

His Church His Way: Part 1

A Biblical Discovery of God's Purpose and Plan for his Gathered People.

Date: October 22, 2011

- I. Worship & Prologue
 - a. What are people, pastors and “the concerned” saying about the church?
 - i. Why do many denominations if there is one Lord?
 - 1. Apostle's creed
 - ii. Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony
 - iii. Who Stole My Church?
 - b. What does the Bible have to say?
- II. What does “Church” mean anyway?
 - a. Organization, Organism, Structure, Edifice, Other?
 - b. *Ekklesia* – *Kuriake Oika* – *Kirika* – *Cirice* = Gathering/Assembly
- III. Biblical Theology of Gathering
 - a. Gathering in the Garden – Gen 1, 2
 - b. Separation from the Garden – Gen 3, 4
 - c. Drawing back to God – Gen 4:26
 - d. Gathered Remnant - Noah
 - e. Scattering at Babel – Gen 11
 - f. Gathering of People – Gen 12
 - i. The Lord calls a man, to start a family, to bring to himself a people called by faith in his Promised Son
 - ii. God's Purpose & Plan given to Abraham are fulfilled in Jesus Christ and His family, the Church – the Body of Christ.
 - 1. Abram/Jesus chart
- IV. New Testament Theology of Gathered People -
 - a. Ephesians 1
 - i. Chose us In Love to be adopted sons for his pleasure & will. 1:4 -5
 - 1. In response John Knox says, “Love God and Enjoy Him Forever”
 - ii. Included in Christ when you heard the word of truth (the gospel), having believed...marked with the Spirit...as those who are God's possession – 1:11-14
 - iii. God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. – 1:22-23
 - b. Ephesians 2
 - i. For through him we both have access to the Father by on Spirit – 2:18
 - ii. Consequently, we are...fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together...in him

you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. 2:19-22

c. Ephesians 3

- i. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heris together with Israel, members together of one body, sharers together in the promises in Christ Jesus. – 3:6
- ii. His intent was that now through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose... 3:10-11
- iii. Prayer for spiritual strength & power through faith & love. A love that will surpass knowledge and fill us to all fullness of God! 3:14-21
 1. To what extent is the Church known for Love?
 2. To what extent is our church known for Love?
 3. Are we showing God’s wisdom to the rulers in heavenly realms or are they laughing at us?
 4. Does love feel like a powerful strength flowing in us or a sputtering stream yielding more dry seasons than floods?
 5. Do you know about love or do you really love?
 - a. John Wesley said: “You can be as orthodox as the devil and still go to hell;” The difference b/tw knowing truth and letting truth transform you. Belief & Behavior
 6. Are we filled with love “to the measure of all fullness of God”? What does this even mean?
 7. Does the “love of Christ” extend outside the church, or is it intended only for those in the church?
 - a. Love = attachment, bonding, compassion, affection, kindness, action towards: self, another, a cause and object.
 - b. Have we been called to love self or love another?
 - c. Is there any higher virtue in the scripture for God’s people – other than love?
 - d. Love as person or social ethic? *Resident Aliens* pp.78-83
 8. What kind of power is at work within us?
 9. Are our hearts rooted in faith, fear, ambivalence, safety, comfort, greed, pride...?
 10. Is Christ alive in our heart?
 11. How much have ever asked for or even imagined possible?
 12. What could are possibilities of First Assembly becoming a *Centered Community Connected Christ* church?
 - a. What can this phrase mean?
 - b. How Christ centered are we?
 - c. How community connected are we?
 - i. With each other?

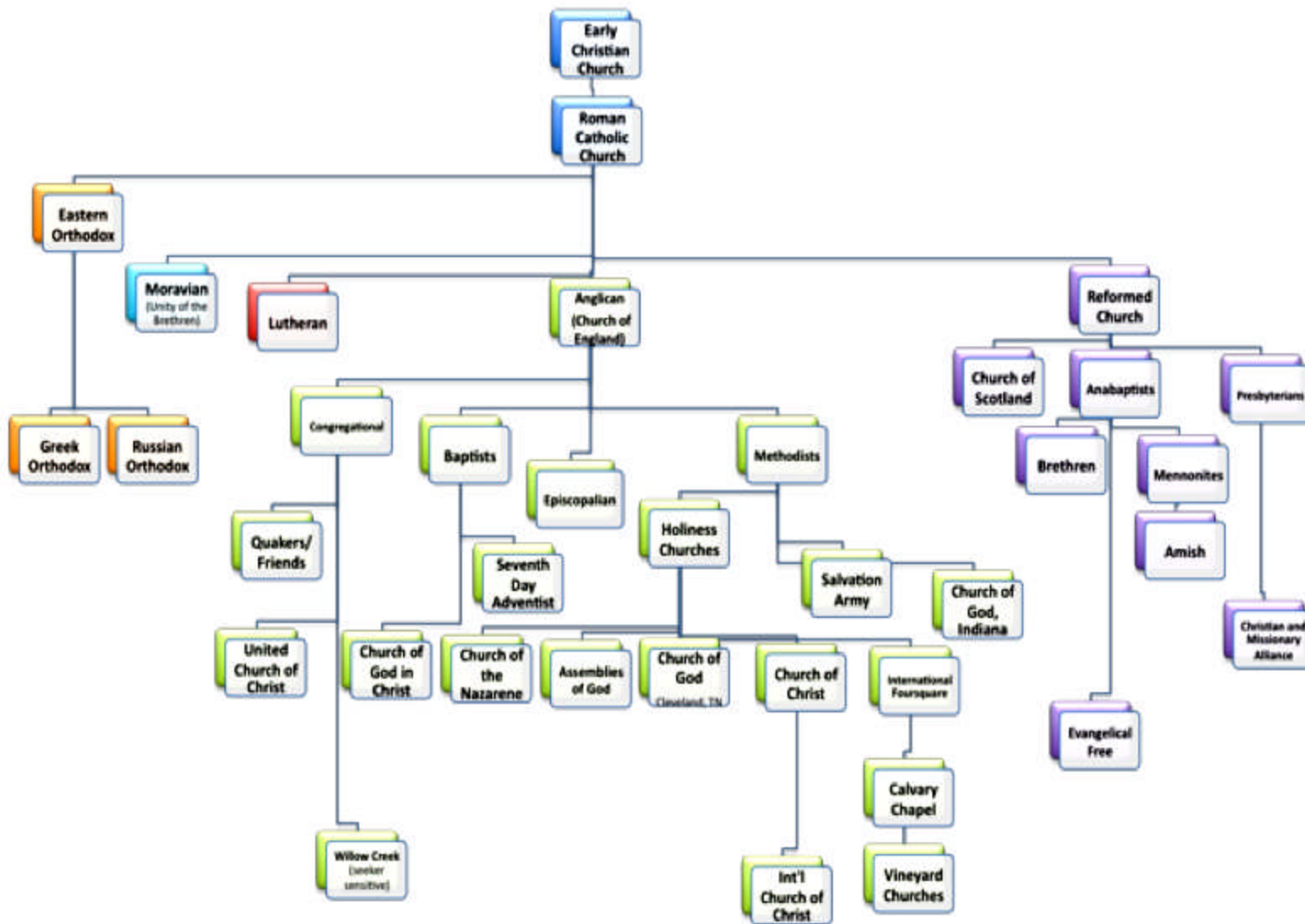
- ii. With our neighbors?
- iii. With our city, town, region?
- d. To what extent are we fulfilling the plan and purpose of God as His Gathered People?
- d. Ephesians 4....to be continued

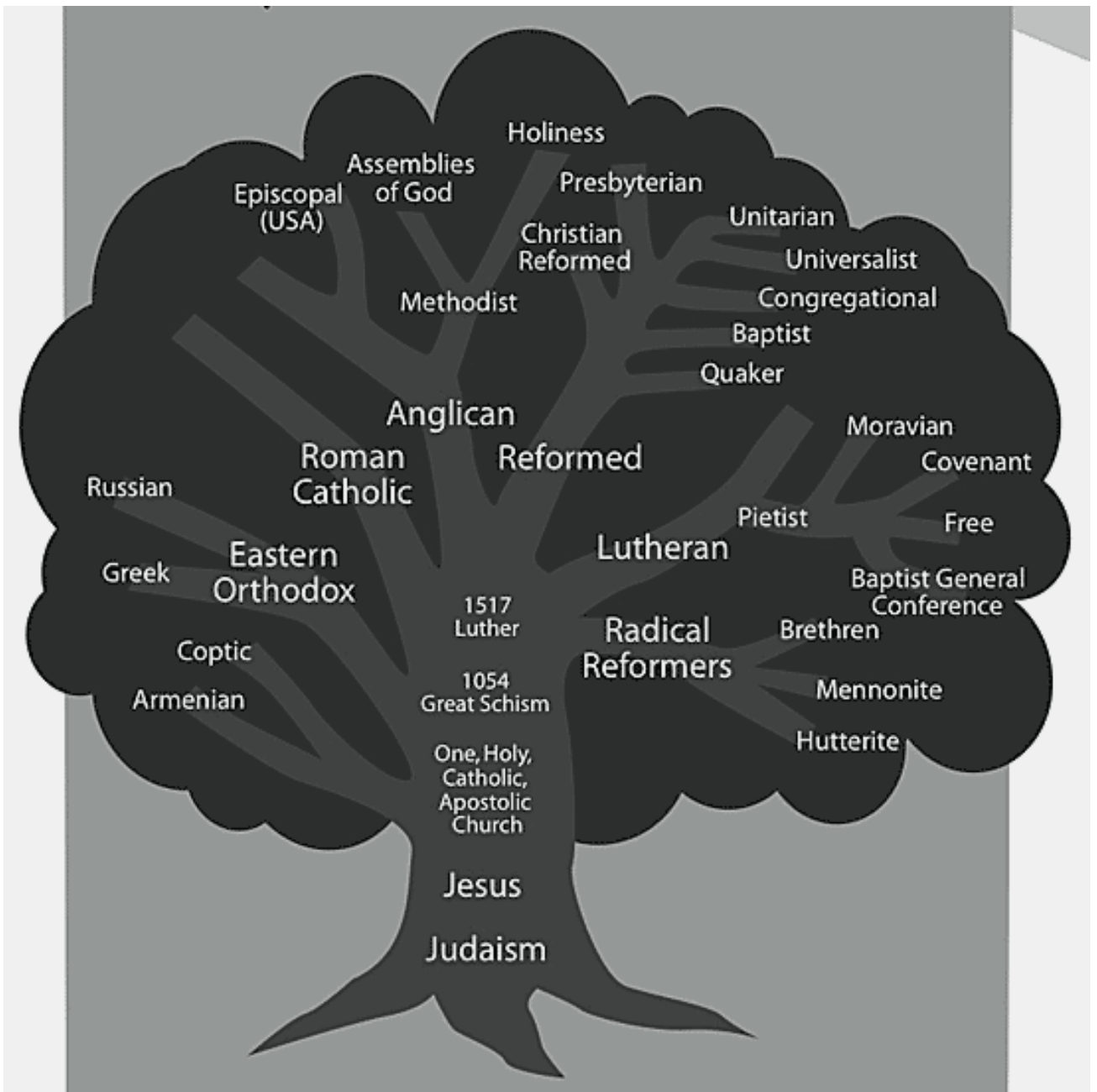
Further Questions for Consideration

1. What kind of people is God calling us to become?
2. How should we spend our money, time, energy as Christians?
3. What should our attitude and motivation look like?
4. How should we treat people in the church and outside the church?
5. How would you put God's plan and purpose for the church into your own words?
6. To what extent does my plan for the church look like God's plan?
7. How serious is God about fulfilling his plan? What happens to those who follow the plan vs. those who don't?
8. How should the church be governed by people, when the church belongs to God?
9. What is the role of church owned property in God's plan?
10. How should a church organize itself to fulfill God's plan?
11. How should our church relate within the denomination, cross denominationally and within our city, region, nation and world?
12. How do we be salt & light in our society, the marketplace, in academia, in politics, and within social media?
13. Under what circumstances should a person leave a local church for another?
14. What emphasis should be placed on caring for the church vs. evangelizing those outside the church?
15. Based on the Bible and History, How should the church function in the 21st century?

Further Reading

1. The Present Future, Reggie McNeal
2. Being the Body, Chuck Colson
3. Simple Church, Rainer & Geiger
4. The Monkey and the Fish, Dave Gibbons
5. Not the Religious Type, Dave Schmelzer
6. Liberating the Laity, Stevens
7. A many colored Kingdom, Conde-Frazier, Kang, Parrett
8. Churches that Prayer, C. Peter Wagner
9. Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony, Hauerwas & Willimon
10. Unchristian, Kinnaman & Lyons
11. The Road to Reality, K.P. Yohannon
12. The Way of the Heart, Henri Nouwen
13. Transformational Discipleship, Charles Crabtree
14. Jim & Casper go to Church, Henderson & Casper
15. Who stole my church, Gordon McDonald





Apostle's Creed

Lutheran Church

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Common Worship

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

God's Purpose and Plan for His Gathered People - Called & Blessed to be a Blessing

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The Lord had said to Abram...Gen 12:1-4	Jesus said to his Church...
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leave your country, your people and your father household and go to the land I will show you 2. I will make you into a great nation 3. I will bless you 4. I will make your name great 5. You will be a blessing 6. I will bless those who bless you 7. I will curse those who curse you 8. All will be blessed through you 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Come, follow me...at once they left their nets...immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him Matt 4:18-22 2. I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overcome it Matt 16:18 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom... Matt 5:1-12 Blessed are those who wash their robes...Rev. 22:12-16 4. Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will acknowledge before my Father in Heaven. Matt 10:32 Name in Book of Life Rev. 20:15 5. He gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness Matt 10:1 6. ...As you enter the home, give it your greeting. If the home is deserving let your peace rest upon it, if not let your peace return to you. Matt 10:11-13 7. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off ...it will be more bearable for Sodom...than for that town. Matt10:14-15 8. You are salt of the earth...You are the light of the world Matt 5:13-14 Therefore, Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing... Matt 28:19-20
Abram responds through...	Church responds through...
<p>Life of Obedience, Faith & Love Abram leaves... Gen 12:4 Offers son of Promise Gen 21-22 Abraham's line yields a people called to obey God in Faith and love. Deut. 4-6</p>	<p>Life of Obedience, Faith & Love Waiting in Upper Room for Spirit Acts 1-2 "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13 We must obey God rather than men... Acts 5:29-32 Ananias in Saul's Conversion Acts 9 Peter's Vision and Cornelius Acts 10 Promise of Relationship with God by faith in Jesus Christ, transformed by the Spirit into his Son's Image Rom 3-8, 12-15; 2 Cor 3:16; Eph 4; Heb 1:1-4; Col 3:1-17; Matt 7:15-23 Love God, Neighbor & One another Mark12:29-31; John 13:34-35</p>