

Yet the church and the nation are two of the most viable and visible institutions of God. Since this series of studies is entitled "Studies in Prophecy" it is legal for us to pick up some subjects and not all subjects. That is what we are doing now. A full study of the material would put these topics down the line after many other studies. But such is not the case in this series and we will assume a lot of background understanding on the part of the hearers.

In definition for our discussion we note the following:

--the church is a body politic professing to adhere to the teachings of the Bible. It may be described as:

- the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim 3)
- the visible body of Christ (1 Cor 12)
- the fellowship of believers (Eph. 4)

It has a visible and invisible side, a local and universal aspect but of these we need make no further note in this study...it is in prophecy not ecclesiology.

--the nation is a term to describe the states allowed of God in the pattern of Romans 13. Governmental forms are left up to us, so to speak, although it seems clear the Divine government is a monarchy with a totally righteous king.

--our nation and its destiny are matters of importance to us as we look to the future and how we can prepare the coming generations. How it stands in the prophetic picture is consequently an attractive study.

B. The Promises/Prophecies concerning the church

1. Explicit:

- Matthew 16...it will persevere
- Acts 20, etc.,...it will be troubled within and without
  - persecution
  - apostasy
  - party spirit
  - heresy, etc.

2. Implicit:

- it will know periods of revival and weakness
- it will carry the saving message to the ends of the world

So when we think of the church as a body politic we must necessarily remember these things and their implications.

C. The Prophetic Character of the Church in REvelation 2-3

We speak of this as prophetic character because it tells us something of the way in which the church develops and what problems it faces. Note that TWT does not think this is strictly predictive of the ages of the church (I will tell you why) but that it is demonstrative and