

Planned, established, corrupted, restored

A. THE CHURCH IN THE MIND OF GOD. (Ephesians 3:9-10 and to make all {people} see what {is} the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly {places},

It is called the kingdom. Mat 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The disciples were taught to pray for the coming of it. Mat 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Christians are in it. Col 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated {us} into the kingdom of his dear Son:

The universal kingdom exists as the extent of Christ's rule and we are put into it when we submit to the conditions or rules of it.

The church is called the Body of Christ. (Ephesians 1:22-23 KJV) (22) And hath put all {things} under his feet, and gave him {to be} the head over all {things} to the church, (23) Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Individual Christians are the members of it. Rom 12:5 So we, {being} many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (KJV) 1Co 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (KJV)

It is described as the bride of Christ in Eph 5 and John's vision of it in Rev 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (KJV)

It is described as a temple. (Ephesians 2:20-22 KJV) (20) And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner {stone}; (21) In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: (22) In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

1. IT WAS PROPHECIED IN THE O.T. (Isaiah 2:2-3 KJV) (2) And it shall come to pass in the last days, {that} the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. (3) And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

At a certain time: Dan 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, {but} it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

It's location (JERUSALEM, A FORTRESS).

(ISA 24:23b) ... for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously. (NKJ)

Zec 1:16 Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. (KJV)

It is not located on earth. Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,

John 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

2. AS THE TIME GREW NEAR, IT WAS SAID TO BE "AT HAND".

(Matthew 3:1-2 KJV)

(1) In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, (2) And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

(Mark 1:14-15 KJV)

(14) Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, (15) And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Mar 9:1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (KJV)

3. Established on Pentecost as fulfillment Act 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; (KJV).....

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass *That* whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

4. IT IS TO CONTINUE UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD. Dan 2:44 ...set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, {but} it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. (KJV)

It cannot be shaken. Heb 12:28b Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved,...

It will be here when Christ returns. (1CO 15:24) Then {cometh} the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (KJV)

B. Church age called "last days". Joel called the days of Acts 2 the last days, vs 16,17

(1TI 4:1) Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; (KJV)

Before the end, apostasy comes:

a. Turn from truth to fables 2Ti 4:4, speak lies 1Ti 4:2, perverse things Act 20:29, other gospels Gal 1:6,7

b. Forbid marriage and meats 1Ti 4:3, oppositions of science 1Ti 6:20

c. People will follow them. 2Pe 2:2, Act 20:30

Catholicism, which claims to be the first church, was in reality, the first apostate church. It traces back to about 600 A.D. It bears many marks of the group that was foretold in the scriptures:

a. Forbids marriage of priests and nuns.

b. Commands abstinence from meats on fast days.

c. Pope of Rome actually occupies (in the mind of true Catholics) the position of God on earth. The official Catholic almanac makes this statement concerning the pope: "The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of Christ. He is also the divine monarch, the supreme emperor, and king of kings." No man on earth has a right to such titles. Mat 23:9 call no man father

d. Much of Catholic doctrine is based on fable which are legendary stories of supernatural happenings.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE APOSTASY

a. CHURCH ORGANIZATION BEGAN WITH A PLURALITY OF ELDERS. (TIT 1:5) For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: (KJV)

b. According to history, local elderships had one elder who presided, calling himself the bishop. In an area, one of these

came to be known as the city bishop or patriarch and took authority over the churches in his diocese (administrative division) Periodically, these met in councils and a struggle for authority at this level led to five major patriarchs over Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Rome. Boniface III finally assumed leadership over all of these as the first universal bishop or pope or head of the church on earth (at Rome).

5. DOCTRINES OF MEN THAT WERE ADDED TO THE WORSHIP.(MAT 15:9) But in vain they do worship me, teaching {for} doctrines the commandments of men. (KJV)

a. Things added: the use of holy water, penance, relics, burning of candles (votives), burning of incense, infant baptism, images and symbols in abundance, counting of beads in prayer, perjury, celibacy of the priesthood, withholding the cup from the laity, instrumental music, etc.

b. The next 1000 years are called the dark ages. No one of the laity was allowed to read the Bible. The leaders used physical persecution and death to punish those in opposition. Secular history of this period is known as medieval history.

c. The Catholic church now recognizes three sources of authority, Bible, pope, and traditions of the church

6. The Protestant reformation. 1517 to 1800 A.D.

a. Martin Luther breaks with the Catholic church and starts a denomination of his own. He reforms some things and keeps some things such as infant baptism, sprinkling, clergy-laity, instrumental music, etc.

b. After Luther, there has been a steady stream of denominations started by different men:

1530 – The Lutheran church was established in Augsburg, Germany.

1534 – The church of England was started by Henry 8th break with the Pope over his adulterous marriage to Ann Boleyn. It came to be the Episcopal church.

1535,6 – The Presbyterian church was started by John Calvin in Switzerland and John Knox in Scotland.

1607 TO 1611 – The Baptist church was started by John Smythe in England.

1608 – The Congregational church grew out of the church of England.

1729 – The Methodist church was started in England by John and Charles Wesley.

1830 – The Mormons started by Joseph Smith in New England.

1844 – The 7th Day Adventist started in New England by Ellen G. White.

1878 TO 1890 – The Christian Science (or C of C, Scientist) started in Boston by Mary Baker Eddy.

The list grows with Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witness, etc.

C. Restoration efforts started in about 1790 by men who took the seed of the Word, Luk 8:11 (the seed is the Word of God), and produced Christians only.

They began to worship God by the New Testament pattern establishing authority for everything by the Word of God. They spoke where the Bible spoke and were silent where the Bible was silent. These men made mistakes in their application of the truth, but the appeal to the scriptures has kept others from following their mistakes. There is no human creed to follow only the Bible.