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Basic Theology for Disciples (Part Two)

Introduction: We are indebted to the *Ekklesia Institute* for the basic design and content of these lessons. They were originally published in two volumes as *Biblical Foundations for Living* written by the following pastors: Ken Brown, Mark Buhr, Steve Thomas, and Scott Williquette. We have made some modifications for our situation here at Calvary.

Part Two: Why am I Here?

Section Six: The Purpose of the Church. *I am here to bring glory to God through the ministry of His Word.*

Lesson Twenty-Two: The Place of the Church in History

1) The Nature of History

- a) History has a unified plan (Is. 46:9-11)
 - i) History is the outworking of God's will
 - ii) History is already established in the mind of God
- b) History has an ultimate goal
 - i) Events of history are moving in a planned and orderly fashion toward an established goal (Eph. 1:9-10)
 - ii) The goal of history is the kingdom of Christ (see lesson # 33)
- c) History has a singular purpose
 - i) The universe is to bring glory to God (Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16)
 - ii) All activities of men are to bring glory to God (1 Cor. 10:31)
 - iii) The work of salvation is to bring glory to God (Eph. 1:5-6; Rev. 5:12)

2) The Development of History

- a) History has been managed by God through dispensations
 - i) The meaning of the term "dispensation"
 - (1) A description of a dispensation (cf. Luke 12:42-48)
 - (a) It is an arrangement between two parties
 - (b) The steward is given responsibilities
 - (c) The steward is held accountable
 - (d) Changes can be made in the arrangement
 - (2) The working definition of a dispensation
 - "A dispensation is a stewardship arrangement in which God reveals His will to men who are then responsible for obedience to that revelation."
 - ii) The relationship between God's revelation and dispensations
 - (1) God's will has been revealed progressively (Heb. 1:1)
 - (2) God's revealed will has contained both eternal principles and temporary programs (Heb. 10:1-2)
- b) The Bible reveals several dispensations in history
 - o Since the revelation in each dispensation is built upon previous revelation, the relationship can be visualized:

Dispensation of THE KINGDOM Initiated at Christ's Return
Dispensation of THE CHURCH Initiated at Pentecost
Dispensation of LAW Initiated with Moses
Dispensation of PROMISE Initiated with Abraham
Dispensation of CIVIL GOVERNMENT Initiated with Noah
Dispensation of CONSCIENCE Initiated after the Fall
Dispensation of INNOCENCE Initiated with Adam and Eve in Eden

3) The Current Age of History

- a) The meaning of "church" (*ekklesia*)
 - i) In general use, the term referred to a "called out body" or an "assembly."
 - ii) In technical use, the NT applied the term to believers in this age
 - (1) Some say there is a universal church, referring to all believers (1 Cor. 12:13) (see lesson # 23)
 - (2) It can refer to a local assembly of believers (the local church) (1 Cor. 1:2) (see lesson # 24)
- b) The time of the church
 - i) The church was not foreseen in the OT (Eph. 3:4-6, 10)
 - ii) The church began on the day of Pentecost (Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:1-4)
- c) The purpose of the church (Eph. 3:21)
 - i) The church glorifies God as the guardian of truth (1 Tim. 3:15)
 - ii) The church glorifies God by fulfilling its mission to pass on the truth to future generations (2 Tim. 2:2)
 - iii) The purpose of the church is to glory God through the ministry of the Word.

4) Learning To Live It

- a) A guest speaker in your church preaches a sermon from Psalm 126:5-6 entitled, "The Mission of the Church."
 - i) What fundamental error has been made in the interpretation of the passage?
- b) A church in your community plans an evangelistic conference. In order to appeal to the community, the guests include a rock and roll band and a magician who performs a stunning act. In addition, a new car is to be given away to the church member who brings the most visitors. When you question the wisdom in planning such an outlandish event, the pastor replies, "Our purpose is to get the gospel to as many people as possible. These methods are good because they get the job done!"
 - i) What does the pastor's statement reveal about his view of the church?
 - ii) How do the methods used in this meeting fail to reflect the true purpose of the church?

Lesson Twenty-Three: The Role of the Church as the Body of Christ

1) The Time of the body of Christ

- a) The church is distinct from Israel because of its origin
 - i) The origin of Israel (Gen. 12:1-2)
 - ii) The origin of the church (Acts 2:1-4)
- b) The church is distinct from Israel because of its mission
 - i) The mission of Israel (Exod. 19:6)
 - ii) The mission of the church (Matt. 28:18-20)
- c) The church is distinct from Israel because of its destiny
 - i) The destiny of Israel (Gen. 17:7-8; 2 Sam. 7:11-12, 16)
 - ii) The destiny of the church (Rev. 19:6-7)

2) The Scope of the body of Christ: It is universal

- a) It is universal because of its composition
 - i) The church is a body of which Christ is the Head (Col. 1:18)
 - ii) The church is a building of which Christ is the Cornerstone (Eph. 2:19-21)
 - iii) The church is a bride of whom Christ is the Bridegroom (Rev. 19:7)
 - iv) The church is a flock of which Christ is the Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:2-4)
 - v) The church is the branches of which Christ is the Vine (John 15:5)
- b) It is universal because of its objectives (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - i) The church is to pursue the spiritual growth of believers (teaching) (28:20)
 - ii) The church is to evangelize (make disciples) (28:19)
 - iii) The church is to seek world-wide expansion (all nations) (28:19)

3) The Function of the body of Christ

- a) The church is equipped for ministry because of its message (Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:18)
- b) The church is equipped for ministry because of its membership (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)
- c) “The body of Christ is the sum of all believers in this dispensation which has been equipped to carry out the objectives of the great commission for the glory of God.”

4) Learning To Live It

- a) A leading author on the subject of Christian counseling states that a counselor will never have to deal with the issue of demon possession because the church age is the Kingdom of Christ and Satan and his forces are bound during the Kingdom.
 - i) What false assumption has he made about the church?
 - ii) What false assumption has he made about the kingdom?
- b) It has recently come to light that some of the missionaries supported through your church reject basic truths of Scripture. As your congregation contemplates its course of action, a mission agency representative contacts the church to encourage continued support for the missionaries. He says, “We are all part of one body. The only thing that really matters is our agreement on the doctrine of salvation. Therefore, you have an obligation to the body of Christ to continue your support for these missionaries.”
 - i) Assuming that these missionaries are believers, are you all part of the body of Christ?

- ii) Does this mean that you have an obligation for continued support? Why or why not?

Lesson Twenty-Four: The Role of the Church as a Local Assembly

1) The Local Church is an Organizational Structure with Administrative Responsibilities

- a) The early church engaged in ministry planning (Acts 6, 11, 13, 15)
- b) The early church developed procedures for implementation (Acts 6:2-3; 15:22-23)
- c) The early church engaged in program evaluation (Acts 14:27; 15:12)

2) The Local Church is an Organizational Structure with Leadership Offices

- a) The office of Pastor
 - i) The titles for the office (Acts 20:17, 28)
 - (1) He is called the Pastor (shepherd)
 - (2) He is called the Overseer (bishop)
 - (3) He is called the Elder (presbyter)
 - ii) The qualifications for the office (1 Tim. 3:2-7)
 - iii) The responsibilities of the office
 - (1) The pastor is responsible to teach the Word of God (1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:2)
 - (2) The pastor is responsible to equip the congregation to minister (Eph. 4:11-12)
 - (3) The pastor is responsible to govern the congregation (1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17)
- b) The office of deacon
 - i) The title for the office (servant)
 - ii) The qualifications for the office (1 Tim. 3:8-12)
 - iii) The responsibilities of the office (Acts 6:3-4)

3) The Local Church is an Organizational Structure with Specific Ordinances

- a) The nature of an ordinance
 - i) An ordinance is not a sacrament
 - ii) An ordinance is a symbol (1 Cor. 11:23-25)
- b) The description of the ordinances
 - i) The ordinance of baptism
 - (1) The mode of baptism is immersion (Acts 8:38-39)
 - (2) The purpose of baptism is identification (Matt. 28:19)
 - ii) The ordinance of the Lord's Supper
 - (1) It is a reminder of the cross work of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26)
 - (2) It is a time of self-examination (1 Cor. 11:28)
- c) The authority for the ordinances
 - i) The command to observe the ordinances lies with the local church
 - (1) The command to observe the ordinances was given to the apostles (1 Cor. 11:23)
 - (2) The ordinances were practiced in the context of the local church in the NT (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:17-34)
 - (3) The early church was responsible to correct improprieties in the observance of the ordinances (1 Cor. 11:17-34)

4) The Local Church is an Organizational Structure with Membership Requirements

- a) Church members are saved (Acts 2:47)
 - i) Church membership is not an option for the genuine believer
 - ii) Church membership cannot be imposed
- b) Church members are baptized by immersion (Acts 2:41)
- c) Church members are growing spiritually (Acts 2:42)
 - i) They were committed to learning doctrine
 - ii) They were committed to unity with other members of the church
 - iii) They were committed to purity in the church
 - iv) They were committed to prayer
- d) Church members serve in the ministry of the church (Eph. 4:11-12)

5) The Local Church is an Organizational Structure with Biblical Limitations

- a) A local church is limited to the objectives of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - i) The spiritual growth of believers (Edification)
 - ii) The salvation of the lost (Evangelism)
 - iii) The spread of the Gospel (Expansion)
- b) The local church is limited by the purpose of the body of Christ
 - i) The activities of the church must display the character of God
 - ii) The activities of the church will focus on the Word of God
 - iii) “The purpose of the local church is to glorify God through the ministry of the Word, whereby believers are edified and the lost are evangelized.”

6) Learning To Live It

- a) One Sunday evening your spouse says, “Let’s not go to church tonight; we aren’t having a service, just a business meeting.”
 - i) What does your spouse think of the importance of business meetings?
 - ii) What biblical principles can you show your spouse regarding the importance of a business meeting?
- b) A co-worker one day brags that his pastor spends fifty hours per week “knocking on doors” for evangelism.
 - i) What does this tell you about that pastor’s view of his primary responsibility?
 - ii) What does this tell you about the pulpit ministry of that pastor?
 - iii) What will you advise your co-worker?

Section Seven: The Objectives of the Church. *I am here to worship God, serve His children, and reach my neighbor.*

Objective One: Spiritual Growth

Lesson Twenty-Five: The Foundation of Spiritual Growth—Education (Eph. 4:12-13)

1) The Nature of Education in the Local Church

- a) Education in the local church is a high priority (Titus 2:1; Acts 2:42)
- b) Education in the local church is Bible-centered
 - i) Bible-centered education involves discipline (2 Tim. 2:15)
 - ii) Bible-centered education is comprehensive (Acts 20:27)
 - iii) Bible-centered education is theological in nature
- c) Education in the local church is relevant (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

2) The Objectives of Education in the Local Church

- a) Education in the local church is designed to produce theological stability (Eph. 4:13-14)
- b) Education in the local church is designed to produce transformed thinking (Eph. 4:22-24; 1 Cor. 2:15)
- c) Education in the local church is designed to produce prepared servants of God (Eph. 4:11-12)

3) The Means of Education in the Local Church

- a) Education in the local church is accomplished through formal instruction
 - i) Teaching involved the authoritative presentation of biblical truth (Col. 1:25, 28)
 - ii) Teaching was a collective activity of the local church (Heb. 10:25)
- b) Education in the local church is accomplished through informal instruction
 - i) Informal instruction takes place through personal relationships (Heb. 10:24-25)
 - ii) Informal instruction takes place through family relationships (Eph. 6:4)
- c) Education in the local church is accomplished through personal study (Acts 17:11; Heb. 5:11-14)

4) The Pupils of Education in the Local Church

- a) All local church members are to be pupils (1 Pet. 2:2)
- b) Suggestions for pupils:
 - i) Believers should be committed to faithful attendance
 - ii) Believers should be committed to daily Bible reading
 - iii) Believers should be committed to regular Bible study
 - iv) Believers should develop the habit of taking notes during church services
 - v) Believers should develop the habit of discussing what they are learning with family members and others
 - vi) Believers should develop the habit of reading biblically sound literature
 - vii) Believers should take advantage of teaching opportunities

5) Learning To Live It

- a) A sign on a church in your community says, “No preaching, just teaching!”
 - i) Evaluate the message that this church is communicating
 - ii) What do they think about preaching?
 - iii) Is such a concept correct?
 - iv) Is there a true distinction between preaching and teaching?
- b) A member of your congregation says, “I don’t study by myself. Our pastor is such a wonderful teacher that he keeps me fed.”
 - i) What do you know about the maturity level of this church member?
 - ii) What will you tell him/her?

Lesson Twenty-Six: The Vertical Expression of Spiritual Growth—Worship

1) The Focus of Worship (intrinsic glory)

- a) True worship is exclusively focused on the character of God (Rev. 5:11-12)
 - i) God is to be worshiped because He is infinite
 - ii) God is to be worshiped because He is holy
- b) True worship is a response to the works of God

- i) God is to be worshiped because He is the Creator
- ii) God is to be worshiped because He is the Sustainer
- c) True worship is inseparably linked to the Word of God (Col. 3:16-17; John 4:24)

2) The Response of Worship (ascriptive glory) (Ps. 29:1-2)

- a) The church worships God with awe-filled praise
 - i) Glory is ascribed to God through the believer's confession of sin (Heb. 9:14; 1 John 1:9)
 - ii) Glory is ascribed to God through the believer's testimony of God's character (2 Thess. 3:1; Acts 13:49-49)
 - iii) Glory is ascribed to God through the believer's prayers (John 14:13; Matt. 6:9-10)
 - iv) Glory is ascribed to God through the believer's songs (Ps. 92:1-3; 100:1-3; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19)
- b) The church worships God through committed obedience (Rom. 12:1-2)
 - i) Glory is ascribed to God when the believer lives to fulfill God's purposes (1 Cor. 10:31; Titus 2:9-10)
 - ii) Glory is ascribed to God when the believer does nothing for personal glory (Matt. 6:1; Is. 48:11)
 - iii) Glory is ascribed to God when the believer obeys even while suffering (1 Pet. 4:14-16; Job 1:20-21; Rom. 8:28; James 1:2-4)
 - iv) Glory is ascribed to God when the believer obeys even when it means sacrifice (Gen. 22:5)
- c) "Worship is all that we are, reacting rightly to all that God is."

3) Learning To Live It

- a) You visit a church where a great musical group is entertaining the audience. Most of the music is long on entertainment and short on biblical content. During the service, the pastor announces that the worship service is so moving, that he has decided not to preach in order to give more time to the music.
 - i) Does the pastor have a proper view of worship? Why or why not?
- b) A friend of yours often speaks of attending a worship service on Sunday. Yet, he has clear areas of disobedience to the Word of God in his life.
 - i) What misconception does he have about worship?
 - ii) What can you teach him about worship to help him change?

Lesson Twenty-Seven: The Horizontal Expression of Spiritual Growth--Fellowship

1) Believers Have Fellowship with God

- a) Fellowship with God is a synonym for salvation
- b) Fellowship with God is evidenced by conformity to His character
 - i) The test of righteousness (1 John 2:29)
 - ii) The test of doctrine (1 John 5:20)
 - iii) The test of love for one another (1 John 4:12)

2) Believers Have Fellowship in the faith

- a) Believers share a partnership to proclaim the Word of God
- b) Believers share a partnership to defend the Word of God
 - i) The believer must not cooperate with those who teach error (2 Cor. 6:14; 2 John 1:10-11; Rom. 16:17-18)

ii) The believer must refute error (Titus 1:9)

3) Believers Have Fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:7)

a) Believers promote unity by their **attitudes** toward one another

i) Believers are to “put off” the following attitudes toward one another:

- (1) Pride (Rom. 12:16)
- (2) Criticism (Rom. 14:13)
- (3) Envy (Gal. 5:26)

ii) Believers are to “put on” the following attitudes toward one another:

- (1) Humility (1 Pet. 5:5)
- (2) Kindness (Eph. 4:32)
- (3) Deference (Phil. 2:3)
- (4) Patience (Eph. 4:2)

b) Believers promote unity by their **speech** with one another (Eph. 4:29)

i) Believers are to “put off” the following kinds of speech:

- (1) Falsehood (Col. 3:9)
- (2) Slander (James 4:11)
- (3) Complaint (James 5:9)

ii) Believers are to “put on” the following kinds of speech:

- (1) Truth (Eph. 4:25)
- (2) Encouragement (1 Thess. 4:18)
- (3) Counsel (Rom. 15:14)

c) Believers promote unity by their **actions** toward one another

i) Believers are to “put off” the following kinds of actions:

- (1) Partiality (Rom. 12:16)
- (2) Retaliation (1 Thess. 5:15)
- (3) Hostility (Gal. 5:15)

ii) Believers are to “put on” the following kinds of actions:

- (1) Service (Gal. 5:13)
- (2) Benevolence (Gal. 6:10; Heb. 13:16; 2 Cor. 8:4)
- (3) Hospitality (1 Pet. 4:9)

d) “True Biblical fellowship requires Biblical attitudes, speech, and actions.”

4) Learning To Live It

a) A woman in your church considers herself to be a good judge of character. Over the years she has turned out to be correct about people most of the time. Her husband often comments that she has a sixth sense in this area. In a conversation on the way home from church one Sunday morning the topic turns to a couple that has recently joined the congregation. She remarks that she has noticed a few things by simple observation that give her cause for concern and warns her husband to be careful.

i) Does the wife’s method of determining character reflect a biblical approach?

ii) If not, what is the problem with her method?

iii) How should she be counseled with regard to her “sixth sense?”

Objective Two: Evangelism

Lesson Twenty-Eight: The Church and Personal Witness

1) The Role of the Local Church in Personal Witness

- a) The local church is the source of personal witness
 - i) The local church has been given the authority to witness (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)
 - ii) The local church provides the personnel to witness (Acts 2:42, 47)
- b) The local church is the means of personal witness
 - i) The local church provides the specialized training (Eph. 4:11-12)
 - ii) The local church maintains personal accountability
 - iii) The local church provides an environment of encouragement (Heb. 10:24-25)
 - iv) The local church provides strength through intercession (2 Thess. 3:1-2)
- c) Local church involvement is the target of personal witness

2) The Method of Personal Witness

- a) Personal witness is primarily relational
 - i) Personal witness is accomplished from a life context (1 Pet. 3:1-2)
 - ii) Personal witness treats people as people (John 4:4-26; 1 Thess. 2:6-12)
- b) Personal witness is message-centered
 - i) True personal witness values content more than technique (1 Cor. 2:1-2, 4-5)
 - ii) True personal witness avoids methods that detract from the message (Rom. 10:17)
 - iii) True personal witness involves a fixed message, but a changing method

3) The Message of Personal Witness

- a) The focus of personal witness
 - i) Genuine personal witness is not man-centered
 - (1) Man-centered witness presents God primarily as a loving friend
 - (a) This minimizes God's authority
 - (2) Man-centered witness views the lost from the standpoint of their needs
 - (a) This minimizes man's sinfulness; man is considered deprived rather than deprived
 - (3) Man-centered witness views Christ primarily as Savior
 - (a) This minimizes Christ's lordship; He is presented as existing for mankind's benefit
 - (4) Man-centered witness stresses the idea that man "accepts" God, and God dutifully responds
 - (a) This minimizes God's grace and sovereignty
 - ii) Genuine personal witness is God-centered
 - (1) God-centered witness shows that God is *primarily* the Creator and sovereign Lord (Acts 17:24-25)
 - (2) God-centered witness presents man as utterly sinful (Acts 17:30-31)
 - (3) God-centered witness emphasizes the life, death, and lordship of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-24, 36)
 - (4) God-centered witness shows belief/repentance as a loving command to be obeyed (Acts 20:21)
- b) The content of personal witness
 - i) Points of emphasis:
 - (1) The fact of God's complete holiness
 - (2) The fact of man's complete sinfulness
 - (3) The fact that salvation is fully based upon God's grace
 - (4) The fact that repentance involves the rejection of and turning from sin

- (5) The fact that the immediate object of saving faith is Christ Jesus, who is both Savior and Lord
- (6) The fact that true salvation will produce a changed life
- ii) A suggested message structure:
 - (1) The character of God (Rom. 9:19-21; Is. 6:1-3; Deut. 32:3-4; Dan. 9:14)
 - (a) He is our Creator; we are responsible to Him
 - (b) He is sovereign; He may do with us as He pleases
 - (c) He is holy; He will not overlook sin
 - (d) He is gracious and loving; He has provided a means for man to be forgiven of sin
 - (2) The character of man (Rom. 3:1-12; Jer. 17:9; Is. 64:6-7)
 - (a) Man was created to reflect the image of the holy God; man marred that image through rebellion; all men continue to reject God
 - (b) Man is incapable of doing anything to please God; anything less than perfection is unacceptable to God
 - (c) Man stands condemned before God; his condemnation has consequences in time and eternity
 - (3) The person and work of Christ (Is. 53:5-6; Mark 10:45; Eph. 1:7; John 1:1)
 - (a) Christ is the God-man; because He is God, He is perfect; because He is man, He can save mankind
 - (b) Christ lived a perfect life; He satisfied God's demands for mankind
 - (c) Christ died a substitutionary death; He was punished for man's sin
 - (d) Christ rose from the dead; He is Lord of the universe and can grant forgiveness to mankind
 - (4) The response to Christ (John 1:12, 16-18; Luke 14:25-33; Rom. 10:9-13)
 - (a) Man must acknowledge his complete wickedness; he is unable to please God
 - (b) Man must repent of his sin; he must change his mind about his sinful way of life and turn from it
 - (c) Man must believe that Christ bore the penalty for his sin; he must acknowledge the Christ died in his place, was buried, and rose again
 - (d) Man must completely submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ; he must recognize that there is a cost to being a believer in Christ

4) The Results of Personal Witness

- a) God is responsible for the results of personal witness (1 Cor. 3:5-7)
- b) The results of personal witness can be recognized
 - i) The initial response
 - A genuine believer will follow through with his commitment to Christ with a three-fold response:
 - (1) Professed faith in Christ
 - (2) Obedience through baptism
 - (3) Local church involvement
 - These do not guarantee the genuineness of someone's salvation, but the absence of these steps calls their conversion into question
 - ii) The continuing evidence (cf. lesson # 27)
 - (1) The belief in orthodox doctrine
 - (2) A righteous lifestyle
 - (3) Love for other Christians

- c) "Personal evangelism is the necessary byproduct of the edification process in the local church."

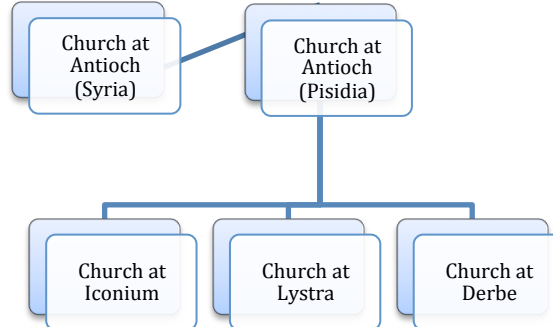
5) Learning To Live It

- a) A popular "how to" book on evangelism states that when you visit someone whom you want to lead to Christ, you *must* begin by complimenting them on their home, children, and so on.
 - i) Why do you suppose the book suggests that you do this?
 - ii) Do you suspect that this approach is message-centered or method-centered?
 - iii) Is it possible that you could find nothing in someone's home that you could compliment?
- b) The same book on evangelism says that it is the evangelist's responsibility to make sure that everyone who hears the gospel is brought to a point of decision; the hearer must either say yes or no to the gospel. If he says no, the evangelist must press him to change his mind.
 - i) According to this technique, who is responsible for the results?
 - ii) Does an unbeliever need to decide to reject the gospel? Why or why not?

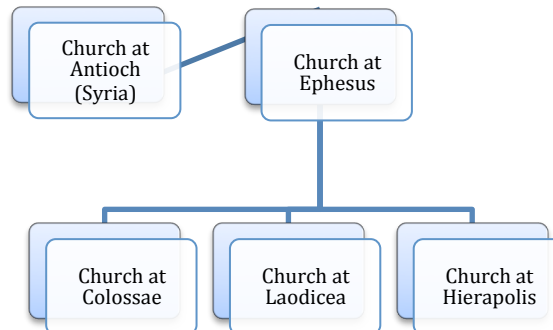
Lesson Twenty-Nine: The Church and Corporate Mission

1) The Goal of Corporate Mission

- a) The corporate mission of the church is to reproduce congregations
 - i) Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)



- ii) Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 16-18)



- b) The corporate mission of the church is to reproduce in kind
 - i) Churches should reproduce doctrinally (Acts 20:27)
 - ii) Churches should reproduce philosophically (1 Tim. 3:14-15)

2) The Scope of Corporate Mission (Acts 1:8)

- a) Corporate mission takes place within the community (Acts 20:20; Col. 4:15)
 - i) Reproduction of congregations maximizes edification
 - ii) Reproduction of congregations conserves resources
- b) Corporate mission takes place beyond the community (2 Cor. 10:15-16)

3) The Priority of Corporate Mission

- a) Corporate Mission is a priority for the congregation
 - i) Corporate mission is not an option for the local church
 - ii) Corporate mission cannot be separated from the other objectives of the Great Commission (lessons # 25-27)
- b) Corporate mission is a priority for the individual believer
- c) "There should never be a missionless church nor a churchless mission."

4) Learning To Live It

- a) Many worthy and needy causes receive mission money from churches: hospitals, famine relief, schools, agricultural training, and so on.
 - i) Do these projects, by themselves, qualify as the mission of the church?
 - ii) Should the church engage in any of these activities? Why or why not?
 - iii) If so, how can they be incorporated into the "big picture?"
- b) A sentiment frequently heard from pulpits is, "There are too many churches here in America. We need to spend our time and resources on foreign missions."
 - i) Is this a legitimate point of view? Why or why not?
- c) A church in your area has an average Sunday morning attendance of 3,000. Of those who attend, 150 are regularly serving in the organizational structure of the church. The rest of those who attend enjoy the services, but are not involved in the ministry.
 - i) Is this church accomplishing the NT objectives for the church? Why or why not?
 - ii) What would you guess is the subject matter of the Sunday sermons at this church?

Objective Three: Expansion

Lesson Thirty: Structure and Expansion

1) Expansion Requires Consistency

- a) The early church was consistent with the commands of the Word of God
 - i) They proclaimed a God-ordained message (Gal. 1:8)
 - ii) They practiced God-ordained methods (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Cor. 5)
- b) The early church was consistent with the principles of the Word of God (Acts 6:1-6)

2) Expansion Requires Planning (Acts 15:1-35; 16:6-10)

3) Expansion Requires Creativity (Acts 6:1-6; 15:1-35)

4) Expansion Requires Cooperation (Acts 15; 1 Thess. 1:7; 4:10)

- a) Missions support
- b) Training institutions
- c) Ordination councils
- d) Pastors' forums
- e) Church planting
- f) Social interaction

5) Expansion Requires Accountability

- a) Accountability within the local church
 - i) Individuals are accountable for matters of belief (Rom. 16:17)
 - ii) Individuals are accountable for matters of lifestyle (2 Thess. 3:6)
- b) Accountability between local churches (Acts 15:1-35; 16:3-4; Col. 4:16)

6) Learning To Live It

- a) A friend of yours visits your church and afterward asks, "Why do you have a piano and organ in the church?" You explain that they assist in the singing of God's praises. Your friend responds, "But you do not find instruments used in the churches of the NT."
 - i) How would you respond?
 - ii) Is music in itself sinful?
 - iii) Does the NT prohibit the use of instruments?
 - iv) How does the use of instruments assist in accomplishing the objectives of the church?
 - v) Do we do anything else that is not specifically found in the NT?
- b) Upon visiting a church for a few Sundays, you find that the pastor has very little knowledge of the Bible, is ill equipped to communicate what he does know, and his life violates the qualifications of a pastor found in 1 Timothy 3. You conclude that this is a man who obviously does not belong in the ministry.
 - i) Who is responsible for placing this man in the pastorate?
 - ii) How could this error be avoided?
 - iii) What could be done through an ordination council to prevent such situations such as this?

Lesson Thirty-One: Stewardship and Expansion

1) The Foundation of Stewardship

- a) God is the Creator and Owner of All things (Ps. 24:1-2)
- b) Mankind does not truly own anything (1 Cor. 4:7)

2) The Profile of a Steward

- a) The office of the steward
 - i) The steward is given a trust (responsibility) by another (Luke 12:42)
 - ii) The steward is to administrate (oversee) that trust (Luke 12:43-44)
 - iii) The steward is accountable for the performance of his task (Luke 12:48)
- b) The resources of the steward (2 Cor. 8:5)
 - i) Believers are stewards of their time (Eph. 5:15-16)
 - ii) Believers are stewards of their talents (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Pet. 4:10)
 - iii) Believers are stewards of material goods (1 Tim. 6:6-10)
 - iv) Believers are stewards of a message (Col. 1:25; 2 Tim. 2:1-2)

3) The Example of Stewardship

- a) The time of giving (1 Cor. 16:2)
- b) The place of giving (2 Cor. 8:18-23)
- c) The attitude of giving
 - i) Stewardship giving is not compelled (2 Cor. 9:7)
 - ii) Stewardship giving is counted a privilege (2 Cor. 8:1-2, 4)
 - iii) Stewardship giving is done cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7)
- d) The amount of giving
 - i) Stewards give according to their income (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:12)
 - ii) Stewards give as much as possible (2 Cor. 8:3)

4) The Importance of Stewardship

- a) Stewardship brings glory to God
 - i) Stewardship is an act of faithfulness (1 Cor. 4:2)
 - ii) Stewardship is an expression of Christ-likeness (2 Cor. 8:9)
- b) Stewardship accomplishes the work of the ministry
 - i) Stewardship of time and talent provides human resources for the ministry (Eph. 2:10)
 - ii) Stewardship of financial assets provides material resources for the ministry
 - (1) To meet the needs of pastors and their families (1 Cor. 9:13-14; 1 Tim. 5:17)
 - (2) To meet the needs of missionaries (Phil. 4:16-18)
 - (3) To meet the needs of others (Gal. 6:10)
- c) "It is because of the stewardship of the gospel that believers manage the time, talents, and wealth that God has entrusted to their care."

5) Learning To Live It

- a) You accept a new job that pays extremely well. For the first time in your life you can actually afford to drive a _____ and live in a \$_____ home. A believer at work who is in the same circumstance says, "This is just the way God blessed Abraham's faithfulness."
 - i) Should you buy the car and the home? Why or why not?
 - ii) How does the mission of the church relate to your decision?
 - iii) How does your role as a local church member differ from that of Abraham?
- b) You go to a church that boasts support of numerous missionaries and gives 40% of its budget to foreign missions. However, you notice that the pastoral staff is struggling to make ends meet personally and does not even receive annual pay raises that keep up with inflation. Yet the church continues to take on new missionaries.
 - i) What scriptural principles has this church overlooked?
 - ii) What could you do to help remedy the situation?

Section Eight: The Destiny of the Church. *I am here to participate in the reign of Christ Jesus.*

Lesson Thirty-Two: The Church and the Tribulation

1) The Nature of the Tribulation

- a) The focus of the Tribulation (Dan. 9:24)

- i) The focus of the Tribulation is on the nation of Israel
- ii) The focus of the Tribulation is on the work of the Messiah (Matt. 24, Rev. 4-19)
- b) The duration of the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 11:30; 12:5-6, 14)
- c) The purpose of the Tribulation
 - i) The Tribulation will prepare Israel for her Messiah
 - (1) Israel will be judged for centuries of unbelief (Jer. 30:7)
 - (2) A remnant of Israel will be saved (Dan. 12:1)
 - ii) The Tribulation will be a time of judgment on the sinfulness of men (Rev. 6-18)

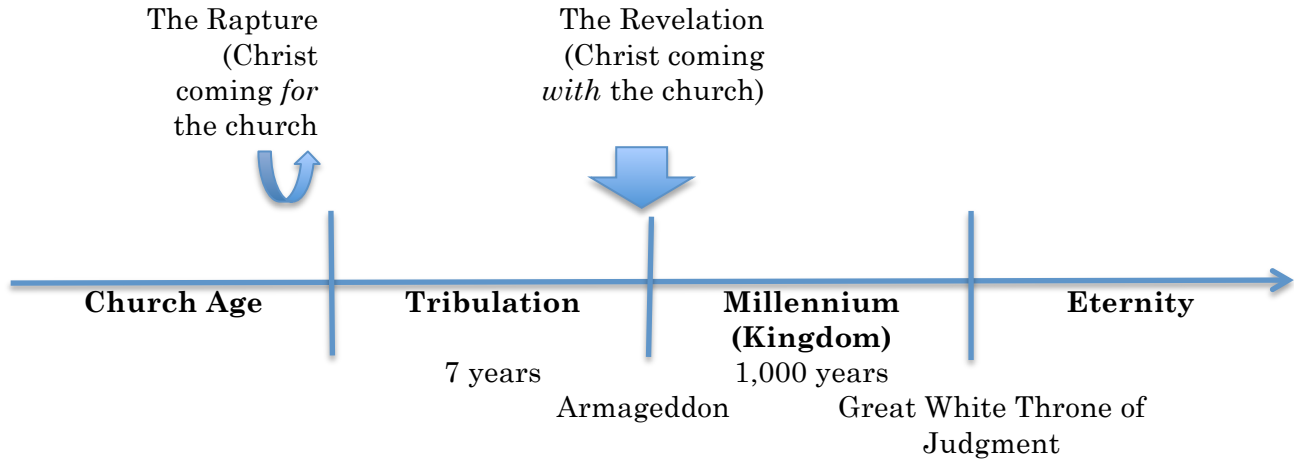
2) The Events of the Tribulation

- a) The Tribulation begins close after the time of the Rapture
 - i) What is the Rapture? (1 Thess. 4:16-17)
 - (1) It is imminent (Titus 2:11-13)
 - (2) It is sudden (1 Cor. 15:51-52)
 - ii) When is the Rapture?
- b) The Tribulation is dominated by the Antichrist
 - i) The profile of the Antichrist
 - (1) He will be a highly intelligent leader (Rev. 13:2; 17:17)
 - (2) He will be a great orator capable of captivating his audiences (Dan. 7:8; Rev. 13:2)
 - (3) He will be a capable politician (Dan. 8:25)
 - (4) He will be a military genius (Rev. 13:4)
 - (5) He will be confident (Dan. 8:23-25)
 - ii) The career of the Antichrist (Dan. 7:8)
 - (1) The Tribulation will begin when he makes a treaty with Israel and allows her to rebuild the Temple and renew worship there (Dan. 9:27)
 - (2) During the first half of the Tribulation he will rise to the state of a world power (Dan. 7:24; 11:40-45)
 - (3) At the midpoint of the Tribulation (after 3 ½ years) he will break the treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27)
 - (a) He will do this to initiate worship of himself (2 Thess. 2:4)
 - (b) He will do this to begin a program of persecution against Israel (Rev. 12:13-17)
 - (4) At the end of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will be defeated by Christ at Armageddon (Rev. 19:17-21)
- c) The Tribulation is concluded at Armageddon

3) The relationship of the church to the Tribulation

- a) The church will not go through the Tribulation
 - i) The purpose of the Tribulation excludes the church (see above)
 - ii) The church is promised to be kept from the horrors of the Tribulation (Rev. 3:10)
- b) The church will be judged during the Tribulation
 - i) The church will stand before the Bema Seat of Christ during the Tribulation (1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:8)
 - ii) Believers will have their works evaluated at the Bema Seat of Christ for the purpose of rewards (1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 5:10)
- c) The church will participate in the marriage of the Lamb during the Tribulation (Rev. 19:7)
- d) The church will return with Christ at the end of the Tribulation (Rev. 17:14)

- e) The following chart will help you visualize the chronology of the end-time events.



4) Learning To Live It

- a) There is growing movement in evangelical Christianity that says a believer does not have to be concerned about how he lives. One author says you can “screw up royally” and then walk into the presence of Christ “with your chin held high”—all because of God’s “grace.”
 - i) Does this idea fit the biblical teaching regarding the Bema seat of Christ?
 - ii) Why or why not?
- b) When a visiting speaker at your church preaches a sermon on the second coming of Christ, he says that the Lord must return within a certain time frame. He bases his calculation on the Lord’s reference to a “budding fig tree.” He relates this reference to the rebirth of the nation of Israel in 1948. “The generation that sees this happen will not pass away. Therefore the rapture must happen soon.”
 - i) Read the passage in Matthew 24:32-35. Has the preacher interpreted it properly?
 - ii) Why or why not?

Lesson Thirty-Three: The Church and the Kingdom

1) The Time of the Kingdom

- a) The Kingdom was announced in the past
 - i) The Kingdom was expected in the OT (2 Sam. 7:16)
 - ii) The Kingdom was offered at Jesus’ first coming (Luke 17:21; Matt. 3:2)
 - iii) The Kingdom was rejected by the Jewish nation (Matt. 12:22-37; 21:4-5)
 - iv) The Kingdom was postponed until a future time (Matt. 21:43)
- b) The Kingdom will be established in the future
 - i) The Kingdom will begin after the Tribulation (Luke 21:29-31)
 - ii) The Kingdom will commence with the second coming of Christ (Rev. 19:11-16)
 - iii) The Kingdom will endure for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-7)

2) The Participants in the Kingdom

- a) Christ the King (Dan. 7:13-14)
- b) The glorified church
 - i) We are presently citizens of the future Kingdom (Col. 1:13; Phil. 3:20)

- ii) We will reign with Christ in the future Kingdom (Rev. 3:21)
- c) OT believers (Dan. 12:2; Heb. 11:39-40)
- d) Believers from the Tribulation
 - i) Believing Israel (Rev. 11; Zech. 12:10)
 - ii) Believing Gentiles (Rev. 7:9-10)
- e) Unbelieving offspring of the Tribulation saints

3) The Nature of the Kingdom

- a) The Kingdom is the focal point of history
 - i) The Kingdom was the object of unilateral, unequivocal promises that God made to Israel
 - ii) The Kingdom promises made to Israel form the dominant theme of the OT
 - iii) The Kingdom is the theme of the doxological priority of the Bible
 - iv) The Kingdom is the expectant hope of the NT believer
- b) The Kingdom is a time of universal transformation
 - i) Spiritual transformation (John 3:3)
 - ii) Political transformation (Zech. 9:9; 14:9)
 - iii) Social transformation (Is. 2:4; Mic. 4:4)
 - iv) Physical transformation (Is. 11:6-8; 33:24; Amos 9:13)
 - v) Ethical transformation (Jer. 31:33-34)
 - vi) Religious transformation (Zech. 6:12-13; Is. 56:7; Ezek. 40-48)
- c) The Kingdom is a time when Satan will be bound (Rev. 20:1-2)

4) The Culmination of the Kingdom

- a) Satan will be released from bondage (Rev. 20:7-8)
- b) Men will rebel and suffer defeat (Rev. 20:8-9)
- c) The lost of all history will be judged (Rev. 20:11-15)
- d) The eternal state will begin (Rev. 21:1)

5) Learning To Live It

- a) The trials of life are numerous. Our jobs bring trials; our families (parents, spouses, and children) bring trials. We experience financial difficulties and frustration in our church ministries. Trials, difficulties, and frustrations abound on every side. Furthermore, they never go away. They hinder and sometimes cripple us for the duration of our lives. How will the material you learned in this lesson affect the way you deal with the trials of life?
 - i) How should the knowledge of your place on the “winning side” help you deal with trials?
 - ii) How should the knowledge of the fact that you will some day reign with Christ alter the way you view life’s trials?
 - iii) How should the knowledge of these facts contribute to your daily worship of and service to God?
 - iv) How should the knowledge of these facts affect the way you view the short time you will live upon this earth?

Section Nine: Conclusion

Lesson Thirty-Four: The Disciplines of Spiritual Growth

1) The Dynamics of Spiritual Growth

- a) The four-step process of biblical change (2 Tim. 3:15-17)
 - i) Teaching (what is right)
 - (1) Cf. Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23; Col. 3:10
 - ii) Rebuking (what is not right)
 - iii) Correcting (how to get right)
 - iv) Training (how to stay right)
 - (1) It is an ongoing process
 - (2) It is a painful process (Heb. 12:10-11)
- b) The replacement principle in biblical change (Eph. 4:20-24; Col 3:9-10)
 - i) You must “put off” sinful behavior patterns
 - ii) You must “put on” righteous behavior patterns

2) The Disciplines of Spiritual Growth

- a) Searching the Scriptures
 - i) The believer must be committed to regular reading of Scripture
 - (1) Provides the believer with an overview of and familiarity with the content of the Bible
 - ii) The believer must be committed to regular study of Scripture
 - (1) Provides the believer with the foundation of change
- b) Local church involvement
 - i) Provides the believer with: instruction, encouragement, accountability, and avenues for service
- c) Prayer
 - i) Praise—extolling God for His greatness and goodness
 - ii) Thanksgiving—expressing gratitude for all things
 - iii) Intercession—remembering the needs of others
 - iv) Confession—acknowledging and turning from personal sin
 - v) Petition—expressing dependence on God for all things
 - vi) The practice of prayer changes our focus from self to God and others
- d) Giving (see lesson # 31)
 - i) This challenges our selfish values
- e) Witnessing (lesson # 28)
 - i) This reminds us of our eternal mission
- f) Reading
 - i) Challenges us to think biblically

3) Learning To Live It

- a) A friend indicates to you that he is looking for another church because his pastors “focus too much on doctrine.” He wants to find a church where the pastors deal with issues that are “closer to home.”
 - i) What important truth is he overlooking with regard to doctrine and practice?
 - ii) How should knowledge of “who God is” and “who I am” affect my practical living?
 - iii) What would you recommend your friend do?
- b) It is apparent that a friend of yours has a habitual problem with the sin of lying. Out of concern for her, you confront her with the matter. She acknowledges the fact that

she lies, and even admits that it is adversely affecting her marriage and other relationships. Then she adds, “But my psychologist assures me that it is caused by a chemical imbalance. We are trying to find a medication to correct it.”

- i) Is her psychologist’s assessment of her problem correct? Why or why not?
- ii) Is sin a direct result of a physiological problem?
- iii) What are the implications of the psychologist’s diagnosis for your friend’s life?
- iv) What scripture steps should you take to help your friend come to grips with the real problem?