

THEOLOGY II: Doctrine of The Church

Session 2- History of the Church - Dr. Jeremy Kimble

REVIEW - Israel and the Church - Similarities and Differences

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

- Israel is the nation that is **descended** from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen 12:1-3).
- God **chose** them as His special people (Deut 7:6-11) and gave them His **Law**.
- Many **covenants** and **promises** were made to Israel in the OT, and God will fulfill all of these, either in the **millennium** or **new creation**.
- Israel largely **rejected** Jesus as Messiah, making way for the Gentiles, but God has a **future plan** for the Jews as well. (Rom 11:11-32)
- The church is the **new covenant** people of God who have been saved through **repentance** and **faith** in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-41) and incorporated into his body through baptism with the **Spirit** (1 Cor 12:12-13).
- The church can be seen as both **local** and **universal**.
- As a **connected** but **distinct** people from Israel, we should still recognize that the OT, though much is fulfilled through Christ, is still **applicable** to us in many ways (i Cor 10:1-6), and is part of our story.

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- The church bears a clear **continuity**, though not **identity** with Israel (one people of God - two expressions; Rom 11:13-24).
 - There is **linguistic** continuity (*qahal:ekklesia* (LXX) Septuagint Greek OT translation).
 - Other language used for Israel is also used for the **church** (Rom 4:16; 1 Pet 2:9).

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9.

*"They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, on the day when I make up **my treasured possession**, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. Malachi 3:17*

*Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be **my treasured possession** among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Exodus 19:5-6*

- Connection to **Abraham** (Rom 4:16-17, Gal 3:6-9, 29).

*That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest upon grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring - not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the **father of us all**.*

Romans 4:16

*Just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”? Know then that it is **those of faith** (belief in Jesus) **who are the sons of Abraham**.*
Galatians 3:6-7

- The **new covenant** made with Israel and Judah (Jer 31:31-34) is also **applicable** to the church (Heb 8-10, 2 Cor 3).
- There are also distinct differences:
 - Israel is under Mosaic law as a covenant, church is not under **Law**.
 - Israel is **ethnically** distinct, church is comprised of nations.
 - Covenants and their **signs** differ (circumcision vs. baptism).
 - Work of **Jesus** and **indwelling** of the Spirit. OT with certain people/NT in certain people)
 - A **future** is spoken of for **ethnic** Israel (Rom 11).
 - Thus, there is relationship, but the church does not **replace** Israel (cf. Rom 11:11-24).

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands - remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling palace for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:11-22

After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written
Acts 15:13-15 (Amos 9)

All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you. If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you. Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, declares the Lord."
(Near fulfillment of their return from exile) Isaiah 54:13-17 (Gal 4:1-2 Pattern of sin, exile and restoration through Jesus)

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

- Two key NT passages about *ekklesia*. Look at these verses in context and discuss in a small group the meaning (look at the cross references, etc.).

*And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my **church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the **keys** of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be **bound** in heaven, and whatever you **loose** on earth shall be loosed in heaven."*
Matthew 16:18-19

*If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the **church**. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be **bound** in heaven, and whatever you **loose** on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Matt 18:17-18*

RCC - Peter is the first Pope. (note... Peter is married, Jesus heals his mother-in-law) vs. Peter is the rock, key leader of the church (Acts 1-12)

Keys - authority

Binding - bring in, affirm

Loosing - put out, deny

Authority of the church to handle Doctrinal and Discipline Issues.

THEOLOGICAL FORMULATION

- Within the biblical affirmations we see a list of **images** as it relates to describing the nature of the church.
 - I believe most of the important aspects can be derived from three central metaphors which also give us **Trinitarian** structure.
 - **The people of God (I will be their God and they will be my people)**
 - This metaphor lies behind the description of the church as the **elect** (Rom 8:33, 1 Pet 1:2, 2:9), the **called** ones (1 Cor 1:24), those set apart by God (saints; 1 Cor 1:2). The church consists of those chosen, called, and set apart by God. For their part, they respond by **trusting** him, **accepting** his call, **following** his will. They are called to **reflect** God's nature, being **holy** as He is holy (Lev 11:44, 1 Pet 1:16), and **loving** as they had received love (Eph 5:1-2). We should be identified by his character.
 - **The body of Christ**
 - The body is used to stress the essential **unity** despite **diversity** in gifts (Rom 12:4-5, 1 Cor 12:12-27), and the resulting mutuality of love and concern that should result. The headship of Christ is emphasized (Eph 1:22, 4:15, 5:23; Col 1:18, 2:9-10). In these two books, the **connection** between Christ and his body is highlighted. He is the final **authority** over all areas of the church's life (Eph 1:22). This, the church's government sees Christ as the Senior Pastor, whatever human form it takes. Christ is the **source** of the body's unity and the **goal** of their growth (Eph 4:15); He is her Saviour and the source of life (Eph 5:23-29). Submit to the Word of God.
- For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 1 Cor 12:12*
- **The temple of the Holy Spirit**
 - The image of the temple points to the centrality of **worship** in the life of the church. Not only is one of the characteristic **activities** of a church gathering for corporate worship, members of churches are called to live their entire **lives** as acts of worship (Rom 12:1-2). The Spirit indwells believers **individually**, and so the New Testament can speak of individual believers as being **temples** of God (1 Cor 6:19), but there is also a **corporate** indwelling, such that Christ promises his presence in a **special** way when his people gather in his name (Matt 18:20; see also 1 Cor 3:16-17; 5:4). But for a corporate body to be a temple, the individual members need to be joined together in fellowship by the Spirit.

- Other images include the bride of Christ (purity/devotion), the vine and branches, a house, a family (1 Tim 5:1-2), a kingdom embassy (Church is a sovereign space in enemy territory), and sheep and shepherd.
- In looking at each of these images, how would you rank your local church? What image do you feel most describes your church, and why?
- In summarizing the nature of the church, Gregg Allison notes the church should be described as follows:
 - Doxological - oriented to the glory of God, the worship of God
 - Logocentric - *logos* John 1, Word centered, Christ centered (Bible and Jesus)
 - Pneumadynamic - *pneuma* “the spirit”, alive and in our midst
 - Covenantal - New Covenant
 - Confessional - Statement of Faith, we affirm these doctrines
 - Missional - on mission for God, making disciples
 - Eschatological - space time here & now reality that’s also future oriented.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- What the church is not:
 - The church is not a **building**, but people **assembled**.
 - The church is not determined by geographical, ethnic, or political lines, but by **relationship** to God and Christ.
 - The church is not a **parachurch** organization.
- The church is a **family**, and as such should live like one (1 Tim 5:1-2).
 - This involves all the “one another” commands in Scripture. The church should care for the people in their midst with a high degree of specificity and attention. (Love, pray, be compassionate, bear with one another, forgive)

4 ERAS OF CHURCH HISTORY

- Patristic - Novation and Donatist Controversies - Per Augustan, Church is a mixed community - We’re going for a regenerate community.
- Medieval - RCC theology - Sacramental theology. Who is Jesus? How much authority does the church have? Infant Baptism? Priesthood? (Major Schisms in the First Sixteen Centuries)
- Reformation - Martin Luther. We affirm people are saved by Faith Alone.
- Modern -