

THE PATTERN FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

A Sermon Outline

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By

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TEXT: Acts 2:42-47

THESIS: To show the pattern laid for the New Testament church.

INTRODUCTION

1. Most people have problems with the term church! In fact, dictionaries describe church as a building.
2. But a church from a biblical definition and concept is not a building, but the people of believers who have taken the steps to salvation and have been immersed (baptized) into Christ!
3. In proper context, a church is a word translated from the Greek word *ekklesia* meaning “the called out”. Called from the world of sin; washed and sanctified (Col. 1:13, 1Cor. 6:11)
4. Those people who have been sanctified and called to be saints make up the house of God which is the church (Isa. 2:2-3, 1 Tim. 3:14-15).
5. Just as God gave a pattern to Moses about the house of Israel, so has He given us a pattern in the New Testament. (Exo. 25:40, Heb 8:5).
6. Jesus declared that those who have become part must be taught to observe whatsoever He has commanded (Matt 28:20).
7. In this lesson I will share with you four main things;

- I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
- II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
- III. THE WORSHIP PATTERN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
- IV. THE ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

DISCUSSION

I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

- A. Prophecies of the church in the Old Testament
 1. The church has been called with different names throughout the Old Testament prophets.
 2. Daniel called it the Kingdom of God.
 - a. It was going to be established in the days of the 4th Kingdom according to Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Daniel 2:44-45)
 - b. The Son of Man (Jesus) will ascend to heaven before its establishment (Dan. 7:13-18).

3. Samuel, Isaiah, and Micah called it the House of God. (2 Sam 7:12-16, Isa. 2:2-3, Mic. 4:1-3)

B. Prophecies and promises of the church

1. John the Baptist foretold it (Matt. 3:1-2)
2. Jesus foretold it (Matt. 4:17)
3. Jesus promised to build His church which is the kingdom (Matt. 16:13-19)
4. Jesus told the disciples it will come to meet them alive (Mark 9:1, Acts 1:4-8)

C. The prophecies were fulfilled; The church came with power on the first Pentecost day after the resurrection of Jesus.

1. Peter spoke to people about the Power of God that came with the kingdom (Acts 2:1-14 cf. Matt 16:18-19, Dan 2:44-45)
2. Peter explained how Jesus has been given them power and a kingdom in Heaven (Acts 2:22-24, 29-33 cf. Dan. 7:13-14)
3. Peter literally Opened the Door (Acts 2:36-41)
4. God added the saved to the church (Acts 2:47)
5. The church scattered and spread due to persecution (Acts 8:1-4,12; Gal 1:13)

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

A. The Church is the same as the House and the Kingdom of God

1. Jesus hinted that the church is the same as the kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19)
2. Paul confirmed that the church is the House of God (1 Tim. 3:14-15)
3. Jesus is the builder of that House (Heb. 3:4-6 cf. 2 Sam 7:12-16)

B. The same things are practiced in both the church and kingdom hence the church and the kingdom are the same.

1. Baptism:
 - a. Church (Acts 8:1,4,12)
 - b. Kingdom (John 3:3-5)
2. Lord's Supper:
 - a. the Church (1 Cor. 11:20, 23-25; Acts 2:42)
 - b. Kingdom (Luke 22:29-30)
3. Members are called Saints:
 - a. Church (1 Cor. 1:1-2)
 - b. Kingdom (Col. 1:12-13)
4. Judgment will be executed in:
 - a. Church (1 Pet. 4:17-18)
 - b. Kingdom (Matt. 25:31-34, Cor. 15:24)

C. The Name of The Church

1. The body of Christ (Colossians 1:18, 24; Ephesians 4:12; 1:22-23)
2. The kingdom of God (Acts 28:23, 31, Colossians 1:13)
3. The house of God (I Timothy 3:15)
4. The church of God (I Corinthians 1:2)

5. The church of the firstborn (Hebrews 12:23)
6. The church of the Lord/God (Acts 20:28)
7. The churches of Christ (Romans 16:16 cf. Matthew 16:18).

D. Day of worship

1. The early church gathered on the First Day of The Week (Acts 20:7)
2. This was called the Lord's Day (Luke 24:1-3, Rev. 1:9-10)
3. They contributed to the church treasury on that day (1 Cor. 16:1-3)

III. THE WORSHIP PATTERN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

A. The church continued steadfastly the Apostles Doctrine

1. The early church continued in teachings (Acts 2:42 Matt. 28:20)
2. They didn't go beyond the teachings of Christ (2 John 9, 1 Cor. 4:6)
3. They upheld the traditions they have received (2 Thess. 2:15)
4. Men led in teaching, preaching, and praying. (1Tim. 2:11-14, cf. 1 Cor. 14:34-38)

B. The church prayed at their gathering

1. Praying was one of the key practices of the church in the bible (1 Thess.5:17,25)
2. They pray for themselves and for one another (Eph. 6:18-19; James 5:16)
3. They prayed as Jesus taught (Matt. 6:5-8 (cf. Jonah 2:1-2)
4. Men led public prayers (1 Tim. 2:8)
5. They prayed through Jesus (1 Tim. 2:1-7; Rom. 1:8; Phil. 4:5-7)

C. The church gave out of their means.

1. The True Church in the Bible practice Free will giving (2 Cor. 9:6-7)
2. The church never practiced Tithing or compulsory levies (Luke 6:38, 2 Cor 8:1-6)
3. The Christian giving is done on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2)

D. The church partook communion (Lord's Supper)

1. The Church in the Bible breaks bread to remember the Lord's sacrifice
2. It is a sign of the New Covenant in the blood of Jesus (Matt. 26:26-29)
3. Just as the Tree of Life was for Adam, Rainbow for Noah, Circumcision for Abraham and Sabbath for Israel, so is the communion to the church.
4. Jesus promised to do that in the kingdom/ church (Luke 22:29-30)
5. Jesus instituted it in Christianity to be used to remember Him (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

E. The church Sang psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs

1. Christians are to sing.
2. The church in the bible sang without musical instruments (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

3. The Greek word used here is “Psallo” which means to sing Acapella!
4. David finished his job as God commanded him. But our job is different from his so don’t try to copy David (Acts 13:34-39 cf. Amos 6:5)
5. Grace and Truth come from Jesus and His word will judge all (John 1:17; 12:44-50).

IV. THE ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

- A. Elders were ordained in every congregation (Acts 14:23, Philippians 1:1, Titus 1:5ff)
 1. Elders are to be appointed in every church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).
 2. In the New Testament church.
 - a. elders are also called presbyters (1 Timothy 4:14)
 - b. bishops (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-2)
 - c. overseers (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2)
 - d. pastors (Ephesians 4:11,12), and
 - e. shepherds (1 Peter 5:1-4).
 3. Preachers are never called pastors in the New Testament.
 4. The elders of the local congregation are the pastors (shepherds) of each local church (1 Peter 5:1-4).
 5. Qualifications for elders are listed in (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-13)
- B. The church has One Head, One King who is Christ
 1. The church is the body of Christ, and He is the head (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4).
 2. He has all authority (Matt. 28:18; Col. 1:18).
 3. The church is a kingdom over which Christ rules as king (1 Timothy 6:15; John 18:37; John 19:19).
 4. Christians are citizens in this kingdom (Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9).
 5. The world is the territory of this kingdom (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8).
 6. The new birth is the way we enter this kingdom (John 3:5).
- C. The Church has no Earthly Headquarters.
 1. The headquarters of Christ's church is in Heaven.
 2. Each congregation of the Lord’s body is independent and self-ruling.
 3. There is no pope, council, conference, or group of people controlling all the congregations of the Lord’s body which is the church.
 4. Each congregation controls its own affairs, its leadership, properties, monetary resources, etc. This is what is referred to as autonomy.
 5. The Church is hence managed by Elders who are ordained from within the members if any! (Phil. 1:1-2, 1 Pet. 5:1-4)

CONCLUSION

1. God has already established His kingdom.
2. A day will come, that Jesus will come again to execute judgment in the church which is the kingdom (Act 17:30,31)
3. Come into the kingdom now, for that day Jesus will lift the church up to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24)
4. I invite you to study the pattern of God's church and made a decision to obey the gospel that you may be washed by baptism and given entry by God.