

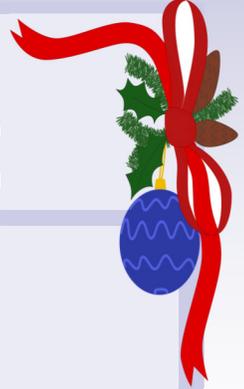
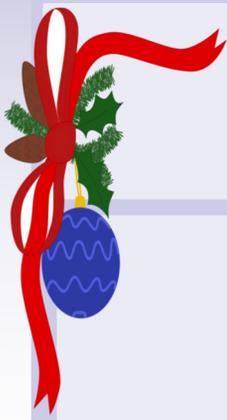


SUGAR LAND BIBLE CHURCH
"BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE FOR 36 YEARS
1982- 2018



THE CORNERSTONE

DECEMBER 2018



Christmas at SLBC

December 2



Ladies Soup and Salad
5:00—7:00

Ladies—Sign up to bring Soup
or Salad

Sign-up List is in the Foyer



December
12

Gingerbread House Contest
7:00 pm

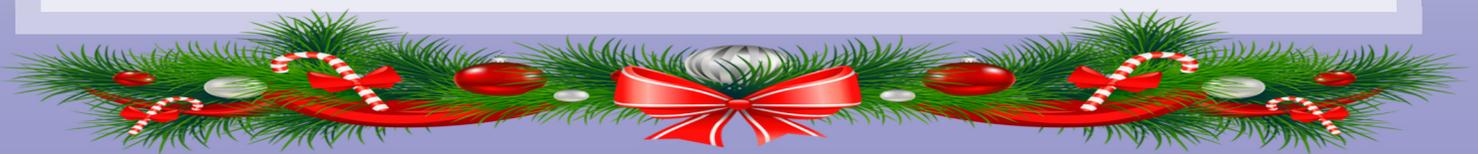
Join the SLBC Family as they build gingerbread houses from the foundation –up!

Be creative! Houses will be provided, you can bring any additional decorative item you wish.



December 9
Jingle Bell Beach
Christmas Musical
6:00 to 8:00 pm
Come and Join the
fun!

December 24
Candlelight
Service
6:00 pm



Missions for the Month



Jim & Lydia Munn



Teaching God's Word in Grenoble, France

Weekly Report

The following is taken from several of the latest weekly newsletters from the Munnns.

A SHIFT IN EUROPEAN ATTITUDES?

from The National Council of Evangelicals of France

Sat, Nov 10, 2018 at 5:00 AM

Sociologists have noticed a gradual change in our postmodern secularized societies [no doubt referring to Europe, not just France], toward a "post-secularism" phase. Religions are no longer excluded from the public sphere and from public debate; rather, they are well integrated. It's not a return to a position of power for one religion. It's an acceptance of the fact that there are many religions in the country's makeup, but also that the religions live side-by-side with currents of thought that are atheist, agnostic, or simply materialistic.

Let's pray that in daily life, Europeans and French people in particular, would be more open to Christian witness!

PREACHING AND TEACHING LAST SUNDAY

I was in a small church in Corbas last Sunday, near Lyon. I preached in the morning on "Jesus' resurrection and ours". I've been reading Randy Alcorn's book, Heaven, and thinking of the New Earth!!

The church meets in an Italian restaurant that is closed Sundays. Why closed? Because it's in a semi-industrial area, and its clients are mostly office workers and others who work in the area, who aren't anywhere near there on Sundays.

Several of us had lunch together... not from the Italian restaurant food! We brought our own.

Then we had another session of "The Progress of Redemption" course: number nine. This church always makes a video recording when I teach there. This is a real gift, because it means I'll have something to leave behind me in France when the time comes.





Andy Woods—Pastor

Twenty-Four Church and Israel Distinctions

(Part 5)

One of the most rudimentary distinctions that the child of God needs to learn to rightly divide God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15) is the basic distinction between Israel and the Church. A common mistake in Bible interpretation is to take God's promises that are aimed at national Israel and instead to indiscriminately apply them to the Church and consequently the Church Age believer. There are, at a bare minimum, at least *twenty-four* differences between the Church and Israel. The purpose of this series is to highlight these basic differences. In prior installments, we saw the following distinctions:

[while Israel is the wife of Jehovah, the Church is the bride of Christ. Furthermore, Israel birthed Christ whereas Christ birthed the Church. In addition, Christ will return for the Church in the Rapture while Christ will return for Israel at the end of the Tribulation period. Furthermore, while Jesus is the King of Israel, He is the groom and head of the Church. While eighty percent of the Bible relates to Israel, a mere twenty percent of it relates to the Church. Also, while Israel was a party to the Biblical covenants, the Church is a mere third-party beneficiary to them. In the last installment, we began to examine yet another distinction relating to the different birthdays of Israel and the Church.](#)

Distinction Number 7: Their Beginning

ISRAEL'S BIRTHDAY

When did the nation of Israel come into existence? As explained in the prior installment, Israel became a nation in Genesis 12 through the calling of Abram, who later was renamed Abraham.

THE CHURCH'S BIRTHDAY

Conversely, when did the Church begin? The Church began in Acts 2. How can we come to this conclusion? There are at least *six* reasons as to why we can know that the Church began in Acts 2. *Three* of six reasons have been presented thus far. *First*, Christ referred to the Church in the future tense during His earthly ministry as recorded in Matthew 16:18. Thus, the Church could not exist in Old Testament times or even concurrently with the life of Christ. *Second*, Paul referred to the Church as a mystery (Eph. 3:3-6), or something previously hidden but now revealed. Thus, the Church did not exist in the Old Testament era. *Third*, the Church did not exist prior to Acts 1 since Christ became the head of the Church only after His Ascension (Eph. 1:20-22). In this installment, we will provide *two* additional reasons as to why the Church began in Acts 2 and therefore began during a completely different time in history than Israel.

The Spiritual Gifts Became Available to the Church After the Ascension

Fourth, the Church did not exist prior to Acts 1 since the *spiritual gifts* only came into existence after the Ascension of Jesus Christ. You might ask, "spiritual gifts, what are those?" Spiritual gifts are Spirit-empowered abilities to serve God in a special way typically within His Church. If the spiritual gifts are not in operation, then you cannot have a Church. Why is that? Because you do not have the divine means through which edification of the body of Christ can take place. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift. Spiritual gifts are not just for the preacher and the piano player. Rather, every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has at least one spiritual gift. How do I know that? Because of the word "each" in the various passages speaking of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10). Notice 1 Corinthians 12:7, "But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." As the spiritual gifts are being ministered, the body of Christ is being edified for the common good. Therefore, Paul, when he is talking about spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 14:26, says, "let all things be done for edification," which means the building up of one another in the faith. This is what the spiritual gifts are designed to do. Furthermore, Paul writes in Ephesians 4:11-12, "And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and

bers of the Church. There is no doubt that the ethnic complexion of the Church changed over time, but it is still the exact same Church! Paul was initially persecuting the Church, which is the very same Church that exists today.

Furthermore, in Romans 16:7, Paul made this statement, “Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles who also were in Christ before me.” If you do a word study on the prepositional phrase “in Christ,” what you will discover is that this expression is used about one hundred times and it always refers to Christ’s body, the Church (Rom. 8:1). In fact, the expression “in Christ” occurs in the famous Rapture passage where Paul writes in First Thessalonians 4:16, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.” This verse is speaking about how members of Christ’s Church will all one day participate in the Rapture. What is Paul talking about then in Romans 16:7? He is speaking of those who were “in Christ” before him. He mentions them by name, Andronicus and Junias. These are people who were “in Christ,” which is a term used only of the Church. In other words, because there were people “in Christ” before him, it becomes quite obvious that the Church could not have started with Paul because he is talking about people “in Christ” before he was even saved in Acts 9.

Additionally, what do we read about in Acts 5? This is the passage of Scripture where we learn that Ananias and Sapphira were slain in the Holy Spirit. Immediately after the death of Ananias and Sapphira, Luke records these words in Acts 5:11, “And great fear came over the whole Church, and over all who heard of these things.” Here, we find another reference to the Church, or *ekklēsia*, which further proves that the body of Christ was functioning in Jerusalem prior to the conversion of the Apostle Paul in Acts 9.

Do you see what I am getting at here? I am merely providing biblical evidence as to how to pinpoint when the Church came into existence. It is easy to pinpoint that the birth of the nation of Israel is in Genesis 12. Here, we have been working through the New Testament to determine when the Church was birthed to establish that the nation of Israel and the Church have different birthdays. The Church could not have existed in the Old Testament, during the time of Christ, or prior to Acts 1. However, it was an entity that already was in existence by the time Saul was converted to Paul in Acts 9. Therefore, if the Church did not exist prior to Act 1 and was already in existence in Acts 5, the birthday of the Church must be somewhere in between these chapters. I have given you the outer edges and in our next installment we will try to narrow the window down for the origin of the Church to Acts 2.

All this to say, when did the Church begin? The birthday of the Church is in Acts chapter 2. How do we know this? *First*, Christ referred to the Church in the future tense during His earthly ministry as recorded in Matthew 16:18. Thus, the Church could not exist in Old Testament times or even concurrently with the life of Christ. *Second*, Paul referred to the Church as a mystery (Eph. 3:3-6), or something previously hidden but is now revealed. Thus, the Church did not exist in the Old Testament era. *Third*, the Church did not exist prior to Acts 1 since Christ became the head of the Church only after His ascension (Eph. 1:20-22). *Fourth*, the Church did not exist prior to Acts 1 since spiritual gifts, which are necessary for a Church to function, only came into existence after Christ’s Ascension (Eph. 4:7-8). *Fifth*, many verses tell us that the Church was in existence prior to the conversion of Paul (Acts 5:11; 8:1, 3; Gal. 1:13; 1 Cor. 15:9; Rom. 16:7; Philip. 3:6). In our next installment, we will examine a *sixth* and final reason that the Church started in Acts 2.

(To Be Continued...)



Video Archive—We archive all our Live-streamed services. To enjoy all your favorite teachings, just go to this link: www.slbc.org/media/sermon-archives/...and be sure to tell your friends too!

some *as* pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”

What I would like you to see is this: these spiritual gifts, which you must have for a Church to function, did not exist prior to Acts 1. These gifts did not exist the way we experience them today prior to the Ascension of Christ. How do I know that? Because Paul earlier in the passage in Ephesians 4:7-8 wrote, “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore, it says, ‘WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.’” Thus, Christ gave gifts to men following His Ascension. What gifts did He give to men? They are the very gifts spoken of later in verses 11 and 12. In other words, you cannot have the Church existing prior to the Ascension because the gifts of the Spirit were not in operation yet. If you attend a Church where the spiritual gifts are not in operation, why even go? If no one has the gift of preaching, if no one has the gift of teaching, if no one has the gift of mercy, or of exhortation, or evangelism, how will you ever be edified to grow in Christ? The reason you attend a Church is to use your gifts to help others and to become the recipient of someone else’s spiritual giftedness. Thus, the reality of the situation is that prior to Acts 1, you do not have spiritual gifts in existence because Jesus Christ gave those gifts after He ascended to the right hand of the Father (Eph. 4:7-8). Therefore, you cannot have the Church in existence prior to Acts chapter 1.

The Church Existed Before Paul’s Conversion

Fifth, we know that the Church existed before Paul’s conversion in Acts 9. In other words, we know that the Church began sometime after Acts 1 but sometime before Acts 9. Many people will tell you that the Church started with Paul. However, this is not true. The Church was in existence *before* Paul ever got saved. Some might say, “to Paul alone was given the mystery of the Church.” That is not true because, as we learned in the prior installment, the mystery was given to the “apostles,” plural. Paul, by God’s grace, was the theologian that God raised up to give us the greatest explanation of the mystery of the Church. People often confuse the *explanation* of the mystery with *when* the mystery started. As a matter of fact, Paul was the last apostle that Christ appeared to as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:6-9, “After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James and then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” Did you catch that? There was already a Church in existence that Paul was persecuting before Christ appeared to him. Thus, it is very clear that the Church existed before Paul. In fact, Acts 8:1 says, “Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.” Verse 3 says, “But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.” Once again, we see Saul, who later became Paul, in his unsaved condition persecuting the Church. There is no question that the Church existed before Saul’s conversion. In his writings repeatedly, Paul tells us that he once attacked the Church. That is why he refers to himself as the least and the last of the apostles.

A little over a decade after Saul persecuted the Church he would go on to write this in Galatians 1:13, “For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the Church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.” Paul also says in Philippians 3:6, “as to zeal, a persecutor of the Church.” Sadly, what many people will tell you is that what Paul was persecuting was the *Jewish* Church and then Paul subsequently started the *Gentile* Church. However, there is no such two-fold differentiation. We are all one in Christ (Gal. 3:28). Even Paul believed this because he wrote in Ephesians 4:4-6, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.” Jesus also knew nothing of two Churches, but rather one flock, when He predicted concerning the coming Church: “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd” (John 10:16). I would agree that the ethnic *complexion* of the Church was completely Jewish right up to the conversion of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert in the Church Age, in Acts 10. It was not until Paul went on his first missionary journey into Southern Galatia outside the borders of Israel (Acts 13–14) that Gentiles started getting saved in large numbers, and consequently the Gentiles become the dominant mem-



“WHO’s Who at SLBC”

by Ashlynn Morris

The Ladies ministry



The Ladies Ministry is a wonderful part of SLBC. It’s a perfect way to fellowship and make new friends. Some of the ongoing events are weekly bible studies, soup and salads, retreats, and luncheons. Other ministries are the Encouragement, Hospitality/ Showers, Publicity, Share-A-Meal, Welcoming, and Wrapped in Love.

The leader of the Ladies Ministry is Mrs. Cindy Blackman. She and her husband, Mr. Maurice have been coming to SLBC for five years. She not only helps with the Ladies Ministry, but is also the teacher of the 1st -3rd grade Sunday School class for the Children’s ministry. The thing she loves most about the Ladies Ministry is being able to work and fellowship with women of faith. Her favorite thing about teaching her youngster class is being able to bring the children to Christ.

Mrs. Blackman especially loves the passage Romans 12:1-2. Her favorite attribute of God is his loving-kindness. She loves to share what she calls her Timothy Experience. Just as Timothy grew up with a Eunice and Lois, Mrs. Blackman grew up with two grandmothers named Eula and Lucy. Mrs. Blackman shared how they always reminded her to stand strong in her faith and to trust God no matter what.

Mrs. Blackman is a very sweet woman and I really enjoyed getting to know her better while preparing this article. You would be very blessed to make her acquaintance if you haven’t done so already.

Proverbs 6:20-23

My son, keep your father’s command, And do not forsake the law of your mother.

Bind them continually upon your heart; Tie them around your neck.

When you roam, they will lead you; When you sleep, they will keep you; And *when* you awake, they will speak with you. For the commandment *is* a lamp, And the law a light;

Ladies Bible Study

New Study in James
Teacher: Betty Cooke

**Practical Righteousness--How to Live Out
Your Faith.**

Our new study will begin on **January 8 at 9:00** in the morning and at **7:00 at night**.

We will cover such topics as trials, temptations, wisdom, money, patience, the tongue, and prayer.

Scripture for the Month:



Revelation 4:9-11

Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

“You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”

Mondays *Jim* teaches Progress of Redemption to 16 people in a Grenoble Evening Bible School class.

Every Tuesday (or almost) at 2 pm, *Jim* meets with *Philip*, the law student from Syria, a former Muslim who believes in Christ. Philip is struggling to acquire a higher level of French, to be able to pass his University exams.

We now have three Syrian families in the church.

Almost all the adults are Muslim-Background Believers. Another family (Philip's cousin) is in the pipeline. Thanks for praying for their adjustment to French language and culture, and their spiritual influence on other immigrants and on the French people around them.



The Cavatello restaurant, where the Corbas church meets

THIS WEEK:

TUESDAY (today): *Lydia* and I met with an area pastor to ask if she could make a presentation of her and *Heather's* novel, "[Le Refuge](#)", this Saturday at a church leaders' seminar. The answer is yes! *Le Refuge* is the French version of *How Huge the Night*, the first novel in the series. We received the first box of them last week!

Then this afternoon I met with *Philip* from Syria, and our former pastor *Jean-Luc* (now a full-time evangelist), for a makeup session of the *Progress* course, because they both missed last Monday's session. It took longer with two, than with twelve! But Jean-Luc thanked me at the end, for good teaching and interaction. I was able to clarify for him, which of the Biblical covenants are unilateral/bilateral, conditional/unconditional, and temporal/eternal.

WEDNESDAY: *Lydia* and I will take *Guy and his wife and daughter* to lunch, to celebrate the publication of *Le Refuge*. Guy is the excellent translator. He did it for nothing! (But *Lydia* will return any profits to him.) And what's great is that Guy is a French novelist himself. The editor said it's one of the best, if not the best, translation that he has seen.

I usually meet with *Philipp* (German physicist) on Wednesday evenings, but he just wrote to cancel. We're reading Alcorn's book, *Heaven*.

THURSDAY-FRIDAY: nothing on the schedule. We both have plenty of work to do, though. I haven't written to you about *Lydia's* managing of the junior high class, with a much too small classroom, working out details for walking to a church member's home graciously offered, and how complicated that is.

SATURDAY: *Lydia* will present the *Le Refuge* novel to area church leaders. One has already told us that he wants to use the book in his church's youth group program.

SUNDAY: I will teach two sessions of the full course of *Progress*, in a church in Villefontaine, near Lyon.

Grateful for your prayers,

Jim Munn

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[Crossworld web site](#)