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Ecclesiology - A Study Of The Church

Dr. Ronnie Wolfe - Beginning January 24, 2016 Sunday

Lesson One - The Origin Of The Church

Text: Matthew 16:18

I. THE TIME OF THE ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH

A. In The Mind Of God, Before The World Began

1. Eph. 3:2-3 *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,*
 - a. A dispensation of the grace of God was given to Paul
 - b. Paul's call to preach was a direct revelation from God
 - c. Paul was given the revelation of a mystery, which was preached in "other ages," 5

B. The Physical Origin Of The Church

1. Meaning of the word *church*.
 - a. The Greek word is *ekklesia*, and the basic, clear meaning of the word is *assembly*, a group of people who are assembled or who are able to assemble as a body together.
 - b. All English Bibles up until the translation of the *Geneva Bible* all translated this word *ekklesia* as *assembly* or *congregation*. So, the first use of the word *church* to translate *ekklesia* was in the Geneva Bible.
 - (1) The date of the first complete translation of the Geneva Bible was in 1560.
 - (2) This Bible was used by William Shakespeare, Oliver Cromwell, John Knox, and John Bunyan.
 - (3) The Geneva Bible was one of the Bibles that was brought to America on the Mayflower.
 - (4) This Bible preceded the King James Bible by 51 years.
 - (5) More than 80% of this translation was actually taken from the earlier English Bible translated by William Tyndale. Myles Coverdale's work was also included in the Geneva Bible.
 - (6) There are new versions of the Geneva Bible with updated spellings, etc. They are not very popular at this time.
 - c. Different usages of the word *ekklesia* in the Bible.
 - (1) Applied to Israel in the wilderness, Acts 7:38
 - (2) Non-Christian assemblies: Acts 19:32, 39, 41(translated *assembly* here).
 - (3) The Glory Church in Eph. 5:27.
 - (4) Institutional sense: Matt. 16:18 "I will build my church" does not mean one physical, visible, universal church but speak of the church as an institution, as "the school is a great institution" or as "the dog is man's best friend." We do not believe there is one universal dog or one universal school, but we understand it in the institutional, or generic sense.
2. The first mention of *church* in the New Testament - Matt. 16:18
 - a. Thayers Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament says: "...some interpreters regard the distinction (generally observed in classic Greek) between *petra*, the

