
THE MISSION AND OR
PURPOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN
CHURCH TODAY

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first published in PDF format at:
www.Biblical-data.org

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DEFINING "CHURCH"

The mission and or purpose of the Christian church TODAY as it is popularly presented, is not clear nor Bible based, especially as I emphasize the word TODAY. This essay shall hopefully clarify the mission and purpose of the Church today, in light of my understanding of the relevant Biblical texts. It shall present the Biblical blueprints for guidance; blueprints which were long ago displayed in God's Word. No new goals or methods are devised, just those which were written in the Bible.

However, when I mention the word "church", do you understand me? To be certain we are on common ground, this common Biblical term shall be defined, based upon its Biblical usage. This is a necessary effort, as I have encountered many saints who—despite years of Bible study—do not really understand the meaning of and the Bible's presentation of the various churches in the Scriptures. Once we both have the Biblical churches clearly delineated, we can move forward. Being a member of a modern Christian "church" today in North America, Asia or Europe, is not actually conducive to a correct understanding of just what a New Testament church of this age is.

Basically, there are three "churches" in the Bible. By "churches" I am not meaning the many individual churches seen scattered throughout Asia Minor, Judea or Italy during the early Christian era. By "churches" I mean the whole group (collectively) in *one or another* of the dispensations. The macro view, not the micro view. When I refer to the entire group(s) of believers from *all* of the dispensations or ages, I prefer the phrase "body of Christ". This "body" would be the largest macro view, again we may refer to

the **WHOLE** church from all of the various ages as "the Body of Christ". And by ages or dispensations, I mean something like the Old and the New Testaments; yet being more specific, we might label the various ages thusly:

1: Age of innocence

Genesis 1:3 - 3:6

2: Age of conscience

Genesis 3:7 - 8:14

3: Age of civil government

Genesis 8:15 - 9:11

4: Age of promise

Genesis 11:10 - Exodus 18:27

5: Age of Mosaic law

Exodus 19:1 to A.D. 70

6: Age of grace (or, the Church Age)

Acts 11:26 - ends at the "rapture"

7: Age of the millennial kingdom

begins after the "rapture" and ends at Revelation 20:7

8: Age of the eternal future

Revelation 21, and never ending

The above list is similar to C. I. Scofield's famous list, but with some important differences, which will be briefly discussed as we progress.

During the above ages, we find the presence of a "church" in numbers 5, 6, 7 and 8. We find these specific churches mentioned in the Bible itself. Additionally, the use of the word "church" in this paper, refers to the actual conglomerate of elected saints, to those genuine believers who

may form groups while on earth, or who may, at times, exist as anti-social humans or independent humans. Before illuminating the three primary churches and their distinctions, we ought to clarify several points or issues.

In contrast to my definition of the genuine "church" stands the common appellation of "religion". "Church" and "religion" are not to be confused, nor are they interchangeable terms in this paper. "Religion" is often that term used to denote a system of belief in a god, gods, or self. It would include the doctrines, practices and rituals of each form of religion, or denomination. This is how Alan Wolfe uses the word "religion" in his 2003 monograph, *The Transformation of American Religion*. Wolfe analyzes the changing "religion" in America, and to him "religion" stands as a synonym for "churches" (Protestant, Catholic, evangelical, Jewish *et al*). Wolfe is correct in observing the gradual assimilation of religion; it has increasingly become part of and even absorbed into popular culture—lacking whatever former piety and integrity it may have had. Yet he is wrong to assume that his analyses describe the true church of God here *on earth*, scattered as individuals and groups. Rather he examines churches rooted *in the world*, and not rooted in the Bible or God, churches in and of the world.

It would seem that the true "church" is invisible to an examiner such as Wolfe and certain other observers of political and social undulations in America. Wolfe's "religion" is that one which: features a Billy Graham, which constitutes the traditional aggregations known as denominations—which are composed of "churches" federally recognized as tax deductible organizations, and those buildings which serve as; worship centers, bingo parlors, dining halls, fashion shows, theaters and musical stages. For Wolfe, "religion" is the typical mainline denominations and their often diluted respect for Bible doctrine and God's Word. Yet, in some respects Wolfe sounds a warning to the true believers of today, we need to maintain a holy separation between us and the world's cultures and mores.

That said, we may now scrutinize the three churches mentioned above. Other than the Hebrew word for "synagogue", the very first use of the English word "church" in the Scriptures stems from the Septuagint (LXX) version of the Old Testament. In the Greek LXX it occurs at Psalms 21:23, which is Psalms 22:23 in the Hebrew text; in our English Bibles it is

typically Psalms 22:22. The LXX Greek word is ἐκκλησίας which is rendered as: "assembly"- NASB, "congregation"- KJV, or "church"- DOUAY, in our English Bibles. The Greek ἐκκλησίας is the Hebrew קהל (pronounced like: kah hal) meaning to be assembled, or congregated, organized.

Actually, the first occurrence for the Greek ἐκκλησία, or a verb form, is at Leviticus 8:3, translated as "congregation". Here the original Hebrew is again קהל. Another Hebrew word is also translated as "assembly" or "congregation", it is מועד also commonly rendered as "synagogue". Both קהל and מועד are usually synonyms when used of the assembled worshippers in Israel.

Twice in the New Testament, we find references to the LXX and Hebrew texts in which "congregation" or "synagogue" is rendered with the Greek word for "church" - ἐκκλησία, these two passages are:

This is he, that was in the **church** in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and [with] our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: Acts 7:38 KJV

and, this quote from Psalms 22:22:

Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the **church** will I sing praise unto thee. Hebrews 2:12 KJV

The Hebrew's passage is, as noted, a quote from our Psalms 22:22. The "church" in Acts 7:38 refers to the congregation of Israelites who participated in the Exodus and their descendents. The group called-out of Egypt was also called-out from amongst the nations, they were the Israelites. These Israelites and their proselytes became legally bound to God via a covenant from God, given by Moses, and they were governed by numerous Laws. This church (*i.e.* Israel) entered the promised land with one function, of many, to conquer Palestine for possession. Extermination was one of the commands this church received (extermination of various Canaanite tribes). This "wilderness Church" remained viable up until the Babylonian captivity, just before which event we read in Ezekiel 11: 22, 23,

Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel [was] over them above. (23) And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which [is] on the east side of the city. KJV

Here we have a picture of the glory of God leaving the doomed temple in Jerusalem, which scene occurred in about 594 B.C. (per Scofield's Bible). Other than some later prophecies (Daniel - Malachi) and the writing of Ezra - Chronicles, God left Israel somewhat desolate. [Note, II Kings 23:27!]. For over 450 years no word came from God until the ministry of John the Baptist. It is my personal understanding, that during this period from Malachi unto the choosing of the 12, that no organized church existed on earth—though Ezra and company could be seen as a type of a church. This does not mean that no elect individuals existed during that time, but simply no organized group definable as a "church" was present, God was not in the, or any temple on earth since Ezekiel 11. [Note: in John 2, Jesus refers to the Temple of Herod as "My Father's house", however it was an empty house, devoid of the Spirit].

What we do observe is a Jewish religion coming into existence out of the Babylonian captivity. After the temple is rebuilt, we see rituals again enacted, we see a priesthood perform its functions, we see the rise of the Pharisees and Sadducees, we see the beginnings of oral traditions and the Targums as well as holy appearing rules created in Israel and Babylon. Yet, God is not a part of all of this. During this 450 year period we see the rise of what I call "pagan-Judaism". This was the official religion which confronted Jesus. It produced the wise scribes and Pharisees who used their knowledge of the Scriptures to attack Jesus of Nazareth. I cannot, in good conscience, recognize any true church existing in Palestine from Malachi's day unto Jesus' ministry. When Jesus began building His church, it was a new and distinct church, not a resurrected "church in the wilderness".

The church in Psalms 22:22 (Hebrews 2:12) is yet future, it is the Messianic church, which comes into its full and final form during the Millennium. Up to this point, we have now noted two distinct churches.

If you are however, not convinced that Psalms 22 in our English Bibles is a Messianic Psalm (a Psalm which refers to the Messiah and or His Kingdom), then perhaps you ought to pause here, and read the Psalm.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus of Nazareth, says to Peter that, "...I will build My church..." a future tense verb, "will build". Peter had just stated that Jesus was the "Christ" or Messiah, and it is upon this same faith (*i.e* Peter's admission) that Jesus will build His church. He does not state that He is going to add to the church, or strengthen an existing one; no, He begins afresh. Apparently, there was no existing genuine church in Israel at that time. When does He begin to build this church? The 11 apostles are probably the first members, per Luke 12:32,

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. NASB

Yet they require the Holy Spirit, which they receive in full on the day of Pentecost. On that special day, we note that there is ADDED to their numbers, new members, **added to the church**:

Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Acts 2:47 per the correct KJV reading.

Christ was building His church. It was in Jerusalem, with expansion plans (Acts 1:8); **it was composed of Jews and proselytes only**. Some of its distinctive features and requirements are:

- repentance from Israel's past sins (Acts 2:38, Luke 24:47)
- expression of faith, believing that the crucified Christ is the Messiah (Acts 2:36, John 20:31)
- water baptism (Acts 2:41, Matthew 28:19, John 3:5)
- a communistic sharing of possessions (Acts 4:32)

- circumcision still relevant (Galatians 2:7, Acts 11:3)
- often various signs (Mark 16:17, Acts 6:8)
- its hope is for the coming Kingdom, and the return to earth of the King Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:6, 3:18-21).
- This church is also known as "the Bride of Christ" (Revelation 17:7-9, Revelation 21:2, 9-27, Matthew 9:14,15)
- its gospel is the good news of the Kingdom (Matthew 3:2, 4:23)
- its goal was to spread the Kingdom Gospel around the world (the so-called "great commission"), and to function as a kingdom of priests, ministering to the great kingdom Temple. (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19,20, I Peter 2:9-12, Revelation 20:6)
- it has an earthly inheritance, with a King on earth, with an earthly temple (no heavenly hopes) (John 14:3, II Samuel 7:8-16, Genesis 13:14-17, Revelation 11:1-8, Revelation 19:11-16)
- many OT Laws and festivals and Holy days are still observed, designated times for prayer were still typical, separation from Gentiles still enforced.
- Most OT Laws replaced by new Kingdom laws and commandments (Matthew chapters 5-7, John 13:34, Jeremiah 31:31-33)
- faith is typically alloyed with works (James 2:17, 24)

The above are distinctives of what is referred to as "the Kingdom Church". It began, technically, on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. It has been temporarily halted, as Israel rejected their Messiah (they rejected Christ), and hence Israel could not become a light to the nations (Isaiah 60:3). So God set aside the construction of this church, to be resumed

when Israel repents and accepts Jesus as their Messiah (during the tribulation). [Note all of Romans 11].

So, the Kingdom Church has a past and future aspect. The historical "church in the wilderness" ceased long ago. The church of today is known as the "body of Christ" church by many folks. However it may be better referred to as: the "Church of Grace". The "Church of Grace" agrees with the title of this present dispensation, whereas the phrase "body of Christ" actually incorporates all members of all of the churches since Adam and Eve! It is, as we say, TRANS\$DISPENSATIONAL, in that it is not confined to any one dispensation. This "Church of Grace" began in Acts with the manifestations of the new revelations given to Paul, the "apostle to the nations". Some of its characteristics will be commented upon in the next chapter. Do note that many dispensationalist's themselves, claim that only the church of today should be called "the Body of Christ"; to this I must demur.

We now have the names or titles of our three churches in the Bible:

- [1] - - - THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS \$ most of 5
- [2] - - - THE KINGDOM CHURCH \$ part of 5 and all of 7
- [3] - - - THE CHURCH OF GRACE \$ small part of 5, all of 6

In looking back at our list of dispensations, we can now indicate the number of such-and-such a dispensation with its church, these are shown with the above names.

As mentioned the "Body of Christ" is composed of all believers from all of the dispensations, and it is the mega-church which fills the eternal age, number 8 (Ephesians 4:15, 16). Confusing? I hope not, but for many this appears as new information. This brief paper is not meant as an apology for the dispensational cause, but dispensations (or, ages) are utilized as necessary environments in which the various churches exist. Thus, they must be indicated. The following chart displays the three requirements for a group be considered as a Biblical church:

THE THREE PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES NEEDED FOR
A GROUP TO BE CONSIDERED AS A BIBLICAL CHURCH

| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----------------------|--|---|---|
| | CALLED BY GOD, OR ARE ELECT | GOD IS WITH OR AMONGST THEM | HAS WORD FROM GOD |
| WILDERNESS CHURCH | a chosen nation (Israel), and called-out from Egypt (all called, but not all elect) | members of Godhead with them in tabernacle and later the Temple | God spoke thru Moses and in the Temple, also via the prophets; O.T. text. |
| KINGDOM CHURCH | first members called by John the Baptist and Christ; Kingdom Gospel via evangelism calls all remaining elect (all are elect) | Christ as King physically with them, except in early Acts wherein the Holy Spirit was with them | All of N.T. text, except Paul's 13 epistles. Strong connection with O.T. texts as well. |
| GRACE CHURCH | called from out of the world, via God's predetermined will and Paul's Gospel. (all are elect) | each church member permanently indwelt with Holy Spirit, each is a Temple | Has the Pauline revelations to the church of this age. All other texts are FOR this church's edification. |

From the preceding chart one should note that each church [must](#):

- (1) be called-out or elected by God
- (2) have God (or member of Godhead) with them
- (3) have specific communications from God

In defining "church", we need to recall that the Greek word *ἐκκλησία* (and its various forms) means a called-out group or person. A selected group, distinguished from those whom they were called-out from. During most dispensations, the members of the true church, were a distinct minority and they were to live separate and godly lives while on earth. (I Corinthians 6:12-20, II Corinthians 6:14-18, Ephesians 5:1-12). The true Church was never popular, except in a few scattered locales (such as in Geneva in Calvin's day, or in various monasteries during the early Byzantine empire), and the true church is hated and despised by Satan and the world, even persecuted by the same—a point which needs to be kept in mind.

In some of the ages an overlap is seen. For example in Acts 13-28, we see two churches co-existing: the early Kingdom Church in Jerusalem, and the new "church of Grace" at Antioch and points north and west. In A.D. 70 the early Kingdom Church in Jerusalem and its temple was removed (the surviving Messianic Jews scattered) by the Roman armies; leaving the Grace Church to carry the faith and its "gospel of the Grace of God" unto this very day. When the Grace Church is removed (during the rapture), God again begins working with the dormant Kingdom Church, in accordance with many Biblical prophecies.

I am acutely aware that some readers may not agree with my dispensational interpretations, but it is necessary that these same folks at least understand such interpretations. If you dear reader, understand most of the concepts (new to you as they may be) put forth as concerns the meaning of the word "church" during the various ages, then we can profitably move forward.

ERRONEOUS CONCEPTS

The purpose of the Christian Church today has been widely distorted, misaligned and compromised. Much of the fault lies in the fact that solid in-depth Bible study is and has been on the decline. Other causes are found in our educational institutions, even seminaries. Human nature, the desires of the flesh, psychological impulses and pride have taken their toll upon many Bible expositors and teachers. The true church is like an alien in this present world system (which indeed it is and should be!) amazingly tolerated by the world system only because there lurks within the true church great power. A power which is mysterious and elusive in the eyes of the world and its multitudes of pagans. God protects His church.

One of the most popular errors concerning the purpose and function of the church today, is confusing the various churches—that is, mixing up the functions and purposes of the three churches defined in the preceding chapter.

Perhaps some simple demonstrations will clarify this type of error.

In America and Europe, on various holidays, including Christ mass, we see baked hams gracing many dining tables. In some of these homes Christians and even pastors partake of the ham, and have been for centuries. Yet God's Word is very clear that any type of pork is forbidden for God's people to consume, it is "unclean". Lobster as well, in fact we find a number of forbidden foodstuffs regularly eaten by Bible believing Christians. Most know of the Laws which forbid such practices, yet they still disobey

and eat! What is one to make of this? What a poor testimony is presented before the eyes of pagans who are aware of what the Bible says concerning which foods are clean and which are unclean.

In my mind, sections of San Francisco and Venice Beach California remind me of the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, especially as concerns their very public immoral behaviors. Consequently, I expect for God to rain down fire and brimstone upon these cities, destroying every man, woman and child. In Haiti and in various African nations we see religious abominations (voodoo, and various sacrifices), should we orthodox believers travel there and massacre the entire populations, along with their animals? Such actions are seen and even commanded of God's people in the Scriptures.

When believers sin, that is, knowingly transgress a law, should we journey to the local farm and purchase a steer to sacrifice—to sprinkle its blood in various ritualistic fashions? Should we slay doves, goats and sheep by the thousands to celebrate a holy day or some victory in battle? In the Bible we have these sacrifices clarified for us, how, what and when. Most of these sacrifices are expected, and commanded by God Himself!

Many more examples can be given: examples of various commands given in the Bible by God to His people to perform and obey. Yet we do not obey them! (Though some sects do practice some ancient dietary habits). Why? Is it because we wish to test God, or because we perhaps think we know better than Him? Before replying, consider the following.

What of keeping a Sabbath day or rest (be it a Saturday or Sunday)? How does one reconcile Exodus 31:15 with Colossians 2:16:

Whosoever doeth any work on the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Exodus 31:15

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. Colossians 2:16

What of salvation via works and faith which is what James declares? What does one do with such texts as Ephesians 2:8, 9 or Romans 3:20, 28 in which faith alone is needed without any works? Is Jesus a man of peace? If so what do we do with such passages as Matthew 10:34:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. (Matthew 10:34)

What are we to make of these apparent contradictions? Consider too these items below which a church or members thereof are to do:

- raise the dead, heal the sick (a command) - Matthew 10:5-8
- be baptized for the remission of sins - Acts 2:38
- cast out demons, drink deadly poisons, lay hands on the sick and heal them, all signs of belief - Mark 16:17, 18
- stay in Jerusalem until you are clothed with power - Luke 24:49
- preach this message: "the kingdom of/from heaven is near" Matthew 10:6, and only say it to the lost sheep of Israel - Matthew 10:7
- you can forgive the sins of anyone - John 20:23
- sell all your property, and donate the proceeds to the church - Acts 4:32, 34
- heal the sick in every neighborhood - Acts 5:16
- avoid anything contaminated by idols - Acts 15:20
- if you speak in a tongue, an interpreter must translate, otherwise keep silent - I Corinthians 14:27, 28
- you are at Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem - Hebrews 12:22
- you are a member of one of the twelve tribes of Israel - James 1:1, or you reside as aliens in Pontus or Galatia - I Peter 1:1

- behave properly amongst the Gentiles where you now are - I Peter 2:12
- it is the last hour, and from amongst us, many antichrists have arisen - I John 2:18
- we are a kingdom of priests - Revelation 1:6, Exodus 19:6
- we dwell where Satan's throne is - Revelation 3:13
- some members of the church can use their Roman citizenship to avoid numerous abuses - Acts 16:37

I trust I have made my point. [All of the Bible is for us today, but not all of it is addressed to us today.](#) Amazingly, this simple fact is violated times without number. God is unchanging, but He has instituted evolving plans and ages exposed in His word. He reveals truths progressively, line upon line, lesson upon lesson. Perhaps this will sink in to your gray matter:

It is June 1966, in an Army unit deep in the jungles of Vietnam. A quiet, humid day. The soldiers had just finished eating their c-rations. A helicopter is heard approaching the LZ, all know it carries their mail. The mail clerk retrieves a large duffle bag, filled with mail from America! He grabs a handful and hands them to the nearest man, another handful to the next man. Specialist Willie Thompson, thus begins reading a letter addressed to Sergeant Elliott. Private Jones begins reading a letter from a daughter of Private Norris. Thompson cannot understand the letter he reads, it is not addressed to him. Jones does not understand the letters given to him, as they are not addressed to him. Each letter bears an address, and each letter is to a specific person. Giving out letters to any one, by disregarding the address is pure foolishness. Yet, this is exactly what is being done with God's written Word! Passages addressed to Israelites are read by Gentiles as if the texts were to and about them, as opposed to being written FOR them, for their benefit yes, but not to them! This is what I Corinthians 10:11 elucidates:

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written **for** our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. NASB

Note, Paul states that they were written **FOR** our instruction, for us to learn from them. This is very different than saying that they are written to us, the context of I Corinthians 10 is clear in that these lessons from the Old Testament are for examples; it did not rain on us as we walked across the Red Sea to the promised land. Nevertheless, we can make application from the earlier texts, we can and should learn from them.

The churches of today, in many places around the world, are marching to orders and blueprints not meant for them! Orders and blueprints, seen in the Bible, yet orders and blueprints intended for different groups or churches in different ages or times.

We *can* eat ham, we need not observe certain days and Sabbaths, we do not raise the dead from all the cemeteries today, we should not drink poisons, we cannot lay hands upon all the sick and heal them, water baptism does not remove our sins, we should not liquidate all of our properties and donate the proceeds to some religion, a heavenly Jerusalem is not now on the earth, we are not a kingdom of priests, we do not today offer livestock as bloody sacrifices, most of us do not dwell where Satan's throne is, we do not violently exterminate our enemies today, and most of us are not citizens of Rome, *et al.* God was addressing other groups, other nations in other times.

Only a deranged person would read a newspaper article about a great earthquake in China, which killed 72,000 in 1822—and think that it just happened to his hometown of Akron, Ohio in 1977! The article was about other peoples, in another place and time. Yet, he did learn that earthquakes can be devastating. What of the many Bible readers who so treat the Scriptures, taking situations and commands from other ages and peoples and following them as if they were written to them today, rather than for them? Would we refer to them as "deranged"?

Many of the above "contradictions" are resolved when Bible students recognize who is speaking, to whom, about what, when is the narrative occurring, why is it said. We normally observe these obvious implications when we read a newspaper, but for mysterious reasons, we fail to do this in

our Bible studies! We fail to "rightly-divide" the texts, we fail to recognize some very basic concepts. Most are probably not deranged, they have just simply followed tradition, or have been deceived. In many cases they are simply victims. They need not be.

Now this is not to say that there are no truths in the Bible which cross all boundaries of time. Yes! God is always true, God is always Holy, triune. Satan is and will always be an enemy, election is eternal, heaven is eternal, God always judges sin, *et cetera et cetera*. I trust most readers can recognize those eternal truths which span all ages and times. Trans-dispensational truths as they are often known as. Yet, too, there are many specifics which are not to all peoples or valid in all ages. Interpretations are not applications, confusing these ideas is a common symptom of beginning Bible students.

The age in which we live today, is the Church Age or the Age of Grace. This age began in mid-Acts, with the raising up and commissioning of our apostle, Paul, it will end when we are removed to heaven in the "rapture". God is not focusing upon Israel in this age.

I refer, as indicated above, to the church of this age as the "Church of Grace" or the "Grace Church". Paul is our apostle, not the 12 Jewish apostles. Paul is the "apostle to the Gentiles (or nations)". He is not limited to witnessing to just Jews or proselytes. He was sent out of Israel to the cultured world at that time. He left us with 13 epistles which contain our marching instructions; blueprints for, to and about us. Today, Paul is like Moses, as Moses led Israel, Paul leads us. Moses illuminated the Law, Paul illuminates grace. Moses led Israel to the promised land, Paul leads us to our promised heavenly abode. As Israel was being cut off, Paul's mission to all was gaining momentum. We, the church of today, have been grafted on, where the Jewish/Kingdom church was cut off. (Romans 11). You cannot fully graft on (or replace) a branch until the former branch is first cut off. Today, Israel; its gospel, its commissions, its hopes, its earthly inheritances, its temple system and sacrifices, its signs and wonders, remains cut off—temporarily, as Paul teaches, until the times of restoration.

Via some serious study and time, many saints should hopefully realize the errors which occur when trying today to follow the programs designed for the "Kingdom Church", or for the "Church in the Wilderness". The word from God needs to be rightly-sliced, rightly-cut, or "rightly dividing"- KJV.

Studie to shewe thy selfe approued vnto God, a workeman that needeth not to be ashamed, diuiding the worde of trueth aright. 1599 Geneva Bible II Timothy 2:15

The KJV is even more accurate: "rightly dividing the word of truth". The Greek word for "rightly dividing" is from *ορθοτομειω*, a compound Greek verb, meaning *ορθο* - "correctly or rightly" and *τομειω* - "cutting or slicing". "Handle accurately" is a deliberate perversion, and not a genuine translation of the Greek. Paul tells Timothy to properly slice or divide the text of God's word. That is, recognizing to whom each text is addressed to, who is speaking, about what; then the when and the where of the texts. Separating them accordingly, just as the normal person does when he or she reads a book or newspaper.

Paul commanded this of Timothy, as he knew that Satan was a master of confusion. Young Timothy did not need to be nurtured on distorted and mixed up Biblical texts and semantics. Nor do we. God moved Paul to warn Timothy, may we too heed the command. Young Timothy is a type for many other young students of today, though many may not have Timothy's stomach problems, nor are all told to do the work of an evangelist! Nevertheless, many aspects of Timothy's life serve as proper models for young men in this present age. Certainly we all should study the Scriptures, in fact this is a trans-dispensational truth—at least in the ages in which the Scriptures were known to exist.

This chapter may be best closed by reminding readers of the purpose and functions of the now defunct "Kingdom Church". By doing so, numerous erroneous concepts should begin to stand out; functions and purposes which the church today is deluded into utilizing. They stand out as they do not fit or REALLY function in this present age. A numbered format shall be used, and it is by no means comprehensive, each item being an attribute of the now dormant and future "Kingdom Church":

(1) The Kingdom Church is to spread the good news of the kingdom (the Kingdom Gospel) to all of the nations on the earth. The evangelists accomplish this via the gift of languages (tongues). The initial spreading of this gospel occurs during the tribulation, spearheaded by the 144,000 witnesses. When they are successful, then the end of the tribulation begins unfolding. [Matthew 24:14, *et al*].

(2) Men and women will live much longer during the Kingdom Age, part of the reason will be the gift of healing will be widespread and popular.

(3) The great millennial temple will be built, and all nations will bring their memorial sacrifices to it. It is so vast, and the number of sacrifices so great, that Israelites, literally, become a "kingdom of priests" ministering to the needs of the temple in Jerusalem.

(4) The Kingdom Church will be wealthy, it will have a communistic form of sharing of all things. All nations shall have an abundance of food and provisions! Israel becomes the greatest nation ever!

(5) At the very beginning of the Kingdom (the seven year tribulation) many evil spirits will be roaming loose on the planet, and certain saints will have and need the supernatural ability to discern the spirits.

(6) Satan is bound for the 1,000 year reign of the King, and the Kingdom Church thus reigns triumphant. All nations submit to the King Jesus Christ.

(7) Peace will fill the earth during the kingdom, even flesh-eating carnivores will become vegetarians.

(8) The King Jesus Christ will be ruling with a "rod of iron", violations of the Kingdom Laws (Matthew 5-7 *et al*) will be swiftly dealt with. Tares however, will be allowed to grow with the wheat, at the end of the kingdom age the tares will be uprooted by angels.

(9) Membership into the church will be via water baptism, recognition of who the King is, repentance and acceptance of Kingdom Laws.

(10) New members become Messianic Jews, if they were Jews to begin with; or proselytes, if they were Gentiles to begin with. "Christians" and "Christianity" do not exist on earth during this dispensation. The "Christians" are all in heaven, which is where their inheritance is.

(11) The Kingdom Church, has earthly hopes, an earthly inheritance, an earthly (physical, three dimensional) King (Jesus Christ), with an earthly temple. After the future "white throne judgment", a new heavens and earth will be created, and the Kingdom Church takes up residence upon this new earth, and Christ still reigns, eternally.

(12) Members of the "Kingdom Church" have physical bodies, they are mortal bodies—some may experience death. Their bodies are not fit for living in heaven. In the eternal age, we see the tree of life, giving life to all who partake! [Revelation 22:2]. In John 14, Christ promises to return to them, to the earth, bringing with him "rooms" [not "mansions"] prepared for their residencies (apparently rooms for the priests in the great temple).

(13) The early Kingdom Church will experience the seven years of tribulation on earth, many members of which God protects. ["time of Jacob's trouble"].

The above 13 facets of the Kingdom Church are all clearly delineated within the pages of the 66 books of the Bible. This paper is also not meant as an apology or as a defense of/for the Millennial Kingdom; the reader should consult any of the many books and articles on the subject to validate and clarify the above functions inherent to and part of the Kingdom Church. I have listed numerous resources for just such an undertaking in this monograph's bibliography.

THE CHURCH'S PRESENT TASK

Having presented many of the functions and characteristics of the "Kingdom Church", we are now in a better position to examine the role of the church in/on the world today.

Most students who hold to a reformed type of theology, declare that the church of this present day (circa 2008) is THE Israel of God. In other words that the church of today has replaced the Israel of old. Many of these same students also declare that there is no future 1,000 year Kingdom Age, rather that we are living in the kingdom now. In order to hold to such a view a multitude of Old Testament prophecies must not be taken literally, especially prophecies and descriptions of the future millennial reign. Since I read the Bible in a very literal mode (which by the way incorporates metaphors, parables, types, similes and other literary conventions, all literally apprehended) I therefore cannot accept the popular reformed interpretations wherein excessive spiritualization is forced upon numerous passages.

God, is divorced from Israel in this present age; and in many ways God has hardened Israel, and they are often enemies against God for our sakes (Romans 11 again!). Yet within this Israel, lies an unknown number of elected saints, an Israel within Israel! When God removes us in the "rapture" (ἀρπαζω), He will again begin working (as prophesied) with Israel. The so-called "Great Commission" wherein Israel is to carry the Gospel of the Kingdom, or the good news of the coming Kingdom from Jerusalem (first) to the uttermost ends of the earth, is not in effect today. Though many religious denominations seem to think and act as if it is in effect today.

To refer to the church of today as a "new" Israel, or as the "true" Israel, or as the "spiritual" Israel, or as a "restored" Israel, is pure folly, the result of mixing up various ages and their situations. The church today is not replacing Israel. Ancient Israel can be seen, in many ways, as a type for all future called-out groups, but the type should *not* become the antitype.

The primary distinction (amongst many others) today lies in the future hopes and positions of the various churches. Israel, as mentioned, is earthly, earth oriented. The church today is heavenly, heaven oriented. No Israelite is promised eternity in heaven! Only the church of this age has this unique promise of a home in heaven, with a heavenly inheritance, with a heavenly Lord, with heavenly bodies.

Confusing the earthly and heavenly distinctions has led to many problems. Recall that during the 1,000 year Kingdom reign of the King Jesus Christ, Satan is bound and is essentially not able to function. Demonic problems are thus greatly reduced! However, today this is simply not so, the church of today is confronted continually with Satan and his agents. Those who think they are living in the Kingdom from heaven on earth (the Millennial reign) today, are in great danger if they think they can banish Satan and his cohorts today! In reality, the great deceiver wishes to appear as holy, even religious, all the while polluting any groups who do not recognize him. Which is one of the reasons why it is so important for believers to care for and edify and encourage one another. God does comfort us, yes, but certainly one method is the love expressed by believers for each other! Pagans cannot even understand agape love, that special love which comes from God, which differs from brotherly love (φιλεω). This agape love is really meant for brothers and sisters, and communion with God.

How can Satan today mislead churches? Consider this example: a pastor of a very large congregation, Rick Warren, wants to end world hunger, especially hunger in Orange county, California. He is using his congregation to try to do so. He believes that this is one way to prepare and conquer the world for the return of Christ to earth. Warren wants to prepare the Kingdom now. Thus he has wrongly made his church members give their monies to the world at large. His church has become a slave to the world, it serves the needs of the world. The monies from "saints" (assuming that Warren's church has a certain number of elect within its confines) is

not being used for the saints! Something is very wrong in this picture. Reaching out to the needy is, at times, justified and it is a good testimony to feed your enemy *occasionally*. But this should not be a primary goal of the church. The church today needs to take care of its own. Are all of the members of Warren's church free of any mortgages? are all members out of debt? do any have any costly medical needs? are any on welfare or food stamp programs? do any need in-home medical care? do all have their dental bills covered? are all gainfully employed? are all of the elderly members cared for? have all got dependable transportation? **IF so**, then Rick Warren's congregation may focus their efforts upon the pagans surrounding them should they want to, but even this too is in violation of the church's commission today.

Thus, in Warren's popular church, the enemy is taking resources God has blessed members with, and supporting worldly needs with them. A great tactic from the enemy's think-tank, yet amazingly the saints in Warren's congregation continue to try to feed the world's poor. A true casting their pearls before swine. They are getting their marching orders from a future church (which began in early Acts) the Kingdom Church. During the 1,000 year Kingdom, hunger will be abolished, as even the pagans and non-church members (the tares) will have plenty to eat.

It is true that in Romans 12:20 it is said that it would be well to feed one's enemy, to do good to him; however since it is a quote from Proverbs 25 and in light of the context of Romans 12, one cannot declare that we are concerned with the feeding of and caring for pagans as **opposed** to a fellow believer with whom we have a problem. Pursuing the matter further, we note in Matthew 25:40, that feeding the hungry *brethren* is a proper undertaking. In the Matthew text we are certain that it is not pagans who may be fed. In II Chronicles 28:8-15, we note Israel capturing many of their enemy in battle, and they did feed and care for these foes. But these foes were of Judah and Jerusalem, brothers who were considered enemies! In II Kings 6:22 we find Judah feeding Syrians, but they did not continue to do so for extended periods. In light of some of these considerations, it is a rather poorly supported venture for Pastor Warren to: (1) use collected church offerings to feed the hungry outside the church, (2) to make it a priority, (3) not really knowing if these hungry are believers or terrorists or simply folks looking for a free meal.

We are not living in the Kingdom Age today, nor is the church today a "restored" or "spiritual" Israel! Consequently, hunger exists in the world, and is even epidemic. As for the church, God provides for its needs, especially if the church or individual is trying to serve faithfully the Lord.

Feeding hungry pagans *as opposed to needy church members*, is one of many endeavors which the churches of this age probably should not be involved in. Nor should the church avoid paying taxes to the government in which it exists (Romans 13:7), at least that is my opinion. Paying taxes on church incomes and properties gives the church a real sense of integrity, it is viewed favorably in the eyes of the world, even respected, and it supports good governments. Christians should also not avoid serving in the military for their country. In the Kingdom Age, peace reigns in the world, but not in this age. Hence religious pacifism, though appropriate in the Kingdom Age, is not in the blueprints for this age. At the individual level, I do not always turn the other cheek, which is seen in Matthew 5:39. However, nor do I present "offerings at the altar" (Matthew 5:23, 24) as there is no temple today, not since the Romans destroyed it in A.D. 70.

The goals of today's church are very different. Oftentimes the goals of the church are identical with that of an individual member. For example the church is expected to correct one who is caught in sin, so too should an individual believer—if he or she should see a brother sinning, he or she should properly admonish the wayward saint. Thus in our lists of church functions and tasks, many functions and tasks apply to both the corporate group as well as to each individual.

Below is a brief list of just what the church of today should focus its efforts upon; beginning with the most important tasks.

- members are to care for and edify one another - Romans 12:10, 13:8, 14:19, Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 4:1, 2, Colossians 3:12-16, I Thessalonians 4:9, 5:11, Galatians 5:13-15
- the church should be separate from the world, in a holy manner - I Corinthians 6:15-20, 5:9-13, 15:33, I Timothy 4:7, 6:11, Ephesians

5:11, Galatians 5:6-11, II Corinthians 6:14-18, II Timothy 2:4, 22-26, Titus 2:10-12, Colossians 3:2, Romans 16:17!

- to avoid and beware of false gospels as well as false apostles - II Corinthians 10:12-15, Philippians 3:2, 17-21, Galatians 1:6-9, Romans 16:18
- to teach and share the written Word and to not go beyond it - I Timothy 4:13, I Corinthians 4:6 [NASB], I Timothy 5:5-16, Philippians 4:8, 9
- to strive for unity and to avoid petty divisions - I Corinthians 1:10, Romans 15:5, 16:17
- to live and walk by means of the Holy Spirit - Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:18, 19
- to oppose false doctrines and hindrances to the spread and understanding of the genuine knowledge from and or about God - II Corinthians 10:5, 6, Colossians 2:8
- to provide for widows who are believers, per I Timothy 5:5-16
- Christian women should not teach or preach in the congregation - I Corinthians 14:34, 35, I Timothy 2:11,12
- to correct and admonish backsliders or sinning saints - Romans 15:14, Galatians 6:1, Colossians 3:16, I Thessalonians 5:14, II Thessalonians 3:14, 15, Romans 16:17
- to wear the full armor provided by God, and then **to stand** - Galatians 6:10-18, Philippians 1:27
- to wait for the rapture (patiently) - I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18, II Thessalonians 2:1-12, I Corinthians 1:7, Titus 2:13
- to pay proper taxes, to submit to the government (as far as the "things of Caesar" are concerned) - Romans 13, Titus 3:1
- to expect persecutions and to persevere under afflictions - II Timothy 3:12, I Thessalonians 3:1-8, Philippians 1:29, II Corinthians 1:4, 5

- members are to use their individual talents and gifts - Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-13
- members expected to work for a living (if able) and not to only depend upon the generosity of the saints - II Thessalonians 3:11, 12
- to pray for all humans - I Timothy 2:1-4
- be prepared to judge the world in the future - I Corinthians 6:2, 3
- test all leaders, and to test all prophets and supposed prophecies - I Thessalonians 5:20, 21, I Timothy 3:1-10, 4:1, Titus 1:5-9
- the church is the pillar and support of **the** truth - I Timothy 3:15
- members must provide for their own families, not shirking this important duty for any reason (unless severely handicapped) - I Timothy 5:8, 9
- church leaders should set examples of proper and godly living, they should live to a higher standard! - I Timothy 3:1-13, Philippians 3:17, I Thessalonians 5:12, 13; and many of the saints listed in Romans 16, I Corinthians 11:19
- to dress modestly, speak properly, for we appear as lights in this dark world (which world observes us) - I Timothy 2:9, Philippians 2:15, Colossians 3:8, 4:6
- the **only** baptism for the church of this age is that one wherein the Holy Spirit puts us (baptizes) into the Body of Christ - Ephesians 4:5, I Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:27. Thus the church today should not practice the Jewish ritual of water baptism.
- believers should partake of the Lord's communion - I Corinthians 11:23-34 (after a proper self examination).
- to live by faith; **not** signs, wonders, works, or miracles - Romans 1:17, Ephesians 2:8, 9, II Thessalonians 2:9, Matthew 24:24, Romans 3:19, 20, II Corinthians 5:7, Revelation 13:13, (I John 4:1 trans-dispensational)

There is no denying that some of these functions apply also to churches on other ages, but do note that all of these are to and for the church in this present age. No other church(es), in other ages, can claim all of these functions as blueprints for their mission and or purposes. Note too, that all of the functions, admonitions and purposes, in the above list, are illustrated only from/in the Pauline epistles (except for the very last item). After all Paul is our Apostle!

Basically, the most important tasks of the church today, are centered upon caring for fellow saints and standing for the truth in this wicked generation. Sharing Paul's gospel (which contains the shed blood of Christ as a necessity to remove sins) should be a natural obligation for most genuinely elected saints of this age. The *gift* of evangelism probably is still in effect today, as some folks seem genuinely gifted to inform others of their salvation. Yet evangelism is not as necessary today as it was in Paul's day. In Paul's day, the written Word needed spreading, the message was absolutely new. In many ways Paul did take his gospel to all of the cultured nations of the world (though he himself did not venture into Egypt or India). He accomplished much of the basic ground work in the first century as far as evangelism is concerned, the **planting** of God's Word.

During this present age, genuine elect believers are in a minority. They are often outcasts, not welcomed or comfortable in the institutionalized churches or the traditional denominations. Many function as individuals. Persecution arises when it is known that they are believers. Usually genuine believers will not be found working in abortion clinics, nor selling liquors, nor producing junk fictional novels, nor supporting pornography, nor any job which takes advantage of customers. Genuine believers usually try to live proper (even distinctive) lives. Even worldly power and fame are quite secondary to serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

Most mega-churches water down Biblical truths, they attract great numbers because they also compromise Biblical truths. The bait cannot be offensive, it must be attractive. Most Bible students generally agree, that the Bible teaches that Biblical truth is never popular. It is my opinion that most genuine saints are not members of organized religions, at least not for any length of time. Those who remain in the staid, impotent denominations, do

so only because they are: deceived, or ignorant of what the Bible teaches, are financially recompensed (vested), or have family-based obligations.

There are other ways to compare the different churches of the Bible: focusing upon the gospels they use, or comparing the different baptisms, or minutely comparing their differing commissions and promises. I have herein, illustrated one broad method, one which notes three distinctive (macro) churches, and then illuminating passages which refer to each of the various churches. By reading and studying these passages, the distinctions between the three Bible churches should become clearer and clearer. For more detailed and recommended information on various aspects and distinctions, references are provided in the bibliography.

In closing, I should mention the church membership of believers who have nowhere to fellowship. In my case, no local churches believe the Bible as I do, our differences are essentially valid. So, I fellowship with my wife, and any brothers and sisters we encounter. I also communicate with brothers and sisters in different parts of the country. The nearest group I suspect that I could fellowship with is about 80 miles (one way) away.

Recall that anyone who confessed that Jesus was the Messiah, was excommunicated (ἀποσυναγωγος used 3x in John) literally "out-of-synagogue", at least in Jerusalem prior to A.D. 70 this was the case (John 9:22, 12:42, 16:2). Yet the isolated believers of today are members of a church, the most important church of all, the Body of Christ church. Each was put into this body (baptized) by the Holy Spirit Himself! Each is eternally secure and always a member. Fellowship can be broken, but can also be reestablished. Most of the members now live in heaven, there are a few down here on earth! Though the media and an assortment of commentators declare that America is a **Christian** nation, they are wrong if they mean a nation with many Bible believing, God-fearing, elected saints dwelling within its borders. Instead they have their eyes focused upon the organized religions, they cannot and do not see the true believers—that small number of outcasts. Outcasts, whose prayers and presence keep a few divine blessings pouring down upon this largely pagan nation.

When the rapture does occur, these outcasts (including myself) most likely will not even be missed. After the elect are raptured, the great denominations continue on—feeding poor pagans, providing free medical services to pagans, and they continue to preach the wrong marching orders,

the wrong commissions and the wrong gospels to the wrong people. Sweet words to an indifferent audience, an audience decked in religious façades; back-patting, hand-shaking, smiling folks who are conquering the world and the god of this world, (II Corinthians 4:4) or so they think.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Divided below into several categories are books, articles and on-line documents which provide in-depth teachings and clarifications as concerns the many issues mentioned in this brief monograph. Indeed, the above essay can be *better appreciated* when one does read some of these supplementary materials. Many of the on-line materials are seen at www.Biblical-data.org. They can be read on-line or freely downloaded as PDF documents, these are indicated in the list below.

ON THE MEANING OF THE WORD "ISRAEL"

Dykes, Gary S.. *The Meaning of the Word "Israel", and Its Development by the Apostle Paul*. PDF file available at:
www.Biblical-data.org/Israel_meaning.pdf

A must read for anyone who does not know what the compound Hebrew word "Israel" means! Clarifies the "Israel above" and helps one understand how it is that not all Israel is Israel! (Romans 9:6). Also helps one grasp the Biblical distinctions between the earthly and the heavenly Israel.

Walvoord, John F.. *The Millennial Kingdom*. Grand Rapids, Michigan. Zondervan Publishing House. 1974. (s.v. pages 165 ff.).

Clarifies some aspects of the meaning of the word, especially as contrasted with amillennial views.

ON BASIC DISPENSATIONALISM

Baker, Charles F.. *A Dispensational Theology*. Grand rapids, Michigan. Grace Bible College Publications. 1971.

Still in print, though I believe only soft cover editions are available. A well researched text by a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary. Provides a clear presentation of the theology. Especially valuable as it does not present the "partial-dispensational" stance which is so popular today, it presents the full dispensational position in only 688 pages of eye-opening revelations.

Stam, Cornelius R.. *Things That Differ: The Fundamentals of Dispensationalism*. Chicago, Illinois. Berean Bible Society. 1985.

A classic text, and still in print. Written by a man who lived a long life meditating upon God's precious Word. A former pastor and college president, the late Cornelius Stam left us with a very easy to understand work. Recommended.

Dykes, Gary S.. *The Church Extraordinary, "The Body of Christ"*. A PDF file available at:
www.Biblical-data.org/Body_of_Christ.pdf

19 pages of cutting edge materials. Dykes probes the depths of the meaning of the Body of Christ, and surfaces with gems of quality.

Bullinger, E. W.. *The Church Epistles*. Michigan. Reprinted by Johnson Graphics. 1989.

A hard-to-find volume, written by Bullinger before Welch corrupted his thinking. A very valuable work.

ON THE VARIOUS GOSPELS

Dykes, Gary S.. *What Is/Was Paul's Gospel?* A PDF file available at:
www.Biblical-data.org/What_Pauls_Gospel.pdf

Newell, William R.. *Paul's Gospel*. A PDF file available at:
www.Biblical-data.org/paulsgospel.pdf

An extract from a larger work by Newell - *Paul vs. Peter, or Remarks on Galatians I and II*. (copyright 1930). If you are a member of one of the traditional denominations, then you need to read this. It contains information which you will not hear in the many world churches. A sound (profound!) work, recommended by Louis Sperry Chafer.

ON THE SUBJECT OF "CHURCHES"

Brock, Robert. *The Seven Churches in the Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grace Publications Inc.. 1979.

A short booklet, but one which corrects common misunderstandings associated with the churches mentioned in the first several chapters of Revelation. Makes a strong case! Copies can be obtained from:
Bible Doctrines to Live By, Inc. - phone (616) 785-3618. In Michigan.

Schutz, Vernon A.. *3 Bible Churches: Two Basic Rules of Bible Study Recognized and Exercised*. Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grace Publications Inc.. 1974.

The late pastor Schutz presents solid exegesis in his clarification of the three primary churches in the Bible. The material is not for beginners! Also available from *Bible Doctrines to Live By Inc.*, (above).

ON ELECTION

Dykes, Gary S.. *On Election, Salvation and Sealing*. A PDF file available at:
www.Biblical-data.org/election_sealing.pdf

Dykes, Gary S.. *A Few Notes Concerning Election/Salvation*. A PDF file
available at: www.Biblical-data.org/Supralap.pdf

Essays which hopefully clarify the actual meaning of election and its relationship to salvation. Deep issues, but important. Interesting reading (at least I think so!).

ON BASIC PROPHECY

Tan, Paul Lee. *The Interpretation of Prophecy*. Maryland. Assurance Publishers. 1974.

Another classic text! Helps readers accurately interpret prophecy by observing simple Biblical principles. Deals with issues such as "rapture", "spiritualization of texts", "hermeneutics", "Israel", "the antichrist" and "the Millennium". An easy to understand text which really helps one to get a better picture of prophecy in the Scriptures.

Anderson, Sir Robert. *The Coming Prince*. Grand Rapids, Michigan. Kregel Publications. 1957.

Still another classic. Anderson provides a detailed analysis of Daniel's prophecies. Enlightens readers as concerns the antichrist and his great future appearance upon the earth—an appearance filled with wonders and miracles. Also makes clear the differences between the church of this age, and the "Bride". A good read!

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

Bultema, Harry. *The Bible and Baptism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grace Publications Inc.. 1983.

A thorough study of the subject of "baptism". Discusses all aspects of the many types of baptisms seen in the Old and New Testaments. Clarifies the "baptism unto Moses" and offers suggestions for the "baptism for the dead". A solid reference work on the subject. Can be purchased via *Bible Doctrines to Live By, Inc.*, (616) 785-3618.

Reiter, Richard R., Paul D. Feinberg, Gleason L. Archer and Douglas J. Moo. *The Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Post-Tribulational?* Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House. 1984.

An engaging collection of views and arguments as concerns the "rapture". By examining the differing views one can better evaluate one's own particular stance. Lively reading.

Hoeksema, Herman. *Hawking Jesus*. A PDF file available at:
www.Biblical-data.org/hawkingjesus.pdf

By a reformed theologian. A great essay about the real function of genuine evangelism today! Not for the weak.

Wheeler, Richard S.. *Pagans in the Pulpit*. Arlington House Publishers. 1974

Against using Christianity as a means or doctrine for social or political reform. Makes his case. (ISBN 0-87000-264-3)

Lee, Philip J.. *Against the Protestant Gnostics*. Oxford University Press. 1987.

Against secret wisdoms held by some in some churches. Against those who think they are elites in the churches. A penetrating work.