Seven Pillars Of The Church

Intro: The New Testament pictures the Lord’s church as being a great spiritual building. Eph. 2:21-22 “In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord: so in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” 1 Pet. 2:5 “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

In the numerology of the Bible, the number 7 represents perfection. Solomon states in Pro. 9:1 “Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.” Let us consider 7 pillars of the church.

I. A Regenerated Membership
A. Jesus taught of a “new birth.”
   1. John 3:3-6 “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”
   2. This is not a physical birth but a spiritual birth and thus a regenerating of the spirit of man.
B. Eph. 5:26 “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word”
C. Being in Christ one becomes a new creature;
   1. 2 Cor. 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, be is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
   2. One becomes a new creature by being regenerated, by being baptized into Christ; Gal. 3:26-27 “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

II. Pure And Sincere Worship Of God
A. We are to worship
   1. Psa. 33:1 “Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.”
   2. Psa. 92:1 “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High.”
   3. We should be glad; Psa. 122:1 “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.”
   4. There is a gathering together into one place; 1 Cor. 11:20 “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper.”
B. Our worship is to be pure and sincere
   1. John 4:23 “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”
   2. Phi. 3:3 “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”
C. Our worship must be according to the Divine pattern.
   1. John 4:24 “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
   3. Without heathen practices:
      a. Christmas services
      b. Sunrise Easter services
III. Knowledge

A. Christianity is a taught religion.

B. One must be taught to become a Christian.
1. John 6:44-45 “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”
2. Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

C. Christianity is a continual growth process.
1. 1 Pet. 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”
2. 2 Pet. 3:18 “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
3. There must be a knowledge to worship God acceptably; John 4:24 “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
4. Must have a knowledge to combat false teaching; Rom. 16:17 “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”
5. Must have a knowledge to overcome sin; Psa. 119:11 “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”
6. Must have knowledge to live acceptably; 2 Pet. 1:3-4 “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”
7. Must have knowledge to have eternal life; John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

IV. Unity

A. It is the prayer of Christ
1. John 17:20-21 “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
2. He knew division destroys; Matthew 12:25 “And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:”

B. It is a blessing that we must keep.
1. Psa. 133:1 “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”
2. Eph. 4:3-6 “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”
   a. One body—Unity of organization
   b. One Spirit—Unity in life
   c. One hope—Unity in desire and expectation
   d. One Lord—Unity in authority
   e. One faith—Unity of message
   f. One baptism—Unity of practice
   g. One God and Father—Unity of worship
C. It comes from being likeminded.
   1. Phi. 2:1-3 “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”
   2. 1 Cor. 1:10 “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
      a. Speak the same thing; 1 Pet. 4:11 “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
      b. Same mind; 1 Cor. 4:6 “And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”
      c. Same judgment;
   D. A warning; Gal. 5:15 “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”

V. LABOR
   A. All are to work
      1. It was expected/commanded from the beginning
         a. Gen. 2:15 “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”
         b. Gen. 3:19 “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”
      2. Eph. 4:28 “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”
      3. This is true in the spiritual realm also.
         a. Eph. 2:10 “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
         b. John 6:27 “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”
         c. 1 Cor. 3:9 “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.”
   B. We are to be involved in works that are good.
      1. Tit. 2:14 “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”
      2. Like:
         a. Jesus did; Acts 10:38 “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”
         b. Dorcas did; Acts 9:36, 39 “Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did... 39Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.”
      3. Good works also involves the Gospel.
         a. In carrying out mission work; Phi. 1:5-6; 4:3 “For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. . . . And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women
which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."

b. In giving our money:
   (1) 1 Cor. 16:1-2 "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."
   (2) Phi. 4:15-16 "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity."

c. Phi. 2:12 "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

d. Rev 2:2-3 "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted."

C. We must labor to obtain heaven.
   1. 1 Cor. 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
   2. 2 Cor. 5:9 "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."
   3. Rev. 14:13 "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

VI. VISION (A FORWARD LOOKING PERSPECTIVE)

A. A necessity for continued existence.
   1. Pro. 29:18 "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."
   2. Benjamin Franklin stated: "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."
   3. God knew the need for vision regarding salvation and the church.
      a. Before the creation, He made plans for the salvation of man through the death of Christ.
         (1) Eph. 1:4-5 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,"
         (2) 1 Pet. 1:19-20 "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,"
      b. He made plans for the church prior to creating the world; Eph. 3:10-11 "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

B. Leaders in the Lord's church must possess this.
   1. Acts 6:3 "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business."
   2. They need to look into the future and make plans for what is best (most expedient) for the congregation.

C. Paul said; Col. 4:5 "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."
VII. **DISCIPLINE**

A. **Discipline involves the totality of teaching and training including corrective discipline.**

B. **Instructive (preventive) disciple is needed.**

1. Acts 20:32 "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

2. 2 Tim. 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

3. This brings about our walking by the same rule.

   a. Phi. 3:16 “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.”

   b. Walking in the light; 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

C. **Corrective discipline must be applied to some by withdrawing fellowship from them.**

1. The immoral; 1 Cor. 5

2. Personal offenses of which they will not repent; Mat. 18:15-17 “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee an heathen man and a publican.”

3. Those who walk out of step with God’s Word; 2 The. 3:6 “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”

4. A divisive (heretick) person; Tit. 3:10 “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;”

5. False teachers; 1 Tim. 6:3-5 “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”

6. Those who fellowship false teachers; 2 John 9-11 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: 11For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

VIII. **THESE PILLARS ARE ON THE FOUNDATION OF LOVE.**

A. **Love for God.**

1. Mat. 22:37 “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

2. Rev. 2:4-5 “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

B. **Love for God’s Word.**

1. Pro. 23:23 “Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”

2. Psa. 1:2 “But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”

3. Psa. 119:97, 127 “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.... 127Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold.”

C. **Love for others.**

1. Mat. 22:39 “And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”
2. Have a desire for their salvation even as Christ.
   a. Luke 19:10 “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
   b. Prompting us to take the Gospel to the world; Mark 16:15 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Conclusion: Truth cannot be compromised. What we think best or what we like or do not like does not displace God’s Word. God gave us His Word because of His love for man; Eph. 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” Do we have enough love for God to do His will?