

DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN CHRIST'S TEACHING IN THE GOSPELS

Some have taken the position that the model for the church found in the Epistles came from the Apostles and not from Christ. The following indicates that is not true. Note the many particulars Christ gives relative to the church. It is also good to keep in mind that the last words of Christ were that the Apostles should teach only those things which they had been taught by Christ (Matt. 28:18-20).

Christ's coming **KINGDOM** is predicted in the Old Testament (Dan. 2:44, Heb.11:39-40). Daniel said God's Kingdom would destroy and outlive all other kingdoms. To Peter, Christ identifies the kingdom with the earthly rule of God in the church (Matt.16: 15-20) . While this does not exhaust the settings in which this term is used (Psl. 145 145:10-13, 2 Tim. 4:18), kingdom and church are often interchangeable in the New Testament. To be in the church was also to be in the kingdom (Col. 1:13-18, Rev. 1:9). "The Biblical idea of the kingdom of God may then be said to center about the thought of a special order of things or dispensation, the chief characteristic of which is that men recognize God as absolute sovereign. But they do so because in the person & teaching of Jesus Christ, He is revealed to them as their Father. The relation of the individual to the kingdom is thus established by faith, i.e., by the acceptance of the revelation made by Jesus; but those who accept Him, irrespective of previous station in life or nationality, are banded together as His new people. The order of things thus begun is to be completed in the future. Yet its complete manifestation at the last will not bring a new reality into existence, but will only fill out and reveal its outline." (A New Standard Bible Dictionary, NY: Funk & Wagnall, 1936, p. 496).

1. To be established soon (Matt. 4:17, Mark 9:1)
2. Christ's death necessary to its establishment (John 10:11-15, Luke 24:46-48)
3. Christ to be the foundation of the church (Matt. 16:13-19)
4. The Apostles to have authority over it (Matt. 18:18-19)
5. There were to be no national distinctions (John 10:16 Mark 16:15, Matt. 28:19)
6. Entry to be by a "new birth" (John 3:3-8, 1:12-13, Mark 16:16)
7. Love was to motivate and Christ's word to give direction (John 14:15, 23-24)
8. Freedom was to be given through the truth (John 8:31-32, 5:24, 17:17)

9. Humility was to be an essential characteristic of the church
(Matt. 18:1-4)
10. Greatness was to come through service to others
(Matt. 20:20-28)
11. Christ gave the true nature of worship (John 4:21-24)
12. The Lord's Supper was to be a living memorial to Christ
(Matt. 26:26-30)
13. Unity was to be a necessary trait of the church (John 17:20-23)
14. Christ's presence would guarantee the continuity of the church
(Matt. 28:20)
15. The Holy Spirit to guide the Apostles into all truth
(John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26-27, 16:8)
16. It would have a world mission (Luke 24:46-48)
17. It would begin at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47)
18. It was not to come with observable signs
(Matt, 12:38-40, Luke 17:20-21)
19. Descent of the Holy Spirit would mark its beginning
(Mark 9:1, Luke 24:49)
20. Its destination would be heaven
(John 17:24, 14:16, Eph. 5:25-27)

Carl Mitchell