

## **Biblical Theology**

### **Unit 7: Doctrine of the Church – Lesson 4: Scope of the Church**

#### **The Church and Israel**

- Dispensational Views
  1. **Classic Dispensationalism:** *God deals mankind in different ways during different periods of history.*
    - God has two distinct plans for Israel and the Church
    - God's purposes and promises for Israel are for earthly blessings and will be fulfilled on this earth at some time in the future.
    - God's purposes and promises for the church are for heavenly blessings and will be fulfilled in heaven.
  2. **Progressive Dispensationalism:** *God has two distinct people but a single purpose in establishing the Kingdom of God.*
    - The promise of eternal fulfillment of David's through is accomplished by Jesus and is not to be understood in regard to an ethnic nation.
    - There is no distinction between the church and Israel in the future eternal state.
- Non-Dispensational Views
  1. **Covenant Theology:** *Establishing the church has always been God's primary objective and he did so through a series of covenants.*
    - Israel constituted the people of God in the Old Testament, the Church constitutes the people of God in the New Testament, and both make up one people.
    - All who exercise the same faith of Abraham are part of God's covenant people.
    - The Church is the ultimate recipient of all of God's promises.
    - Any unfulfilled covenants to Israel will be fulfilled through the church.
  2. **Replacement Theology:** *Israel was replaced by the church and no longer has relevance in God's current and future plans.*
    - Many who hold this view retroactively reinterpret scripture replacing any reference to ethnic Israel with the church.
    - This is a dangerous framework for interpreting scripture.
- Scriptural Considerations
  - **Colossians 3:11** - *Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.*
  - **Galatians 3:26-29** - *So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*
  - **Romans 11** – *(Metaphor of the olive tree).*
  - **Romans 11:25-27** - *Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob"; "and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins."*
  - Conclusion:
    - Progressive Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology are the result of proper biblical interpretation techniques and have the most scriptural support.

## Spiritual and Earthly Roles

1. **Spiritual Warfare:** *The church has been given unique abilities to directly engage in spiritual warfare.*
  - **2 Corinthians 10:3-4** - *For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.*
  - **Ephesians 6:11-12** – *Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*
  - **Acts** – *Various encounters casting out and rebuking demonic spirits. (13:8-11; 16:16-18; et al).*
  
2. **Keys of the Kingdom:** *Jesus gave the church the authority to preach the Gospel and thus open the door of the kingdom of heaven and allow people to enter.*
  - **Matthew 16:19** - *And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”*
  - **Matthew 24:14** - *this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*
  - **Matthew 18:17-18** - *And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*
  
3. **Cultural Influence:** *The church’s relationship within the culture should be one of Gospel influence. The bible does not, however, teach that the church should pursue earthly rule.*
  - **Mark 12:1** - *“Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”*
  - **Romans 12:17-18** - *Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.*
  - **1 Timothy 2:1-2** - *First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.*
  - **John 18:36** - *“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.”*

## Discussion Questions

1. Why are the Classical Dispensational and Replacement Theological views dangerous?
2. How would you answer this question, “Who are God’s people, the church or Israel?”
3. What does “holding the keys of the kingdom” look like in your life, circumstances and relationships?
4. If we are going to conclude that it is not Christ’s desire that the church attempt to establish an earthly reign, does that mean we should or should not be involved in politics and speak up on social issues? Explain your answer.

## Reading Assignment

*Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem – Chapter 47: Church Government*