

Remnant Life Church  
January 11, 2015

## “The Beginning of the ‘The Church’”

Gen 17:7; Ex 10:3; Matt 16:16-18; Acts 2:41-42

- When this church first started we looked at who we are, as individuals, to God
- Today we examine who we are collectively as a church and that begins at the beginning
- Where did the church get its start?
- There are 4 primary events that led to the start of the church
  - **Abraham (Gen 11 – 25)**
    - He is the first of the patriarchs
      - Abraham’s life is taking place around 2000 BCE according to the chronology of the Bible timeline
      - In Mesopotamia – modern Iraq
      - Abraham’s father is Terah, the 10<sup>th</sup> descendent from Noah
        - Terah has 3 sons - Abram, Nahor, and Haran - the father of Lot (Gen 11:26-27)
        - When Terah dies at the age of 205 (11:32) Abraham leaves (at the age of 75) to go a land that God would reveal to him (12:1)
    - God first reveals His desire for a renewed personal relationship through Abraham
      - (Gen 17:7) *I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.*
      - This was a never before thought of concept – a personal relationship with God
      - Abraham was raised a polytheist – from the Greek *poly* meaning many and *theos* meaning god
        - The Canaanite gods were gods of location – god of the sky, god of the earth, god of the moon, god of the mountains, etc...
        - This is the first time that a worshipped god is God of a people or person – God of Israel, God of Jacob, God of Isaac, etc..
        - This the true God
    - In the covenant between God and Abraham it is the first setting apart from the world (sin) and the first step to bridging the gap between God and man created by sin in the Garden of Eden.
      - God’s original creation was to have intimate relationship with Him, face-to-face
      - Sin destroyed that relationship

- **God's call of His people out of slavery (Ex 1-20)**
  - God's call is not just for a physical removal but a spiritual one as well
    - **Rom 12:2** - not to conform to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our mind
  - God also gives the people laws of living that will honor Him and allow them, if they are followed, to stay in fellowship with Him (**Gen 21 – Lev 27**)
  - Moses speaks the words of God to Pharaoh – “...let my people go, that they may serve me.” (**Ex 10:3**)
  - God used many through biblical history to accomplish His will
    - King Cyrus and King Artaxerxes through the priest Ezra and the prophet Nehemiah to allow the people to be released from captivity again by the Babylonians and begin to make their way back to Palestine
    - He then spoke through all of the OT prophets lovingly yet sternly warning His people that they must refuse to embrace the gods of other nations
  - We hear those same words spoken earlier by Moses but for the last time through His Son Jesus Christ in three words spoken on the cross – “*It is finished.*” (**John 19:30**)
  - At that point it was a calling out not just the physical descendants of Abraham but now made available to everyone
    - The Israelites were the original “chosen people” (**Ex 19:6, I Chron 16:13**)
    - We, as Christians, become “Spiritual Israelites” (**I Peter 2:9-10**) - *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.* <sup>10</sup> *Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*
    - We are grafted into the spiritual root of God's people as Paul teaches in **Romans 11**
- **At Peter's “great confession”**
  - Jesus has just finished another confrontation with the spiritual leaders; then cautioning His disciples -
  - **Matt 16:13-20 – READ**
  - Within these few verses Jesus reveals the outline for the church to come
    - It is the revelation of who Christ is in each of us that sin can no longer have power over us
    - It is the revelation of why we, the church, are here – both individually and corporately
      - Not just to gather together
    - It is the revelation of what the church should be – the power of binding and loosing in the spirit and also in the natural

- The church must have an impact
- Not just in activities or events but through the changed lives of its people to impact their homes, neighborhoods, schools, etc...
- **At Pentecost – Acts 2:41-42**
  - Three great Jewish festivals to which every male Jew living within twenty miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to come
    - Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles.
    - Pentecost means "The Fiftieth,"
      - Another name for Pentecost was "The Feast of Weeks."
      - It was so called because it fell on the fiftieth day, or a week of weeks, after the Passover.
      - The Passover took place in the middle of April; therefore Pentecost was at the beginning of June.
        - Travelling conditions were at their best this time of year
        - This explains the number of countries (9) mentioned in this chapter; never was there a more international crowd in Jerusalem than at the time of Pentecost. (Acts 2:9-11)
  - The event at Pentecost was not the creation of the Holy Spirit
    - The Holy Spirit, just as God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Son, is eternal (Gen 1:2)
    - The outpouring of the Holy Spirit was for the purpose of the church to grow and empower those to expand the Gospel
      - That first day they added 3000 (Acts 2:41)
      - They continued to grow as determined by God (Acts 2:47)

#### Why do we talk about this today?

- You need to be sure of who you are
- You belong -
  - Not just as a part of RLC
  - But to the family of God through His mercy, grace and love - just as much as Abraham, Moses, David, Paul or Peter
- When you know your true identity you will never believe otherwise
  - Satan does not want you to know your identity
  - He even tried to get Jesus to question His – temptation in the wilderness – “If you are the Son of God...” (Matt 4/Luke 4)
- The lies of the enemy cannot rob you of your true identity
  - You are a child of Almighty God
  - Paid for (redeemed) by the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
  - Strengthened, encouraged, healed, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be more than a conqueror (Rom 8:37)

That is who you are; that is who we are!