



The New Testament Church

The Future of the Church

I. ITS FAILURE TO BRING THE KINGDOM

A. The Church and the Kingdom

1. The root of most false doctrine
 - a. Replacement theology
 - b. Charismatic movement
 - c. Roman Catholicism
 - d. Sabbath keeping
 - e. Works salvation
 - f. Faulty concepts concerning the coming of Christ
 - g. Baptism and circumcision
 - h. State Church
2. Some obvious distinctions
 - a. The position of Christ
 - (1) In the church—He is the head of the body (Colossians 1:18).
 - (2) In the kingdom—He is the king of the world (Psalm 10:16; Zechariah 14:9).
 - b. The presence of Christ
 - (1) In the church—He is in heaven (Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22).
 - (2) In the kingdom—He is seated on a throne in Jerusalem (Isaiah 9:6; Jeremiah 23:5; Luke 1:32; Acts 2:30).
 - c. The mention in the Old Testament
 - (1) The church—A mystery (Ephesians 3:1-12)
 - (2) The kingdom—Widely mentioned (Psalm 2 and many others)
 - d. Judgment for sin
 - (1) The church—There is some immediate judgment for sin, but the main punishment occurs after death at the various judgments.
 - (2) The kingdom—Judgment for sin will be exact and immediate (Zechariah 14:16-19).
 - e. Sacrifices
 - (1) The church—Our sacrifices are spiritual in nature (Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Peter 2:5).
 - (2) The kingdom—Animal sacrifices will return (Zechariah 14:21).

B. The Focus of the Kingdom

1. The people of the kingdom
 - a. Proclaimed in the Old Testament
 - (1) Began in Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)
 - (2) Cont'd through Isaac (Genesis 26:1-5) and Jacob (Genesis 28:1-4)



- b. Confirmed in the New Testament
 - (1) The Jews are the “children of the kingdom” (Matthew 8:11-12)
 - (2) The Lord Jesus was sent unto the Jews.
 - a) He came unto His own (John 1:11).
 - b) He was sent unto the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 15:24).
 - c) He was a minister of the circumcision (Romans 15:8).
- 2. The message of the kingdom
 - a. The delivery of the message (Mark 6:7-13)
 - b. The sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7)
- 3. The usher of the kingdom
 - a. A kingdom does not exist apart from a king.
 - b. The Lord Jesus establishes the kingdom.
 - (1) Through war (Isaiah 63:1-6; Revelation 19:11-16)
 - (2) Through judgment (Matthew 25:31-46)

C. The Postponement of the Kingdom

- 1. The kingdom delayed
 - a. It was at hand (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17; Matthew 10:7).
 - b. Yet, Christ departed when they would make Him king (John 6:15).
 - c. The Jews were blinded (Romans 11:1-25).
 - d. Christ’s kingdom was not of this world, “now” (John 18:35-37).
- 2. The kingdom yet future
 - a. Israel shall be saved (Romans 11:26-27).
 - b. God hath not cast away His people (Romans 11:1-3).
 - c. The treatment of the Jews will become the focal point of entrance into the kingdom (Matthew 25:31-46).
 - d. The Lord is not slack concerning His promises (2 Peter 3:9).
 - e. The Lord will establish the new covenant (Hebrews 8:10-13; Hebrews 10:15-17).

D. The Focus of the Church

- 1. Our purpose
 - a. To call out a people (Acts 15:14)
 - b. The glory of God (Romans 11:36)
- 2. Our message
 - a. All have sinned (Romans 3:23)
 - b. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
 - c. Faith brings eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 10:9-13)

E. The End of the Church Age

- 1. The end of other dispensations
 - a. Innocence
 - (1) The test: God allowed the serpent (Satan) to tempt Eve concerning the tree (Genesis 3:1).



- (2) The plan
 - a) The serpent questioned God's word (Genesis 3:1).
 - b) The serpent contradicted God's word (Genesis 3:4).
 - c) The serpent changed God's word (Genesis 3:5).
- (3) The fall
 - a) Eve added to the word (Genesis 3:3).
 - b) Eve took of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:6).
 - i) Good for food
 - ii) Pleasant to the eyes
 - iii) Desired to make one wise
 - c) Eve gave of the fruit to Adam (Genesis 3:6).
- (4) The consequences
 - a) They lost their innocence (Genesis 3:7).
 - b) They lost their fellowship (Genesis 3:8).
 - c) Their spirit died at that moment (see Romans 7:9).
- b. Conscience
 - (1) Wicked imaginations (Genesis 6:5; see Genesis 8:21)
 - (2) Earth filled with violence (Genesis 6:11-13)
 - (3) Defiled generations (Genesis 6:1-4, 9; see 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6-7)
- c. Human government
 - (1) One people (Genesis 3:6; Acts 17:24-28)
 - (2) One language (Genesis 3:1, 6)
 - (3) One-world government (Genesis 2-4a; see Daniel 2:40-43; Daniel 7:23-25); "let us build us a city"
 - (4) One-world religion (Genesis 3:4b; see Revelation 17:3-18); "a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven"
 - (5) One-world goal (Genesis 3:4); "let us make us a name"—The only name that should be exalted is the name of God (Psalm 8:1; Psalm 102:15; Psalm 103:1)
 - (6) Unlimited imagination (Genesis 3:6; see Genesis 6:5; Genesis 8:21)
 - (7) They were restrained by God (Genesis 3:7-9).
- d. Promise
 - (1) Sojourn in Egypt (Genesis 45:16-20; Genesis 50:26)
 - (2) Destruction by Egypt (Exodus 1:7-22)
 - (3) Absorption by Egypt (Exodus 14:10-12; Exodus 16:3; Leviticus 18:3; cp. Exodus 32:1)
- e. Law
 - (1) Rejection of the Law (Jeremiah 6:19; Hosea 4:6)
 - (2) Keeping the form without the heart (Isaiah 1:11-15; Isaiah 58:1-7; Amos 5:21-27; Micah 6:7-8)
 - (3) Rejecting their Messiah (John 1:11; Acts 2:22-23; Acts 3:13-15; Acts 7:52)
2. The end of this dispensation
 - a. Perilous times (2 Timothy 3:1-9)
 - b. Apostasy (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)



II. ITS SUCCESS IN CALLING OUT A PEOPLE

A. A Change in Dealings

1. The nation of Israel
 - a. Began in Abraham (Genesis 12:1-2)
 - b. Continued through Stephen (Acts 7)
2. A people out of the Gentiles
 - a. Began in Cornelius (Acts 15:6-14)
 - b. Continues through the church age (Revelation 3:20)
3. The change
 - a. A nation out of a people—Israel out of Abraham
 - b. A people out of nations

B. A Change in Association

1. People of God by birth
 - a. The children of Israel were the people of God by natural birth.
 - b. This covenant was confirmed by circumcision.
2. People of God by new birth
 - a. By nature, we are the children of wrath (Ephesians 2:1-3).
 - b. We are the people of God by the new birth (John 1:12; John 3:1-7).

C. Calling Out a People

1. Without any bias
 - a. The message given to the disciples (Matthew 10:5).
 - b. The message given in the early church (Romans 1:16).
 - c. The message today (Ephesians 2:11-22)
2. With no difference (Acts 15:9; Romans 3:22; Romans 10:12-13)
3. With one message
 - a. All saved the same way (Acts 15:11; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
 - b. Solely by the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8-9)

D. A Marvellous Success

1. As witnessed in the early church (Acts 6:1, 7; Acts 9:31)
2. As witnessed in Paul's epistles (Colossians 1:6, 23)
3. As witnessed in heaven (Revelation 5:9)

III. ITS GLORY IN HEAVENLY PLACES

A. Its Presentation

1. The church will be presented to Christ (2 Corinthians 4:14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22, 28; Jude 1:24).



2. The apostle Paul is somehow involved in this presentation (2 Corinthians 11:2; Colossians 1:28). Note: Colossians 1:28 seems to indicate that believers other than Paul are involved in this presentation. Could it be that you physically get to present believers to Christ that you led to Him while on this earth?
3. The trinity appears to be involved in the presentation.
 - a. God the Father and God the Spirit are involved (2 Corinthians 4:14).
 - b. The Lord Jesus Christ presents the church to Himself (Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22; Jude 1:24).
4. The condition of the church at its presentation
 - a. It will be presented as a chaste virgin (2 Corinthians 11:2). Note: A virgin is a woman that has never known a man in an intimate way. The fact that we will be presented as a chaste virgin signifies that we have never known any other god.
 - b. It will be presented a glorious church (Ephesians 5:27).
 - (1) Without spot
 - (2) Without wrinkle
 - (3) Holy
 - (4) Without blemish
 - c. It will be presented (Colossians 1:22)
 - (1) Holy
 - (2) Unblameable
 - (3) Unreprovable
 - d. It will be presented perfect in Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:28).
 - e. It will be presented faultless (Jude 1:24).

B. Its Position

1. A joint-heir (Romans 8:17)
 - a. An heir of God
 - b. A joint-heir with Christ
2. Glory
 - a. Glory will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).
 - b. We will be partakers of the glory that will be revealed (1 Peter 5:1).
 - c. We will have an exceeding and eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4:17).
3. Glorified bodies
 - a. We will be like Christ (1 John 3:1-2; Psalm 17:15; Philippians 3:21).
 - b. We will bear the image of the heavenly (1 Corinthians 15:45-55).
 - c. We will put off our tabernacle (2 Peter 1:13-15).
 - d. Note: A tabernacle is a temporary dwelling place. The fact that Peter called his body a tabernacle suggested that it was a temporary dwelling place for him. Consider this when looking at the fact that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16).
 - e. We will be clothed upon (2 Corinthians 5:1-4).



C. Its Plans

1. The rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17)
 - a. The next event on God's prophetic calendar for the church.
 - b. The Lord will descend (1 Thessalonians 4:16).
 - (1) With a shout
 - (2) With the voice of the archangel
 - (3) With the trump of God
 - c. The dead in Christ will rise first (1 Thessalonians 4:15).
 - d. Those which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with the dead in Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:17).
2. The judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10-11; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15)
 - a. All believers must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).
 - b. We will receive the things done in this body, good and bad (2 Corinthians 5:10).
 - c. This judgment exemplifies the terror of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:11).
 - d. Every man's work will be tried by fire (1 Corinthians 3:13).
 - e. The things that remain will gain reward, while the things that are lost in the fire will suffer loss (1 Corinthians 3:14-15).
 - f. It is possible this is the scene somewhat described in Revelation 4.
3. The second coming
 - a. The circumstances of the return
 - (1) A time of darkness
 - a) Armies gather against Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2)
 - b) The Lord sends darkness upon the Earth
 - i) The stars of heaven and the constellations shall not give their light (Isaiah 13:10).
 - ii) The sun shall be darkened (Isaiah 13:10).
 - iii) The moon will not shine (Isaiah 13:10).
 - iv) A day of darkness and gloominess (Joel 2:1-2)
 - v) A day of clouds and of thick darkness (Joel 2:1-2)
 - vi) The sun and moon shall be dark (Joel 2:10)
 - vii) The stars shall withdraw their shining (Joel 2:10)
 - viii) The sun will go down at noon (Amos 8:9).
 - ix) God will darken the earth in a clear day (Amos 8:9).
 - x) The sun shall be darkened (Matthew 24:29).
 - xi) The moon shall not give her light (Matthew 24:29).
 - xii) The stars shall fall from heaven (Matthew 24:29).
 - (2) A time of great light
 - a) The sign of the Son of Man
 - i) A special sign called "the sign of the Son of man in heaven" immediately precedes His coming in power and great glory (Matthew 24:30). By nature, this sign must be different than the other signs which mark the tribulation.
 - ii) The identity of the Son of man



- (a) By name (Revelation 1:13)
 - (b) By countenance (Revelation 1:16)
 - iii) This fits in with Malachi 4:1-3 where Christ will come to those who fear His name as the “**Sun** of righteousness.”
 - b) The literal sun at the coming slaughter (Isaiah 30:25-33)
 - i) “The day of the great slaughter” (Isaiah 30:25). This matches “the supper of the great God” (Revelation 19:17).
 - ii) At this time, there is a sign in heaven (Isaiah 30:26).
 - (a) The moon becomes as bright as the sun.
 - (b) The light of the sun is sevenfold.
 - iii) The wicked of the earth will be destroyed with the burning of God’s anger (Isaiah 30:27, 30).
 - b. The comradery of the saints
 - (1) We will be riding white horses behind the Saviour (Revelation 19:11-16).
 - (2) We will gather as a great army (Joel 2:1-11).
 - a) Our great army gathers (Joel 2:2).
 - b) A fire devoureth before us and a flame burneth behind us (Joel 2:3).
 - c) The appearance is as the appearance of horses and horsemen (Joel 2:4).
 - d) Like the noise of chariots and of a flame of fire will we come (Joel 2:5).
 - e) Before our face the people shall be much pained (Joel 2:6).
 - f) The faces of the people before us shall gather blackness (Joel 2:6).
 - g) The army
 - i) We shall run like mighty men (Joel 2:7).
 - ii) We shall climb the wall like men of war (Joel 2:7).
 - iii) We shall march every one on his ways (Joel 2:7).
 - iv) We shall not break their ranks (Joel 2:7).
 - v) We will not thrust another (Joel 2:8).
 - vi) We shall walk every one in his path (Joel 2:8).
 - vii) When we fall upon the sword we shall not be wounded (Joel 2:8).
 - viii) The earth shall quake before us (Joel 2:10).
 - c. The effects upon men
 - (1) Men will be burned up (Malachi 4:1).
 - (2) Their flesh will consume while standing (Zechariah 14:12).
 - (3) Their eyes shall consume away in their holes (Zechariah 14:12).
 - (4) Their tongues shall consume away in their mouth (Zechariah 14:12).
4. The kingdom
- a. All the saved will be in the 1,000-year kingdom on earth.
 - b. Some will rule with Christ (2 Timothy 2:12; Luke 19:11-27).
5. Eternity (1 Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 21-22)