

## To the Teacher

The information below is to help you in teaching the lesson. DO NOT read this page to the students. Instead, teach the information in your own words. Be sure to finish the student's lesson as well. The Scripture references in parentheses are for additional study, to round out the information given in the lesson. Become familiar with these passages as well, to provide additional Scriptures to your students.

## Lesson 22 – The Will of God for the Church (Teacher's Lesson)

Opening: Answer the opening question. The answers will vary. Explain that what we believe is the most important work of the church often says more about us and our perceived place in the church than the church itself.

### Study Notes:

#### **Ephesians 4:14-16**

*Verse 14* – When we are “babies” in our relationship with Christ, what can tend to get us off track? Every wind of teaching.

*Verse 15* – Who does God want us to resemble as we grow up? Jesus.

*Verse 16* – How does the “whole body” of the church grow? When each part does its work.

#### **1 Corinthians 1:10**

Paul pleaded with the church at Corinth church not to have divisions and to be perfectly united in mind and thought.

When Paul pleaded with the entire Corinthian church to agree with one another, he did not tell them to simply say “yes” to what their pastor wanted. He told them that they should be perfectly united with a purpose.

#### **Church Evaluation Responses**

1. God wants a church to finish an assigned task, even if there is a large division in the church. **False**

God wants the church to have no division (Read above). If some sense God's leadership in one direction and others do not, it is the leaders' job to spend time with those who do not detect the same and see why. Perhaps they have a communion problem in their relationship with the Lord. Perhaps they are right and the others in the church are simply following the crowd. Here is where spiritual discernment, love, and discipleship are necessary to bring the entire church together following the leading of Christ.

2. God wants His people to show love above all. **True**

The way the church loves is the way the world knows that we are God's disciples (John 13:35). Loving one another can be shown in many ways – by caring, discipling, teaching, and others – but it will always be with a gentle spirit of genuine concern.

3. As long as a church is doing God's work, they can do it in immoral or illegal ways.

**False**

If God has the desire to accomplish a certain task, He can allow His church to complete it in ways that do not contradict His nature and His commands.

Application: Help students answer the questions honestly. Explain that God has placed every member and leader in your church just as He wanted them (including them). Most people, when they are unhappy with the church, leave thinking that they will find a perfect church somewhere else. Instead, believers should entrust themselves to the Lord as part of His local body, and allow God to use them to help their church be all that it can be. help students discover that God can use them, no matter how inadequate they think they are.

## Lesson 22 – The Will of God for the Church

### **Our Purpose**

What is the most important work of the church?

### **How to Grow to be Big and Strong**

God has various goals in mind for the church. One of these is found in Ephesians 4:14-16. Read these verses and answer the questions below.

*Verse 14* – When we are “babies” in our relationship with Christ, what can tend to get us off track?

*Verse 15* – Who does God want us to resemble as we grow up?

*Verse 16* – How does the “whole body” of the church grow?

As we can see from the verses above, God’s goal for the church is for it to grow into a mature body in Christ. But what is the church? We often think of the church as the place where we get together on Sundays, but it is much more than that. It is an organism made up of individual believers. Exactly like there are no two individuals exactly alike, no two individual churches are going to be exactly alike. How then does a church determine the will of God? The answer is, they do it together. Read 1 Corinthians 1:10 and answer the following:

Paul pleaded with the church at Corinth church not to have \_\_\_\_\_ and to be perfectly \_\_\_\_\_ in mind and thought.

What do you think Paul wanted to say when he pleaded with the entire church to agree with one another?

## **United We Stand**

To be united as a church does not simply mean saying “yes” to what the pastor says. Many times, when God reveals what He is about to do He does it through people who are not the pastor. This is because each member of the church has a responsibility to share what God is teaching them. Those who disagree with a particular direction also have a responsibility to share. Each person in the church is important to God and He wants each one to have His vision.

Here are some other goals that God has for the church:

### *Love one another*

For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. (1 John 3:11). Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3: 18).

### *Be holy and pure*

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:14-16).

## **Evaluation of the Church**

How is your church progressing towards these goals? Answer true or false to the questions below.

1. God wants a church to finish an assigned task, even if there is a large division in the church.

True\_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_

2. God wants His people to show love above all.

True\_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_

3. As long as a church is doing God’s work, they can do it in immoral or illegal ways.

True\_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_

How did you do? Perhaps you have seen that your church is not moving in God’s direction. If that is so, you can be the one God uses as an agent of change. Take a moment and pray for the leaders of your church and for the members, asking Him how He wants to use your church.

Scripture to memorize:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 Juan 1: 7