



## *"The function of the church"*

We can't ignore the significance of the word church; the term used by the Lord Jesus to identify the people he was going to form, through the message he brought from God. Let's read: "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my <<church>>; and the gates of hell (death) shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18).

Jesus Christ is the only founder and constructor of his church. As the architect, he uses saints to build the spiritual building (lively stones, refer to 1 Pet 2:5). The word church is ultimately derived from the Greek "Ekklesia," and is composed out of two other words: "Ek" meaning "out of" and "Kesis" meaning "the called." These words were used by Greeks to form assemblies, and work on cases pertaining to the state or kingdom. The church is constituted by God and the saints with a definite purpose, and pertains to God's kingdom. Therefore, we understand that the specific characteristic of the church is to <<announce the gospel of God's kingdom>> and do it as established by the Lord in His word.

In the days of the apostle Paul, false preachers began to rise, stealing the fundamental significance of itself to confuse the people. Let's read: "For we are not as many, <<which corrupt the word of God>>; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:17). These corruptors, are wheedle preachers that use cleverness and deception to sell something inferior as genuine or new. These false teachers talk with cajolery and verbiage; giving a degraded and adulterated message, thus mixing the paganism and Jewish tradition.

They were dishonest men, whom where in search of winnings and prestige; at the cost of a true gospel and without the moral care of the effect it had to the listeners. Sadly history repeats itself in our times, instead of announcing the true gospel -the one that transforms lives, creating new creatures to give worthy acts of repent, and with the power of God give light to the world-, false teachers pile up with the ability of talk, preaching an accommodated gospel; thus mixing in a clever and diabolical way the things that God condemns with the things that God values. Resulting in a degraded and false gospel; that does not demonstrate our Savior Jesus.

This fits perfectly with the prophecy that refers to the last dispensation of the church, the Laodicea, from the Greek Laos: meaning multitude of people; and says to give or custom, meaning "the customs of people" or "mankind's right." Who would thought that name, would fit perfectly in the religious context we live in? This is proof that we are living the promises of the prophecy of the Lord Jesus. Let's read: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim 4:3-4).

And: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev 3:15-17). Beloved brothers and sisters, this is the reality we live in, we must understand that the "gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (1 Thess 1:5). If the word of God were only preached, then it would not be the gospel of the Lord; because "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor 4:20).

If the church does not present God's power -then what are those change, evidence through righteous lives of its members- we'll become anything else but not the church of Jesus Christ. Let's us not fool ourselves: "If any man... consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness (the gospel practical aspect); He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife... from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim 6:3-5). Listen well: "from such withdraw thyself" and follow the truth of Christ, and let us remember that his word says, "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet 2:9). Virtue means power and actions. It's the practical part of the God's gospel. My beloved reader, are you demonstrating virtue? May God fill us with His Holy Spirit! Amen.

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