

Jesus and His Church

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Text: Matt 16:13-18 ESV

13) Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" **14)** And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15)** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16)** Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17)** And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. **18)** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build my church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Ideas:

- What is your view of the of the local church?
- How important is it to you?
- Is it like having three McDonalds in a town: any one will do, after all, they are all the same?
- Is it like having a variety of restaurants where you try one then another?
- Why should we be loyal to a certain church?
 - Is it where your family always attended?
 - Is it a dogged commitment to certain creeds?
 - Is it a personal identity: I've been in this group all my life and intend to stay?
- Does membership matter?
- How does Jesus view the local church?
- Is our view the same as His?

Note: There is strong evidence that Jesus Christ holds a high view of the local church, and that his purpose in our lives can only be fulfilled by faithfulness to a certain fellowship of believers.

A. Evidence Reveals How God Works

1) The Universe is Comprised of Small Parts

- Atoms (Invisible)
- Molecules (Invisible)
- Planets
- Suns
- Solar systems
- Galaxies (Millions)

Notes:

- The smallest part cannot exist without the universe as a whole, and the universe as a whole cannot exist without the smallest part.
- All is interrelated, and each part must fulfill its specific purpose.

2) Global Humanity is Comprised of Nations

Note: Some are attempting to return us to a pre-Babel era when all of mankind was one unit. They want to engineer by international laws and economy.

Note: This is a flagrant attempt to overturn God's plan—as did humanity at the Tower of Babel.

Acts 17:26-27 ESV

“(26) And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, (27) that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him.

Note: A global government and religious system is coming, but will only succeed for three-and-a-half years.

- It will be based upon satanic deception.

Note: We know that God judges nations individually (Read the Old Testament prophets). The same God who judged Israel also judged Sodom, Gomorrah, Egypt, Tyre, Sidon etc.

3) Mankind is Comprised of Individual Families

Notes:

- There is no confusion in the Bible as to what a family is—a **male** husband, a female wife. They are a family. They may or may not have offspring and, if so, they are part of that family.
- Serious consequences befall those who neglect or violate their families.
- Great blessing is promised to those who embrace their families.

Summary:

- **The Universe is Comprised of Small Parts**
- **Global Humanity is Comprised of Nations**
- **Mankind is Comprised of Individual Families**

4) Christ's Body is Comprised of Individual Churches

Vital! Many today feel they are part of the “universal” body of Christ and do not need to be committed to a local congregation.

Vital: Jesus judged seven individual churches in Revelation 2-3

Vital: Some believe these churches represent seven time periods (or dispensations) in the church age. While that may be true, it is more true that Jesus is addressing seven actual churches.

The First Church: Ephesus

Revelation 2:2-5

2) "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. **3)** I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. **4)** But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. **5)** Remember therefore from where you have fallen;

repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.”

The Second Church: Smyrna

Revelation 2:9-11

10) Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

11) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.”

The Third Church: Pergamum

Revelation 2:14-16

14) But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. **15)** So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. **16)** Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.”

The Fourth Church: Thyatira

Revelation 2:19-22, 26

19) "I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. **20)** But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. **21)** I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. **22)** Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, **26)** The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations,

The Fifth Church: Sardis

Revelation 3:1b-3

"**1)** I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. **2)** Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. **3)** Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.

The Sixth Church: Philadelphia

Revelation 3:8, 10-12

8) "I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. **10)** Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. **11)** I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. **12)** The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God.

The Seventh Church: Laodicea

Revelation 3:15-19

15) "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! **16)** So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. **17)** For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. **18)** I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. **19)** Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.

Summary:

- **The Universe is Comprised of Small Parts.**
- **Global Humanity is Comprised of Nations.**
- **Mankind is Comprised of Individual Families.**

- **The Universal Church** is made up of individual congregations and Jesus judges each one individually.
- **The local church** is made up of individuals, all of whom will be individually judged by Jesus Christ.

Call to Action

- **Ephesus**: Abandoned their first love.
- **Smyrna**: Has no charge against them and is encouraged to endure severe trials—to be faithful to the end.
- **Pergamun**: Fell into heresy and immorality.
- **Thyatira**: Likewise permitted heresy and immorality
- **Sardis**: Had a reputation of being alive, but was dead.
- **Philadelphia**: Was commended for patient endurance amid trials and encouraged to press on.
- **Laodicea**: “For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.”

Two Questions:

- 1) How would Jesus judge Antrim BIC today?
- 2) How can I help the Antrim church family gain a good report in Jesus’ eyes.

Note . . .

Our desire as a church family is to hear Jesus say, “Well done, Antrim.”