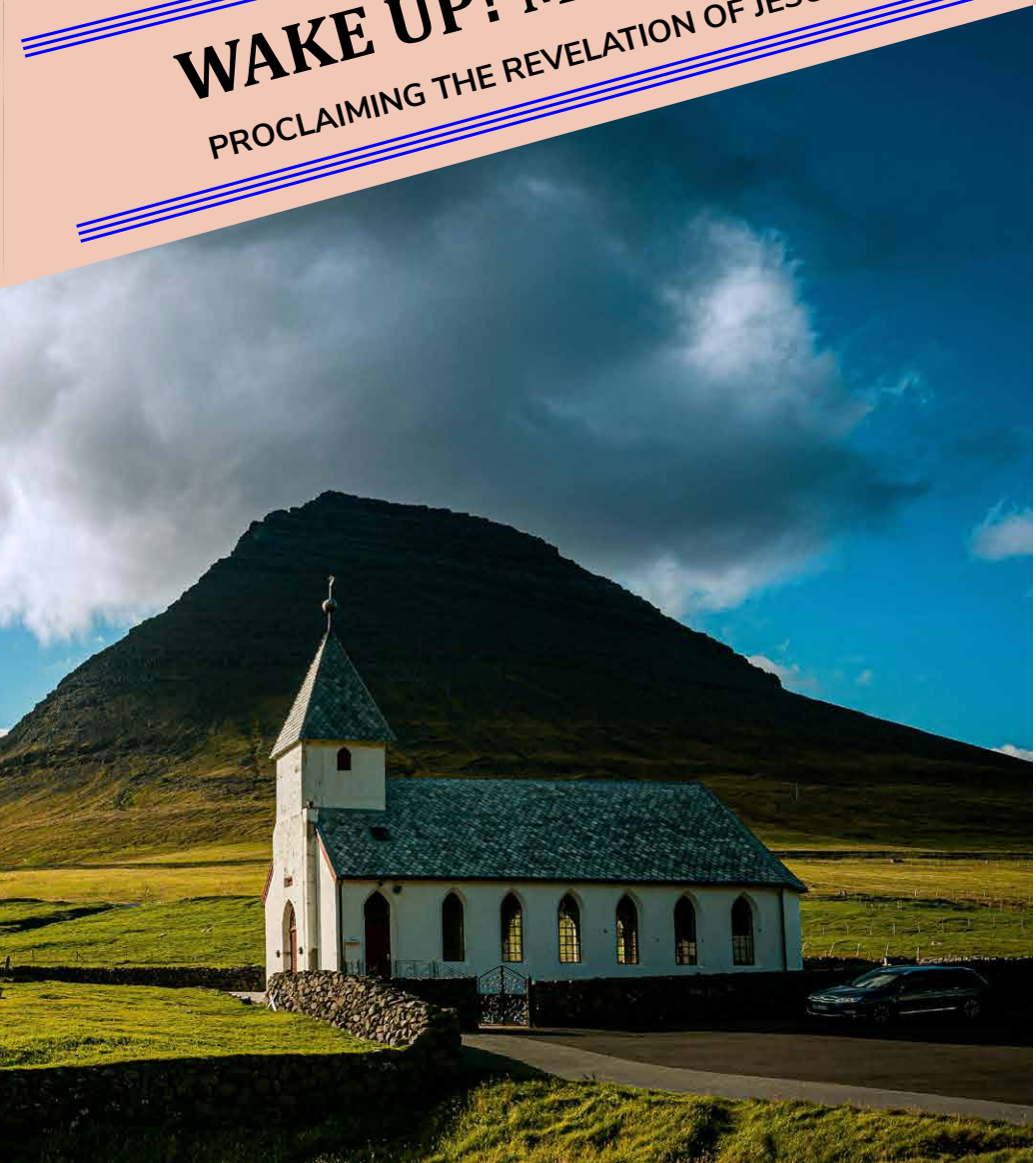


April 2024

WAKE UP! MONTHLY

PROCLAIMING THE REVELATION OF JESUS



Wake Up
America
Seminars

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Hello Wake Up Family,

Last month, Rex wrote an article describing how organized Christianity today is replacing biblical truth with a watered-down gospel that does not build souls for Christ's kingdom. Unfortunately, throughout history, His people have wandered from the straightforward truth He has given them. Christ himself could not reform the church in His day. Each time there has been reformation in the Christian church, compromise and error have infiltrated, preventing the church from fulfilling what Jesus intended.

This creates serious questions for a Christian who wants to follow God's plan wherever it may lead. Should I attend a church that does not follow biblical truth? What is my responsibility to those who attend this church? What should I do if my church teaches a social gospel instead of preparing people for the Lord's imminent return? Should I attend a church that does not meet on Saturday? Will there be another reformation within Christianity before Jesus returns? Should I attend a church whose doctrines are different than mine?

We should consider what makes up a church as we ponder these questions. One definition of a church is a building where people gather to worship their creator. Another definition is the people who attend services and participate in the activities of an organized body. People often call an organized denomination having defined doctrine with many members a church. Others believe the church is God's chosen people who have lived in various ages, incorporating a final group that will survive the Great Tribulation to see Jesus return. God uses the visible and invisible church to achieve His goals for us. The *visible* church is the organized body of Christ that tries to conduct a mission and convey Christ's teachings. The *invisible* church is the body of Christ that consists of all those whom God accepts as His children. God uses both bodies to accomplish His goals for each person who follows His leading.

Within the varying definitions of churches, a visible church should provide these elements to its parishioners.

1. Corporate Worship: God created us to worship Him. (Psalm 29:2) David said we are to sing for joy, shout aloud, and bow before the Lord in worship. (Psalm 95:1–6) A church is where God's people can come together to meet and worship Him. God favors those who humbly approach Him with clean hands and a pure heart. (Psalm 24:3–4; Isaiah 66:2) An organized church service should provide spiritual benefit to individuals, the church body, and, by extension, others through the witness of the attendees.
2. Bible Study: Jesus gave us the responsibility to teach others when He gave the Great Commission. We are to teach others to obey everything that Jesus commanded us. (Matthew 28:20) We should share the message Jesus gave us through teaching one another. (Colossians 3:16) The church is built up through hymns, instruction, a revelation, or an interpretation. (1 Corinthians 4:26) A church needs to provide Bible study and be open to advances in biblical understanding so members can collectively learn more about God and strengthen their relationship with Him.
3. Discipleship: In the Great Commission, Jesus told us to **"Go and make disciples of all nations."** (Matthew 28:19) A church should equip its members to grow spiritually by training them to put Jesus first (Mark 8:34), obey His teachings (James 1:22), and allow Christ to work through them to make more disciples for Him. (John 15:8) A church must deal with believers who are not attempting to live a righteous life and remove those who are living sinful lives. (1 Corinthians 5:12–13) Unfortunately, it is easy for church members to become benchwarmers who do not actively participate in winning souls for the kingdom. The church should be the training center for developing members

to become disciples of Christ and, more importantly, generate more followers and disciples for Him.

4. **Evangelism:** Most Christian churches today present a gospel unrelated to the one Jesus gave us. Instead of witnessing to others, many churches strive to provide an entertaining environment, thinking that the worship experience is essential in drawing people into the church. The priority has changed from a single-minded focus on learning and sharing Jesus Christ to repetitious music and entertainment. However, evangelism is the act of sharing a call to repentance (Matthew 3:2) through witnessing to those who have not heard His message. An organized body cannot be a true church by presenting the gospel only within the confines of a church building.
5. **Fellowship:** A church can provide a location where members can unite with Christ and fellow believers. John describes this as a oneness of true fellowship between Christians like Christ has with the Father. (John 17:23) We yearn for deep social relationships, and a church should provide a haven in which to build connections with like-minded believers.
6. **Prayer:** Jesus told us that His house is to be a house of prayer. (Isaiah 56:7; Matthew 12:13). The most important aspect of a church is to draw its participants closer to Christ. Prayer is how we communicate with our Savior, and the church must promote, teach, and practice prayer. (Acts 2:42)
7. **Service:** The Bible says that God gives each Christian a spiritual gift to serve one another. (1 Peter 4:10) We often believe we are to use our spiritual gifts within the body of Christ because Paul describes our gifts in that context. (1 Corinthians 12:4–31) However, we should also use our gifts to serve others outside the church building. (2 Corinthians

9:12–13) A church should provide a foundation to support Christian service to nonbelievers. Jesus encouraged us to support the needy and less fortunate among us (Matthew 25:40), and a church can support members who have different spiritual gifts to multiply their efforts.

Many Christian churches have moved away from the seven elements that define a thriving Jesus-focused church. Satan has effectively used societal influences to dilute the impact of a church, and church membership has declined significantly. Church leaders have allowed unbiblical teachings to flourish, so a person who believes in Christ's imminent return may not have much in common with members attending a particular church. However, if you are a member of God's invisible church, with His help, you can decide whether to attend a visible church by evaluating how the church is meeting the goals of corporate worship, Bible study, discipleship, evangelism, fellowship, prayer, and service. Each of these items is important, and if a church ignores one component, the Holy Spirit cannot fully work through its members to accomplish the mission Christ has assigned it.

The Lord has blessed us with an important message regarding the end times and His soon return. With that message comes a great responsibility to share the message with others. Our decision to attend a church that likely does not have the same prophetic understanding should be based on what elements the church provides, what we can give the church through our ministry, and our personal needs as disciples of Christ. If you believe your personal religious experience generally aligns with the seven elements, you can be an effective member of that church. However, since the end-time prophetic schematic we understand differs from that of nearly all organized churches, it may be challenging to study the Bible and achieve agreement in a church with prophetic views different than your own. In fact, if you try to share your views, church leaders may tell you to stop sharing or leave the church!

I must make a distinction between church attendance and church membership. If you choose to join a church, you accept that you agree with the church's doctrines and agree to submit to the church's leaders. (Hebrews 13:17) However, all Christian churches are part of the body of Christ. Jesus has members of the invisible church whom He has accepted as His children. God can still provide a spiritual blessing to His children if they attend a church that may have a different doctrinal perspective. A church with different doctrines may still provide worship, fellowship, prayer, and service that can bless you or others.

We should not evaluate a church solely based on what it can provide for its members. As followers of Jesus, we can contribute to a church in other areas, such as corporate worship, fellowship, and service through church attendance. We may not be able to share our prophetic understanding directly, but we can pray that the Holy Spirit allows us to share the end-time story with other church members.

Satan is continuing to attack the organized Christian church with scandals, immorality, compromise, and lethargy. Those who understand the prophetic story realize that the moral deterioration in society and the church is a sign that the end is near. I anticipate the visible Christian church will continue to decline until the first trumpet sounds, and Jesus will replace organized religion with His 144,000 prophets. Jesus then will use the members of His invisible church to complete His work on earth and prepare His saints for His soon return. We can rejoice that we do not have much longer to wait. Still, we can also receive a blessing from and provide a blessing by attending and participating in a visible church with attendees who are part of Jesus' invisible church. May the Holy Spirit provide us with discernment to go, to be, and to do whatever is necessary to fulfill the Lord's calling.

Marty

Ezekiel



Larry wrote this book not to tell you what Ezekiel means, but to provide information about Ezekiel so you can understand it by yourself. As you study this book, open your Bible and read what it says. Like the Bereans, search the scriptures and let the Holy Spirit guide you into all truth.

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Quote of the Month

The institutions of Churchianity are not Christianity. An institution is a good thing if it is second; immediately an institution recognizes itself it becomes the dominating factor. When the war struck us in civilized Britain we were members of certain churches and institutions, and were called Christians because we held certain doctrines and creeds. The bedrock of membership of the Christian Church is that we know Who Jesus Christ is by a personal revelation of Him by the Spirit of God. The essence of Christianity is not a creed or a doctrine, but an illumination that emancipates me—‘I see who Jesus Christ is’. It is always a surprise, never an intellectual conception.

- Oswald Chambers, *Approved Unto God / Facing Reality*

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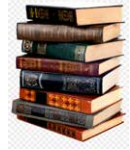
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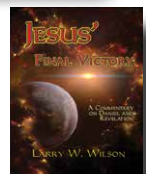
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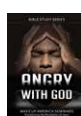
#17 – *The Israel of God Today* (30)



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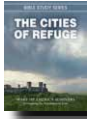
#21 – *Seven Trumpets* (30)




- #22 – *Sealing God's People* (30)





#29 – *Saul – Good Heart Wrong Head* (28)


- #23 – *Which Israel Will be saved?* (40)





#30 – *John the Baptizer* (35)


- #24 – *Daniel – A Test of Loyalty* (30)





#31 – *Pilate's Judgment* (45)


- #25 – *A Faith More Precious than Gold* (30)





#32 – *Noah and the Pig Pen* (45)


- #26 – *Esther – Beautiful Savior* (30)





#33 – *Moses and the Mark* (40)


- #27 – *Gideon – Reluctant Warrior* (35)





#34 – *Predestination vs. Free Will* (40)


- #28 – *Elijah the Tishbite* (30)




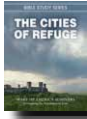
#35 – *Once Saved – Always Saved* (40)


- #36 – *The Properties of Faith* (35)





#37 – *The 144,000 Will Soon Appear* (38)


- #38 – *The Cities of Refuge* (38)





#39 – *Protestant Protests* (35)


- #40 – *When God Breaks His Silence* (35)





#41 – *What Must I Do to be Saved* (30)


- #42 – *Is Sin Forgiven* (30)





#43 – *The Sealed Book* (25)


- #44 – *The Trinity – One God or Three* (20)



#45 – *The 2,300 Days of Daniel 8:14* (25)


- #46 – *Four Messages* (40)



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