

The Lord's One Church

By Ron Boatwright

Daniel in interpreting King Nebuchadnezzar's dream concerning the fourth kingdom which was to be the Roman Empire said, "And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed...and it shall stand forever" (Daniel 2:44). The Lord's kingdom or church was to be established during the time of the Roman Empire .

Another Old Testament prophecy concerning the establishment of the Lord's church is Isaiah 2:2-3. "Now it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem ." What is the Lord's house that was to be established? Paul writes to Timothy, "but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). So the Lord's house that was to be established in the last days was the Lord's church. When did the last days occur?

Peter described what was happening on Pentecost of Acts 2:16-17 as the last days when he said, "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God'". The Day of Pentecost of Acts chapter 2 was the beginning of the last days or the Christian dispensation.

After Jesus was baptized we read, "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17) and when Jesus sent His apostles out on the limited commission He told them, "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Matthew 10:7). The Lord's kingdom or church was at hand or soon to be established.

When Jesus asked His apostles, ""But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:15-16). In response to Peter's confession, Jesus then said, "On this rock I will build My church" (Matthew 16:18). Notice Jesus says, "I will build My church". The word "My" is a possessive pronoun, which shows that

the church belongs to Jesus. Also notice that the word “church” is singular, in that he only promised to build His one church. He did not promise to build any of the many denominational churches with their differing creeds, doctrines, and worship. If the Lord didn’t build any of the differing denominational churches we have today, then who built them? Men did. We read in Psalms 127:1, “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who built it”. Also Jesus says in Mark 7:7, “And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” If something is vain it is empty, worthless, or useless and does one no good. I would not want to be a part of a church where my labor and worship was in vain.

In Mark 9:1 Jesus is teaching, “And He said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power’”. Notice that the kingdom or church was to “come with power”. Later Jesus told His apostles to “tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Then He tells them, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” (Acts 1:8). Here we see that the Lord’s kingdom or church was to come with power and the power was to come when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles.

Next in Acts 1:26-2:4 we see the power and the Holy Spirit coming on the apostles. After Matthias was selected to replace Judas, “And he was numbered with the eleven apostles. When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” “Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles” (Acts 2:43).

The Lord’s kingdom or church was to come with power and the power was to come when the Holy Spirit came on the apostles. So we have seen that both the power and the Holy Spirit came on the apostles on the Day of Pentecost of Acts chapter 2, so the Lord’s kingdom or church came on that day. Peter on the Day of Pentecost was asked, “Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them...And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:37-38, 41, 47).

On the Day of Pentecost of Acts chapter 2 the Lord started adding saved people to His newly established church. The Lord only adds the saved to His church. There are not unsaved people in His church. How does one become saved so he can be added to the Lord's one true church? Jesus says, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). One need help to misunderstand this. Many people laugh and scoff at what the Lord says one must do to be saved, but their laughing will cause them to be lost. Any church that had its beginning before Pentecost of Acts chapter 2 is too early to be the Lord's church. The many different churches that had their beginning down through the ages after Pentecost of Acts chapter 2 are too late and cannot be the Lord's one true church.

The Lord only established His one church. Ephesians 4:4-6 says, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all". There is only one God even though there are many false gods. There is only one body. What is this one body? We read in Ephesians 1:22-23 concerning Christ that He is the "head over all things to the church, which is His body". Since there is only one body and the body is the church, then there is only one church that belongs to Christ. But just as there are many false gods there are many false bodies or churches. Jesus is "the Saviour of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). Jesus is only going to save His one body, which is His one church. The Lord will not be saving anyone in the many churches that men have established.

Most of the denominational churches were established by men in the past 300-400 years. They are all false churches. Even by their names they don't even claim to be the Lord's one true church. Their names give glory to men such as Martin Luther, places such as Rome, races of people such as Greeks and Russians, days such as Pentecost and the Sabbath, the methodical way of doing things, the apostles, baptism, rocks, the Greek word EPISKOPOS meaning overseer, the Greek word PRESBUTEROS meaning elder, etc. But no glory is given to the Lord. Are they ashamed of Jesus? Jesus says, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the Holy angels" (Mark 8:38). Those of whom the Lord is ashamed will be lost.

Christ only established His one church, the only one that claims to be His. The apostle Paul in writing to the congregation of the Lord's church at Rome while on his third missionary journey and having been in a number of different cities where he had helped to establish congregations of the Lord's

church says, "The churches of Christ greet you" (Romans 16:16). As we have seen from the scriptures, Christ only established His one church, the church of Christ on the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 in 33 AD. If you are not in the Lord's church, please don't wait until the Day of Judgment to find out what you have been doing is vain. Jesus says in Matthew 7:22-23, "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' "I never knew you" is the worse thing that will ever be said to an individual. If a person is lost in Hell he will only have himself to blame.