

Prove All Things.

1 Thess. 5: 21

BULLETIN

TWELVE APOSTLES

Does the New Testament teach continuation of the twelve apostles? Is it the only system that can be recognized as the Church of God? This is the question that will be examined in this bulletin.

Every true church should be built and founded upon twelve apostles that Jesus chose and filled with the Holy Ghost. One, however, was a devil and committed suicide; another was quickly chosen to fill his place. Upon those twelve the church of God was built. Eph. 2: 20. And no other foundation can be laid. 1 Cor. 3: 11. If the above statements are true, how can another set of twelve in these days take the place of those Jesus chose as he says no other foundation can no man lay?

It is true that the above apostles are dead, so are the prophets; but their testimonies, their writings, live to this day. Surely it was not upon those weak apostles and prophets that he built his church, they are dead. It is their testimonies and their writings that are not dead, that the church is built upon and that the gates of hell cannot prevail against. We know that hell prevailed against the apostles themselves, as they were beheaded and slaughtered in various ways. But where is the man that has slaughtered their writings and beheaded them? They remain to this day; the gates of hell have not prevailed against them. However, those twelve apostles were chosen men above all men this side of the cross. They will have their names written in the foundation of New Jerusalem. Rev. 21: 14.

PAUL, AN APOSTLE

Paul was an apostle outside of the twelve and his writings live and remain to this day. Some claim that Paul was put in the place of James, but where do they find that record in the Bible? We find that Paul was an apostle three years before he saw Peter or James. Paul declares it is no lie. Gal. 1: 10-20. As we find Paul an apostle three years before James was beheaded we find him an apostle outside of the twelve. We may have as many apostles as God may see fit to give us. They, too, as well as we, should be governed by the writings of the apostles and the prophets, the only living foundation for men to abide by that will gain them a home in the kingdom of Heaven, as no other foundation can be laid by any man.

TWELVE APOSTLES

Did the twelve apostles lord over other churches? Paul labored three years before he went to Jerusalem and consulted with any of the apostles. Gal. 1: 17-20. Paul sent Timothy and Titus to set in order the churches which he had raised up. Why didn't the twelve send them? The twelve were not acting as lords, but as witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. Paul dared to blame Peter for a loose standard that he permitted, and Paul rebuked Peter for the same. Gal. 2: 14. Paul did not go before the board of twelve before he rebuked Peter; neither did he go before the General Overseer and the Assistant Overseers that he might reach Peter with a message of rebuke.

SEVENTY DISCIPLES

Where do we find Jesus built the church on the seventy disciples?

They walked no more with him; they left him before he died on the cross. They left Jesus before he bought the church. The seventy were not included with that purchased property as it plainly states they walked no more with him. John 6: 66. Then why should we choose seventy, nothing less nor more? When we find they were untrue to Jesus. It is nothing more than a catch to satisfy the weak and the unlearned of the day. It is not scriptural, without Bible support. The twelve were not acting as Lords over the churches; they were witnesses.

TWO BY TWO

Remember Jesus sent out his disciples two by two. It is not a command for the day. It was a custom and Jewish tradition. A man coming alone with a message would not be accepted of the Jews. The Lord send Jonah to Ninevah alone as it was a Gentile city and a marvellous work was accomplished. Jesus chose twelve apostles but he did not make it a continuous command. Paul did not abide by either one. We find Paul as a worker alone in many places. We find Paul did not recognize the twelve apostles as lord over him and his churches. Paul was the overseer and sent men to set in order the churches he had raised up. He recognized the twelve apostles as witnesses of God, not as lords of God on this earth.

JESUS' OWN WORDS

Matt. 18: 15-18. The local church and its authority and how to proceed is given in the above scripture. If they refuse to hear the one, two, and three, then take it to the church. If they refuse to hear the church, let them be unto you a heathen and a publican. The strongest power under the heavens is the local church. What is bound on earth is bound in heaven; what is loosened in earth is loosened in heaven. Jesus did not command them to take it to the twelve if they fail to hear the church.

Eph. 4: 11-14. The Lord has given some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and teachers to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till we all come into the unity of the faith. Notice carefully that those officers are all to work for the edifying of the body until the body has become agreed and one in the unity of the faith and become established. Then they become a strong organized body. They, too, have the same power to bind and to loosen on earth and in heaven.

SEVEN

The seven that were chosen by the apostles were chosen to care for a special work at Jerusalem by the twelve, but they were not chosen to care for the work, the financial business of all the churches the world over. Acts 6. They were to care for widows that were neglected in the daily ministrations. They were chosen upon the complaint of Grecians and Hebrews. The twelve were busy preaching the word of God witnessing to the world the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ. Therefore the seven were chosen by the twelve to care for the widows that were neglected at Jerusalem, not the widows that were neglected in the United States and abroad. There is nothing said about them caring for the financial and business affairs. Be it remembered that the foundation that Jesus laid was laid and completed years before the seven were chosen. The church that Jesus bought and purchased with his blood took place on the cross when he shed his blood. He said it was finished; nothing can be added to the foundation He laid. We may have as many and as few business managers as we wish to choose. We may have as many apostles and prophets and disciples as the Lord will bless us with, but no set of twelve can take the place of the twelve that Jesus chose. Jesus spoke in so many words, where there are two and three gathered in his name, he will be in their midst. Each and every one of us should abide by the writings of the apostles, the prophets and patriarchs.

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SALEM CONSTITUTION

We shall now examine and compare the Salem Constitution with the Bible constitution. Page 2, Section 1: "The twelve shall have the oversight of the body of believers as a whole....One from among the twelve selected by themselves shall preside at all meetings of the twelve and at all general assemblies of the bodies."

Page 3; Section 5: "The Overseer shall have general care over the churches as a whole. The Assistant Overseers shall have the care of the churches in the states, territories, or various countries...The Assistant Overseers are to be under direct supervision of the Overseer and to report to him who in turn gives account unto the twelve."

GENERAL OVERSEER

Who is the General Overseer of the Church of God with Headquarters at Salem, West Virginia, and World Headquarters at Jerusalem, Palestine? If the reader will notice the heading of their letter stationery, you will find these words: "General Overseer, A. N. Dugger." He is to preside at all meetings of the twelve and at all general assemblies of the body. The Assistant Overseers are to be under direct supervision of the Overseer (A. N. Dugger) and report to him (A. N. Dugger) who in turn gives account unto the twelve.

Notice carefully that all matters to be brought to the twelve must be brought to the Overseer, and he in turn gives account unto the twelve.

Here we have a political machine made up of many bosses.

Where do we find the apostles having a General Overseer? Their Overseer was Jesus; he is the head and the door of the church. He has promised to go with us to the end of the world.

THE SEVEN

Page 3, Section 3: "The seven shall have the general oversight or management of the business of the church and shall act as trustees for all property....but always under the supervision of the twelve." Where do we find Bible that the seven were to have the management over all business affairs and all property? We find in Acts sixth chapter they were to care for the neglected widows, and wait upon tables at Jerusalem. We do not find this committee presiding over business affairs of the churches that Paul raised up. We do not find those seven in authority or in power when Jesus died upon the cross and said it was finished. We believe in Bible government. You can have seven or nine or as many business managers that we find God will supply us with. But the question under consideration is, Where do we find the seven as business managers and the seventy disciples in the church constitution that Jesus purchased with his own blood? It is not there. Jesus built it on the apostles and the prophets, he, himself (Jesus), the chief cornerstone.

MODERN APOSTLES

We object to the Salem Modern apostles for various reasons. The Lord must come through this chain of officers before he can reach the members with the message of the day. The Lord has said every man shall work out his own salvation with fear and trembling and that every man shall be persuaded in his own mind. Paul did not receive his message through a chain of modern apostles. He declared he received it not from men. Gal. 1: 10-14. Paul recognized that the apostles that Jesus chose were subject to mistakes and were in need of rebuke and correction. But their writings were inspired by God. He moved them to write; he moved them to speak. Their writings are alive today and remain to this day. And the true church of God will be founded upon the living writings of the apostles upon which Jesus built his church. John saw the true church of God in Rev. 12, clothed with the gospel of Christ and the crown of the twelve apostles, the twelve star witnesses of Christ, of his crucifixion and resurrection. The Lord warns against many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater damnation.

CHURCH AND ITS POWER

The Bible teaches plainly congregational government. Each local church has power to radiate within itself and is divinely endowed with full authority to require obedience to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus as once delivered unto the saints and that it is not subject to any other power. The local church has no right to forfeit her responsibility, and to become a part of any foreign corporation. For proof see Matt. 18: 14-18.

Quoting from page 5, Section 3: relating to church government: "Church Trial, local, shall be conducted by members in good standing with the elder as chairman-....Should decision not be accepted it must be referred to the twelve for their decision." The Lord has plainly stated that if he will not hear the church let him be a heathen and a publican. Why can't the Salem church give the local church the same power and authority that Jesus gave them?

Section 4: "General Church trials shall be conducted by the twelve, seventy, and seven and the ordained elders. Decision to be by majority vote and to be final."

Where do we find Bible for local church trials and general church trials as taught by the Salem constitution. It is not there.

The modern apostles have robbed the members of their church responsibility and leading of the Holy Spirit. The early church of God spoke as the spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2: 1-2) not as the General Overseer and the twelve apostles gave them utterance.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church, too, has a General Overseer. He is called the Pope, Vicar of Christ. This is his proper name. But the General Overseer of the true Church of God is Jesus Christ. He will go with us to the end of the world. We are to worship the Lord today in spirit and in truth. "To teach the nations" might as well have been withheld by the Master; if a political machine controlled by one General, twelve apostles remains in force.

Zech. 4: 6. Not by might nor by power but by my spirit saith the Lord of hosts.

Jesus stands at the door and knocks, and if any man hears his voice and opens the door he will come in. He did not say if the twelve will hear his voice and let him in. Dear reader, if you are with the class boasting of the twelve modern apostles, listen to Jesus's voice as he speaks, Come out and have no part with modernism and substituters. Let Jesus be your General Overseer. Step out on that foundation that Jesus laid.

Written in love for those in darkness and for the gospel of Christ. For further information write to the author.

Elder O. R. Osman
Pastor of the Church of God
Waupaca, Wisconsin