



# What's the church all about?

Part 004 - The Foundation of the church

## *I. GOD'S PLAN FOR THE AGES*

### **A. God's Eternal Kingdom**

**PS 10:16**

The LORD is king forever and ever; the nations perish from his land.

**PS 103:19**

The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

### **B. The Cosmic Rebellion**

All of God's creation was good, but at some point, sin entered into creation.

When and how this happened is not clearly stated in the Bible, but certain passages seem to allude to this fact (Isa 14:3-21, Eze 28:11-17).

### **C. The Earthly Rebellion**

**GE 1:26**

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

#### **RESULTS OF MAN'S SIN WERE:**

- Fellowship with God was broken.
- The image of God in the man and woman was marred.
- Man experienced physical and spiritual death.
- The woman would experience suffering in childbirth.
- The man would experience painful toil.
- The ground (nature) was cursed (Ro 8:21-22).
- Fellowship between the man and the woman was broken.
- Rule over the earth was usurped by Satan who became 'the god of this world.'

### **D. God's Redemptive Plan**

- The redemption of Man, restoring him to the image of Christ (2Co 3:18).
- The restoration of fellowship between God and Man and between men (1Jn 1:3-7).
- The restoration of God's reign over the earth (Rev 11:15) and man's reign with him (Rev 22:5).  
The creation of a new earth (Rev 21:1).

**GENESIS 3:15**

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

## *II. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH*

### **A. The Background For The Church: Israel**

1. The Nation of Israel
2. The church

This passage is the basis for the mission statement of New Life Church:

**MATTHEW 28:18-20**



And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**EPH 3:10-11**

'Through the church the manifold wisdom of God is made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

### 3. Comparison between The Nation Of Israel And The Church (Figure 1)

**FIGURE 1.1 ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH**

The Nation of Israel	The Church
<p>The orientation of the 'Nation' was centripetal. God's plan placed Israel as a light to the nations, to which the nations would COME to see and hear of His glory. To participate in His glory meant to come to the Nation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth by addition (birth, take by force, God-fearers)</li> <li>• Centralised plan 'when they come to this House'</li> <li>• God's glory temporarily residing in Jerusalem (1Ch 28; 2Ch 6-7)</li> </ul>	<p>The orientation of the Church is centrifugal. God's plan places the Church as a Light to the nations. The people of the Church are to GO and be salt and light among the nations (Mt 5:13-14; 28:18-20).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth by multiplication (conversion, church planting)</li> <li>• Decentralised plan '... into all the world'</li> <li>• Released and empowered by the eternally indwelling Holy Spirit (Ac 1-2); God's glory residing in the hearts of men (2Co 3)</li> </ul>
 <p><i>Growth through attraction (centripetal)</i></p>	 <p><i>Growth through expansion (centrifugal)</i></p>

We see here an interesting problem.

**QUESTION:**

**IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SEE THE CHURCH SOMETIMES MAKING THE MISTAKE OF FALLING BACK INTO ISRAEL'S MODEL?**

## *B. The Prediction Of The Church: Matthew 16:18-19*

Jesus predicts the establishment of the church in Matthew 16:18-19. The following is a review of Matthew 16:18-19.

### **MATTHEW 16:18-19**

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

### **1. The church is built on the rock: “Upon this rock”**

Major interpretations of ‘the Rock’

- Jesus the Messiah: Petra used of Christ (1Co 10:4; Ro 9:33; 1Pe 2:8)
- The confession of faith by Peter about Christ
- Peter himself

#### **QUESTION:**

**WHY HAS THIS VERSE CAUSED SO MUCH MISUNDERSTANDING? MAYBE DISCUSS THESE 3 INTERPRETATIONS.**

### **2. The Church belongs to Christ: “I will build My Church.”**

### **3. Jesus builds His Church through us: “I will build my Church.”**

Jesus uses born again people as His building material (1Pe 2:5).

### **4. The Church will be triumphant: “the gates of hell will not prevail against it”**

## *C. The Birth Of The Church: Acts 2*

The prediction of Jesus came true in Acts 2 when the empowering Holy Spirit was poured out on people from many nations giving birth to the church.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1. WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHURCH AS CENTRIFUGAL?**
- 2. HOW DOES AN OLD TESTAMENT (CENTRIPETAL) UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH AFFECT ITS VITALITY? WHEN IS SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOCAL CHURCH APPROPRIATE? WHY?**
- 3. THE CHURCH EXISTS FOR THE WORLD (EPH 3:1-10). WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?**