

Church Planter?

This teaching is for all those who are leaders or want to be leaders in the living church of our Lord Jesus Christ, or those Christians who want to understand more about the true church and if they are a part of it and are a part of it that is in scriptural order so that their labor for the Lord will be with reward and not be burned up and they suffer loss at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 3:6-15; 2 Cor. 5:9-11).

This brief message is to introduce you to a 10 page teaching, "The Planter," that will give understanding about "church planting" that can be downloaded free from my web site. Most people think they are part of a scriptural entity and will receive rewards for their labor, but in actuality they are not in divine order as specifically given in God's Word! Many leaders think that as being first they are working well, but they will find they will be last, and some will not even get in at all. How sad and eternally tragic!

In the scriptures given in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul writes that he and Apollos were "fellow workers" and "apostles" (4:9),

and that he planted the church in Corinth as a "wise masterbuilder" [Gk.: *architekton*, "architect, superintendent in the erection of buildings," the one who makes the blueprints] and laid the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The teaching is part of an overall blueprint and other views of the church are available there online as well.

What we are to be planted in is important; first is "in Him" (Col. 2:6-10), then "rooted and grounded in love" (Eph. 3:14-21), and next is in a proper understanding and daily application of the "cross" (Rom. 6:3-6; Mt. 10:33-42; 16:24-27; Mk 8:34-38; Lk. 9:23-26).

The problem with church planting today, and actually ever since the second century, is a proper understanding of "the church," its headship, structure, ministries, gifts, and even its entrance requirements.

God has been bringing the church back by steady reformation, one step at a time. Many great revivals have brought reformation, and understanding, but have not influenced the church world-wide like God is going to do in these last days. God is restoring

everything, and is coming back for a church "without spot or wrinkle," and this requires a restoration of everything, to the original "apostles doctrine" in "the church" that He started on the day of Pentecost, and will culminate in the glorious appearing of the Lord Himself in our day. Before that event, all people will be tried and tested, many will fall away under severe persecution, deadly deception, and sin, but a holy remnant will come forth, full of God's holiness and righteousness, testifying to Christ's soon glorious appearing.

When most people think of "church planting" they think of establishing a congregation of believers, and of course the structure varies with the background of the "church planter." However that is not what we find when we study the scriptures. We never see a congregation referred to as "a church," separated from the other believers in a city. The "church in Jerusalem" (singular) included all the members of the body of Christ in the city of Jerusalem, meeting as recorded in many different places (Acts 11 & 12). The letters Paul wrote to churches were written to all the believers in a particular city.

The seven churches in the book of The Revelation referred to all of those people claiming the name of the Lord Jesus in one of those particular seven cities. To a true apostle, the thought of believers being divided into individual congregations, each with their own individual memberships, was not only not thought of, it was intolerable, and warned against strongly by Paul as the result of either a grievous wolf entering into the city flock or else even some of the God ordained leaders of the city of Ephesus going astray and "speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves," and thus selfishly dividing the one united flock in the city (Acts 20:17-31). For believers in a city even saying they were following any one true man of God and implying they were different from the other believers in the city was labeled by Paul as being "carnal, even as being babes in Christ" (1 Corinthians 1 & 3).

So we shall see as we study the scriptures, that church membership is always and only in the entire body of Christ that is both in heaven and on the earth. If we are to become united today, and those who are truly following the Lord will see this clearly, we "must stop doing that which divides us"

and understand the significance, importance, and spiritual power that comes with practical unity in the body of Christ.

The true church of the Lord Jesus is the true "ecclesia," the "called out ones." All those people who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light, called out of sin and into righteousness, out of "conformity to the world's way of thinking and are being transformed by the renewing of their minds" into God's way of thinking and expressing their lives.

The true church is not an institution or organization headed up by man, and centered around agreeing with various teachings and traditions, nor is it one that is centered even around various biblical truths as important as they are, but it is all the people who have been brought into fellowship with God through His son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the fellowship of His Holy Spirit, and have their lives centered around HIM! We must do all that we can to preserve "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and not allow anything to separate us except sin, which also separates people from God Himself.

Beloved, let us continue God's great work of reformation

that He started, and work with Him in perfecting His church, being concerned with how we affect and are affected by the entire body of Christ, the people who are destined for glory to be with Him throughout all the ages. Amen! and Amen!

To read the entire message entitled "The Planter," please go to our web site, www.JohnRothacker.org and you'll see it there. You may either read it there or download it in PDF free.

Other books and teachings are also available there online free, to be read by you or shared in PDF with others.

Contact us if you would like any further help.

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