



The New Testament Church – Church Perpetuity (“Pamalagian ng Iglesia”)

If we only had one promise in the word of God concerning the perpetuity of the New Testament church that would be sufficient to believe in it. History certainly supports what the Bible teaches concerning church succession throughout the centuries however it is the Scriptures that are foundational to this doctrine being the only Divine and sufficient record whereas history, at times, is inadequate.

Matt. 16:18 “*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” – There is no force in Satan’s artillery that can extinguish the truth upheld by the church concerning Christ. When the church proclaims that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and bring men to faith in Christ, the church will prevail against the wiles of the Devil. Therefore, from the time Christ founded His church till now, there has always been an assembly of baptized disciples who are organized to carry out the Lord’s ordinances and mission. History bears record of churches who stood for a pure gospel, believer’s baptism, regenerated church membership, practicing the memorial of the Lord’s supper as a body, and establishing other churches of like faith and practice. They may have been called different names in different times and in different places but as to the nature of those churches they are nothing less than a Biblical, immersionist, assembly of the Lord’s disciples whose Head and Founder is none other than the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Matt. 28:20 “*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*” – The church that Christ commissioned is the recipient of two special promises: His special presence and the permanency of such a work until the end of the world. As the church conducts their mission, that is, as they make disciples, baptizing those disciples, and instructing them further in all of Christ’s commandments, they have the assurance of Christ working in and among them. This promise is the possession of the church and other churches who will succeed them in the work of the ministry. The promise can only be made good by ensuring that in every era, from the time this divine promise was given, that a church to which this promise was given has always been in existence.

Jn. 14:3 “*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*” – The Lord’s assembly is the recipient of the promise of His personal return and reception. He will return to receive them so they may eternally abide with Him. This promise is the blessed hope of His church, (v.1) “His own,” and this has yet to be fulfilled. His prospective return signifies that whom He is returning for is still here and is awaiting for His return and reception. Christ is returning for all believers, and indeed Christ bled for sinners, and for all believers but it is also true that His return and blood bears something special to His churches (Rev. 2-3; Acts 20:28).

1 Cor. 11:26 “*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.*” – If the memorial ordinance is to be observed until the coming of the Lord, then it only follows that the assembly that was commanded to observe the Lord’s Supper must also be extant.

Eph. 3:21 “*Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*” - the usage of the word church here is generic (meaning it applies to all of His churches comprehensively). In order for God to receive glory throughout all ages, there has to be extant in all ages from its founding onward, that agency of glory which is His assembly.

Rev. 1:20 “*The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*” – The Lord’s churches are candlesticks that bear the light of the pure gospel and true liberty. The multiplication of His churches, as we see in the book of Revelation, demonstrates continuity. So long as Christ holds the messengers (pastors) in His right hand, and walks in the midst of His churches, their ministries will continue until such a time as to when He will return for them either in blessings or in judgment.

Based upon these Scriptures we have assurance that Christ’s churches will continue to exist until He returns to receive them unto Himself.