

About the Author

In 1964, John Philip Rothacker was dramatically and radically converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. Born in Fremont, Ohio, in 1935, he graduated from the College of Dentistry at Ohio State University in 1963, and completed an internship in pedodontics at Children's Hospital a year later, following which he met the Lord.

He then practiced dentistry for two years, dividing his time between private practice and working with children at the Columbus State School for the mentally retarded. Following a desire to serve the Lord full time, and stimulated to fasting and more prayer, John left to do missionary dentistry for three months in the summer program of Project Compassion in the West Indies in 1966. After this ministry, while travelling and working with other missionaries, God led John into the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and he experienced the power of God in many exciting, miraculous, and life changing ways.

After returning home, he was ordained in 1967 by the Lord Jesus **“through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery”** (I Tim. 4:14). John was set apart as an apostle, “to plant the church,” which is what this book on *The church*, and his whole life and ministry, are all about. His first of three other major publications, *The Public Ministry of Women*, teaches about the biblical role that women are to have in the body of Christ, specifically in the assembly, along with many other foundational truths. The second, *A Woman's Headcovering*, is a booklet expounding “a biblical custom practiced faithfully by all godly women from the beginnings of recorded history until our present generations.” The third, *A Woman's Dress*, is another booklet, teaching what God has to say from the creation of man in “Genesis” to “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” about modesty and dress for both men and women, but primarily the biblical and secular emphasis that is upon women.

In 1976, the Lord Jesus led John out of nine years of part-time dental practice (for Paul, it was making tents, Acts 18:3) and into a radio ministry where he has been “on call” teaching and discussing the scriptures and health related subjects over the air live. An original “talk radio” format according to Acts 19:9, the “Truth for Today” program is an outreach through the media of radio, tapes, and literature to “plant the church” in Christ, in His love, faith, holiness, righteousness, health, and healing, always endeavoring to speak the truth in love.

After having been called to be celibate for many years, the Lord gave him a helpmate to minister with him. God is healing both naturally and supernaturally as John teaches; and his wife, Dulce, is given manifestations of the Holy Spirit such as “**a word of knowledge**,” “**gifts of healings**,” and “**spiritual songs**” (Ex. 15:26; I Cor. 12:7-11; Eph. 5:19). As they minister together, the operation of “**faith**” and “**the working of miracles**” bring wonderful surprises.

Among various ministries available is a Basic Disciples Course on audio cassettes together with his books called “Apostolic Foundation Series.” This series of teachings from the Lord’s direction is very helpful for anyone who desires to build his life and God’s church in love and scriptural truth. These and other programs from Truth For Today are available upon request.

Another specific ministry given by special revelation is “Holy Nutrition.” Through the “Health for Today” program, literature, instructions, and products about health and healing are obtainable. “Manna From Heaven” Whole Leaf Aloe Vera is the first in their own line of products that the Lord has directed them to provide for the “health and healing” of His people.

John is also active in various ministries working to preserve our American Christian heritage and regain religious freedom at home, and promoting unity, revival, and restoration in the body of Christ worldwide.

About the Cover

The cover developed gradually over many months, the same as the church has over centuries. First, there was a pastoral scene with the flock of God shepherded by the five-fold ministry, with the Lord Jesus present in Spirit as reflected in the cool still waters so wonderfully portrayed in Psalm 23. The lush green grass for our health with caring oversight brings contentment where we can be fed and ruminate on the Word of God (Psa. 1:2), and properly digest “our daily bread” (Mt. 6:11).

The vine and the grapes are of course an oft symbol of the Lord and His people, for He is the vine and we are the branches, and as we abide in Him, we bear much fruit (Jn. 15). Unfortunately, often the vineyard is not kept by the vine-growers as it should be (Lu. 20; Isa. 5; Jer. 12:10).

So then, the back of the book, which once was the same as the front, gradually developed into a Babylonish scene. The grass is not as green, briars and thorns cropped up, and we have a Babylonian ziggurat with a lamb being taken for slaughter and the sacrifice of false worship. Storm clouds are coming, completely unawares by the fat, overindulgent leader depicted as Ezekiel saw it, as a fat sheep which has not only trodden down the pasture with his own feet but is now drinking of the clean water and fouling the rest with his feet (Eze. 34).

Perhaps if you look closely you can see some thrusting the others with their sides, shoulders, and a few with horns. And perhaps you can spot the wolf lurking to pounce on its prey (Eze. 22:27; Hab.1:8; Mt. 7:15; Acts 20:28-30).

This is just a portion of the picture given in the scriptures and this book, which we have portrayed on the cover. The church has degenerated into a Babylonish disgrace, but wake up church, the Lord is at work!

“He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold

and silver, so that they may present to the Lord offerings in righteousness” (Mal. 3:3 NAS). Yes, “Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless” (Eph. 5:25-27 NAS)!

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Thank You!

First, I want to thank the Lord for everything! His instruction, enlightenment, the wonderful way He leads us into truth is amazing, and fills life with so much wonder and excitement. When writing on subjects such as are found in this book, to reflect on the direction, the inspiration, revelation, all of God's marvelous ways of bringing truth to us, it's just simply wonderful. Thank you Father, thank you Lord Jesus, and thank you Holy Spirit!

Also, I want to thank my wife, Dulce, for her years of patience while writing this book, and for her reading and help.

Thank you Brian, for your thorough, consistent, time consuming, and greatly appreciated meticulous editorial assistance. Without it this work would not be as precise, or as clear as I trust it is. What a tremendous help you have been!

To my friends, Wilma, Linda, Gladys, and Jim, for their input, help, prayers, and support, I shall always be grateful!

And to Tom, because your artistic ability and skills in making the cover and graphics have been so amazing, working with you and the Lord and seeing the work develop has been also wondrously surprising! Thanks to you, and thanks again to all!

Preface

What is “**the church**”? What does it do? What is it for? What is its structure? How do we get in? How is it named? How does it operate? Who is its head? How does it get direction? How is it led? How is it financed? These are just some of the questions that we must know the answer to if we are to live successfully in this life and for eternity!

The format of the different chapters is one of teaching with scriptural references; the first chapter also has a section of questions and answers.

Let us begin this most important study in prayer.

“Lord God, maker of heaven and earth, we praise thee and thank thee that thou art the ruler of the universe, and we desire to be ruled by thee, by thy great and mighty power and love and holiness and righteousness. We confess our own inadequacies in the light and knowledge of your supreme wisdom and truth. Make us to be thy servants in building your church, for thy glory and for thy honor, both now and forever. Amen! Illuminate us, teach us, guide us, strengthen, enable, and inspire us by thy Holy Spirit to do thy will and not our own, for Jesus’ sake and in His precious name we pray. Amen, and Amen!”

Introduction

In introducing this work on “the church,” I would like to outline briefly its contents. The first chapter teaches us what the church really is, and then how one is to enter it scripturally. It contains questions and answers at the end for bible teaching purposes.

The second chapter tells us what Babylon is, the false church, so that we can then be able to understand properly the true church and how we are to function in it.

The third chapter explains what the true church is and how it differs from the false in many significant ways. After chapters two and three we should be able to better understand the true and the counterfeit which all of us are involved with in one respect or another.

Chapter four is a doctrine the scripture refers to as “**one mind, and one accord**,” which any group of Christians, even in Babylon, can follow to find the Lord’s mind and will, but is absolutely essential for building the kingdom of God unto perfection.

Chapter five is then a teaching on discipline which is also essential for bringing about the perfecting of the church and the maturing of God’s people in order to accomplish His will at the end of this age!

There are many teachings for the church which are outside the scope of this one on “**the church**” itself, but are vital in perfecting the saints. Other books which I have written are available and address some of these issues.

Now, as we get into “**the church**” together,

“May God bless our hearts and minds, and give us the courage and strength to walk in His ways, being faithful unto the end, is my prayer! Amen!”

This is the end of The church, Contents PLUS
For Chapter 1, visit www.JohnRothacker.org