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Original Church Organization RESTORED

HOW We should ~~thank~~ thank and praise Almighty God for restoring to us the original church organization, as Jesus first organized it!

Do we realize what it means? For the first time since the first century, there is in the world a church built according to the original pattern, with JESUS, not any man, the HEAD; and once again under the leadership of the twelve apostles; the headquarters restored to Jerusalem; kept in the name of the Father, as Jesus so earnestly prayed (John 17:11,12); fitting the ~~the~~ scriptural description of the true remnant church, having the COMMANDMENTS OF GOD and the TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST. (Rev. 12:17;14:12).

The CHURCH has withstood the ravages of time, the persecution of the Pagan Roman Emperors, the Apostasy of the so-called Holy Roman Empire and Catholic church, and the confusion of Protestantism. But after 70 A.D., when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem and the church was dispersed, persecuted, driven into the four corners of the earth, the original apostolic ORGANIZATION fell into disuse. The Apostles were scattered far and near, out of touch one with the other, and unable to get together to appoint successors as fast as one of their number met death.

Since the Apostolic office was for this cause abandoned, many today honestly question whether it ever continued beyond the original "12" whom Jesus named.

A search of the scriptural history on the question reveals that the Apostolic office and original organization was maintained intact

FOR Over 1800 years there has been no true Scripturally-organized church on the earth, having the original Bible name, and the faith once delivered to the Saints!

until the dispersion following 70 A.D.

When Judas Iscariot dropped out, the eleven promptly selected a successor, Matthias. (Acts

1:23,26). And in Acts 6:2, the Apostles are again numbered as TWELVE.

Later, king Herod killed James the brother of John, one of the original "12". (Acts 12:1,2). This was before Paul was made an Apostle, who is still called Saul in Acts 13:2,9. But Paul was made an apostle in his place.

Under the continued persecutions other apostles were martyred, and their places filled by new Apostles. Barnabus was made an Apostle (Acts 14:14), and later James the Lord's brother, not one of the original "12", became an Apostle (Gal. 1:18,19), about 58 A.D. About 60 A.D. we find Andronicus and Junia are numbered among the "12" (Rom. 16:7). And Silvanus and Timothy are called Apostles (II Thes. 1:1 with 2:6).

In addition to the Twelve Apostles, Jesus also appointed the "70" elders. There were the 20 leading elders in the Church in the Wilderness, under Moses, (Ex. 24:1 and Nu. 11:16). But, rejecting the "20" Levites among the Jews, ~~At~~ Jesus appointed OTHER seventy (Luke 10:1), and, as He had commissioned his Apostles to do, He also sent them "two and two", and commissioned them to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, and to heal the sick, (verse 9).

The third step in the divine primitive church organization was the selection of the seven deacons, chosen by the brethren under guidance of the Holy Spirit, who were set over the BUSINESS of the church, at the headquarters church in Jerusalem.

(Acts 6:1-6). Some have thought ~~that~~ these were seven local church deacons, but Jerusalem was world headquarters, and after Philip became an evangelist, traveling about, he still was "one of the SEVEN," while living at Caesarea, in A.D. 60. ~~Acts~~ (Acts 21:8). This plainly shows the office of the "Seven" was to be continued.

Thus, upon these three orders of office was built the apostolic Church of God by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

After the original pattern of organization was broken up thru persecution and dispersion, the true Church, that invisible organization composed of all saved individuals, has continued in existence; and, tho, dispersed and scattered and unorganized, the gates of hell have never prevailed against the true Church.

But the time has come for the original primitive ORGANIZATION to be restored to the true Church. When Jesus comes again---and He is coming SOON---He must find the ~~church~~ church as He left it. He will present it "to himself a glorious ~~church~~ church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." It will be "holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:27).

John saw in vision, at the end-time, the multitude praising God, saying: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

The bride IS NOT READY NOW. She must hasten to make herself ready, for time is short.

Can we dare to profess to follow the Master Builder, and not accept the divinely-given model? Can we reject the ORGANIZATION, while still accepting the remainder of the practise, teaching, and zeal of the original apostolic church? Let all members of the true invisible Church organization now return to the faith once delivered to the saints, and follow the light now shining so clearly upon the true Bible ORGANIZATION, as organized and left by Jesus, the HEAD of the Church.

BUSINESS MEETING VOTES TO AFFILIATE

Since only a minority of the members of the Churches of God in Oregon were able to attend the business meeting announced for January 31, it was decided that, while the vote was unanimous for accepting the Constitution of the restored apostolic organization, each member should speak for himself, and express individually whether or not he wishes to affiliate with it.

Of the Twelve, the Seventy, and the Seven, chosen the Bible way, two

Seventy, Elder S. A. Oberg, and the editor. Both have accepted this ministry.

Read carefully the following report of the meeting, and then sign fill out and sign the coupon below expressing your personal decision regarding the restored order.

To the People Whom it Concerns:

As had been announced, a general meeting of the Churches of God in Oregon convened January 31, 1934, at home of S.A.Oberg, in Dever.

The following is a report of the meeting:

At a meeting in the home of S.A.Oberg this morning, the following motion was carried: Moved by S.A.Oberg that the Churches of God in the state of Oregon accept the Constitution of the organization with headquarters at ~~Salem~~ Jerusalem, Palestine, U.S. headquarters, Salem, West Virginia, in its entirety, including the 40 points of doctrine under Art. 8, Sec. 1. Seconded by Bro. Hobbs. Unanimously carried.

In view of the fact that only a minority of the ~~members~~ members of the Churches of God in Oregon were represented at his meetin,

Sabbath, called even by the Jews yet today a "High Day."

The lamb was killed as the sun was going down. (Deut. 16:6). Yet it was eaten IN the 14th day, not after it had passed, so we know the lamb was killed at the very beginning of the day, and eaten after dark that night. (Lev. 23:5,6).

Let us now notice ex. 12:14,17. The Passover was instituted an ordinance FOREVER. Circumcision was ordained forever, too. In both cases God meant forever, just as He said. But, as in circumcision, the mode has changed since the Cross, being of the HEART, not literally of the flesh, so the Passover continues on forever. But, as we have seen, at that last Passover supper with His disciples, Jesus CHANGED the manner of its observance, substituting the broken bread for the broken body of the lamb as a symbol of Christ's broken body; and the wine for the blood of the lamb, symbolizing His blood shed for the remission of our sins.

How OFTEN was this ordinance to be observed? "Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year." (Ex. 13:10). Once a year, at night, after the sun has set in the beginning of the 14th of Abib, Hebrew calendar.

Jesus observed it once a year at this time set time. (Luke 2:42).

Suppose, at the time of that original Passover in Egypt, those Israelites had said, "It doesn't matter when, or how often we do this. Let's wait until the 15th." You can see what would have happened when the angel of death went thru the land that midnight, if the blood had not been on the door-posts AT THAT PRECISE TIME. God does things ON TIME. He has set the exact time for the Passover as it was observed until the Cross, and as it has been since observed in the form of the Lord's Supper. It is important that we, today, return to the faith once delivered to the saints and have the blood of Christ on the door-post of our hearts at the precise right time.

So, when the time of Jesus' crucifixion came, He took that last Passover, changing its manner of observance into the Lord's Supper, at the precise right time. And if in the FIRST Lord's Supper was taken at this precise time, when instituted by Jesus, we ought to follow the example today. Jesus, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed on the Cross on that same day---on the day the typical lamb always had been killed, altho' His crucifixion was in the later day-light portion of that day.

The Ordinance of Humility

Along with the Lord's Supper, Jesus introduced also an ordinance

of humility.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all describe the taking of the bread and wine. But John's gospel omits this and relates the ordinance of humility.

It is ~~that~~ in the 13th chapter of John. Verse 1 shows it was at this Passover. And, the supper being ended, (v.2), Jesus took a towel, (v.4), and began to wash His disciples' feet (v.5).

"So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an EXAMPLE, THAT YE SHOULD DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU." (v.12-15).

Now many today do not want to humiliate themselves to wash the feet of their church brethren. Very few are doing this today.

Are we going to say "I don't want to," or are we surrendered, yielded true Christians, saying with Jesus, "Not as I will, but as THOU wilt," humbly and willingly obeying? Perhaps this will be a test of just how far you have surrendered to Christ, of how good a Christian you really are. And Jesus said, "If ye know these things, HAPPY are ye if ye do them." (v.17).

Some try to argue that Jesus was commanding only His disciples to wash one another's feet. Well, if we study verses 14 and 15 we must admit that Jesus did COMMAND them to wash one another's feet. Now turn to Matthew 28:19,20:

"Go ye therefore," He said to these same disciples, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching THEM to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded YOU." So these disciples were to teach US to observe ALL the things He had commanded THEM, and He commanded THEM to wash one another's feet. Surely God is no respecter of persons.

Kept Once a Year in the Apostolic Church

Now notice I Cor. 5:7,8:

"Christ our passover, is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven . . . But with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Paul gives directions regarding the Lord's Supper in the 11th Chapter of I Corinthians. Some notice verse 26, where he says: "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup," and interpret that to say "Take it as often as YOU please." But it does not say that.

as often as we observe it should be once a year, to show forth the Lord's death till He come." It is, then, the anniversary of His death, and anniversaries are observed once a year.

The Lord's Supper, then, should be, as it was by the 1st century Church of God, observed once each year, and at NIGHT (it is SUPPER, and who ever heard of taking supper in the morning?) on the 14th of Abib, or Nisan, Hebrew calendar.

It is the most solemn and sacred event of the entire year.

If we take it unworthily (v. 27, 29), we do it to our own damnation. What if we do not feel we have lived worthily---as most of us do feel? Shall we refuse to take it? Verse 28 tells what to do: "But let a man examine himself, AND SO LET HIM EAT OF THAT BREAD, AND DRINK OF THAT CUP." It says EXAMINE YOURSELF---that is, GET worthy. If something is wrong between you and another, go to that party according to the Scriptural directions and get it made right. And your other mistakes and sins, take boldly to the throne of grace, according to 4:14-16, where sits a tender-hearted, loving, forgiving High Priest, Jesus Christ, who can be touched with a feeling of your infirmities, and is willing instantly to forgive, and impart to you HIS worthiness. If you are not worthy, GET worthy. It does not take much time---it only takes your submission and your willingness. And so, says the instruction, "let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." It is a positive command that we partake of this ordinance.

Example of the First Century Church

The 1st Century Church of God, under the original apostles, continued to observe this solemn ordinance once a year at the proper time.

The days of unleavened bread were still being observed. Notice Acts 20:6, "And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread." That was in 59 A.D.

Notice Acts 12:3. The Holy Spirit inspired these words, to tell us the time of year: "Then were the days of unleavened bread." That could not have been done had these days been done away and kept obly by Christ-rejecting Jews.

Then notice a third text, verse 4. "Intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people." The word Easter is a deliberate mistranslation. The Greek word is "Pascha," or PASSOVER. In the original Greek it is exactly the same word as is used for PASSOVER in Mat. 26:2,17,18,19. We might as well speak of our Lord preparing to eat the Easter, for it is the same identical word in the original. Many translations have faithfully rendered this, as it should be rendered. They intended, in this

verse, to keep Peter in prison until after the PASSOVER. And this was more than ten years after the New Testament Church had been established.

"Break Bread" not synonymous with Lord's Supper

Some churches turn to Acts 20:7---"and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." To them this means, take the Lord's supper every Sunday morning.

Let us see if this text gives any such instruction. Notice verse 6. It was AFTER the days of unleavened bread, when Paul and his companions had taken the Lord's Supper, that they came to Troas, where they remained seven days. On this first day of the week Paul had prepared to leave. His companions started to sail by boat around the peninsula to Assos on this particular night, at the beginning of the first day of the week, Paul remaining behind for a farewell visit and sermon, intending to cut across the shorter distance by foot. (Verse 13, and see map.) Notice again verse 8, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow---that is, the daylight part of the same first day of the week, always referred to after sundown as "on the morrow." When was Paul preaching? It was not Sunday morning, as these churches now take their Lord's Supper, but after sunset, when the first day of the week commenced, and before midnight, (v. 7) and there were many lights burning (v. 8). It was about midnight or after that a young man fell down from the third balcony, (v.9). After Paul restored him, they came to the breaking of the bread. Notice it carefully. It is in the 11th verse. "and had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day." This bread breaking happened about midnight, and was not the Lord's Supper, but eating a plain MEAL. "Break bread" does not necessarily refer to Lord's Supper, as so many suppose today. Notice Acts 27:36;35: "Wherefore, I pray you, take some MEAT. . . he took bread, . . . and when he had broken it HE BEGAN TO EAT."

Notice Acts 2:46. "and breaking bread from house to house, did EAT THEIR MEAT with gladness." Here they were breaking bread daily, but they were also eating meat, and Paul says, (I Cor. 11:34) that if we eat to satisfy hunger at the Lord's Supper we do it unto condemnation.

Notice Mat. 26:29. Jesus said He would not take the Lord's Supper again with them until in the Kingdom after His Second Coming. Yet, as He sat "AT MEAT", eating a meal, Jesus later broke bread and blessed it. (Luke 24:30).

Let us return to the faith once delivered.