**A Lesson in Church-Speak – by thailer jimerson**

Being in or growing up in a church context can sometimes have some downsides. As Christians, we, like all people, have our own shortcomings and oversights. One is that we forget what it was like to be newcomer to the faith, to have nearly no grasp at all on biblical vocabulary.

My wife, Amber, frequently mentors teen moms at Harris Academy where she often is able to introduce the Bible to many girls who possess nearly no biblical literacy. She came back telling a story of how quickly overwhelmed a young woman felt not even understanding the biblical concept of sin. Can you imagine this? As Christians, we need to try. It can be frustrating to try to grasp the Bible and biblical ideas. And to have to translate and define so many words may have a disorienting effect when you study God’s word.

So, if you’re a newcomer, I hope you’ll benefit from this first lesson in “church-speak,” and if you’ve been a Christian for some time, feel free to share this article with nonbelieving friends.

**Anointing** – the act of pouring oil over someone to set them apart for God’s service. Often, we use it to designate someone chosen of God.

**Apostle** – the word literally means one who is sent, however it often refers to 14 particular individuals who carried a special authoritative position in the church after Jesus ascended to heaven.

**Atonement** – literally a covering of sin. The atonement refers to the act of Jesus dying on the cross to pay the price for our sins against God, purchasing us from Sin and Satan.

**Baptism** – literally meaning submersion. It’s the holy act by which one is immersed into water for the forgiveness of their sins and entrance into the body of Christ.

**Benevolence** – the kindness, mercy, and charity a church is called to possess and act upon on behalf of those in need.

**Church** – a group of people living underneath the Lordship of Christ. Universally, containing all saved everywhere, at all time. Locally, a group of believers that worship, live and work together for the glory of Christ.

**Communion** – also known as the Lord’s Supper based off the Last Supper of Jesus Christ where he commanded his followers to partake of the bread and fruit of the vine which represented the body and blood he would give for the salvation of his people.

**Disciple** – a student and follower of Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine** – simply meaning teaching. Usually this specifies a particular teaching of the Bible.

**Edification** – a word meaning to build up. It describes the work the church is called to when we encourage one another in the faith to grow in various areas mirror more and more the image of Christ.

**Evangelism** – means to preach the good news about Jesus. It is a work the entire church is to share in either doing or sending, to work together to share the saving message about Jesus Christ.

**Faith** – basically means believing, but implied in the word is something more than mere acknowledgement or mental ascent. The word implies obedience based on your belief.

**Gentile** – a non-Jew. Someone who is not a part of the bloodline of Abraham and generally outside of the people of God.

**Gospel** – simply means “good news”. It’s “news” in that it tells of what God has accomplished in Jesus, making him king over all through his defeat of Sin. It is “good” in that Christ paid with his own life to free us from Sin’s slavery and the penalty of sin in the Last Judgement.

**Inspired** – means it has the creative power of God behind it. If it’s inspired, it’s comes from the very mouth of God.

**Israel** – God renamed the patriarch Jacob “Israel”. We use the name Israel to refer to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and (particularly) Jacob who had twelve sons which multiplied into their own distinct tribes. Israel is God’s nation. The church has been joined to Israel.

**Jew** – a non-Gentile. They are physical descendants of Abraham and belong to God’s covenant people.  
**Justification** – is a legal concept where God declares us “not guilty” for our sins. It originates from the righteousness of God in rectifying our sinful state by pronouncing Christ guilty in our place.

**Messiah** – this is another word for “Christ”. It is the Hebrew term for the chosen/anointed one. This word always carried royal implications. To say Jesus is the Christ means that he is the Hebrew Messiah, God’s chosen king to sit on David’s throne.

**New Testament** – the word “testament” means a covenant or contract. The New Testament is the new order through which God deals with us today, to be differentiated from the Old Testament. It is also used to refer to the last 27 books of the Bible.

**Old Testament** – this speaks of the order through which God dealt primarily through the physical descendants of Abraham, with the nation of Israel. We also use it to refer to the first 39 books of the Bible.

**Redeemed** – this word means purchased back. God purchased us from the slavery of Satan and Sin, and the purchase price was nothing less than the holy blood of his own Son, Jesus Christ.

**Santification** – the process taking place after justification where a person is not merely pronounced not guilty (i.e., holy and accepted in Christ) but also are made progressively and practically holy in their everyday lives through the power of the Holy Spirit reforming their characters.

**Sin** – also known as trespasses and transgressions. Basically, this refers to breaking God’s commandments and falling short of the bar he has set. Paul also speaks of Sin as a power that is at work in our lives, seeking to take us captive.

\*\*\*For more words, check out this website: http://www.victorious.org/cbook/glossary