

THE BIBLICAL CHURCH AND THE MODERN-DAY MINISTRY

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Abstract

The Church of the Bible was never an afterthought but was in the planned program of God that he was going to establish his church according to His plan. For that reason, God put in the minds of prophets and they did prophesy about it even before the coming of His son Jesus Christ. Isaiah, Daniel and Micah prophesy about this Church. The prophecies were fulfilled on the Pentecost day where three thousand people were baptized and added to their number. The Church has her condition for entry. One must hear the gospel, repent of his sins, confess Jesus Christ, and he or she is baptized for the purpose of remission of sins. The church has her officers or leaders. They are who are the elders, who oversee the Spiritual matters of the church, deacons; these are servants of the church who work under the oversight of the elders. "Ministries" are churches that are in their formative stage. At the beginning they don't call them churches rather ministries so that it will sound palatable and they will get the attention of people through miracles which they will claim to be performing. By implication any church that does not have her starting place in Jerusalem and also not started on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is manmade. Churches that have one man as a pastor are also manmade churches because according to the Bible there must be plurality of elders or pastors over a local congregation or Church.

Keywords: Bible, Church, Ministry, Prophecy

Introduction

The church of the living God was in prophecy; there was nothing of God that came into existence without the foreknowledge and the divine preparation of the God of Heaven towards that. Nothing has ever taken God an aware but all things happen according to His perfect plans. The modern-day ministries are human initiatives, because their bases are not biblical and under the apostolic examples or direct command.

The Church in Prophecy

The Lord God almighty used His mouthpiece, that is the prophets in the time past to communicate to His people what He was going to do many years to come.

1 Isaiah 2.1 this is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days the mountain

of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many people will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

According to Barry Webb, Isaiah here foresees the day when one holy Mountain will stand supreme, reducing all others to utter insignificance. In this sense Isaiah's vision is exclusive. It is also inclusive, however, because it envisages all nations and many people are coming to Zion to share with Israel in the blessing of the Lord's rule. Finally, it is a vision of universal peace, described in terms which have reverberated down through the centuries. The mountain of the Lord then is a

symbol of the coming kingdom of God, in which a purified and restored Zion is destined to play a crucial role. And Isaiah summons his contemporaries to live now in the light of that glorious prospect (46).

In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands — a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces (Daniel 2 .44, 45).

"The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy." While commenting in Daniel 2.44 Cloer states that

The church is God's eternal kingdom on earth. It is not fleeting or temporary, it is stable unshakable, and everlasting. Daniel prophesied that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed. When Gabriel revealed to Mary that she would be the earthly mother of the Messiah, he mentioned the eternal quality of the kingdom over which the Messiah reign; he will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end (35).

Wayne Jackson states that the reference is not to a, "temple," supposedly constructed for the, "millennial reign" of Christ, as some religionists allege. Rather, the oracle concerns the establishment of the Lord's church under the figure of the, "house" of God. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-church-700486> 22/1/2019.

In the New Testament, the Church is referred to as the, "household of God" and as, "a holy temple" for the Lord's habitation (Eph. 2:19-22). Elsewhere Paul declared that, "men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God" (1 Tim. 3:15).

Petrillo states that since the house is not a building, we understand that Paul is saying how one must conduct himself with the other members of God's family. This also is the reason why elders cannot delegate authority to the women of the Church. It is God's house, and He is the authority figure. Elders can only do that which they are authorized to do in the Scriptures (49).

Peter also described the church as, "a spiritual house" wherein God is now served (1 Pet. 2:5). <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-church-700486> 22/1/2019

David R. Reagan states that

Some theologians take the position that the Church is not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. This is both right and wrong. It is correct that there is no specific mention of the Church. But, on the other hand, the Church is certainly intimated in a number of prophecies in the Old Testament. The Apostle Paul referred to five of these prophetic passages in Romans 15 where he justified his preaching of the Gospel to Gentiles. He specifically quoted:

1. 2 Samuel 22.50 and Psalm 18.49 — both of which speak of a time when God will be praised among the Gentiles Romans 15.9.
2. Deuteronomy 32.43 — which says a time will come when Gentiles will rejoice with the Jews Romans 15.10.
3. Psalm 117.1 — which says there will be a day when the Gentiles will praise the God of the Jews Romans 15.11.

4. Isaiah 11.10 — which says when the Messiah comes (“the root of Jesse”), Gentiles will find hope in Him Romans 15.12.
5. Isaiah 52.15 — which says that one day the Gentiles will come to know and understand the Messiah Romans 15.21.

And these are only a few of the Old Testament prophecies about the future inclusion of Gentiles into God’s Plan for the Ages. Isaiah 42.1 says the Messiah will bring, “justice to the nations (Gentiles)” A few verses later, Isaiah proclaims that the Messiah will be, “a light to the nations (Gentiles)” Isaiah 42.6). Isaiah repeats this prophecy in Chapter 49 where he quotes God as saying that He will make the Messiah “a light to the nations [Gentiles] so that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth” Isaiah 49.6b). (<https://youtube.com/watch?v=Z9gc6Wr7cV4>) 20/1/2019

This is a special kind of prophecy that both Jews and Gentiles will be brought under one umbrella so that any kind of difference between the Jews and the Gentiles will no longer exist but will be completely eradicated among the people of God. Although it was always possible for Gentiles to be saved during Old Testament times by responding to the Creator in faith Joel 2.32 and Romans 2.14-15, their specific inclusion in God’s Plan for the Ages did not occur until the Day of Pentecost in about A.D 30 This was when the Church was established. The Apostle Peter preached the first Gospel sermon Acts 2.14-36), and three thousand souls responded.

It is true that all of these were Jews. It is true that the Church began with Jewish people responding to a Jewish message about a Jewish Messiah. And thus, the Church began as what appeared to be a Jewish sect. But within a few years of its establishment, the

Church was opened up to Gentiles in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

This began when the Apostle Peter was given a vision by God that made it clear that Gentiles were to be included in the Church (Acts 10.9-15). That same day, Peter was summoned to Caesarea Maritime to preach to a Roman soldier named Cornelius (Acts 10.19-22). When Peter shared the good news of salvation with this soldier, he and his entire household received Jesus as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit fell on them, and they were baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 10.34-48). This turning-point event caused a crisis in the Church. Some questioned whether or not pagan Gentiles should be included. Others argued that if they were to be included, they must be required to submit to circumcision and the laws of the Torah.

Where Was the Church to Be Established?

The prophets indicate that the location was to be in Jerusalem, which is where the apostles were when they proclaimed the facts of the gospel, and a multitude obeyed the truth (Lk. 24:47-49; Acts 1:4-5; 2:1ff). Cloer states

Many people are of the opinion that it does not matter where the church was established since they are calling upon the name of Jesus Christ the Lord God will accept them on the last day. In response I noted that Isaiah declared that the “foundation” of the Lord’s house was to be laid in “Zion,” i.e., Jerusalem (Isa. 28:16). I further observed that it would be something of an oddity for a builder to lay the foundation in one place (Jerusalem) and then erect the superstructure elsewhere (Galilee). The “Galilee” theory creates a difficulty for the biblical symbolism (21).

Exactly Who Is to Enter into, the “House of God”?

To say the same thing in another way, who is to constitute the church? Under the Old Testament economy, only priestly Jews could enter the “house of God.” Gentiles were restricted to the “court of the Gentiles,” an outer region of the temple compound. Separating the “court of the Gentiles” from the sacred enclosure was a stone wall about four and one-half feet high. Upon it was written a warning, in Greek and Latin, that no Gentile should proceed beyond the barrier upon the penalty of death. Paul, symbolically alluding to this wall, called the Law of Moses, a “middle wall of partition” that separated the Jews and the Gentiles (Eph. 2:14). By way of contrast, Isaiah indicated that “all nations would flow unto” the new house of God. This refers to the fact that the Church would be opened to both Jews and Gentiles. Any movement which seeks to nationalize access to God is wrong.

How can One Be a Member of this House or Church?

First, he must exercise the personal initiative to know the will of God. Those who aspire to salvation exercise personal initiative, saying: “Come ye, let us go.” One needs not wait for some compelling operation of the Spirit which will mysteriously sweep him or her into union with God; that will not happen. Rather, conversion occurs by allowing the Lord to “teach us of His ways.” The way others that were before us became members of this Church is this:

HEARING

Becoming a member of the Church that was prophesied is not by dreaming or having vision like some had in the New Testament time. Peter saw a vision which directed him to

the house of Cornelius and Peter was not willing to go because Cornelius was a Gentile while Peter was a Jew. The Lord had to explain to Peter that He has called the Gentiles into a relationship also (Acts 10). Some had waited for direct descending of the Holy Spirit as it happened on the Pentecost day. By hearing means someone must take the pain of teaching the gospel and the hearer must listen, as instructed in the Great Commission in (Matthew 28:18-20). “Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” It therefore means that one must be ready and also willing to obey Roman 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ. 18 But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course, they did: “Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

First, he must exercise the personal initiative to know the will of God. Those who aspire to salvation exercise personal initiative, saying: “Come ye, let us go.” Someone needs not to wait for some compelling operation of the Spirit which will mysteriously sweep him or her into union with God; that will not happen. Rather, conversion occurs by allowing the Lord to “teach us of his ways.” The Lord is using people today to preach to anyone that is willing.

Christ declared: “And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes unto me” (Jn. 6:45). The Christian Way is a taught and learned religion, and those who are not willing to invest the time and energy to investigate the claims of this divine system, will not be able

to access the spiritual blessings provided by God.

BELIEVING

In the Great Commission that Jesus gave in the book of Matthew 28:18 "Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Mark 16:15, He said to them, "Go into the entire world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

While commenting on verse 19, Ryle states that, "they were not to confine their knowledge to themselves but communicate it to others. They were not to suppose that salvation was revealed only to the Jews, but to make it known to the entire world. They were to strive to make disciples of all nations and to tell the whole earth that Christ had died for their sinners" (380). It is not believing whatever anyone wants to believe but whatever God wants you to believe, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He died and resurrected for the sins of the world and that only through Him is salvation found.

This kind of belief should seriously be different from what is found in the book of James 2:19 which states that you believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder. It is the belief that goes with action to show the evidence of the faith. Acts 19:13 says some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I

command you to come out." Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. [One day] the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

REPENTANCE

"There are three Greek words used in the New Testament to denote repentance. (1.) The verb *metamelomai* is used of a change of mind, such as to produce regret or even remorse on account of sin, but not necessarily a change of heart. This word is used with reference to the repentance of Judas (Matt 27:3). (2.) *Metanoeo*, meaning to change one's mind and purpose, as the result of after knowledge. This verb, with (3) the cognate noun *metanoia*, is used of true repentance, a change of mind and purpose and life, to which remission of sin is promised. Evangelical repentance consists of (1) a true sense of one's own guilt and sinfulness; (2) an apprehension of God's mercy in Christ; (3) an actual hatred of sin (Ps 119:128; Job 42:5,6; 2 Cor 7:10) and turning from it to God; and (4) a persistent endeavor after a holy life in a walking with God in the way of his commandments". *Easton Bible Dictionary* Pc study bible V5

The true penitent is conscious of guilt (Ps 51:4, 9), of pollution (51:5, 7, 10), and of helplessness (51:11; 109:21, 22). Thus, he apprehends himself to be just what God has always seen him to be and declares him to be. But repentance comprehends not only such a sense of sin, but also an apprehension of mercy, without which there can be no true repentance (Ps 51:1; 130:4).

It means someone turning away from something that is not right, it could be behavior or attitudes. Yet in this case it is

turning away from sin. Thus, evil practices that someone engages in that are not in accordance with the will of God must be stop. That is doing a U-turn. Some common sins are as follows, sin of fornication, stealing fighting, lying and many others are not mention here Galatians 5. 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

CONFESSING

Those who are willing to be part of this kingdom the Church must be willing also to publicly confess Jesus. Matthew 10. 32 "Therefore everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven "But whoever denies me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. The act of confession has to do with one in the public telling the world that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

BAPTISM

Christ declared: "And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes unto me" (Jn. 6:45). The Christian Way is a taught and learned religion, and those who are not willing to invest their time and energy to investigate the claims of this divine system, will not be able to access the spiritual blessings provided by God.

Baptism in the New Testament in the Greek usage is Baptizo which is to immerse completely into the water. Matthew 3 .16, 17, as soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." In this passage the Bible clearly states that immediately when Jesus came out of the water which was river Jordan where His baptism took place, it was a big body of water that even John and Jesus Christ went down into it that was why the statement "when they came out of the water".

Acts 8 .37" As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized? And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing". The implication of these two passages is that true biblical baptism excludes pouring as way of baptism,

Church or Ministries

Jesus promised to establish His own Church. The place was stated which is Jerusalem and it actually began there. So, any church or ministry that has its roots anywhere apart from Jerusalem and it was not started on the Pentecost day is not part of the original Church.

Any church that has humans as her source of authority or founders has gone beyond what the word of God has instructed. 2 John 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the

Father and the Son. After all the anti-Christ's will come in the name of Christ and they will deceive many. They will take the captive by the use of smooth talk.

Christ is the head of his Church He lives in the headquarters of the Church (Phi 3.20). As far as ministries are concern, they are churches in their formative stages. From the beginning the ministries will be meeting for the purposes of Bible studies, prayers meeting, evangelism, healing and some kind of divine encounters and other activities like singing practice. By the time they have enough membership that is when they will roll out their strategies, making some pastors, some deacons, and some elders. And the man who brought out the ideas will be made the general overseer, with full authority to command other people, and spell out how the finances of the church will be manage.

Denominationalism started in the days of the apostle 1Corinthians 1.10-10 "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? When the members of the church at Corinth were divided somehow Paul condemns their attitudes. In the words of Jackson

'Here is specified the need to speak the same thing, thus making it possible that there be no division among the saints. Division is a parting, a cleft, and disunity, whereas God demands unity and that we, in God, pursue the unity taught by the Spirit (Ephesians 4.3) (5).

The Leadership Structure of the Church

Just like any society of the world be it family, school, market, industry or factory, village or city for it to function normal or according to plans of the society, there must be leaders. In case of the village there must be the village head, while in schools the head teacher or the principal of the school, while for markets they also have their authority in place for the smooth running of the market.

The Church of God too has some officers who run the affairs of the Church as the owner of the Church has ordained. Therefore, a local Church without qualify leaders is lacking in that aspect but not to say that they will not go to heaven but something is fundamentally wrong with that structure. Therefore, God expect churches of Christ to ordain men to the offices once they are qualified of leadership position. As it is said that when the qualified men refuse to work for God the unqualified will definitely be ordained and they will instead kill the church for the owner.

God's Commands on Leadership

Titus 1.5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. 6 An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. 7 Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless — not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. 8 Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. 9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound

doctrine and refute those who oppose it. Since it is the Lord's command that elders or bishops are to be appointed in every church of the living God, there are also requirements that must be met by people who will be willing to be ordained as elders and deacons a local of the church. People are picked from just among the congregation but they must fit into a criterion mentioned in verses 6 -9 of the above text.

There must be a group of people not just one person been a pastor or founder of a church. And one man being the general overseer and others working under him is not in the Bible. Human being doesn't have the right to go.

Conclusion

It is true that God almighty had a plan for the establishment of His body the Church. Therefore, after the establishment of the Church, humanity must comply with the terms and conditions of admission into the Church. The leadership must be as it is prescribed by the owner of the Church. The followers of Christ must be aware of wolves in sheep clothing's. It is one body, one head, and one God over all. Ministries are manmade organizations and they are churches in their formative stages.

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