 1 we read:

<sup>10</sup>On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, <sup>11</sup>which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

<sup>12</sup>I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup>and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man," dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. <sup>14</sup>His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. <sup>15</sup>His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. <sup>16</sup>In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. <sup>17</sup>When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. <sup>18</sup>I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And, I hold the keys of death and Hades.

<sup>19</sup>"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. <sup>20</sup>The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Here we have a prophetic picture of our Messiah standing in a place where these seven lampstands are located. He is also using this place to transmit a very distinct and staged picture of Himself. The Apostle John as he experiences the visual and very profound transmission, now becomes the current messianic messenger for that time here on earth. Who, at this stage of his long life, is now a Roman political prisoner.

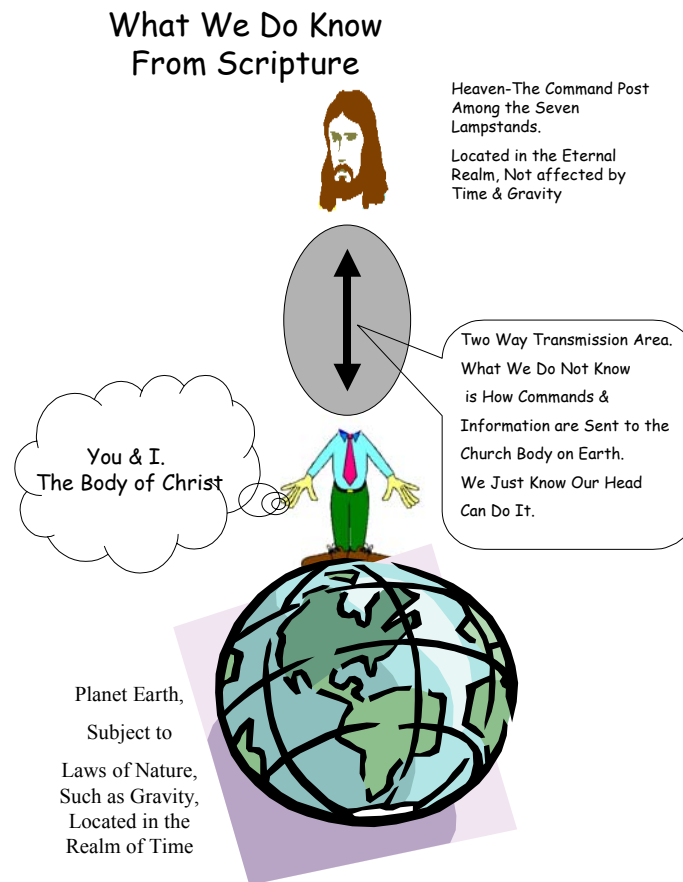
I am reminded of how our own political leaders follow the same pattern when they make a speech to be aired on television. They use a familiar location showing their full authority. The emblems of their authority are in plain view to all as they make their speech. Their speech or message has a greater impact when the viewer takes in the entire visual scene along with the message. In this age of instant communication, we know very well how important visual images assist our hearing in creating an impact. This fact applies equally to individuals or to large groups.

We view these first three chapters as a continuation to the Book of Acts of the Apostles. They show a progression of the personal contacts to give comfort and instructions by the Messiah. In reading through the first three chapters spanning all seven letters to the seven churches, we note that we can very easily make the comparison to a military situation. If we think of the Messiah as a military commander who is located in the army's central headquarters. He is busy issuing orders (the letters) and getting very accurate intelligence reports on the ever-changing battlefronts. All the needed information is forwarded to that one place to allow those in charge (the Head) to make the best decisions possible.

Then orders for troop readiness and movements are issued in response to the information in the intelligence reports.

However, we are not talking about a command post a few miles back from the front anymore. What we are describing is a Head, Our Leader, who just happens to be a commander that is physically located out of time. This is the Eternal Realm of Heaven we are describing. We have to realize that the troops that He commands are on the planet's surface. This means that the troops are living and moving outside of the Eternal Realm. They are subject to the laws of the universe such as gravity and the speed of light.

The following drawing is a simplified attempt to review the logistics we have discussed so far.



We know the Lord left a foundational command as the common goal for our Body of Believers. This was personally given to those leaders who were with Him just before He ascended into Heaven. He commanded that we are to go into all the earth and teach every nation and tongue to become his disciples.

Remember that we just read:

<sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup>to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup>and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

An integral part of the washing, with water through the word we must conclude are the seven special letters. As the church is “washed in the Word” of the Lord and purified, with our leadership pointing the way, then we will

- Hear HIS corrections.
- Accept the judgement(s)
- Repent and **make** the adjustments required

We will hear that the second part of the message is full of instructions of how we are to fulfill the Great Commission.

If we would explore more scriptures toAs we read the second part of the informative narrative<sup>1</sup> (given to the magistrate Theophilis, by Dr Luke in his scroll called Acts of the Apostles. Here it is revealed to us that the HEAD of the church made other personal appearances to living members of the church here on earth. These situations reveal just how much this commander was involved in the placement of His troops. We read how the commands covered both long and short periods of time within the life of the particular individual. These commands also covered such topics as to where they were to go, to whom they were to testify before and the subject matter of their testimony.

Several scripture references that tell of these “General to Soldier” encounters are:

Acts 7:

<sup>54</sup>When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup>But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup>“Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

Acts 9:

<sup>3</sup>As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup>He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

<sup>5</sup>“Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

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<sup>1</sup> The scroll given to the magistrate Theophilis, by Dr Luke is called Acts of the Apostles

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. <sup>6</sup>“Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

<sup>7</sup>The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. <sup>8</sup>Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. <sup>9</sup>For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. <sup>10</sup>In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord,” he answered.

<sup>11</sup>The Lord told him “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. <sup>12</sup>In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

<sup>13</sup>“Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

<sup>15</sup>But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup>I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

<sup>17</sup>Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” <sup>18</sup>Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and <sup>19</sup>after taking some food, he regained his strength.

### Acts 18:

<sup>9</sup>One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. <sup>10</sup>For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.” <sup>11</sup>So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

### Acts 22:

<sup>17</sup>“When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance <sup>18</sup>and saw the Lord speaking. ‘Quick!’ he said to me. ‘Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.’

<sup>19</sup>“‘Lord,’ I replied, ‘these men know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. <sup>20</sup>And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’

<sup>21</sup>“Then the Lord said to me, ‘Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

### Acts 23:

<sup>11</sup>The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”

The above scriptures reveal just how personal the involvement of their commanding officer was in each situation. We know they followed those instructions exactly.

You and I are living today ( just a few years later ) and we need to ask ourselves ‘How do we follow their example of obedience to the revealed Word of the Lord?’

If He does choose to send a message to a community through a messenger then what?

**Part 1B. Personal Testimony:**

We do want to share that in our past, there was a period of fourteen months in the early 1970's where we were involved with a community that had submitted themselves under the guidance and training of Judson Cornwall to learn how to worship the Lord.

A prophetic message (of the calibre of the seven letters in Revelations) had been delivered one Sunday at the second service. The Lord had brought a major southern California prophet to preach that service. The community as a whole received this message in stunned silence<sup>2</sup>. The community really questioned the message. The judgements mentioned in that forceful Word were so true it hurt our southern California Christian ears to hear them. The rewards for obedience were so wonderful they were hard to remember.

The entire community was upset with the consequences of this word. The immediate reaction to it was the death of a prominent businessman in our community within two hours of receiving the prophetic word. This occurred during a large public banquet welcoming Brother Cornwall.

I held this brother's left hand as his final breath left his body. Before me were these people:

1. Elders bent over over his body commanding him to come back from the dead in the name of the of the Lord;
2. His wife across the body from me, screaming out his name.
3. I can still see his four little children, still holding their forks and spoons at the banquet table were looking on at the entire scene in those first seconds.

I took a deep breath and asked the Lord what was going on? I felt very guilty for being at peace in the midst of all the shouting. I knew immediately that a sovereign act was in progress in the middle of the scene I just described.

From that brother's last breath, in that moment in time, all we could do was to strap on our spiritual seat belts and ride along with the dynamic moves of the Holy Spirit until the ride was completed. We later called it "An E-Ticket Ride".<sup>3</sup>

I share this because we never again experienced a level of the Power of the Holy Spirit and the Presence of the Lord that was equal to or greater than the level we experienced there.

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<sup>2</sup> This community was also the home church for a Christian music group called the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of Acts.

<sup>3</sup> This is a reference to Disneyland's original ticket books with tickets ranging from A (baby rides) to E, the most daring.

Our question is: Could the Messiah, in heaven, the head of the church send you and your church a modern day letter, just like one of the original seven letters?

If your answer is yes, then get ready to tighten your own spiritual seat belt.

### **Part 2. Simple Guidelines to Follow**

Did you notice that in the instructions given in scriptures we just read that the believers getting these messages were left little room to decide how to respond. Each visitation clearly revealed that the Lord expected the hearer to obey without reservation.

The seven letters very plainly compare the current conditions of each community to a Heavenly measurement system. They revealed just how far off from the Heavenly Course the community actually is. This implies a master plan up in Heaven, again in the Eternal Realm. These letters go on to describe the heart of the community and its believers who need to be on course to do the will of the HEAD and His Heavenly Father.

Each letter has instructions for a corrective action plan that will lead that community in ways to grow in understanding their particular purpose for their region of the Roman Empire, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. This explains why they must get back to the Heavenly Plan.

In reading between the lines we can determine that it is very important to the Lord the spiritual condition of each believer's heart'. It becomes very apparent that each individual heart is to be on guard against the enemy and to be disciplined enough to obey the commands given to the group as a whole. In all seven letters their Head challenges each community directly to respond to their letter. Each member within the community is then challenged to follow the plan for their community. The individuals working together for a common purpose. Do you realize the details within the plans that the Head and His Father have prepared? These detailed plans include each member and each household.

Each letter ends with promises of group and individual rewards for obedience to the plan from Heaven. Those who obey unto their death are given the very special title of 'Overcomers'. This title for obedient disciples, can still apply to each of us.

### **Observation:**

We know that each of the seven letters were written from a heavenly perspective. This is the Eternal point of view. I call it a "tactical view," others might call it the "big picture". This point of view was delivered specifically to those who were alive here on the planet's surface at that time.

If we continue on with the “general in charge” comparison we can suddenly comprehend a different perspective of each letter. All we need do is visualize the seven city churches as seven military bases or outposts. Do you remember the Messiah’s word to Paul that we just read?

Acts 18:

<sup>9</sup>One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. <sup>10</sup>For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.” <sup>11</sup>So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

The statement “No one is going to attack and harm you,” is very interesting. That statement implied the reason for this security was that there were many people in the city that the Messiah could trust. They could be called His own troops.

He talked as if they were faithful to Him and His plan and that they obviously knew how to pray.

Each of the seven letters vividly describes a heavenly observation of the community as it was at that day and time when given to John, his messenger. The tone of the letters were written as if the communities were to appear before the Lambs judgement seat immediately.

We all will remember the incident when our Head was still traveling and ministering, He mentioned woes of upcoming judgement upon several villages and towns that had rejected His ministry. He even mentioned out loud that the people of Sodom who had died in their judgement would fare better at the last judgement than those who had just rejected Him and the miracles he had performed in their village.

What was so remarkable for this setting was that years before our Messiah had rebuked His disciples when two of them wanted to call down fire from heaven on another village. Yet here He mentions a fate far worse. I am reminded of another time He did curse something. I am referring to the time He cursed a fig tree when it gave every appearance of being fruitful. When He moved the leaves back, looking for fruit to eat, there were no figs to be found.

We believe that it is not correct to look fruitful to our Lord and then under his scrutiny that we be found to be without any fruit that He could use.

### **Part 3. Areas of Responsibility**

**A.** We would like to offer the following suggestions to any Group of Believers and their Leaders receiving such a letter:

1. Be open to hear the message.  
This can be done before the leaders only or before the entire community.  
The choice is yours.

Remember that no matter how “in a rush” the messenger may be, the message is subject to the spirit of the messenger/prophet who will give it. A mature messenger can be patient and submit to the elders and leaders for a time and place for the Word to be given.

The community and the leaders may decide not to hear it. It is their right.

2. Test the message. Do not judge the messenger, just test the message. The messenger is a fellow servant to the Messiah and a child of God. Is it from God?
  3. Decide in one accord what the areas or specifics of the message are. Review if there are any changes in group behavior that need to be made?
  4. Decide as a group if you will obey these changes of either heart or actions. We suggest taking each topic separately for a decision. Remember to search the scriptures for themes and discipleship instructions.
  5. Once you have made a decision on the change and/or changes, then come together before the Lord and verbally acknowledge His right to judge you as a group. State the results of your decision(s) before Him and in the presence of all the people.
  6. Live your everyday lives, within these new guidelines, individually and as a community of disciples
- B.** In the same spirit of openness, we would like to offer the following suggestions for the Messianic Messenger who is responsible for:
1. Having clean ears to hear with. Personal purity is a key element for any would be messenger. Is your life accountable to a pastor or elder(s) who is called to pastor messengers?
  2. Possess an accurate vocabulary. Make sure you repeat just what you were told. No ad libs allowed. No word substitutions either. Just state the message as you heard it, using the original tones you heard.
  3. After you have received the message, do not judge the people or community you are to give it to. Keep your heart free of any judgements. Never let your delivery tone or facial expressions add to the message unless you were told to do so by the Holy Spirit. A telephone works best when it just conducts exactly what it was given by the sender over the telephone line to whoever receives the call.
  4. Remember all the guidelines for messages in a church service, all done in order. Especially use from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, chapters twelve and fourteen.

Please remember that your message must reflect chapter thirteen in all its aspects.

Remember 1 Corinthians 12:

But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup>so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup>If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

5. You must let love for your brothers and sisters guide your every step. Remember you are not the judge, just a messenger used by the judge. A biblical messenger who has gone before us, who needs to be mentioned here is the talking burro in Genesis. He was faithful and saved his master's life with his simple message. What will be said concerning you?
6. You must maintain a worry free attitude when you are walking before the Lord. You are only responsible for the Word you have brought to them. Again, we recommend you remember Jonah and that all his fretting was for naught.
7. You must do your part as expected by the Lord. Be open and wear humility as a covering for your heart. This will enable you to dispense grace towards your recipients.<sup>4</sup>

Thank you Φ

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<sup>4</sup> First published in the Who is Your Boss Brochure, POM Nov. 99

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