

The Church and The Kingdom of God

## **The Church and The Kingdom of God**

### **Definitions**

**Christian:** A follower of Jesus and citizen of The kingdom of God

**The Body of Christ:** The citizens of the Kingdom of God on earth and in heaven

**Assembly:** Christians gathered together for worship or other purposes of The Kingdom. Also called a fellowship.

**Congregation:** A group of people that meet in a church or similar building that may include non-Christian or lukewarm Christians.

**Denomination:** a collection of congregations which segregate their congregations from congregations of other denominations and by this divide The Body of Christ. There is only one denomination and that is The Body of Christ. All others are man made for the purposes of man as a result of the reasonings of man. Jesus does not recognise denominations. He only recognises The Body (of His followers).

**Independent Church:** A church that does not belong to a denomination or similar. These form associations of independent churches and negate their name and purpose for being independent from a denomination through doing this.

**Social Gathering:** A group of Christians who are gathered together for purposes other than those of The Kingdom of God.

### **Organisation**

In heaven there are:

*No Denominations*

*No Churches*

*No Clergy*

*No Church Organizations*

And as heaven is model for how things are in The Kingdom of God why are they on earth where Satan rules and not in heaven where God rules?

### **Preamble**

There is only one law in the universe. The Law of The Kingdom of God. All others laws are in part or whole a reflection or rejection in part of this. The Mosaic Law was a reflection of the law of The Kingdom of God and it still applies, although some parts are now redundant.

The Law of The Kingdom applied from before eternity and creation and will apply after these are gone. The Kingdom is the primary law we are under and all else is a reflection of its law

The Mosaic Law applies. It was obeyed by Jesus and was not negated by Him. He said He was not going to change the smallest bit of The Law. Some parts of it were made redundant because He fulfilled forever their requirements (Sacrificial Law) or made a greater freedom in following them (removing The Temple and making us His Temple so we can worship Him wherever we are).

The dietary laws were negated by Jesus after He died (see the dream of Peter in Acts 10:9-16).

The Body of Christ reflects the fellowship we will have in heaven. The church is not The Body of Christ but is a meeting of people who profess to be Christian and at times may approximate the love and fellowship we will have in heaven. Those belonging to The Body will be doing The Work of The Kingdom rather than the work of a denomination and by their fruits you will know who they belong too: The Kingdom and The Body or a denomination.

When Jesus died He established a New Covenant (Testament) based on The Kingdom of God and summarized by the following verse:

*Heb 10:16–17 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

This was to signify the presence of the Holy Spirit given to us after Jesus ascended to heaven. There was no longer need for a temple or a high priest which is why The Temple was removed in 70 AD

God's presence is in us so now we are The Temple of God in which the Holy Spirit's presence is in and who marks a person belonging to The Kingdom of God. Jesus also removed the blockages between God and man so we can go directly to God (through Jesus Jn. 14:6) and do not need any other intermediary. He alone is sufficient and our High Priest. We can worship where we are, when we want too and need no one else to be there to do this. All you need is a desire to worship and to have intimacy with The Father, Jesus and The Holy Spirit.

## **The New Covenant (Rom 8)**

The New Covenant was mediated by Jesus and witnessed too by Calvary and is based on God's Love and Grace. A new commandment was given that would express this new covenant (and which really was the basis for the Mosaic Law). This is called the Law of Love and is as follows:

*Jn 13: 34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

This is the basis of all the other New Testament commands.

Salvation is a relationship (Jn 17:3) and this new commandment shows the type of relationship it is, a relationship based on Love and not legalistic obedience to a set of laws. Any legalism of any type, should no longer be in a church. The moment there is legalism of any type, the church is no longer under grace. If it is no longer under Grace it is no longer under the new covenant of Grace and love as there is no grace or love in legalism.

There is a difference between obeying laws for administrative purpose in which a form of legalism is required and legalism in enforcing the Law of Love.

### **Church or Denomination**

Denominations are different to The Body of Christ. This can be seen when denominations unite to do something and have to be careful not to treat on another's denominations corns.

If denominations were The Body of Christ - citizens of The Kingdom of God - this concern would not arise as they would all have unity of purpose, direction and belief statements.,

### **What is the purpose of the 'church'?**

What is the purpose of the 'church'? When you become a Christian and follower of Jesus the minister invites you to join the church or denomination. You already are a citizen of The Kingdom of God so why do you have to join a church or denomination as you are the church. He should be asking you to join their fellowship of Kingdom orientated believers. Anything else is not Biblical.

A church Christian lives in and for the denomination of church. A follower of Jesus lives in and for The Kingdom of God and may attend a church but the denomination or church is not important to them.

### **The invisible church**

To many people in the western world a church is a moral place which they have little or no interaction with and have no idea what happens there. In a sense, to many it may as well be a secret society as they have no idea what it is or does.

They are attracted by New Age, Masonic lodges, Satanists or religions that advertise what they do as and appear to have spiritual power and authority and in which people can get involved on a personal basis and which do not rely 'qualified people' to run the show.

However, once a church walks in love and demonstrates the authority and power of Jesus through (signs and wonders and deliverance etc.) and not just use the world's methods to sustain their budgets and grow in numbers, people will see it is different to religions and as they see it overcome demons and the illness that the demons cause then they will see Jesus as being greater than the New Age or Satan. The church must show this or die spiritually.

Until a church can show these things it is not going to do the work of Jesus, hinder Satan's Kingdom, rescue people from its influences or destroy his works. It may as well be a social club of high moral standards or a secret society for a few who know the ritual and language of the church.

Paul stated this principle clearly as being an important part of his evangelistic ministry:

*1Co 2:4-5 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God..*

### **Jesus in the church**

*Mat 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

When you go to church with others and gather together under the leadership of The Holy Spirit for the purposes of Jesus He is in your midst.

This not just going to church because everyone does it or you will hope to have signs and wonders or personal prophecy to occur. That is for your purposes and not that of Jesus which is why He is not in many church meetings because they are not gathered together for His purposes but to obtain a Pentecost experience or because your of habitual going to church at that time slot.

If Jesus is there then your attitudes should reflect this and you would dress modestly and behave reverently, not socializing but seeking His purpose for your being there. His Love would be expressed in all that happens instead of gossip and cliques occurring so that the church is divided and people 's needs are not met.

Do you go to church to be with Jesus and those of a like attitude? If not you stand a chance of being amongst those that miss the Rapture.

### **Kingdom Living**

The principles of The Kingdom express themselves in creation and they are written on the hearts of men by The Holy Spirit so they can be seen by man in God's creation.

As you express the relationship you have with The King you either follow these principles (being led by The Holy Spirit) or follow man's principles as expressed by a church or denomination in their rules and requirements that are additional to or replace what The Bible teaches.

If you are fortunate some of their rules will be those of The Kingdom but a lot are not.

If the guidance and empowerment of The Holy Spirit are no longer sought and deliverance from the ravages of Satan on the people is no longer done then the church activities are little different to what the world does and there is little to differentiate the methods of the church from that of the world. If it does not preach The Kingdom it does not preach a purpose greater than that which the world offers and has little to offer of the world.

If it does not demonstrate the Authority of Jesus and His Kingdom then people will not see it on earth.

People other than Christians have godly moral principles and if the church does not demonstrate Jesus and His authority they have every right to ask why they should change their morality for one the church offers.

Without the guidance of The Holy Spirit, deliverance or other manifestations of the Kingdom of God the church becomes nothing more than a social worker using reason and man's methods, giving lip service to The Holy Spirit and the Kingdom of God. The tools of organisation and/or methods of working that Satan promotes in the world are used as they 'work' but are Christianised to be acceptable to the denomination's members.

The denominations promote a social gospel not having the Power and Authority of God so must use man's (Satan's world) methods and devices. There is also the opposite end of this situation where The Spirit is followed and deliverance is carried out but excesses occur as Christianity becomes emotion driven and not Biblically driven and the guidance of the Holy Spirit becomes hidden or obscured as it all becomes an emotional experience and not a spiritual one.

Satan has trained the church well so that deliverance is made to appear difficult even dangerous and something to be feared or done after long study and striving for holiness. Demons are allowed to manifest to further make people hesitant to work in deliverance.

Satan cripples the church through their ignoring the things of God and everyone continues as if nothing is wrong having been duped by Satan into believing what they do in church is normal to the Christian life and the expression of The Kingdom!

There is also the witchcraft spirit in a church that controls the people for the purposes of the people in charge. People do what the leaders say or are considered to be troublemakers or spiritually immature and to be ignored spiritually and may even be driven out of a church. Often the leaders guide the church for their own self-esteem purposes or of pride or denominational purposes and not as the Holy Spirit wants it led. This is a major problem in denominations where minister put the denomination and/or church growth ahead of what Jesus desires them to do.

### **Unity of The Spirit**

*Eph 4:5 Endeavouring to keep the unity of The Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

*Amos 3: Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

It is only as you walk in unity being unified through The common Holy Spirit in all Christians will you walk in unity with Him and other Christians. The Holy Spirit gives us the instructions of God so we know what God desires us to do and it is only as we listen to Him will we walk in harmony with God and The Body of Christ fulfilling what God wants us to do and represent The Kingdom as we should.

This is how The Body is suppose to function. All should be led by The Holy Spirit and all work in unity of purpose in accordance with the Will of Jesus and any body, committee or governance that sets itself up to make laws for the interaction of The Body is usually interfering with God's guidance through the Holy Spirit and limiting God's guidance in people by making The Holy Spirit's leading subordinate to man's judgment. This is why a spirit led person cannot worship or survive well in a church that is not spirit led.

If people are correctly following Jesus, then you do not need ecumenicism and if they are not following Jesus correctly then you should not be considering fellowship with them. Socializing yes, fellowship no.

Only as each person is guided by the Holy Spirit will they perform the role God requires them to perform in The Body so that it will function as it should.

Satan knows this which is why people who are led by The Spirit are forced out of churches or have The Spirit's leading quenched in them through control spirits working through the leadership in a church or in people around them.

Note that the basis for the unity is Peace with God! All the members being in a proper relationship with God. If this is so then they will be all led by The Holy Spirit and act as one, unified body. The fact that there are denominations and factions within churches shows that this unity of The Holy Spirit is not there which means those that promote their denomination or church and not The Kingdom are not in a correct relationship with God or they would be listening to The Holy Spirit and promoting The Kingdom of God!

The reason for not promoting The Kingdom could be because of one or more of the following reasons:

The minister is not teaching The Kingdom but is promoting the denomination or church either knowingly or out of ignorance

The person is not in a salvation relationship with God

The person is hurt and needs deliverance and healing to be able to enter fully into the correct relationship with God

The person knows about it but is not interested in promoting The Kingdom of God.

The person is learning incorrectly how to promote The Kingdom of God

Remember, you will be judged for how you dealt with what you know about Jesus and His kingdom and if you did knowingly not promote The Kingdom and the unity of The Spirit that is integral to the Body of Christ then you could be in a precarious position in regard to salvation when you face Jesus and give an account to Him of what you did with the life He gave you.

People are without excuse for not promoting what they know about The kingdom of God or learning how to promote it because Jesus spoke only of The Kingdom and His example was to preach, teach and demonstrate The Kingdom of God (Matt 4:23)!

So why is the church not doing this? Satan has gotten into its teachings and corrupted them so that they teach what he desires and not what God wants taught otherwise there would be no disunity amongst Christians and the Authority of The Kingdom over Satan and his works would be demonstrated by them.

### **The Body belongs to Jesus.**

He places people where He needs them for His Will to be done and The Holy Spirit trains people for their role in The Body so they can carry out the Will of Jesus.

As people walk in the principles of Matt 6:33 (seeking the Will of God and furthering His Kingdom) each day they are being trained and placed where Jesus needs them to be at that moment of time and they will be doing what He needs them to be doing at that point of time. You will be in the place you need to be to serve Him and do His Will and you will do your part in the body so that it will function as it should.

### **Holy Unity**

Holy Unity is defined as the union we have with Jesus as we identify completely with Him and His teachings so all put aside to pursue His Will. This unity is the highest form of worship and is paralleled to the relationship in marriage between a husband and wife and is the desirable state to be in if a marriage is to succeed and serve God.

### **The Church and Matt 6:33**

In Matt 6:33 there is the promise that anyone who seeks The Kingdom of God and of being in a correct relationship with Jesus will always have provided what they need to live and serve Jesus. This also applies to The Body and its subgroups.

A Church is not a building but a fellowship of people many of whom are believers. If they are seeking His Kingdom and His righteousness they will never lack for anything they need to do the work of God. God promises to provide all they need so why then do they need to ask for donations or take up offerings? If they are doing what God wants them to do these should not be necessary.

If people are listening to the Holy Spirit, they will give what God says so to give so that the church does not need to ask for what it needs. By demanding people tithe or give it makes giving a legalistic exercise by implying that what God said in Matthew 6:33 is not true.

The only conclusion is that they are not doing what God wants then to do so need to find money for these 'unauthorized activities', or, they do not trust God sufficiently to supply their needs. Satan will suggest many good things to tie up a church's money which have the appearance of what God wants done but are actually not what He desires done. By this Satan has a church tie up its money and sidetracks what it does so it does not do what God desires it to do.

If a fellowship is led by The Holy Spirit Satan cannot sidetrack it this way as The Spirit will tell them it is a plan of Satan.

### **Why do church groups have to ask for money?**

If God asks you to step out in faith He will always provide what you need. As it is a test of faith He will make you wait for His provision to strengthen your faith in Him. You will not need to ask for donations or gifts or to take up offerings. It is only as we do not trust God or do that we should not that we turn to man for help.

God will prompt those He wants to give to do so and will tell them how much to give and to whom to give it too. This assumes these people are listening to God and can hear God's instructions in regard to this.

This also assumes the church has taught them how to hear God so when He prompts them to give they will give. If the church has not taught them how to hear God then they will not hear to give.

It also assumes, the church is doing what God desires it to do and is not doing things it is not suppose too which God cannot bless or supply provision for but which Satan will gladly try and supply them so that the church or denomination becomes committed to the new expense. When the church has all these ungodly commitments (not being from God), then Satan will stop helping the church leaving the church wondering where God is and in a financial mess.

This is one reason church have loans.

While Satan is limited with what He can do to you there is nothing to stop him leaving things around for our lusts to accept and use and by this gain a foothold in you. This is how he use the media that he controls.

Whatever the case it begs the question. With God's promise of provision in Matt 6:33 why does a church have to ask for money to keep itself going.

As the church building is only a place the people use and it is not something that is able to determine its usage (as it is not alive) it then becomes the attitude of the church board and/or church people towards God that determines whether God provides for its upkeep or not.

If the people use the church fellowship for the purposes of The Kingdom and pursuing righteousness with God, then He will provide for its upkeep (Matt 6:33). The moment they go outside this usage there will not be enough money to meet its upkeep and people will be asked for donations and offerings (often special church fund type offerings) .

This also applies to parochial organizations, para-church organizations or associations attached to a church. If these bodies are used in accordance with God's purposes their needs will be met otherwise they will be continually asking for Money.

Should a Christian give to organizations not seeking God's kingdom (Purposes) or God's righteousness? No! Why give to the devil God's money unless He distinctly tells you too. This is how Satan ties up the money of Christians so it is not given to God's work or purposes. Often people give out of habit or guilt. Since when does God make you feel guilty so you will give. Since when does God also ask you to give out of habit instead of asking Him first what to do with His property (Is 66:1,2).

We are only stewards of what we have as God owns everything so we need to ask Him what to do with what we have.

Through this incorrect giving Satan ties up the money God should be using and by this removes blessing from the congregation. Give only as guided by The Holy Spirit. Then you will know it will be used as God desires it to be used.

We are to tithe, but it is God who tells us where to send the money and not the minister or denomination. They can only suggest where it should go.

### **Opposing God's Work**

I write this section with a heaviness as I see many opposing the work of The Kingdom of God even if only by indifference to it and do not realise it as they are led by pastors who oppose the work of God (without realising it) by ignoring the true role of The Kingdom in their God-given ministry.

When God has a work for a person to do you opposes it at the risk of death, illness or separation. God will tolerate rebellion and resistance to His Work for only a certain period then He acts. It is more important one person dies for the sake of The Kingdom than many go to hell or be hindered in doing His Will. Often the death will save the person's salvation which could lose if they kept going on with their opposition to His Work.

In revival, people opposing revivalist preachers have suddenly dropped dead. In marriages a spouse opposing the work of God has died suddenly, divorced or been incapacitated so they could not longer resist the spouse and their work for God. God will free the bound spouse to do His work so be careful opposing a spouse or someone you are resisting whom has the anointing of God on them for a work of The Kingdom. Sometimes the opposing person has illness that gets progressively worse as a warning before they are removed.

A person led by The Spirit of God will never oppose the work of God so that is your safeguard, a conscience desiring to do God's Will and desiring to hear The Spirit so that you know what God's Will is.

God is Love and all He does is out of His Love and that includes removing the opposition to His Will and Work.

### **Excesses in the Church**

Should we speak out about excesses and errors in the church?

Jesus said it is His church so we should leave it to Him to fix. However, we should obey what He tells us to do and He may use us in some way to help, heal or deal with church problems.

We should know what their errors are so we can avoid them as well as in humility explain to people what they are (backed up by Biblical scripture).

We can discuss them, for purposes of learning and not condemnation

We are to go whom He tells us to warn and in humility warning them, telling them only what Jesus desires us to say to them.

We should examine ourselves daily to ensure we do not fall into these errors ourselves.

Any other way of doing discussing these things is pride, judgmental criticism, gossip or lovelessness, any of which is sin.

### **What about revivals?**

After the usual heated debates in an Internet chat room about the Lakeland revival (which debate I observed in a concerned manner and tried to defuse) I was shown the following by The Holy Spirit.

Where an event occurs like a revival or church split that causes you grief then:

If there is obvious error then correct in meekness lest you become proud and sin. All you can do is show where The Bible says they are wrong in what they are doing. Then it is up to God what happens to them as it is His church.

Where there is no obvious error then you watch the fruit of The Revival.

Remember people have gone there to draw closer to Jesus and the ministers there are seeking to preach the Truths of God so as long as they sincerely doing these things you cannot condemn or criticise them. So do not attack the people but attack the demons causing any problems (Ep 6:10-12):

In Jesus' Name bind any demons causing problems

In Jesus' Name command any deception to be revealed to the people involved

Ask The Holy Spirit to teach the people in charge what they need to know to draw closer to Jesus

Ask God to bless their faithfulness in desiring to know more of Jesus.

Give your attitude about it to Jesus using the five steps.

If the revival is of Him you will not be able to stop it. If it is not of Him He will take care of it His way. So sit back watch, bind demons and do what He says to do in respect of it but do not criticise it as it may be a move of God then you would be criticising God's work.

### **In summary**

It can be said that the modern view of the Christian life as being church or denominationally centred is completely inadequate to give the complete picture of what it means to be a follower of Jesus and a citizen of The Kingdom of God.

There is only one Kingdom of God and as each church or denomination follows their own agenda they will be out of unity with the others, not being unified in purpose and direction by The Holy Spirit and showing they are possibly not part of God's Kingdom. In Mark 3:25 Jesus said:

*And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.*

This means that as churches and denominations squabble and divide the Kingdom of God they may keep their physical presence but spiritually will fall and no longer represent God or His Kingdom as they should. As this has happened churches no longer work in the Power or guidance of The Holy Spirit and man's attempt for unity of the churches has led to the modern ecumenical movement which is more political than spiritual and has allowed Satan to set up the foundation for the One World Church in preparation for the Antichrist.

The fact that the ecumenical movement is necessary shows how divided denominations are and how far away they are from the unity of The Spirit which characterises The Body of Christ which is the true church.

### **Where to Worship God**

*Acts 17:24-25* God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

God does not need a special place to worship as He is everywhere. He does not need us to offer things from creation as He owns them already. To say you need to worship God in a special place is to limit God's presence and imply He is only able to be worshiped in places like churches and not able to be worshiped everywhere.

So what does God want from us then? Why were we created? He desires:

Our Love

Our voluntary service

For us to relate to Him as our Father, friend and King and adviser.

He does not need these as He is complete in Himself but desires these for our sake so He can give us the pleasure of our relationship with Him and all that results from it.

In other words He wants an intimate relationship with you where you appreciate His love for you and are thankful for all He does with and for you.

### **Choosing leaders**

Jesus did not give leadership roles to the church. The fivefold are gifts to serve His church not rulers to govern them. This is in line with Matt 20:26-27 where those in charge are servants not rulers. They are also mentioned in Ephesians, a book scholars believe was not written by Paul so is not a teaching of Jesus. They are also not mentioned in The Didache which is what Jesus taught the apostles to teach the gentiles so appear to be a man's interpolation.

### **Who then is to lead the Church?**

Its Bishop (ruler) is Jesus (1 Pet 2:25) and its Guide is the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13). This is the situation in The Kingdom of God whose citizens we are. In the Kingdom Jesus rules and appoints people to do His Will and His Will involves serving others and not usurping the Role of Jesus as King and controlling them. Any church, denomination or similar that appoints leaders without consulting The Holy Spirit is setting up its own system independent of The Kingdom of God. This thing set up will not do the work of The Kingdom as it has not been sanctioned by its King. It will probably hinder the work of The Kingdom as it is man reasoned and orientated and not Spirit led.

In the early church, spiritual guidance was given by people who waited on God, while the physical (administrative) side was, carried out by people (deacons) The Holy Spirit appointed to do this (acts 6:3-4).

There were leaders appointed by God who did not rule or control as such but passed on what The Holy Spirit advised them to do or tell others for the purposes of the Kingdom of God.

Churches, Bible colleges denominations did not exist. God did not ask for these and fact they are really for mans benefit and not necessary for the worship of Him!

*Is 66:1-2 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

He is more interested in the heart of people than in what they do or build for Him.

Most of what the church considers necessary to worship and serve God was not actually present in the early church and in fact may even detract from or hide the Kingdom of God because it portrays it incorrectly to people so that they do not see The Kingdom of God but a man made organisation.

Jesus is your King. The Holy Spirit is your Guide. He will teach you or send people to help you and advise you in regard to spiritual things and they will mentor you and not rule you.

### **Ministry and the church**

How does the current church system fit in with the Kingdom of Heaven?

All are given gifts and are expected to use them to minister to each other. This is what happens in heaven according to those that have been there. Everyone willingly and gladly serves others, placing serving them before their own needs. This is easy in heaven as no one has a lack of anything they need to live and survive and the tyranny of time is not a problem. On earth this placing others before yourselves is sacrificial at times because of your own personal survival needs that are not dealt with to help another who is worse off than you. In heaven personal pleasure is forgone to help others but people do not count this a loss as heaven is such a joyful place.

So people in heaven all serve while on earth they must be qualified by the pastor or the denomination to have any roles of importance. Instead of helping people to find their gifts and training them they are sent to a bible college or similar or told you need church approval to use them. So most people are not prepared for the Kingdom and are not utilized in the way God wants them to be and are kept in a sort of servitude, always being ministered to and never given a chance to minister.

This should not be so and goes against what God desires for all of us which is for us to learn how to serve and minister and spiritually grow as well as being used to expand His Kingdom through the example of loving service to those inside and outside the Kingdom of God that will make people look seriously at what Christians believe.

Love was a characteristic of the early church and until it seen as the mark of the modern church, Jesus and His Kingdom will not be seen in its fullness, if at all.

Evangelism is for reaching people which is why signs and wonders are necessary for that. For a close friend, your lifestyle and your Love of The Kingdom expressed towards them will reach them and it is important to show this

love to them in all you do with them. For others they will need to see The Kingdom expressed through its authority over Satan and his works.

Hypocrisy is the one thing that will turn people off The Kingdom of God quicker than anything else except lovelessness or indifference.

Our life is a training ground for The Kingdom and we need to be taught and guided now how to live as a citizen of The Kingdom through learning how to love and to serve others so that we know how to use our gifts probably. We also need to hear The Holy Spirit so we can serve God as He desires us too here and in eternity.

If you are not serving God and are in a position of authority in The Body then what are you doing? Earth is God's training ground for The Kingdom of God in eternity and how you use this life to prepare people to live no in eternity will have a big effect on your rewards and possibly your even getting to heaven.

### **Control By Ministers**

To be an 'adopted son of God' you need to be led by The Holy Spirit and not man (Rom 8:14). This means Jesus is your head/authority and not man,

The moment you place yourself under a man's spiritual authority and follow him you are no longer a son of God but a son of that person by adopting them as your leader. This is spiritual idolatry replacing God with another (unless that man has been appointed to be a mentor to you and then he is only a guide for a season and not your controller).

In the physical things are different as people are given stewardship over things by delegation. Deacons are given responsibility for physical things in The Body (Acts 6:1-3), a husband for a wife and family while those appointed to lead spiritually spent their time listening to God and doing what He says to them so they can help others spiritually with their problems. In the early church there was no denominational or church guidelines to limit The Holy Spirit. These became necessary as people, not led by The Spirit, came to control the church and rules were needed to support their usurped authority.

God will send people to guide you and tell you what The Holy Spirit said. They will point you to Jesus not to their will or the guidelines of a denomination or church. The moment someone points you to these instead of Jesus and you obey them you are in idolatry unless The Holy Spirit has told you to obey them.

Jesus is King, and anyone who says they are your leader and controls you and others, is usurping Him and may cause you to sin as they take the place of God and become to you an idol if you obey them and not God. This is what the Nicolaitans did which Jesus hated so much. The danger of denominations is that they set themselves up as the authority over its members and by this stop the individual leading of The Holy Spirit that is necessary for Jesus to guide each member of His Body in what He wants them to do. By this His work is hindered, not promoted.

As The Holy Spirit no longer leads, the denomination turns to man's methods and reason and starts to decline and move away from The Bible. The moment you place man's rules before God's or use them to constrain what God teaches you have a church or denomination that is starting to die and possibly a cult. It no longer is led by God's Spirit and so must use its own reason which Satan gladly helps them with.

This is why denominations do not usually teach the guidance of The Holy Spirit but teach obedience to the denomination. It is not obedience to Christ they practice, even though they may preach it, but obedience to what man has said is best for their church or denomination.

Unless each member of The Body is led by The Spirit, or taught this, then The Body will not function as it should and denominations will take over The Body and splinter it. In the revivals to come in these last days, each person will be led by The Spirit and any minister stopping this will be removed or lose their salvation if they are not careful.

### **Healing in Churches**

One of the problems in a church is that people will condemn someone as having a wrong spirit (Jezebel, gossip, lying etc) but do nothing to heal the person of the hurts that allowed the demon to enter.

Love, deliverance and healing is what is needed and not more guilt, hurt, rejection condemnation heaped on the person.

### **A modern day parable**

People were entering the church. As each entered they looked at the grand building and all the pretty ornamentation and pondered how wonderful a church they had and thanked God they had a building worthy of Him. Few had thanked Him that the day for their breakfast but most thanked Him for the wonderful church building they had.

They were thinking various things:

“What does God want me to do here today?” Thought one.

Another wondered what they could do there for The Kingdom

Another was wondering if there were any good looking girls there that day

Another wondered if they would finish counting all the bricks behind the altar before the sermon finished (true story)

Another wondered what they could do today in the church to serve the minister or his church

Another was looking forward to the emotional high they got when worship was on and they could ‘feel’ ‘The Spirit’

Another was wondering how long the sermon would take

Another was glad the wife was not nagging them to come to church as she had stopped nagging when they said they would go

Another entered and wondered what church was all about.

Everyone walking in greeting people they knew, ignoring strangers or others not of their social standing or clique except possibly for a polite ‘hello’.

The Lord asks you:

Who was fellowshiping?

Who was doing His work of The Kingdom?

Where was The Holy Spirit in this who is suppose to lead church worship?

Sadly this is typical of churches and you wonder why The Kingdom of God is not found in them and fellowship is missing as God desires it to be.

Who is at fault for these attitudes?

The minister for not teaching what The Kingdom is all about and emphasizing its role in their life?

The people for being lukewarm if they have not responded to the minister stirring them up to holiness and zeal for The Kingdom?

The Bibles they read because they do not challenge their faith?

Wrong! Satan has suggested things and people listen to him. He is behind all this and the church ignores him and does nothing to fight him.

Until the church fights Satan and demonstrates The Kingdom of God it will be a social club, achieve little for The Kingdom and be in danger of being spewed out of the mouth of Jesus.

The Battle not fought by The Church

We are told we fight the demons who plan the attacks and not just the people that carry them out or the demons guiding them to do the action, that we are to attack these demonic leaders and not just the people or demons they use. Demons can be replaced but if you remove the demons and their leaders then there is no one to use the people to attack you and their attack stops dead in its tracks.

*Eph 6:12 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

We are told the Kingdom of God is being attacked and we are to attack back

Mt 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

We are told to do it and not just watch!

*Mar 16:17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

So the church ignores all this and asks Jesus to do it for them when Jesus has distinctly said we are too. Any wonder the church is in decline in many places.

### **Stewardship and the Kingdom of God**

Satan is out to kill, steal and destroy and his time is short. As he is still ruler of this world these trademarks of his are all over it. Everywhere is death, destruction as well as people who have been robbed of their quality of life. As his time is short he has stepped up his activities in these areas so that these activities of his will be more worse and in the tribulation become almost unbearable. But God is a God of Love and has promised never to test us above what we can handle so there will still be a way of escape for these people in the tribulation and great tribulation. Jesus will still accept them if they repent.

The earth belongs to Jesus as it is part of the spoils of war from His victory over Satan (apart from being part of His creation). It is an unclaimed part of His Kingdom and so we have a responsibility because we are citizens of The Kingdom of God and thus stewards of the things of The Kingdom to look after these things of The Kingdom of God on the earth we are given to care for. Usually this is the family and what it is steward of although in government and public departments it could be a greater area or activity.

This is one responsibility the members of The Body has not done in the way Jesus desires it done which is why governments have so much legislation to inhibit Christian activity these days.

As stewards of the things of God we need to care for them. Satan knows this and all ecological problems are a result of Satan trying to destroy God's spoils of war as he uses them to trap as many people as he can and take them to hell.

The thing Satan tries to destroy most are our mind and body so we cannot do the work of God, attack Satan and his kingdom and bring Jesus dishonour by abusing what He has given us as a bad steward of these things. So we need to learn how to be a good steward of these.

Satan will put illness on you so being ill is not wrong. The problem is in the attitude we have towards it that will determine whether or not we are a good steward of our illness.

We need to examine what we do carefully and see whether we are destructive (Satan guided) or constructive (God guided).

As stewards we must be faithful to reap the rewards promised of which one is Salvation and the other is an eternal relationship with God with all the good things that come with it.

### **Stewardship and The Church**

Another masterstroke of Satan was to convince the church they were owners and not stewards of the things they had and as such could do what they wanted with them without the need to consult God. Thus God was deprived of the use of these things and Satan got the benefit of them because people did not ask God what to do with them. This meant Satan could suggest what to do with them and use these things for his own purposes. They would not be used to cause people openly to sin but to sidetrack them and gradually lead them into sin. Usually it was a sin of pride in what they 'owned' or covetousness to make their building or ministry greater than other buildings or ministries.

Because possessions were thought by people to be their own to do with what they wanted, Satan brought in the concept of profit on interest and saving (hoarding possessions and not sharing excess possessions with those who needed them). Wealth creation and profit became more important than hearing God as people did not believe they needed to ask God what to do with things. Because of this we have the resulting financial structure today with the emphasis on wealth creation. This emphasis on wealth creation and preservation hides the promises and requirements of Matt 6:33 as well as the attitude to money a citizen of the Kingdom of God should have.

By this structure he ties up the money of God even further having Christians seek for treasure on earth, ignoring obtaining treasure in heaven as well as blinding them to their stewardship responsibility of things, and that they need to ask what to do with God's possessions that have been trusted to them.

Until this situation is remedied the church will always be poor spiritually and financially.

The Body has many interactions with the world one of which is stewardship and unless it is led by The Holy Spirit it will not serve God as it should let alone be able to demonstrate The Kingdom of God as it should.

## **The church in Acts**

The book of Acts is a history of the of the Kingdom of God on earth after the commencement of the New Covenant (the expression of the New Testament of Christ) between God and man that resulted from The death of Jesus at Calvary.

With the death of Jesus, the Old Covenant (Old Testament) was completed, the sacrificial system was made redundant so that there were new ways to worship and minister to Jesus and others on His behalf as well as to relate to Him.

The Kingdom of God was now in the citizens of God's Kingdom and you no longer needed a select group of people to help you approach God or a special place to worship Him. These were made redundant after Calvary and now you could worship God without the need of sacrifice or of a special place to worship God in. There was no need for ritual of any kind or for someone to sacrifice an animal for you. so you could approach Him Worship was now possible wherever two or more people were gathered together for the purposes of The Kingdom of God (Mat 18:20). Fellowship could occur anywhere now, and not just in the Temple, synagogue or special places.

The Kingdom of God was now mobile and was sent to everyone in the world as it was no longer tied to the Temple because it was now in the followers of Jesus. The people of The Kingdom could go everywhere to preach Jesus and were able to worship Him wherever they were. The shackles of Old Testament worship and evangelism had been broken and a new regime for evangelism and worship (as recorded in Acts) was now to occur!

The book of Acts opens with Jesus telling His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until The Holy Spirit was sent to authorise (empower) them to serve Him (Acts 1:4-5). The disciples were not to be concerned when this would happen, or when Jesus would return but to wait for the Holy Spirit to anoint them to minister and then all the resources of The Kingdom would be behind them as they did the work of the Kingdom (Acts 1:7-8, Matt 6:33).

This principle of waiting for God to anoint you to minister is so important that it is the first command given in Acts. The command given in the Gospels, the Great Commission, could not be fulfilled until The Holy Spirit came at Pentecost to appoint and anoint (empower) them to this ministry. To serve Jesus, you must wait for His timing to anoint you, authorise and empower you to minister. Often the Ministry is not told to you after this has happened.

Service is not at the command of the denomination or minister which does this for the purpose of the denomination or man usually. Often this is not what God desires and so counters or hinders the work of The Kingdom.

In the Gospels Jesus told us what was on His heart for us to do and in Acts He tells us we need His Commissioning (anointing of His Spirit as happened in Acts 2) as well as the guidance of The Holy Spirit to perform it. Note how many times the baptism (anointing) and the Will of The Spirit is mentioned in Acts.

The disciples had been given the Holy Spirit previously to mark them as belonging to Jesus (Jn20:22) and would soon be given The Baptism (anointing) of the Holy Spirit to authorise them for service so that The Holy Spirit could work through them to demonstrate the Kingdom of God like Jesus did.

The apostles were still a man short and had not yet received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to be able to be guided by Him so resorted to reason to replace Judas. They used a method of the Old Testament, the casting of lots (Acts 1:26 Prov 16:33).

Here is the first example of what happens when you do not consult with God or wait for His timing:

The person they chose, Matthias, is hardly mentioned in Acts as he was not God's choice

They did not pick someone who was to minister as God desired. Church appointed not God appointed

Their choice did not have the qualifications God needed to use him as He desired so did not authorise Matthias for ministry as an apostle.

God did not anoint him to write and explain things and interpret God's Will/solution for problems in the early church

God's solution is far superior to that of man which is why we need to be led by the Holy Spirit to hear God's answer and desires for us! It is as we implement our own solutions separate from God that we fail, achieve second best or get in God's road.

Just compare what God's appointed person (Paul) is recorded as doing compared to what Matthias is recorded as doing,

This is why a church will not function as God desires it when the people are chosen by denominational or church guidelines or affiliations or who they know in the church.

God is a God of wonders! Not only did He stop the persecution that was happening but used one of its leaders to replace the position left vacant by Judas (Acts 9:31)!

The Holy spirit was given to them (Acts 2) and the gifts they needed would also have been provided. As the primary focus was to preach and teach the Kingdom, the first gift given was the gift of tongues, the ability to speak in your own language but be understood by the hearer in their own language. This was so they could minister to and preach to those who did not understand their language, which was important in Jerusalem as so many people had come from other countries to worship at the temple at Pentecost and the only way to reach them was through the gift of tongues.

When they had been sent out previously to the Jewish Nation the gift of tongues had not been needed but now they were to be sent into the world to preach amongst people of a strange tongue they would not be able to talk to them without the gift of tongues and the corresponding gift of interpretation of tongues.

The apostles and disciples were now authorised to do the work of Jesus and had a boldness they did not have before. They came out of hiding and the first act Peter did was to take up his God-given ministry of evangelism and preach Jesus. The Holy spirit does not just anoint you to minister He also gives you the boldness to minister!

Another result of The Holy Spirit's anointing was unity. They continued in worship and praise of God, learning more of God and having fellowship and communion (in Acts 2:42-43) in unity of The Spirit (Acts 2:42-43), they also were willing to share what they had spare with those who needed support of any kind, but they did not steal from the need of their family to give to others (Acts 2:44-45.)

The Kingdom was also demonstrated in miracles and exorcism so that many were confronted with the authority of the Kingdom of God over that of Satan's kingdom and followed Jesus.

They were not afraid to suffer and fearlessly preached Jesus, valuing His message more important than their own lives (Stephen, Acts 7) or the threats of imprisonment or beatings (Acts 4:17).

The Holy Spirit will always give you the strength and faith you need in these circumstances (Acts 4:8,5:17-18)

They were doing the work of God (Acts 8:12-16) so God protected them (Acts 5:17-20). They went fearlessly back into the Temple they had been thrown out of and were not being afraid of being arrested or beaten.

The Kingdom was being proclaimed and it was being added to daily with new citizens.

As in revivals, God quickly dealt with those that opposed the move of the Spirit.

Ananias and Saphiras believed they could hide what they did from the Apostles and God. They did not really appreciate God and His all knowingness, or wholeheartedly follow Jesus, not being willing to pay the cost of following Jesus. God did not tolerate this lukewarmness and removed them before they could pollute the Kingdom and bring it into disrepute (Acts 5:1-11)! Similar happens in revivals where people stand up against the anointed evangelist resisting the revival preacher and the revival and drop dead. The Holiness of God will not stand being polluted by unbelief.

Another problem that arose was the time the spiritual leaders spent doing the mundane activities required to meet the needs of the disciples. So God brought this to a crisis and gave instruction in regard to who was to do what in the assembly. God divided them up into two categories: those involved in spiritual ministries and those involved in physical ministries. Later on in the Bible God gives us a list of the five spiritual ministries given to minister too (and not control) the citizens of The Kingdom of God.

Those who were the spiritual leaders were not to get involved in the daily duties necessary to run the local assembly but were to spend their time with The Holy Spirit to hear His advice and instructions so they could give the spiritual guidance people needed. God's fast is to separate yourself from the world and what it offers so ministers are to separate themselves from worldly pursuits and concentrate on the spiritual side of Christianity.

Godly people were appointed to run the gathering of disciples and family and meet their daily needs. This would also be a training ground for them to learn to serve properly in preparation for when they would be spiritual leaders and spend their life spiritual service to others (see Acts 6).

An example of the quality of Godliness these people had is shown when one of them, Stephen is Martyred for testifying to the religious leaders of his faith in Jesus (Acts 7) rather than denying Jesus and being freed. The early Christians were not afraid to die for their testimony.

The early church trusted completely in God and obeyed Him regardless of the possible consequences to their selves.

As usual Satan puts fear into people so the Christians in Jerusalem were scattered because of the persecution of them by the leaders of the Jews. This God allowed to scatter the knowledge of Jesus throughout Israel or wherever other places the disciples were scattered too. They had been told to go into the world but did not do so. So God used Satan to enforce this on them.

The quality of Character of another of these men is shown. Phillip was an evangelist as well as one who demonstrated the miracles of the Kingdom of God. He was the disciple who took the Gospel to Samaria leaving his home and security behind. The Samaritans believed but had not been authorised (anointed/empowered) to minister. Two apostles were sent to them, whom when they realised this, laid hands on them and prayed for them to receive The Holy Spirit's Baptism (authorisation to minister). With authorisation by The Holy Spirit comes His empowerment. The laying on of hands, was symbolic, as the anointing comes from the Holy Spirit and not from man.

The things of the Kingdom cannot be bought, They are gifts from God (Acts 8:18-20). Anyone selling them or implying they can impart them at will does not belong to the Kingdom of God or is very deceived and needs deliverance. Only as God authorises can the gifts be imparted and stewardship of property and possession be transferred.

Anyone selling them can only be providing them by demons which is why there is so much trouble in some churches that proclaim they control the gifts and miracles and sell them to people through 'donations'.

The church also baptised by immersion (Acts 8:38). It is hard to be buried and rise again if you are only sprinkled but it is easy if fully immersed in water.

In The Didache there are three methods usable for baptism and sprinkling is not one of them, As the Didache as the instructions from Jesus as to what to teach the gentiles we can assume sprinkling was not an approved method of baptism. Having said that, baptism is a confession of faith demonstrated by an act and if a person does not know any other method who is to judge their 'baptism'.

God makes everything beautiful in His time and now it was time to replace Judas. God is a God of Miracles, and not the person who was to replace Judas was the chief one stirring up opposition to Jesus. The Apostle Paul!

Note the obedience of Ananias (Acts 9:17) even though there was the possibility of dying through expressing His faith He trusted Jesus, and went to Paul. He had not known Paul had been converted and was no longer killing Christians. The early church were willing to do the work of the Kingdom no matter what the cost was to them.

Paul's life was now in danger as He preached Jesus because He was sufficiently skilled to show the teachings of Jesus as superior to The Law (Acts 8:23) but his time to die had not yet come and God delivered him to safety.

We are given specific examples of the kinds of miracles the early church did. Healing People, raising people from the dead (Acts 9) and casting out demons (Acts 16:16) and are all examples of the authority of The Kingdom over that of Satan's kingdom. These are the signs Jesus said would follow those that believe (Mark 16:9-19) and their occurrence in the book of Acts verifies that this passage of Mark is scripture.

One wonders why the Western church does not show them and because of this does not demonstrate that Jesus and The Kingdom are real.

We are also shown that the Gospel is for all (Acts 10) so that if you withhold the Gospel from any one because of their lifestyle or race then you are not doing what Jesus asked you to do. You are denying Jesus and He will deny you when you try and go to heaven.

In heaven there is no such thing as race or creed (Gal 3:28). There are only true believers who are citizens of the Kingdom of God. Any church promoting their denomination over that of another one (except for their being heresy in the other denomination) is dividing the Kingdom of God and does not belong to it, promoting its own agenda over that of God's! Any church ignoring a race or group of people and not taking Jesus to them does not belong to Him!

A final comment is on Paul surviving a snakebite (Acts 28). Jesus said we would take up serpents and they would not harm us. Here God also shows His word in Mark 16:9-19 is true.

It is to be noted that nowhere in The Bible are these gifts and working of miracles said to no longer apply. So man has no excuse for not at least trying to do them. God looks at our heart and its purposes and not our success. So we

may not be used to do miracles but if our heart has a correct attitude to their being done that is all God requires of you.

## **The Apostle**

When we look at the book of Acts we see that so much of it is about the apostle Paul and is in a sense a mini panorama of his life. Why, in a part history of the Kingdom of God on earth, is there so much about the Life of one man.

I believe there are five reasons for this:

To show his qualifications so that it is obvious Paul knew what he was writing about

To Show the attitude of a citizen of the Kingdom of God to the Gospel

To show what an apostle does

To show God was correct in choosing Paul as an apostle and ignoring the choice of the eleven apostles who chose by lot the replacement for Judas.

To show no one is beyond hope of responding to the Gospel even though it may take a personal visit by Jesus to encourage them to respond.

Acts 13: 2-4 The Holy Ghost appoints him to ministry and guides him in it. He is sent by the Holy Ghost to evangelism the Gentiles and to teach them how to live for The Kingdom of God (2 Tim 2:2).

An apostle goes where no Christian evangelist or pastor has been already. An apostle is to proclaim the Gospel and teach Jesus where no one has gone Before, He may find believers who have declared Jesus To be their Lord in another place in which case the apostle strengthens their faith and teaches them how to live as a citizen of the Kingdom of God. This is how Paul operated in ministry, reaching those who had never heard and encouraging and building up those who had. He rarely stayed in a place for too long (unless God told him too) and moved around teaching and preaching The Kingdom God (Acts 28:31). He preached boldly and unashamedly and fearlessly trusting God for whatever happened to him.

Paul gave up all to follow Jesus and was not afraid to die for his faith in Jesus. He willingly went to Rome knowing he was going to die there. He willingly went there as it would give him a chance to tell the Gospel to the emperor as well as the fact he would preach and teach people who would go to all parts of the empire because Rome was the centre of the empire and people went from Rome to every part of the empire.

Paul said *“for me to live is Christ and to die is gain”*.

Anyone who calls themselves an apostle but stays in a church is really a glorified pastor. Unless you are appointed one by God and sent to do the work of an apostle you are not one.

In Acts we have before us a panorama of the Christian life as it should be lived by a citizen of the Kingdom of God (Paul being a chief example which is why his life is mentioned so much in the book of Acts).

It is not just the Apostles (leaders who lived it) but the disciples (ordinary people) also lived it. All who say they belong to the Kingdom of God, are expected to live this lifestyle or are at least trying to live it. If this lifestyle is the requirement to live as a citizen of the Kingdom of God what then of Churches and its members that do not do these things? Are they part of the Kingdom of God? After all Jesus said that by your spiritual fruits you would be known

You are either in The kingdom of God, doing His work (showing His fruit), trying to do His work, resting or learning how to do His work. If you are not doing any of these you may not be in The Kingdom and not have salvation.

The work of the kingdom is:

Preaching The Kingdom

Teaching The Kingdom

Demonstrating The Kingdom

Casting out demons

Healing the sick

Destroying the works of Satan (note: destroying not hindering)

Whatever the King tells you to do

This is all plainly seen in the Bible is so you do not have any excuse for not knowing that you have to do these things.

Jesus also said that the miracles done by the early church were a sign that they were His followers (Mark 16:17-18). Any one not doing any of these signs needs a good reason not to be doing them unless they are resting, learning how to work in them or waiting for anointing to go out and minister in them.

What of the Shepherds of the sheep that do not teach the sheep to do these things. They are suppose to be mature Christians and if they do not do these things or teach them then they do not believe what Jesus said and may be false shepherds honouring Jesus in name only and not doing the works He said to do.

Jesus said we would do these things if were His follower. If you are not doing them then you had better have a good reason to give Him for not doing these things when you face Him at the Judgment seat.

You are a citizen of the Kingdom of God and are expected to live like one and to undertake the necessary training or learning to be able to serve Jesus in these things.

You will have no one else to blame but yourself as Jesus said (John 7:17) that anyone who desired to know what Jesus taught (including what He says you are to do) would be shown this by The Holy Spirit.

What happens next is up to you!

### **The Letter to the Seven churches**

When writing to the churches in the book of Revelation why does Jesus address the church as a whole and not individuals in each church?

He is looking at the church in terms of the requirements of The Kingdom of God and how it impacts on the society around them because of what it preaches and how it demonstrates Jesus and The kingdom. The church and their representation of The Kingdom reflects the leadership and in a way these letters are comments on the leadership in these churches.

In a sense it shows the importance of the church as a local representative of the Kingdom of God on earth. There is no longer is a temple, synagogue or other places of worship mentioned in the New Testament as each person in The

Body now is a temple and is able to worship God personally. People cannot see The Kingdom except in the normal daily life of a citizen of The Kingdom or when they make as a group, a part of the Body known as a local church.

Ministers are usually responsible for what the church does so if the church does not do the will of God it is probable they will have the greater condemnation. Perhaps this is why the Nicolaitans are amongst the first mentioned problems in the church.

If a church is not doing the work of Jesus it may not be part of the Body. It could be in the category of one of those churches that God says will be removed and people in it may lose their salvation. The church loses being a member of the Body of Christ and its members may be in danger of going to hell. This is not to say all the members have these wrong attitudes but many do and they allow the church leadership to make it the way it is.

### **So there is a double warning here:**

Are you a part of the body doing the work of Jesus or

Are you demonstrating The Kingdom to society as Jesus desires you to by life and word or are not doing this and in danger of hell fire.

The church is the sum of its members so the local church that Jesus condemns is because of what most of its members do. The condemnation is also of the church's leadership that guide the members so that they do what they are taught by the leadership which a reflection of what the leadership believes and does.

In a sense these letters are a judgment on the official and unofficial leaders in the church. So these letters are to leaders who are recognized and appointed as such and those that assume leadership unofficially in a church.

### **What were and still are Nicolaitans**

The root of the word Nicolaitans comes from Greek 'nikao', to conquer or overcome, and 'laos', which means people and which the word laity comes from. The two words together mean 'to overcome or rule' the people and refers to the earliest form of what we call a priestly order or clergy which later on in church history divided people and allowed for leadership other than those led by the Holy Spirit. A good translation of Nicolaitan would be "those who prevail over the people"

These leaders destroyed the flat structure of the Body of Christ where each person is directly answerable to Jesus and not to another and replaced Jesus as its bishop (1 Pet 2:25).

Spiritual authority over another in the Body of Christ is only for the purposes of helping them in their spiritual life and then it is not control type authority but a servant type serving the spiritual needs of the person. This true authority last only as long as Jesus wants you to minister to that person: to guide them, help them mature, to meet all of their needs you need to or to teach them what Jesus desires them to be taught.

Ministry is the expression of God's love in you to another and to express it any other way than helping them because Jesus has asked you to is to take over the role of Jesus and declare you know what is best for a person.

To take authority over the physical side of a person is wrong unless Jesus appoints you as steward over them. Physical authority is really legal authority which God has setup laws in the land to guide and control this area. Servants meet the physical needs of another and do not control them and so it is with all who are citizens of The Kingdom, that they meet the needs of others and not seek to have their own needs met or to control others for their purposes.

## **Background**

Chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Revelation deals with letters to seven churches in Asia Minor. Why were they all in Asia Minor?

We are told in the Letter to Pergamos that Satan had his throne (seat) there so he ruled from there and these churches were all in the area of its influence and of the influence of the people who served at his throne.

The chief spirit over Asia Minor was not a lower territorial spirit but Satan himself. So the churches were prime targets for his attacks and illustrated various ways he attacked the church. So these Letters are to seven churches to illustrate the effects of Satan attacks on churches.

It is interesting that after these letters to the seven churches the focus changes from these churches in the area Satan controls to God's throne in heaven as if to remind us that Satan is controlled by God so that these churches are only in danger if they do not follow Jesus as Lord!

### **Ephesus 2: 1-7**

This was the seat of the worship of the Goddess Artemis who was worshiped throughout the then known world. The demon behind Artemis would probably be working directly To Satan and if Satan did not have his seat there this demon would have been the most powerful demon in that area.

The Ephesians were doing all the correct things as Christians, but from wrong motives. They had left their first Love Jesus (v4) so love for Him was no longer their motivation. The legalism that was involved in the cult of the goddess Artemis had somehow crept into the Christians so love was no longer a motivation for service.

They Tested the spirit behind things v2

They could not stand evil people v2

They laboured to serve Jesus and endured in this labour v3

But their motive for service was wrong so Jesus could not have them as His representatives and would close the church down rather than have it minister in a corrupt way. Even though they were preaching the correct gospel of salvation (as they followed the Bible (v2) legalism and ritual had crept in and replaced love and grace. They were not serving Jesus out of love for Him but for the sake of service.

Legalism could only have crept in if The Holy Spirit was no longer in charge or being ignored and not manifesting in their midst with His guiding gifts.

They were commended, however, because they hated the priestly structure associated with the Nicolaitans.

The Ephesian church had the truth but did the right things but for the wrong reasons. They had lost their love for Jesus so it was just ritual and legalism, the same as it was at the Temple of Artemis to which it was little different in many ways once it lost its love of Jesus.

It was a church society could not see are different to what they were doing already and in many ways represents the church of today.

### **Smyrna 2:8-11**

The church at Smyrna is commended for its endurance against Satan's attacks on it. They are encouraged to continue in their endurance until the trial is over and they will be rewarded with eternal life.

They are told not to be afraid as Jesus is greater than Satan and they can never lose the gift of eternal life He promises them they would have if they endure to the end of the trial.

This is the type of Church that resists the evil around it and is not compromised by this evil in any way. Its members would rather be imprisoned than give in to the forces of evil around them.

They have not lost their first Love for Jesus and endured because of their love for Him and His Things.

It was a church that represented The Kingdom of God in all it did!

### **Pergamos 2:12-17**

In this city Satan had his seat (throne) and from this earthly throne he could monitor Rome, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Egypt and other important spiritual areas in the countries around him.

The church in Pergamos was once godly and they had people who had died fighting for the faith in that city. But they had become compromised in two ways:

They had allowed a priestly structure in the church (with all the results that follow this type of structure).

They had also abused the forgiveness and freedom the Grace of Jesus allows a Christian.

They had compromised their faith through allowing things of Satan's world system to be acceptable in the belief they could repent afterward because of Calvary and the forgiveness that was there. (Heb 6:6-8 had been written then and they also had the warning in Rev 3:5)

After a while this worldliness became a natural part of their lifestyle and they no longer repented.

The Nicolaitans were there because the church had accepted things of Satan's world, because they had lost the ability to Hear the Holy spirit so adopted man's system of doing things

This is the church did not fight evil but compromised with it and lost its love for the truths of God as well as its ability to hear the Holy Spirit and had adopted man's methods of doing things.

It was a church that was irrelevant to the society around it and is also representative of many churches today that have lost the leading of The Spirit and look to man's ways of leading and guidance.

### **Thyatira**

This is the longest letter to any of the seven churches. Jezebel was the problem in this church. Jezebel is part of the unholy trinity: Jezebel, Death and Hades and Anti-Christ so a victory over her is important.

This church showed God's love in its ministry but had Jezebel in its midst using Christians for her purposes. (Those that did not have Jesus truly as Lord).

Each person in the Thyatira church would be judged according to their service of Jesus. Those who allowed Jezebel to use them would be destroyed. Those that resisted her would continue in their relationship with Jesus (salvation) and would rule the nations with Him.

Jesus placed no other trial on them than to resist Jezebel and obey His revealed Will (truths). This is the church that seeks to do God's Will and resist the things of Satan but the leadership does not remove those Satan uses from within its midst so it sends mixed signals to society around. Those of Satan and those of Jesus.

This is a church that is too busy trying to please man and so ignores what God wants it to do. A church that tolerates evil in its midst for the sake of peace and so called unity.

### **Sardis 3:1-6**

Sardis was a Church that had forgotten its beginnings so the foundational teachings it had received were badly compromised or forgotten. Things were so bad that many would lose their salvation. They were told to restore (strengthen) that of the Truth that they still had left (and Jesus would build on this and their desire to hold to these truths).

As always, there was a faithful remnant who had held to this what they were originally taught.

This is a church that compromised its truths and salvation because they allowed into their belief system things that were ungodly and embraced them. They had salvation (were in the Lamb's book of life but if they did not repent their name would be blotted out of and these would lose their salvation (v5).

Can you lose your salvation? Yes, through deliberately unrepented disobedience, according to this letter.

This church did not represent God or His Kingdom so was of none or little use to Him.

### **Philadelphia.**

Jesus had been watching them as they had been faithful to the point of exhaustion (had little strength) and had obeyed Jesus completely (there was no condemnation to them).

Jesus set before them an open door (of service and ministry) as they had proved their worth to Him through their faithfulness to Him. Their enemies would bow before them and admit their error of faith to the Philadelphians.

They are encouraged to endure to receive their rewards. It is only as you finish the race do you receive the prize.

This church represented Jesus and by their faith and lifestyle attracted people to Him and His Kingdom.

The people in this church had passed all the tests necessary to prove their faith in Jesus so they could be used by Him as He desired too so He would lay no other burden (trials) on them. Satan had been allowed to sift them and had failed. Through the way they had handled these trials of Satan they had proved to Satan they were worthy of doing the work Jesus had called them to do.

You do not become great in the kingdom of God through studying the Bible at seminaries, Bible colleges etc.. You become great through applying the Bible, and faithfully enduring every trial Satan places on you.

### **Laodicea 3:14-22**

This is the lukewarm, worldly, wealthy, comfortable church, a comfortable social club with all the trappings of Christianity but none of the fruit of it. Of no spiritual relevance to the world around it as it makes none or little spiritual impact on it, having little of any real spiritual worth to offer them. Appearing to be little different to the world, or to other religions and cults having little impact on the world.

If your church makes little impact in the society around it, perhaps it is this type of lukewarm church. If this is not this type the church, you had better find out why Jesus cannot use your church to impact the people around you.

Jesus hates comfortable, lukewarm people or churches so much He spews (violently vomits) them out of His Body into Satan's world as He will not use or tolerate hypocrisy. This is the hypocritical church that say they are Christ's, but pay only lip-service to Him.

If any repent and obey Jesus (v20) their Salvation relationship with Jesus will be restored (Jn 17:3) and they will be restored to fellowship with Him and The Father.

They had not blasphemed The Holy Spirit as they were able to be restored so it was more comfortableness and disobedience rather than maligning or calling into disrepute (blaspheming) The Holy Spirit and His Things. Ignoring the Holy Spirit is disobedience and not blasphemy.

This church was hypocritical saying they served God but ignored what He wanted them to do so they were of no effect on society and even gave a bad impression of what Jesus wanted to tell society and would be vomited strongly out of His Kingdom if they did not repent. He had nothing of good to say to this church but still gave them hope if they repented.

Some of the lessons from these letters

You can lose your salvation (Rev 3:5)

Only in obedience to Jesus and His truths is their salvation

There are rewards for overcoming the attacks of Satan.

Only if you endure to the end will you receive a reward (Matt 10:22, 1 Cor 15:58)

Lukewarmness (comfortable Christianity) is hated by Jesus.

You must reject the world and all it offers not to be compromised by it.

God is Love and readily accepts the repentant person back into fellowship (Salvation,). It is obvious these people had not blasphemed The Holy spirit or they would not have been able to repent.

You must be led by The Holy Spirit to avoid the traps these churches fell into.

Each of these churches would have shown the Kingdom in a different way but only those that obeyed The Holy Spirit would be showing it correctly. Those that showed a church structure or lifestyle little different to the religions around them would have little impact on the society they lived in but those that had people willing to stand up for Jesus and die for Him would have changed the society they lived in.

Only as you show your life is different to those around you as you demonstrate the authority of The Kingdom of God in the world and that you are willing to die for Jesus will you impact society in a way that will change it.

Remember, that these churches reflected the attitudes of the ministers and/or church board over them and Jesus will hold them accountable for the way they led the people they had control of.

**Closing Comments on the letters**

As I was discussing the purposes of these letters the prophetic I was discussing this with was given the following by Jesus:

They were written to the people in those areas professing to be of Christ yet not willing to open their blind eyes or their ears. Had they been willing to listen to the Holy Spirit, certain letters would not have been necessary. They are also an example for churches employing those same practices today.

These were written for Christians to examine their heart and see which one of these churches they are attending. Yet was written for leaders of churches as well as all people professing to be Christians.

### **Warnings to Church pastors and leaders**

Things that are not done or Misunderstood in regard to churches and thus affect The Kingdom

The church has confused the denomination with The Kingdom of God and exalted the denomination to a position it should not have and by this makes the work of the denomination replace the work of The Kingdom. As a result all sorts of errors and wrong activities occur. Not intentionally but because things are done the way they have been done for generations.

### **Nine things that are wrong with Christianity**

When the Kingdom of God is not demonstrated then Christianity is no different to any other religion or moral lifestyle.

When the Christians stopped meeting in public places and used special buildings they became a closed society and no longer informally met people in the public places to discuss the Christian faith as the early church did.

When they stopped hearing The Holy Spirit or believed He was not personal or could be heard by people, they became like any other religion and had to use man's way of doing things.

When they stopped laying up treasure in heaven they laid up treasure on earth and grew wealthy and worldly.

When they stopped showing God's Love and Mercy to people they had to find a new direction and purpose for being a church and justifying their existence. Man's ways of doing things became the churches way of doing things so it grew less and less like The Kingdom of God and more like the world.

When they lost their personal relationship with God they lost their identity of whom they were.

When they gave authority to a person (pastor apostle etc.), they placed themselves under man and not God and lost direction and purpose being guided and driven by man and their processes rather than God.

When they paid others who were "certified and trained" to do their social work and evangelism they lost their purpose for being a Christian.

When they became insular and self orientated promoting their own church or denomination they lost their focus on The unity of The Kingdom, their purpose in the world and God's heart for it.

### **What is not usually done by the denominational church**

They do not demonstrate the authority and power of Jesus over His enemy

They do not destroy the works of the enemy

They do not publicly stand up for the values and purposes of the Kingdom of God

They do not worship in public

They do not take ground from the kingdom of the enemy so that the enemy takes ground from The Kingdom of God

They have given Satan the earth and all on it rather than fight Satan and increase the influence of the Kingdom of God on the earth, recapturing that which rightfully belongs to Jesus.

They tolerate the sins that resulted in so many dying in Israel and Judah and eventually resulted in the people being removed from the land!

They do not teach the true cost of what Jesus did on Calvary!

They do not teach personal holiness and sanctification and became compromised by the world!

Their worship has become fleshly and self-centred, no longer being led by The Holy Spirit

They enjoy the chief places at the feasts and the importance of having large churches.

Numbers and prosperity are more important than humility or holiness!

They do not use God's weapons of warfare and so are easy prey for His enemy!

They do not protect the people in the congregation adequately because they use their own weapons and defences and not God's!

They do not fulfil God's requirements for true religion... the loving of their neighbour as God loves them! Helping the widow, orphan the sick and the needy!

They do not grieve in their heart over the lost and the fallen in the church! They do not weep over them as Jesus does!

They are too busy building "organisations" and using the latest "approved" method to listen to The Holy Spirit's Leading!

They spent money on buildings and personal "junkets" and "necessary" luxuries, rather than on the lost and needy around them. Many of the ministers also have a lifestyle better than the people they are supposed to Love as themselves!

They are too busy playing "important pastor" of "prominent church" to develop intimacy with Jesus. Their activity on His "behalf" are no replacement for a vital, close, relationship with Him! Jesus has shown people who have gone to heaven that these pastors, if they make it to heaven, have little or no reward, having received their rewards on earth for the fleshly pursuits they chased. The rewards in heaven are for spiritual accomplishments and not fleshly ones.

They do not develop the gifts of the people under their authority or disciple them!

Unless they are "trained" or "officially" approved, people cannot minister in "their" church!

They condemn many to consider themselves inadequate for God's service because of this!

They do not teach "their" people to minister to those outside the church, but only "trained" people are allowed to minister "officially" in or outside the church and not allowed to minister in other denominations until approved by that denomination. This is one way Satan limits ministry.

They do not teach people what God's Love is so they can show it to those living around them, and by this, win many to Jesus!

They do not properly disciple new followers of Jesus but process them, so many do not mature, or fall away. Those that remain are churchified and fit in to what is required of them by the church and denomination.

They reject God's prophets who are calling them to repentance but listen to those who "tickle" their ears with prosperity and ease!

They do not learn or teach how to share in God's fellowship of suffering or teach others what it means!

They do not carry out the commission in Is 61:1-3, Math.28:18-20, or show they believe in who Jesus is Mark 16:17-18 or teach "their" church to do so!

They do not use God's gifts, or delegated authority, properly... but use them to build numbers... not heal or deliver people then train them and send them forth to a lost and hurting world!

### **How to stifle a church**

Do not make God a personal God

Do not make Him relevant for daily living - only for special occasions such as Easter and Christmas

Do not make His miracles or His Gifts to be for today, but only for the time of Jesus

Do not believe or teach the personal guidance and power of the Holy Spirit

Do not make The Word more important than reason, tradition or denominational rules

Do not make the work of God personal - use agencies for charity and evangelism and not church members

### **What is not preached**

Hell and God's Judgment: We are not told what we are saved from so that salvation does not become imperative. Restoration and deliverance do not mean anything as there is nothing to be delivered from. We do not realize our potential as we are not told we need to be delivered from the effects of the fall on the 'flesh'.

The Victory we have over demons and temptation won by Jesus at Calvary or even the fact they attack us.

The rewards of the Kingdom of Heaven: so we do not know how much better they are so that we do not realize that the pleasures of earth are not worth holding onto because they pale in comparison to what is going to be given to us in heaven. It is the rewards in heaven, that make suffering worthwhile. If there were no rewards there would be no reason to suffer. The true Christian does not suffer for reward but out of love for Jesus.

The Love of God expressed towards us: so we don't know how special we are to God or what He does for us each moment of the day. We are not taught the extent of God's Love towards us!

Salvation as a personal relationship: so God becomes impersonal to us and the depth and quality of the relationship with Him is not realized. Thus we do not serve Him out of love but of necessity for the purposes of self-esteem or avoiding going to hell.

The Grace of God is not taught. How much God gives us and gently deals with us out of no benefit to Him. That is God's unmerited favour towards us.

Who Jesus is and what He gave up for us: so we don't appreciate His Love for us and what He gave up to help us. Thus we do not realize any sacrifice we make pales in significance when compared to what He gave up for us!

What it means to be a citizen of God's Kingdom: so we do not realize what it means to be a citizen of God's kingdom and all it requires of us and as well as the rewards offered toward us for service in this kingdom!

The gifts of The Holy Spirit and the delegated authority of Jesus so that the church is sick, without power and has nothing spiritual of The Kingdom with which to do the work of Jesus.

The return of Jesus when all will be restored on earth and things will be as they should have been.

The complete work of Jesus at Calvary so that people are emotionally crippled by guilt, shame and condemnation instead of being released from these.

The roles The Father, The Holy Spirit and Jesus have in the life of a believer so people do not relate or approach them as they should.

### **Does it Matter?**

Does it matter how good your theology is if there is one person going to hell because of it?

Does it matter how good your church programs are if there is one person who has not heard The Gospel that you can but do not teach what Jesus can do for them?

Does it matter how wealthy and prosperous your church is if there is one person who is hungry that you can help?

Does it matter how good your facilities are if there is a child sleeping in the streets you can help?

Does it matter that the needs of the congregation are met but the wounded spirit and the broken hearted outside the church are ignored?

Does it matter how well your church is run if those outside it are not ministered to as they need it?

Does it matter? Will it matter when you face Jesus?

### **False Pentecost**

The greatest success of Satan in the church today is his substituting the true Pentecost of The Holy Spirit with his false Pentecost.

He is able to do this because people are seeking Pentecost and its signs instead of a deeper relationship with Jesus and Holiness. Because of their seeking signs and not Jesus he is able to give them signs that appear Pentecostal but are all sourced in his demons.

He has trained pastors to make people believe these are from God to preach a gospel that watered down and allows these to manifest in the 'church'. People have seen pastors preaching while a demon whispers in their ear what to preach.

So people seek signs and wonders and prophecy and tongues thinking they are growing closer to God when demons are behind these.

this is why there is so much sin in the church these days and which is why only 20% of people who call themselves Christian will go up in the rapture according to Jesus.

We are to seek to deepen our relationship with Jesus and the purposes of His Kingdom and then He will give us of Pentecost what we need and not what we think we need

Satan cannot then give us a false Pentecost.

The Gospel is free so people who charge for it are guided by Satan and not God which is why prosperity preachers are ending up in hell.

### **Divided the church is conquered**

I was lying in bed and Jesus said to me

*“Let Me show you how Satan has crippled the church and hindered My commands to it.*

*Satan knew He could not defeat My church if it was united so he worked at ways to divide it. This is why we have denominations and all the theological differences and squabbles between them over the centuries.*

*But that was not enough! He had to divide each church as well.*

*So how did he do this?*

*There are Apostles, prophets, evangelists, teacher and pastors in My Body.*

*The first thing he did was to make them ‘specialist’ activities the normal congregation member was not qualified by the denomination to do.*

*He made man believe they could choose these people and not need to ask Me who to put in these roles.*

*I choose Apostles and prophets and not man which is why there are so many false prophets in the church as they have been placed there by the choice of men and not by Me so that Satan has been able to guide who they pick..*

*Apostles are to found a church, establish it and move on. When they stay in a church permanently they are pastors and not apostles. As they are not doing the work of an apostle.*

*Evangelists, ministers/pastors and teachers are trained by the denomination to preach the denominational outlook and not mine. You must be qualified to be officially recognised by the church or denomination usually.*

*This does two things:*

*It sets up a two class structure similar to that of the Nicolaitans*

*It stop the normal congregation member from doing the command of Jesus to go into all the world and make disciples and by this training them to become mature Christians.*

*Each denomination also seeks to promote itself and not My Kingdom and does not even consider The Kingdom in their activities. They do not seek unity of My Body but may give token efforts at this.*

*Until My Body is united and the people in it are taught to do the work I gave them then it will become corrupted and die, becoming a shadow of what it could be (which is what many churches are now)*

*Jesus*

(Neville Salvetti 15 August 2019)

### **Ecumenicism**

Where the body meets there is unity so ecumenicism is not needed.

Where denomination unite to do things there are hindrance as they try and adapt each others practices.

Where your faith needs to be compromised to work in unity with another faith then you have ecumenicism. Ecumenicism is only necessary when trying to work with belief systems that compromise your own which means you should not even be considering this union.

Ecumenicism does not occur in heaven so should not be considered on earth.

### **Conclusion**

Until the denomination acts like The Kingdom of God it will gradually die and not fulfill what Jesus asked it to do. This is happening in the western world but in persecuted countries and the third world they are living The Kingdom lifestyle and are growing and doing the work of Jesus.

## **Appendix A**

### **The hindrance of denominations to Christianity**

'Unity of the spirit in the bond of peace' is what is expected of The Body of Christ but it is not happening.

Denominations divide the body and in a way they because compete with each other because they believe they alone have all the truth so divide The Kingdom of God in accordance with the plans Satan made in creating denomination

Denominations were not made by God but by man under the guidance of Satan who knew the damage they would eventually make to the unity of The Body. They are not mentioned in the new testament and first arose as heretical sects.

### **How is this dividing shown?**

Rich churches do not help poor churches even in their own denominations

Denominations do not socialise very often and rarely fellowship with each other and then it is usually considered a special event when it should be an everyday occurrence.

They do not do the work of The Kingdom as it should be done because Satan has managed to stop denominations working with each other so they do not promote The Kingdom but the denomination and the members have little idea about what they are to do as Christians. They are taught to support the denomination and not The Kingdom of God.

When you become a Christian you join the denomination and not The Kingdom of God.

Members of the congregations pay others to do the work they should be doing and few really know the gospel to be able to explain it to others yet that is one of the primary things required of Christians.

They do not share with people the eternal life relationship Jesus offers people and so these people go to hell.

How can a denomination say that it has the 'Love of God' when it does not tell others about God's Love, heaven and what Jesus has done for them, is doing for them and will do for them and how to avoid going to hell by this ignoring those in need around them.

It is hypocrisy to say they have God's Love and sing about it then do little to show it to the lost and hurting world around them.

When a person becomes a member of a church He is welcomed into it and the denomination it belongs too. The Kingdom God is not mentioned yet that is what they really become when they become a true follower of Jesus.

They are taught the authority of the minister and denomination but not the Authority of Jesus and His Kingdom in its truest and fullest sense.

## **Note:**

Satan trained many modern theologians well. He does not have to have them teach error.

All he has to do is:

Cause people to doubt their faith and who God is

Doubt His personal Love for each of them

Not realise salvation is an intimate, personal relationship with each member of The Trinity and not just an activity

Have ministers not preach about certain subjects but hide them or make them appear not necessary, such as:

*Deliverance*

*Spiritual Warfare*

*Evangelism a need ever Christian should be able to do*

*Our intimate relationship with each member of The Trinity*

*Jesus is not Divine*

*Hell*

*Satan, his purposes and how to defeat Him*

*How to deliver people from the damage he has done to them*

*Prophecy*

*Spiritual gifts*

A more cunning stratagem of his is to teach about these things but only superficially so people never really do them as God desires them to be done or to have the need for people to be qualified by the determination to able to do certain things.

### **What is not usually done by the denominational church**

They do not demonstrate the authority and power of Jesus over His enemy and by this do not demonstrate The Kingdom of God

They do not destroy the works of the enemy

They do not publicly stand up for the values and purposes of the Kingdom of God regardless of the cost to them

They do not worship in public but privately in a building away from those they are to reach.

They do not take ground from the kingdom of the enemy so that the enemy takes ground from The Kingdom of God

They have given Satan the earth and all on it rather than fight Satan and increase the influence of the Kingdom of God on the earth.

They tolerate the sins that resulted in so many dying in Israel and Judah and eventually resulted in the people being removed from the land!

They do not teach the true cost of what Jesus did on Calvary or even what He did at Calvary in a way that those outside the church can understand!

They do not teach personal holiness and sanctification and become compromised by the world!

They do not teach how to have a personal, intimate relationship with The Father, Jesus and The Holy Spirit so may not go up in the rapture according to what Jesus has said about this.

They enjoy the chief places at the feasts and the importance of having large churches.

Numbers and prosperity are more important than humility or holiness!

They do not use God's weapons of warfare and so are easy prey for His enemy!

They do not protect the people in the congregation adequately because they use their own weapons and defences and not God's!

They do not fulfill God's requirements for true religion loving their neighbour as they love themselves and in the way God Loves them!

They do not personally help the widow, orphan the sick and the needy but pay others to do this

They do not grieve in their heart over the lost and the fallen! They do not weep over them as The Father does!

They are too busy building "organisations" and using the latest "approved" method to listen to The Holy Spirit's guidance!

They spend money on buildings and personal "junkets" and "necessary" luxuries, rather than on the lost and needy around them. Many of the ministers also have a lifestyle better than the people they are supposed to Love as themselves and the poor in their church are often neglected.

They do not trust God for their needs so borrow money mainly because they do things God has not asked them to do.

They are too busy playing "important pastor" or "prominent minister" to develop intimacy with Jesus. Their activities on His "behalf" are no replacement for a vital, close, relationship with Him!

They do not develop the gifts of the people under their authority! In other words they do not disciple them like Jesus said too.

Unless they are "trained" or "officially" approved, they cannot minister or serve in "their" church! This requirement condemns many who consider themselves inadequate for God's service because of this!

They do not teach "their" people to minister to those outside the church, but only "trained" people are allowed to minister "officially" in or outside the church! The congregation is not taught evangelism and how to defend and demonstrate The Kingdom of God.

They do not teach people what God's Love is so they can show it to those living around them, and by this, win many to Jesus! At times they have trouble showing it even in their own homes.

They do not properly disciple new followers of Jesus but process them, so many do not mature and/or fall away. Those that remain are churchified and fit in to what is required of them by the church and denomination.

In their sermons they give knowledge but often there is no application given that can be applied in a practical way or if there is they are not shown how to apply it..

They reject the prophets of God's calling them to repentance but listen to those who "tickle" their ears with prosperity and ease!

They do not learn or teach how to share in God's fellowship of suffering or teach others what it means!

They do not carry out the commission in Is 61:1-3, or Math.28:18-20, or teach "their" church to do so!

They do not use God's gifts, or delegated authority, properly but use them to build numbers not heal or deliver people to train and send them forth to a lost and hurting world!