

MANIFOLD NATURE OF THE CHURCH **(Isaiah 2:2-4)**

I. The spiritual nature of the church.

- A. Jesus stood before Pilate and declared the spiritual nature of His kingdom (John 18:36).
 - 1. If Jesus had a physical kingdom there would have been a physical uprising of people.
 - 2. There would have been bloodshed and fighting.
- B. The Lord's church was never intended to be some physical kingdom with a material nature.
 - 1. There are no military conquests.
 - 2. There is no physical capital.
- C. Our Premillennial friends do not understand this.
 - 1. They believe that one day Jesus is going to set up a physical kingdom and rule on a physical throne.
 - 2. They teach and believe that the church was just an afterthought or accident.
 - 3. The church was always a part of the eternal purpose of God (Ephesian 3:9-10).
 - 4. Jesus came to build a church or kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19).
 - 5. The apostles did not understand this while Jesus was still on earth (Acts 1:6).
 - 6. Sadly, there are many who do not understand this today.
- D. Souls are added to the church, thus showing its spiritual nature (Acts 2:41).
- E. Jesus told His disciples that the kingdom was inside them (Luke 17:21).

II. The peaceable nature of the church.

- A. God never intended for the Lord's church to take up arms.
- B. Isaiah prophesied this long ago (11:6-9).
 - 1. Also, Isaiah mentioned this in the text of our sermon.
 - 2. He also prophesied that Jesus would be called the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6-7).
- C. When Jesus came, He came teaching peace with others.
 - 1. Matthew 5:39.
 - 2. Matthew 7:12.
 - 3. He commands that His followers become peace makers (Matthew 5:9).
- D. Peter was inspired to quote the Psalmist to tell us that loving life involves seeking peace and pursuing it (1 Peter 3:10-11).
- E. When we are harassed or treated poorly, we are to respond kindly and meekly as our Lord did (1 Peter 2:23).
- F. This type peace only comes from obedience to Jesus (John 14:27).

III. The militant nature of the church.

- A. One might ask how the church can be both peaceable and militant at the same time.

- B. The fact is that we are at war, but it is not a physical one (Ephesians 6:12).
 - 1. Because of that fact, Paul then wrote that we are to take on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:13ff).
 - 2. We are to be prepared to battle sin and Satan.
 - 3. He is our enemy and seeks to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8).
- C. Paul told Timothy to be a “good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Timothy 2:3).
- D. We are to “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Timothy 6:12).
- E. We fight for truth, which is contained in God’s word, and we fight for Jesus and His church.
 - 1. We are to contend for the faith (Jude 3).
 - 2. Jesus fought for His church (Acts 9:3-4).
 - 3. Jesus said He would fight against Christians that did not live in accordance with His will (Revelation 2:16).

IV. The universal nature of the church.

- A. We are told that because of Jesus, all families (Genesis 12:3), all nations (Genesis 18:18) and all kindreds (Acts 3:25) of the earth would be blessed.
- B. Br. Flavil Nichols wrote that because of this: “If there is any person on earth who is not eligible to be blessed through Christ, he is no “kin” to any of the rest of us”
- C. Isaiah and Micah (4:1-2).both prophesied that many nations would flow into the kingdom.
 - 1. Entrance into the church of Christ is to be open for all people.
 - 2. Jesus made this possible (Ephesians 2:14-16).
- D. This is why Jesus commanded us to preach the gospel to every creature in all the world (Mark 16:15).

V. The singular nature of the church.

- A. There is only one church established by Jesus.
- B. Jesus said He would build His “church,” indicating only one (Matthew 16:18).
- C. The metaphors used to describe the church indicate only one.
 - 1. It is described as a body over which Jesus is the head (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).
 - 2. It is described as a bride to Christ (Revelations 21:2; Ephesians 5:22-32).
- D. There are not a multiplicity of churches, just as a man does not have a multiplicity of bodies over which his head sits.
- E. There are not a multiplicity of churches, just as a man is to only have one wife (Genesis 2:24).

VI. The eternal nature of the church.

- A. Long ago Daniel prophesied that the church would be eternal in nature (Daniel 2:44; Daniel 7:13-14).
 - 1. Man cannot destroy this kingdom.
 - 2. It has been attempted but never accomplished.
 - 3. People today still fight against the Lord’s church but cannot

overcome it.

4. Jesus said that even death would not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).
- B. Satan does all he can do to fight against the Lord's church but will not prevail.
- C. One day, on that last, great day, Jesus is going to deliver the kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24).
- D. On that day, all those that fought against the church are going to admit defeat and bow the knee to Christ (Romans 14:11).