

DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

With Bryan E.W. Davis

I. INTRODUCTION

This class is a study of the local church in the light of its New Testament origin and pattern. We will carefully consider the mission, structure, governance, function and ministries of the local church as seen in the Scriptures.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. To delineate a theology of the local church.
- B. To show the priority of the local church in God's eternal plan.
- C. To describe the plan and pattern of the New Testament local church.
- D. To give practical instruction concerning local church life and ministry.
- E. To discuss the role of the local church in the 21st century.

III. SUGGESTED READING MATERIAL

- A. The Local Church Today by Bill Scheidler
- B. The Gate Church by Dr. Frank Damazio
- C. Why We Love the Church by Kevin DeYoung & Ted Kluck
- D. The Church in the New Testament by Kevin Conner

IV. ONLINE CLASSROOM PROTOCOL

This is a classroom environment where learning and participation are expected. The following simple protocols are in place to promote a learning environment.

1. Each person should log on to the classroom 3-4 minutes before the start of the class time.
2. Once class starts all participants are to have their audio on MUTE and must remain on MUTE for the duration of the class.
3. If you have a question you can hit the RAISE HAND button on Zoom. The teacher will then address your question at the appropriate time. Alternatively, you can also type a question in the chat box.
4. All fill-ins for the blanks are at the end of your notes. Do not ask the teacher to go back and repeat an answer for a blank you may have missed. It is okay to ask for clarity on a point, but fill-ins are provided in the appendix so the class can keep moving.

DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH // CHAPTER ONE

I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, there has been significant debate as to the definition and importance of the local church. Some have tried to downplay the importance of the church and others have sought to redefine the role and function of the church with new models and methodologies. Without a proper biblical foundation for the church, we can easily be swayed by the winds of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14) and what is current in our culture.

The church is more than a sociological phenomenon, it is a divinely established institution! From the very beginning, God dreamt of the church being His divine instrument to fulfill his eternal plan and purpose on planet earth. Understanding what God says about the church should be the single most important shaping ingredient to 'why' we exist, 'what' we believe about church and consequently 'how' we do church.

II. DEFINING TERMS

- A. **EKKLESIA** = called out ones ; an assembly
- B. **ECCLESIOLOGY** = study of the church

III. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

"Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, 9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. 10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord." Ephesians 3:8-11 (NIV)

- A. **THE MYSTERY OF GOD** - Jeremiah 33:3 ; Ephesians 1:9, 3:9, 5:32

The mystery of the church was kept hidden in ages past but is now revealed through Jesus Christ and the people of God.

- 1. Mysteries in the Bible
 - a. The mystery of the kingdom - Matthew 13:11, Mark 4:11, Luke 8:10

- b. The mystery of iniquity - 2 Thessalonians 2:7
- c. The mystery of godliness - 1 Timothy 3:15-16
- d. The mystery of faith - 1 Timothy 3:9
- e. The mystery of translation - 1 Corinthians 15:51
- f. The mystery of the seven stars - Revelation 1:20
- g. The mystery of the woman-Babylon - Revelation 17:5,7
- h. The mystery of the marriage of Christ & the church - Ephesians 5:32
- i. The mystery of God - Revelation 10:7, Colossians 2:2
- j. The mystery of Christ - Colossians 3:4, 4:3
- k. The mystery of the Gospel - Ephesians 6:19
- l. The mystery of His will - Ephesians 1:9-10
- m. The mystery - Ephesians 3:3-4, Romans 16:25, 11:25

B. GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE - Ephesians 1:4 ; 2 Timothy 1:9 ; Titus 1:2

The eternal purpose of God was settled in eternity before the foundation of the world, but is progressively revealed to His people as His eternal plan unfolds in history.

1. PROGRESSION OF THE PURPOSE IN HISTORY

God's purpose for humanity which began in the garden will continue to progress to the end of the age.

- a. Adam
- b. Israel
- c. Jesus Christ
- d. The Church
- e. The return of Christ

C. THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST

In all of God's dealings with man, His desire has never been just for one people or one race only. His purpose and His plan involved the bringing together of all nations into the ONE BODY - the body of Christ.

Here is some of the language used to describe this ONE body of Christ...

- 1. One Body - 1 Corinthians 12:13 ; Ephesians 2:16, 4:4
- 2. Abraham's seed - Galatians 3:27-29

3. Children of Promise - Galatians 4:28
4. Fellow heirs - Ephesians 3:6
5. The New Man - Colossians 3:10-11

IV. WHAT THE CHURCH IS NOT

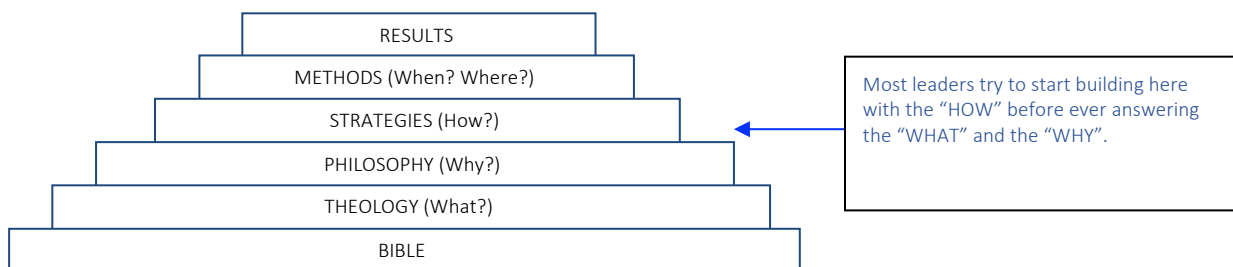
- A. THE CHURCH IS NOT A MATERIAL BUILDING
- B. THE CHURCH IS NOT A DENOMINATION
- C. THE CHURCH IS NOT A NATIONALISTIC ENTERPRISE
- D. THE CHURCH IS NOT JUDAISM EXTENDED
- E. THE CHURCH IS NOT THE KINGDOM OF GOD
- F. THE CHURCH IS NOT A PARENTHETICAL PLAN OF GOD

V. THE IMPORTANCE OF PATTERN

Before any contractor builds a home, there is a great amount of planning and preparation. The level of preparation determines the quality of the end product. Once the plan is developed, great care must go into the entire process to make sure that all people involved in the building project adhere to the master plan. Any variations can be catastrophic!

When it comes to the church, God has a definite plan and purpose for His Bride. From Genesis to Revelation He has laid out a biblical blueprint as to how His church should be built. It isn't up to any leader to decide how and what the church is supposed to be. We have an obligation to build what has already been designed by God. As leaders of the church in the 21st century, we must study the pattern and build accordingly. Paul exhorts us to "take heed how we build," (1 Corinthians 3:9-10). God can only place his blessing upon that which is built according to His pattern.

A. THE RIGHT FOUNDATION



B. OLD TESTAMENT BIBLICAL PATTERNS

All Old Testament divinely originated structures were models and types fulfilled in Christ and revealed in and through the New Testament Church.

1. THE ARK OF NOAH - Genesis 6:14-22
2. THE SACRIFICIAL ALTARS - Exodus 20:24-26
3. THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES - Exodus 25-40
4. THE NATION OF ISRAEL - Acts 7:38
5. THE SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS - Leviticus 1-7 ; Numbers 19
6. THE FEASTS OF THE LORD - Leviticus 23 ; Deuteronomy 12, 16 ; Numbers 28,29
7. THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID - 1 Chronicles 15-16 ; 2 Samuel 6
8. THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON - 1 Chronicles 28-29 ; 2 Chronicles 1-5 ; 5:13-14
9. THE TEMPLE VISION OF EZEKIEL - Ezekiel 40-48
10. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

C. OLD TESTAMENT CONNECTION

God has only ever had one purpose to which he is building. He is gathering his "called out ones" both in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

TERM USED	OT ISRAEL	NT CHURCH
A chosen people	Deuteronomy 10:15	1 Peter 2:9
A holy nation	Exodus 19:6	1 Peter 2:9
The people of God	Psalms 100:3	2 Corinthians 6:16
A priesthood	Exodus 19:6	1 Peter 2:9
God's treasure	Exodus 19:5	Matthew 13:44
The Bride or wife	Isaiah 54:6 ; 62:5	2 Corinthians 11:2-3
God's vineyard	Isaiah 5:7	Matthew 20:1 ; 1 Cor. 3:9
God's inheritance	Isaiah 19:25	1 Peter 5:3
Israel	Isaiah 44:6	Galatians 6:16
God's flock	Jeremiah 23:3	1 Peter 5:2

A house	Ezekiel 18:31	1 Timothy 3:15
A light	Isaiah 60:1,3	Matthew 5:14
God's witness	Isaiah 43:10	Acts 1:8
A church	Acts 7:38	Galatians 1:13