

Great Stories of the Bible— 08/14/22

The Birth of the Church

TEXT - Matthew 16:18 *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Matthew 18:17 *And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*

Acts 2:47 . . . *the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*

INTRO – The church is unique in the history of the world. There have been different dispensations that God met with people in different ways. Starting with Moses, the nation of Israel worshipped God through an assembly of priests and a tabernacle in the wilderness and a temple in Jerusalem. They were a special people and they were to be a testimony to the surrounding nations that they worshipped the one true God.

I. What is the Church?

There are main line denominations, associations, fellowships, diocese, independent, Pentecostal, catholic, and protestant churches.

But a true church contains born again believers. It is not a building.

Assembly - ekklesia from ek, "out of," and kaleo, "to call"

The church is an assembly of baptized believers covenanted together to carry out the great commission.

There are contemporary, Liberal, fundamental, and progressive. But the Bible teaches us what a church should be.

A. Called out of the world. *The church is different than the world*

1. Heart attitude is changed
2. Entertainment has changed
3. Music and dress has changed
4. Friends has changed

The church is distinctively different than the world. A Christian that looks and acts like the world is called a worldly Christian.

The church is by definition is "called out of the world."

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

Titus 2:11-12 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*

B. Built upon Christ and the Apostles

Ephesians 2:20 *And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;*

- He is building His church through believers

Matthew 16:18 *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

C. It is a local New Testament church

The church at Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus etc.

II. Authority of the Church

A. The authority of the Apostles

2 Peter 3:2-3 *That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

B. The authority of the prophets

Ephesians 4:11-12 *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

C. The authority of the pastors

1. Feed the flock

Acts 20:28-29 *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

2. Protect the flock

1 Peter 5:1-4 *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

3. Correct the flock

4. Heal the flock

5. Lead the flock

6. Be an example to the flock

7. Pray for the flock

8. He must not lord over the flock

9. He must not make money his primary goal

The Perfect Pastor

1. The perfect pastor's been found who'll please everyone.
 2. He preaches exactly 20 minutes and then sits down.
 3. He condemns sin, but never steps on anybody's toes.
 4. He works from 8 in the morning to 10 at night, doing everything from preaching sermons to sweeping.
 5. He makes \$400 per week, gives \$100 a week to the church, drives a late model car, buys lots of books, wears fine clothes, and has a nice family.
 6. He always stands ready to contribute to every other good cause.
 7. He is 36 years old, and has been preaching 40 years.
 8. He is tall on the short side, heavy-set in a thin sort of way, and handsome.
 9. He has one blue eye and one brown, He wears his hair parted in the middle - left side, dark and straight, right side, brown and wavy.
 10. He has a burning desire to work with the youth, and spends all his time with the senior citizens.
 11. He smiles all the time while keeping a straight face, because he has a keen sense of humor that finds him seriously dedicated.
 12. He makes 15 calls a day on church members, spends all his time evangelizing non-members, and is always found in his study if he is needed.
- Unfortunately, he burnt himself out and died at the age of 32.

III. The Marks of a Biblical Church

Are you looking for the perfect church? A "perfect" church would be filled with perfect people who are all living perfect lives, doing everything right, never hurting each other's feelings, never needing to ask for forgiveness, always knowing exactly how you feel. If you are looking for the perfect church, you can quit looking. You won't find it. It doesn't exist.

NO PERFECT CHURCH

I think that I shall never see
A church that's all it ought to be;
A church whose members never stray
Beyond the strait and narrow way;
A church that has no empty pews,
Where all the people pay their dues;
A church whose members always sing
And flock to church when bells do ring.
Such perfect churches there may be,
But none of them are known to me.
But still we'll work and pray and plan
To make our own the best we can.

The churches of Asia Minor

- (1) **Ephesus** (Rev. 2:1-7) - the church that had forsaken its first love (2:4).
- (2) **Smyrna** (Rev. 2:8-11) - the church that would suffer persecution (2:10).
- (3) **Pergamum** (Rev. 2:12-17) - the church that needed to repent (2:16).
- (4) **Thyatira** (Rev. 2:18-29) - the church that had a false prophetess (2:20).
- (5) **Sardis** (Rev. 3:1-6) - the church that had fallen asleep (3:2).
- (6) **Philadelphia** (Rev. 3:7-13) - the church that had endured patiently (3:10).
- (7) **Laodicea** (Rev. 3:14-22) - the church with the lukewarm faith (3:16).

IV. The Benefit of the Church

A. Preaching of the gospel

B. Christians edified

Romans 14:19 *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

Ephesians 4:16 *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

C. God is glorified

Three ways by which Scripture calls us to glorify God —faith, worship, and humble service—

CONCL – Our Relationship To the Church

A. Attend it

Hebrews 10:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

B. Place our lives and family under its authority

C. Propagate it

1. **Preach the gospel**
2. **Follow the leadership**
3. **Support it by prayers and giving**
4. **Be an example to others**

D. Live a consecrated life

1Ti 3:15 *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*