

The "Church of God", What Is It?

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Since there are scores of organized and variously named bodies: all claiming to be the true church; all recognizing the fact that God in His word has named it "Church of God," yet they are persuaded, that in some way or somehow, they are the identical and true body, even though they assume a nom de plume or foreign name. And there are also many individuals who witness the evils of so many organized traditions, which are at variance with each other in both doctrine and name. That they therefore assert their independence, and oppose all organizations. Now it is the writer's purpose to appeal to reason and the word of God, in the spirit of love to all that he may assure the reader (1) That God has a body of people on earth qualified to be called His children; (2) That all members of this body should cooperate with each other, according to divine order; (3) That whereas such divine order of co-operation primarily is to enlighten the world about God and His Word; that they therefore should know true doctrine; (4) That this body having the truth, should wear the true name.

All must admit that the English word "Church," is a derivative of the Greek "Ecclesia" meaning "called out one." Yes God's family of children is called out from the world, to be a peculiar people zealous of good works. Titus 2:14. "But as many as received him to them he gave power to become the sons of God" John 1.12. "Behold what manner of love

the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not." 1 John 3:1. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:26 and Paul says, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Eph. 3:14, 15. Christ in heaven is a member of this family. He is the head member. He is the head of the body, the church, the firstborn from the dead. Col. 1:18. This family of God's children, or called out ones have their names written in heaven. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven. Heb. 12:23. The book which contains these names is called the book of life. Paul says, "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help these women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow laborers whose names are in the BOOK of LIFE. Phil. 4:3 Yes, and we should rejoice; that our names are enrolled in this book, as Jesus said unto the seventy "rejoice not" that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice because your names ARE written in heaven." Luke 10:20 We should note that this was before Pentecost. Now Rev. 22:19 shows us that it is possible to do things to cause our names to be erased from this book of life; so let us not be highminded, but fear. Rom.11:20. Daniel recited that when the Battle of Armageddon is fought; "Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. Dan. 12:1 All who do not have their names written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire after judgment. Rev. 20:15. Then can we doubt that the patriarchs and prophets of old had their names written there?

Certainly Abraham belonged to the "called out ones." See Luke 13:28.

Be it known, that God adds to the church daily such as should be saved. Acts 2:47. He sets the members in the body as it pleases him. 1 Cor. 12:18. Can you imagine that that body did not exist prior to Pentecost? Do you really think that the Church of God did not exist before John the Baptist? I believe John to be a good member of that body. Jesus' instruction in Matt. 18:17 certainly was applicable when spoken, as well as today, and how could they tell the matter to the church, if it then did not exist? Oh, how can men contend that God had no Ecclesia, or "called out ones" prior to Pentecost? Certainly the church or family of God's children antedated the apostolic age. But it was then known as Israel. Moses was in it: This is he that was IN THE CHURCH in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai. Acts 7:38. This text is positive and plain. Not a single text to infer that the Church of God had its earliest incipency at Pentecost; or that John the Baptist started it. Inspiration instructs us concerning Pentecost "and the same day there were added unto THEM about three thousand souls" Acts 2:41. Note the pronoun "Them" represents members to which the three thousand were added, and verse 47 shows what it was they were added to "and the Lord added to the CHURCH daily such as should be saved."

Before Christ, the church, or called out ones, was known as Israel. But the Lord informed them, that when the Gentiles should be added unto them, their name should be changed. "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory:

and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Isa. 62:2 Who should be called by a new name? Israel of course. Through the door of prophecy Jesus entered into the sheepfold, and became the true shepherd of the sheep. John 10:1, 2. I ask what was the sheepfold which Christ entered? It was something definite. He was born an Israelite, but certainly birth was not the particular door spoken of in John 10:1, 2. No! for all Jews could make such a claim. But this door into the sheepfold was definite, all who did not enter by this door were thieves and robbers and Jesus was the only one who did enter it, and thereby proved himself to be the true shepherd. Jesus entered the sheepfold through this prophetic door; fulfilling all prophecies concerning the promised Messiah, the true shepherd of the sheep. Now note that the sheepfold existed before he entered into it. Verse 4 shows who are the sheep: they are the "called out ones" for they follow Christ their shepherd. Now a question may be asked: are all sheep in this sheepfold? Verse 16 answers "and other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Dear independent do you represent one of these sheep out of the sheepfold? Do you hear his voice "ONE FOLD." Oh, my dear brother or sister do not fight God's order. You may assert your independence like Cain and say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I will take care of myself, and no one is my superior. I will not submit to any form of government. But listen to God's word. 1 Cor. 12:28 says that he sets "governments" in the church and among those qualified to rule he says they must

RULE WELL their own house. "For if a man know not how to RULE his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God." 1 Tim. 3:5 he further says that they should RULE with diligence. Rom. 12:8 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you OVERSEERS to feed the Church of God." Acts 20:28 Many are trying to look after themselves, and expect the Church of God to do likewise. Oh, dear brother do not bury your talents. If you are a servant of God you are entrusted with a talent and should exercise it to glorify God. You can't lie down on your job and long endure. You are not independent; even though you be so isolated from other brethren as to be excused from personal participation in government, you can be A "HELP." 1 Cor. 12:28 You can not be a "help" while fighting God's order, or government. What reason have you for fighting government? Anarchists oppose government.

Brethren, even a poor government is better than no government at all. Even among the savages we find some form of government, why? it is because they have learned that lesson by experience. If every individual is independent of every other individual; then we, like the wild beasts of the forests, are at the mercy of the merciless, who are governed only by appetites, passions, and sexual desires: then theft, dissipation, jealousy and murder would be paramount. Oh, brethren! God has a government else it would not be a body at all, and this government is as perfect as the individuals who are entrusted to govern is perfect. Therefore if inefficient or unscrupulous governors are elected to the different branches of duty in this body; who, then, is to be

blamed more than yourself, if you did not do your part in electing able and God-fearing men? God's order is perfect; but human beings are entrusted to execute this order, and each member should assist in selecting these executives. See Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1.

Now let me ask: if the church is not an organized body, and has no treasury, how can it follow out the divine instruction given in 1 Tim. 5th chapter? How could it relieve the distressed, if it had no funds? If it has funds who is divinely empowered to collect, and disburse such funds? Should such duty be entrusted to any and every self-styled person? Do you think that such self-styled person should not be asked to give a report, to the body, of funds so received and so distributed by him? Brethren, don't you see the need of a treasury? "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse." Mal. 3:10. While Jesus was here Judas was treasurer John 13:29. Jesus himself directed the disbursements. But after that inspiration orders "Wherefore brethren (not worldly people), look ye out among YOU seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom whom we may appoint over this business." Yes, we should select men of wisdom and filled with the spirit of God to look after the storehouse of God, in receiving and disbursing the Lord's money to the needy and destitute brethren.

Again I ask: how shall the ministry be supported with no treasury? You say beg of course! Well Mr. A goes into a new field to preach, possibly leases a hall, furnishes fuel and lighting, pays his own board etc., in two months possibly he is instrumental in causing some to accept the truth and

obey God. In the meantime his dear wife and children at home, are laboring hard to earn their own living and send this husband and father enough funds to pay his board bill and the expense of his protracted meetings. Now during this same period of time Mr. B. goes among brethren, preaches where everything, including board is freely furnished; he preaches long enough to inform these good brethren that he has financial obligations to meet and his family at home needs his support, and that unless means are furnished, he must labor at something else: of course the good brethren donate to his purse, then he goes to another settlement of brethren and collects likewise. Now in two months Mr. B collects several hundred dollars, while Mr. A collects nothing, bears his own expenses, yet his work is even more valuable. Brethren, can you see any justice in such an unsystematic and unscriptural way? Of course Mr. B is apt to oppose organization because he usually works among brethren and pockets all sums, both tithes and offerings and need not report, he is independent. Mr. A. turns all sums which he may collect into the church treasury, as he reports his expenses while laboring for the Lord, hoping that these SEVEN MEN who have been appointed over this matter according to Acts 6:3 will remunerate him out of the tithes and offerings collected. Brethren, don't fight God's order. Let everyone, including the ministers turn all sums of the Lord's money into the treasury or storehouse where an accurate account is kept of all sums received and paid out, and true reports be made, that all can know and let us all practice strict economy in the Lord's work, to make each dollar do all possible good— Amen.

Now be it known that the afore mentioned seven men who constitute what we call the executive committee, for that is their assigned duty, are not paid a salary. It would be impossible to select these seven men according to Acts 6:3 without an election and previous notice to all members of the Church be given, to attend or be represented. And besides the election of officers, all confer upon important matters concerning the church work throughout the world, as they thus confer. This meeting is called a "Conference," and to be orderly they must select a chairman or presiding officer, called the President, or Bishop in 1 Tim. 3:1-7. His qualifications are outlined as follows: "Must be blameless, the husband of one wife (only), vigilant sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he TAKE CARE of the Church of God? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Note—that his duty is to RULE or TAKE CARE OF THE Church of God as mentioned in Rom. 12:8 "he that RULETH with diligence." These are divine instructions concerning what sort of a man to select to fill this most important office. But how and who may do the selecting? If God is to select by revelation then this foregoing instruction would be useless. Why instruct us how to select, if he is to select by Himself and without our aid? Again I

ask are only a few to do the selecting, or is it a duty of all? If only a few; who are the few? Brethren! It clearly is the duty of all to elect according to these qualifications: Therefore the constitution of the Church of God grants to every local congregation a voice in these elections. Now it is not the writer's purpose to enumerate each office and their qualifications and duties, but only to convince the reader that the body of God's children should organize according to God's order. It is the church represented as a building fitly framed together, and constantly growing as other material or members may be added to it. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ, himself, being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building, fitly framed together GROWETH unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:19, 21.

Now we know that a building is not disorganized, disconnected lumber or material, but various parts of the material are fitted to connect and cooperate with each other, not an independent piece in the whole structure. Again Paul likens it unto a corporal body, the most highly perfected of all organized bodies; with all of its members co-operative with each other in the harmonious working of the whole body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members being many are one body; so also is Christ. For by one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jew or Gentile, whether we be bond or free." 1 Cor. 12:12, 13. Then he likens the different members to eyes, ears, nose, feet and hands; all co-operating in

a single body effectually, and in verse 18 he says, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." We know that we cannot all be preachers, some are gifted as teachers, others as exhorters, some are especially qualified to do colporteur work, others to do office work, and still others who follow the various pursuits of life, letting their light shine before the world, and lending financial aid and encouragement to spread the gospel, are classed as HELPS in verse 28. Note also verse 26 says, "and whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it." Now I ask if all churches constitute this one body, does such brotherly feeling exist among them? Does the membership of one church have as much concern, love and sympathy for the membership of other churches? Every one knows that they do not, and could not. All know also that they are not under the same government. The officers of one church have no governing rule over the membership of any other church. Then cease longer to say they all belong to the same body. Many bodies are not one single body. Members of the one body are not and can not mean different organizations, because they must work harmoniously. "For as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then GIFTS differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering, or he that teacheth on teaching; or he that exhorteth on exhortation; he that ruleth with diligence;

he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness." Rom. 12:4-8. This shows conclusively that the different offices are not different organizations, but different branches or offices of duty in the same church; and that this single sheepfold or church government is not a local affair, but world wide. Paul further illustrates this fact in Rom. 11th chapter, here he likens this sheepfold to a tame olive tree, from which some of its branches were broken off, because of unbelief, verse 20.

We well know how, and why these branches or individual members were broken off because of their blindness in rejecting Christ the true shepherd, when he entered the sheepfold. But we should not lose sight of the fact that only SOME, not all, were broken off, verse 17 "and if some of the branches be broken off, and thou (Gentiles) being a wild olive tree (family of satan), wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree." The pronoun "them" are the branches not broken off, and among these individual Gentiles were grafted; to partake of the root and fatness, blessings and promises of God to Israel. See Eph. 2:11-13 "Ye (in time past Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." grafted into the true Israel, or tame olive tree. Now dear reader can you not see, that God did not make a new tree? No! some of these branches were not broken off, and among them God grafts the Gentile who accepts his mercies. Certainly Israel was not all blinded, Zacharias, and his wife Elizabeth were

both righteous, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of God blameless. Luke 1:5,6. Zacharias attended to the duties of priest under the ancient discipline which discipline underwent a change of order from Levitical to Melchisedek, but the same body of God's children continues to be unbroken off. Anna also a prophetess, and Simeon accepted Jesus as the son of God, at first sight. Luke 2:25 to 35 Also the wise men of the east we believe were not broken off because of their unbelief, many continued to belong to this same old tame olive tree. God never made a new tree in the apostolic age. No! The same 'Ecclessia,' called out ones, continued to be his family their name changed from Israel to "Church of God" so mentioned a dozen times by inspiration.

Now dear reader, do not think since these Gentile grafts begin their growth in this tree, that they can continue to bear fruit according to the wild scion. No, they must be converted, and bear fruit the same as those branches among whom they are now grafted, they must bear fruit or keep the same moral law of God given to Isarel.

That wild nature of living in rebellion against God's will must be converted to obey him. This fact is shown by Paul in Rom. 11:24, "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree (family of sathan) which is wild by nature, and wert grafted CONTRARY to nature, into a good olive tree (family of God); how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" The blinded Jews who reject Christ, and are cut off can be grafted into the family of God. But note how Paul explains that the Gentile grafts can not bear fruit according to nature, but CON-

TRARY TO NATURE, which must be the same as the tree into which they are grafted.

Some in their vain efforts to prove that the Church had its earliest incipency in the apostolic age quote Matt. 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build my Church" etc., emphasizing the fact that "will build" means future tense. But note—Christ did not say I will start my church, as though it did not then exist. Moses was in it at Sinai. Acts 7:38.

Dear reader, the church is yet being builded and will yet be builded when any additions are made to it. There were added unto it at Pentecost about 3000 souls Acts 2:41; and God continues to add or build unto it daily such as should be saved Acts 2:47. When these Gentiles are grafted into that tree, which already existed it was thus being enlarged or builded. Be it known that we do not contend that individuals are grafted into the organization, but we do maintain that the grafted in ones should organize according to God's order. We may be asked that if Christ is the rock upon which the church is built, how then could it exist before Christ or before Jesus was born? Will answer, Christ was not the ROCK mentioned in Matt 16:18. Christ is part of the church Col. 1:18, therefore could not be the rock upon which it is builded. In Eph. 2:19, 20 the church is represented by a building with the apostles, and the prophets as foundation pillars; and Jesus Christ as chief corner stone. The foundation of a building is part of the structure itself so the apostles and prophets were members, as was Jesus. Col. 1:18; Acts 7:38. Their lives and writings are to us foundation pillars, but these pillars had a basic rock upon which they were established. I understand that the contractors who built the

state capitol building at Jefferson City dug fifty-seven feet deep to place the foundation pillars upon solid rock. So Jesus explains, "Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like. He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock Luke 6:47, 48. Evidently Jesus referred to God as the foundation of the church, for it is he who is back of the apostles and prophets: Yea, He was the authority back of all Christ did or said, and who revealed to Peter that Jesus was the son of the living God. Matt. 16:17. He is described by the prophets as "the rock" David said "The Lord is my rock and my fortress." Psalms 18:2 "For who is God save the Lord? or who is a Rock save our God." Verse 31 "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect" Deut. 32:3, 4. "The Rock of my salvation" verse 15. "For their rock is not our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" verse 31 "Thou art my Rock and my fortress Psalms 71:3. Psalms 62:2 "He only is my Rock and my salvation." "My God is the Rock of my refuge." Psalms 94:22. Yes, he is the solid rock upon which the church of God is established. The apostles and prophets as pillars, are anchored upon this rock: Jesus Christ the chief corner stone also, for he says, "I do nothing of myself; but as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things. John 8:28. "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." John 14:24. God is the ROCK upon which Christ our chief corner stone is founded.

Some say that the church today should have twelve living apostles. Well as we are builded upon the apostles and prophets, should we so under-

mine our foundation once established to replace them? Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone of this foundation, shall we also replace him for another in modern times? I ask what is an apostle? What marks the difference between a disciple and an apostle? Jesus had many disciples or followers, but of these he chose twelve apostles. Now let us see just what the qualifications of an apostle are and thus determine if any one could qualify to be an apostle today. The eleven met to select one to take the place of Judas and Peter said, "Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, MUST one be ordained TO BE A WITNESS with us of his resurrection." Can any one qualify as an eye witness today? Paul qualified by testifying that he actually saw him after his resurrection, and conversed with him. If we can replace our foundation pillars, then we can replace Christ also. Now since the Church of God is a universal body, and is a unit of government, yet it has local governments with each such local government so corelated and so connected by association, that they are inseparable, and thus component parts of the one body: as one hand is a distinct unit yet this unit being connected to the body therefore corelated with the other hand.

Since these local units have governments some must officiate as governors so we have divine instruction to set in order things that are wanting in every city ordaining elders to govern in spiritual matters and deacons for the temporal affairs locally. See Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:17 also 1 Tim. 3:8-15. As the Bishop or president who presides over the business and deliberations of General Conferences when various local bodies meet to confer con-

cerning the work of the body in general: so in local matters, must one officiate. "Let the elders that RULE well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine." 1 Tim. 5:17. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses" verse 19. Then if found guilty of sin after such trial God says, Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear verse 20. Brethren do not fight God's order, but obey it implicitly. "Moreover if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone: If he will hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matt. 18:15-17. The Ecclesia, or "called out ones" are a body of people separated from sin to live righteously as servants of God "That he may present it to himself a glorious CHURCH, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:27. Therefore as these people organize, it would be a reproach upon this church organization to continue to fellowship sinners in the church fold: Jesus' instruction is to disfellowship such after conviction has been rendered by the church.

Paul gives further instructions how to thus proceed. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. 5:7. This purging out of incorrigible members should be done

before Passover time each year. Note the context carefully, also 1 Cor. 11:18, 19 "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth I wrote you in an epistle not to company (fellowship) with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with covetous, or extortioners, or with idolators; for then must ye needs go out of the world." 1 Cor. 5:8-10. Of course not to be among them in business and social affairs of life, one would then need to go out of the world; for the world is all that class of people so Paul doesn't mean such; but he does not mean to fellowship in the church organization such. As he further explains in succeeding verses. "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat (Lord's Supper). For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? (without the church fold) do not ye judge them that are within? (within the church fold.) But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among you that wicked person." Verses 11 to 13. Paul then explains how to conduct this church trial: "If ye then have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed **IN THE CHURCH.**" 1 Cor. 6:4, 5.

Brethren can not you see the need of an executive to conduct this trial? One whose duty so enjoines? No one would volunteer to conduct such an unhappy procedure. If adultery or fornication is the charge preferred shall the women members be compelled to participate in such a trial? Of course to convict a

member the facts must be shown. The women are excused; "Let your women keep silence in the churches: For it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

Having shown that this body should organize according to God's order we now cite the reader to God's word to determine what name he gave it to wear. Christ in his prayer to the Father said, "I have manifested THY NAME unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world." John 17:6. He did not name them after some person or doctrine in verse 12 he said, "While I was with them in the world I kept them IN THY NAME." Then he asked "Holy Father keep them through thine OWN NAME." Verse 11. And "Simeon hath declared how God at first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for HIS NAME." Acts 15:14. And in verse 17 he speaks of the prophecy concerning the Gentiles who would seek the Lord "Upon whom My NAME is called" and Paul declares in Eph. 3:14, 15 "I bow my knees unto the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth IS NAMED." Christ in heaven is a member of this family, He is the Head member. "He is the head of the body, the CHURCH; the first born from the dead." Col. 1:18. Christ belongs only to that body which wears his Father's name. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the CHURCH OF GOD which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. Paul

by inspiration wrote "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the CHURCH OF GOD." 1 Cor. 10:32. And in speaking about this body partaking of the Lord's Supper says, "Or despise ye the CHURCH OF GOD?" 1 Cor. 11:22. "Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Sothenes our brother, unto the Church of God which is at Corinth." 1 Cor. 1:1, 2. "For ye brethren, became followers of the CHURCHES OF GOD which in Judea are in Christ Jesus." 1 Thess. 2:14. Note that these local churches are of the one body in Christ Jesus and of the same name CHURCH OF GOD. And while giving instructions concerning qualifications of officers and how they should rule said, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the HOUSE OF GOD which is the CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. 3:14, 15. "For if a man know not how to rule his OWN HOUSE, how shall he take care of the CHURCH OF GOD" verse 5.

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthian brethren, he addressed it to the "CHURCH OF GOD." 2 Cor. 1.1. It was the church, an universal body which Paul persecuted. "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the CHURCH OF GOD and wasted it." Gal. 2:13. "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the CHURCH OF God." 1 Cor. 15:9. In so doing he persecuted Christ for he is a member of it. Col 1:18. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Acts 9:5. "Verily, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto

one of the least of these MY BRETHREN, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25:40. But who are "my brethren? Every professor of Christianity will say this includes me, Catholics, as well as Protestants though wearing spurious names. Let Jesus answer this question. "And he answered them saying, Who is my mother, and my brethren? And looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." Mark 3:33-35.

Dear readers, if it is God's will to organize, then can you claim to be Christ's brethren while fighting this order? Answer for yourself. Imagine yourself to be a finger amputated from the hand. It now is independent, separated from the body. Is this God's order? If so, then stir up trouble among brethren, and thus get other members to be amputated also. May God help us all to be peacemakers, and try to get all members of this one body to function as "God hath set them in the body." 1 Cor. 12:18; that they may be bound together in a unit of love, in honor preferring one another; wearing the one God given name, "Church of God." "Keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12. "He that saith I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." 1 John 2:3-5. Don't say Christ abolished God's moral law. Jesus kept it perfectly and we must manifest that same spirit in doing the will of God. "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." 2 Cor. 4:11. Therefore as Jesus kept the Ten Command-

ments perfectly John 15:10; Heb. 4:15 that very life must be made manifest in our mortal flesh. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. Paul says, "With my mind I serve the law of God." Rom. 7:25. Repentance belongs to God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ Acts 20:21 and to have faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ we should show such faith by our works being "Buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. 2:12.

Brethren if you have died by repentance, cease to sin, and be made alive to Christ; that body of sin symbolically buried in the act of baptism; you are then a new creature, vowed to obey God, as his dear children. Then if you belong to his family, why not wear his name? Christ says, "He calleth his own sheep by name." John 10:3. These are the Ecclesia, or called out ones, once named Israel, now The Church of God; divinely organized, and divinely named. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold" verse 16. Now note he says, "they shall hear my voice." There are thousands of honest and sincere people who are in "Babylon" and the call of the Lord is, "Come out of her my people." Rev. 18:4. "Babylon" means confusion. "Mystery Babylon" the mother of harlots has so changed the customs of the people contrary to the law of God, and established traditions of its own, that now people are confused, or they are in confusion. "Come out of her MY PEOPLE that ye be not partakers of her sins (transgressions), and that ye receive not

of her plagues.” Follow Jesus and you will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John give us a history of Christ’s life “while I am in the world I am the light of the world.” John 9:5. Christ obeyed God, do you? He came unto the sheepfold, (John 10:2,) have you? Do obey God.

In prophecy a woman is the symbol of a church: Therefore a corrupt woman represents a defiled or corrupt church, and a pure, chaste woman is a symbol of THE PURE CHURCH. The 17th chapter of Revelation fitly describes the Roman Catholic church as an unchaste woman seated upon the bloody, or scarlet colored beast, the state government of Rome. Verse 6 says that “she was drunk with the blood of saints and the blood of Martyrs of Jesus.” And truly the armies of Rome were under her control for more than 1200 years. History says the Pope thus came to be regarded as the foundation of justice, and in theory at least, the supreme judge of Christianity while emperors and kings and all civil magistrates bore the sword simply as his ministers to carry into effect his sentences and decrees.” Myers General History edited 1889 page 149. In the great struggle of the Reformation this mother church lost much of her power to enforce her decrees, but other churches have since appeared upon the scene to champion and defend her mandates against the commandments of God: Hence they may be styled the daughters of the HARLOT Rev. 17:5. Like the mother church they try to influence civil governments to enact laws to enforce Sunday observance etc. These organized bodies are called churches; because they profess and do have a form of godliness, but like the Pharisees of old, they make void the law of God by their tra-

ditions Matt. 15:9 "They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish THEIR OWN righteousness. Rom. 10:2, 3. their church traditions or customs are more sacred to them than God's commandments. Such traditional zeal is only abominable confusion. Hence styled "Mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abomination of the earth." Rev. 17:5. Any church which obeys the pope of Rome instead of almighty God is a daughter of this mother whose head is not Christ; but the pope. A priest called Father Enright in his lectures exclaimed "The Bible says remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, but the church says No! keep the first day of the week and the whole world bows in obedience." Daughters obey their mothers. "His servants ye are to whom ye obey." Rom. 6:16. Read about this pope or man of sin 2 Thess. 2:4; Dan. 7:25.

In the 12th chapter of Revelation the Church of God is described as a WOMAN clothed with the sun (gospel light), under her feet is a moon (reflected light) this shows that the church was established before the gospel age, when types and shadows were used. Those atonement offerings in faith were reflections of the real sacrifice which Christ made. In offering the blood of animals they manifested their faith in the blood of Christ in the forgiveness of sins. Lev. 4:27-31. By such faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Heb. 11:4. In type Christ was slain from the foundation of the world Rev. 13:8. This woman has a crown of twelve stars. The apostles are satellites also. They are witnesses of the resurrection of Christ Acts. 1:22 and endowed with the holy spirit of truth. For 4000

years the church anxiously waited for the fulfillment of God's promise Gen. 3:15, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. And like a woman finally relieved of her burden and anxiety in the birth of her child, so the church, (or children of God), was made to rejoice when Jesus the looked for seed of the woman was born in Bethlehem of Judea. The "Governor that shall rule my people Israel" Matt. 2:6 "Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." Rev. 12:5. This man child certainly represents Christ. The rod of iron or strict rule is mentioned of him in Psa. 110:2 also Rev. 19:15. This dominion will be given him when he comes in the clouds of heaven. Dan. 7:13, 14.

The great red dragon, Roman empire, in the person of Herod sought to destroy this child as soon as it was born Matt. 2:13. Rev. 12:4. This man child was afterwards caught up unto God and to his throne. Some think that this woman symbolizes the church of Rome apostatizing and bringing forth the pope.

Oh dear reader, the church of Rome never was pure. Mother Rome never was the Church of God. The true church never was corrupt nor ever will be, therefore could not apostatize. Paul speaks of the time of a falling away and the man of sin being revealed; but the falling away was in membership numbers, not that the whole church was corrupted. Oh no! It "has neither spot nor wrinkle, or any such thing; but should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:27. During the 1260 years in papal rule the true church could not worship in public, but she was in seclusion. "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God that they should feed her a

thousand two hundred and three score days." Rev. 12:6. God provided a place for his people during the time of papal rule. To express it in these symbols the pure woman did not apostatize; did not go out of existence at all; but God protected her in her secret hiding during the time when the corrupt woman was astride the scarlet colored beast, directing the armies to enforce the pope's decrees. "And the woman (church of God) was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time (1260 years) from the face of the serpent" verse 14. "The earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood (army of people Rev. 17:15) which the dragon cast out of his mouth" verse 16. The pure woman did not fight the dragon. It was the EARTHLY armies that carried on the wars of the reformation and helped the woman in the wilderness, even the armies of Napoleon sent to capture the pope in 1798 were not Church of God people. Of course the earth helped the woman.

Now bear in mind that the dragon spirit is one of the three to cause the Armageddon battle Rev. 16:13. Now during this short, but extreme persecuting period the Church of God probably will not function as an organized body, the mark of the beast will be enforced and for a very short time church work will cease, the ten virgins slumbered and slept Matt. 25:5. All nations of the world marshalling their forces for Armageddon. "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12:17. While enforcing the mark of

the beast, when war is waged against us; when army drafts will be hunting for our dear children to fight against God in Armageddon; then our publishing work must cease, our evangelic work be finished.

Dear ones this is the night when no man can work. In such scattered and disorganized condition the church work is no longer operative, hence we will be the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Therefore let us work while it is day for that night cometh when no man can work. Jesus is coming to deliver his people. Amen.



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