

The Establishment of the Church

- I. The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed up until the time of John the Baptist; from then onward the Kingdom of God was preached (Luke 16:16)
 - A. John the Baptist spoke of the Kingdom of God (Matt 3:1-2)
 - B. Jesus spoke of the Kingdom (Matt 4:17; 9:35) and sent out His disciples to do likewise (Luke 9:1-2)

- II. During the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus, the Kingdom had not yet been established.
 - A. John proclaimed that it was coming soon (i.e., at hand) - Matt 3:1-2
 - B. Jesus likewise said the Kingdom of God was at hand (Mark 1:14-15)
 - C. In teaching the disciples to pray, Jesus taught them to pray for the Kingdom to come (Matt 6:10)

- III. Jesus said that some who heard Him speak would still be alive when the Kingdom was established (Luke 9:27; Mark 9:1)

- IV. The Kingdom of God is not a physical kingdom; it is a spiritual kingdom
 - A. The Kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36; I Cor 15:50)
 - B. It will not be seen in a big uprising (signs) - (Luke 17:20)
 - C. The Kingdom of God is in your midst (i.e., within you) - (Luke 17:21)

- V. Jesus often used the terms “Church” and “Kingdom” in an interchangeable sense
 - A. Jesus said that upon this rock (i.e., Peter’s confession that Jesus was the Son of God), He would build His Church; then immediately Jesus declared that He would give Peter the keys of the Kingdom of heaven (Matt 16:18-19)
 1. Use of future tense (“will build”) indicates that Kingdom was not yet here
 2. Acts 5:11 says fear came upon the whole church (so church existed by then)
 - B. Peter opened the Kingdom of Heaven to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and he opened the Kingdom of Heaven to the Gentiles beginning with Cornelius (Acts 10).
 1. The keys to the Kingdom were to unlock (i.e., open) the Kingdom of Heaven.
 2. When Peter actually did so (i.e., opened the Kingdom of Heaven), people were added to the body of the saved - the Church (Acts 2:41, 47)

- VI. Jesus said the Kingdom would come “with power” (Mark 9:1); hence we can trace the origin of the Kingdom through the appearance of this power.
 - A. Jesus promised the Apostles that they would be “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49)
 - B. That promise and power was to be the Holy Spirit received by the Apostles while they remained in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4-5; 8)
 - C. The promise and power was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)

- VII. Prior to Acts 2 the Kingdom of Heaven was spoken of in the future tense and setting, but after the Day of Pentecost it was referenced as being in existence.
- A. The book of Acts describes the growth (Acts 9:31) and persecution (Acts 8:1) of the Church.
 - B. By the time of Paul's ministry, Jesus' Kingdom existed for Paul was in it (Col 1:13)
 - C. The Apostle John was a member of this Kingdom as were others (Rev 1:6)
- VIII. By what names is the Kingdom called?
- A. Church of Christ (Rom 16:16)
 - B. Church of God (Acts 20:28; I Cor 1:2)
 - C. Church of the First-Born (Heb 12:23)
- IX. By what names are the individual members of the Church (Kingdom) known?
- A. Christians (Acts 11:26)
 - B. Saints (I Cor 1:2; Phil 4:21-22; Rom 1:7)
 - C. Disciples (Acts 6:1-2; 9:10)
 - D. Brethren (I Cor 1:1; 8:11-13; James 2:14-16)