

Mt. 28:19-20 **THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH, GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE**

**Introduction:**

I will be talking about the church in its institutional sense and also in its local sense. There is no such thing as a big universal church covering the entire world. But there is the church as an institution which includes all of the individual churches in the world. This is similar to the home. There is no big universal home, but there are many individual homes in the world.

Jesus called upon a small group of men in Galilee to follow Him and, thus, organized the first New Testament church in Galilee. When He departed from the earth He did not leave His church in Galilee, but rather in Jerusalem.

**I. The giving of The Great Commission**

- A. In our text Jesus instructed the Jerusalem church that members of that church were to go into all parts of the world with God's message.
  - 1. Therefore, the Jerusalem church was God's representative to the entire world.
  - 2. They were to present the gospel message so that lost souls could be saved.
  - 3. They were to baptize those who got saved.
  - 4. They were to teach and train those who got saved and were baptized.
- B. The result would be that new Christian congregations would spring up in many different places of the world.
  - 1. The new congregations did not become a part of the Jerusalem church, but became new churches separate and apart from the Jerusalem church.
  - 2. It was then the responsibility of each of those new churches to be a representative of God to the world.
- C. The responsibility of representing God to the world was not given to specific individuals within the church, but to the entire membership of the church.
  - 1. For instance, it was not given to the apostles.
  - 2. If it had been, then when the apostles died out God would have no representatives in the world.
  - 3. But since it was given to a church, then as long as there are Scriptural churches in the world God would have representatives in the world.

**II. The exalted position of the local church**

- A. This is an exalted position to be a representative of God to the world.
- B. There is no higher honor that could be bestowed upon men. (Many high honors have been given to men, but there is none that equals the honor of being God's representative in this world.)
- C. It is an honor that is not to be taken lightly, but one that should call upon us to give our best to the Master.

**III. How this relationship of the local church affects the nation of Israel**

- A. Long before God had sent Jesus to the world to organize a New Testament church God had chosen the nation of Israel to be God's representative in the world.

1. God gave the Old Testament scriptures to the world through the nation of Israel.
  2. The prophets of Israel were God's spokesmen to the world.
    - a. Through the prophets of Israel God directed messages to numerous Gentile nations.
    - b. He spoke to the Greeks, to the Philistines, to the Assyrians, to the Babylonians, to the Edomites, to the Moabites, to the Ammonites, to the Medes, to the Persians and to the Egyptians.
- B. But today Israel does not stand as God's representative to the world.
1. Israel does not speak for God today.
  2. Israel has done many things which displeased God, but there are two primary things that caused God to set the nation of Israel aside.
    - a. First, the nation of Israel had polluted the word of God by the traditions of men, Mt. 15:6. .
    - b. Secondly, they crucified the Son of God.
  3. Therefore, God has temporarily set this nation aside as His representative in the world.
- C. Therefore, Jesus, with full authority in heaven and earth set that nation aside and gave the local New Testament church the commission (the authority) to be God's representative in the world.. Mt. 28:19-20. (In effect He said, "Ye are my representative in the world.")
- D. Yet God has not forgotten Israel
1. He made a covenant with Abraham.
  2. He confirmed that covenant with Isaac and Jacob. (Not with any other people.)
  3. He has not forgotten that covenant and He never will.
  4. The time for Israel's greatest glory is yet ahead. (During the millennium)
- E. But in the age of the Gentiles it is not Israel who is God's representative to the world; it is the local New Testament church.

#### **V. Some questions for the members of this church**

- A. What kind of representative for God are you? (You are His representative either good or bad.)
- B. Are you saved?
  1. Being a church member does not mean that you are saved.
  2. You must repent of your sins and trust Jesus to save you in order to be saved, Acts 20:21.
- C. How is your language? (Do you use profanity? Do you tell dirty jokes?)
- D. Do you drink beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages?"
- E. Do you pay your debts?
- F. Do you stretch the truth?
- G. Do you attend church services regularly?
- H. Do you witness to the unsaved about Jesus, the Savior?
- I. Are you aware of some shortcoming in your Christian life that you need to change?

#### **VI. Questions for the unsaved**

- A. Are you aware that your sins are great?
- B. Are you aware that you are in danger of going to hell?"
- C. Are you aware that Jesus can save you?
- D. Are you ready to ask Jesus to save you?

