

## WHEN THE CHURCH BEGAN

### A LOOK AT THREE BIBLE CHURCHES

*"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*

~ Colossians 1:18

#### 1. Which Did the Church Begin

- a. An old dispute, which we add fuel to by claiming "it began with Paul".
- b. An expected objection: "Church mentioned before Paul!" "People in Christ before Paul!"
- c. Church found throughout scripture, but like children to a father must be distinguished.
- d. Col 2:16-17 – 1) OT 2) things to come (NT) 3) But now – the body is of Christ
- e. What beginning? Not in God's mind (2 Tim 1:9), Not Christ (Jn 1:1, 17:5), but operation
- f. Church ~def. God's called out congregation, assembly of God's people.

#### 2. "Church in the Wilderness" - Acts 7:37-38

- a. A church began at the first mention of His people, but is this what God is doing today?
- b. Who: Exo 4:22 – Israel the firstborn (nation) Deu 33:4 – Jacob's congregation
  - i. Exo 27:20-21 – the tabernacle of the congregation of Israel
  - ii. Isa 2:2-3 – the house of the Lord/Jacob
- c. What: A kingdom- Exo 19:6; 34:10, 24; Deut 7:6, 26:18; Isa 41:8-9
- d. How: Blood of a lamb (Ex 12:3-7, 43-49), Baptism unto Moses (1Co 10:1-2)

#### 3. "Church at Jerusalem" - Acts 8:1

- a. A church began when Christ was first preached (John), the New Testament church
- b. Who: NT Israel, remnant nation, disciples; Mtt 16:18 – I will build my church
  - i. Matt 21:43, Luke 12:32 – kingdom given to "little flock" of Israel
  - ii. Acts 2:44-47 – The Lord added to the church daily in the temple
- c. What: Matt 6:10 – kingdom come to earth, Mat 19:27-28 (Acts 1:6)
  - i. Acts 2:36, 3:18-21, 24 – Jesus the Lord and Christ
  - ii. Matt 28:20; Acts 11:19, 15:1-2, 21:20 – zealous of the law
  - iii. Heb 8:1-2 – tabernacle not made with hands (Rev 21:2-3)
  - iv. Heb 10:16, 25-26, 39, 13:14, 17 – law in their hearts, city to come
- d. How: Heb 9:15-16; John 1:29 – the Lamb of God; Rev 13:8
  - i. Baptism with water and spirit – Mark 1:4, Matt 3:11, Acts 2:38

#### 4. "Church, which is his Body" – Col 1:24

- a. Mid-Acts dispensationalists do not mix Israel into the church of this dispensation
- b. A church began when God *revealed* a new creature, operation, ministry to Paul.
- c. Who: All who believe; both & neither Jews/Gentiles – Gal 3:28, 6:15, Co 3:11
  - i. 1 Cor 3:16 – ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost
  - ii. Eph 5:23, 30 – Christ is the head of the church (you are the church)
- d. What: Col 2:17, Eph 1:22-23 – church, which is his body, a mystery
  - i. Eph 2:6 – raised us up to sit in heavenly places
- e. How: 1 Tim 2:5-6 – a ransom for all to be testified in due time
  - i. Baptism by Spirit into Christ 1 Cor 12:12-13, Rom 6:2-4, Col 2:11-12
  - ii. It could only begin after Israel's fall – Rom 11:11-13
  - iii. It began with revelation to Paul – 1 Tim 1:16; 1 Cor 3:10-11