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OF
EDIFICATION FOR THE CHURCH OF GOD

DID CHRIST Reorganize THE CHURCH

Which is the one true Church?

Here is amazing new light from the Bible, establishing the TRUTH of this important question of Church organization and government.

Let us open our minds, and with out prejudice, search the Scriptures, whether these things are so!

Just what is "The Church?" What is its object and purpose -- its real mission?

Is it an ORGANIZATION, or a spiritual ORGANISM, composed of those saints whose names are written in heaven, and who have, and are led by, the Holy Spirit?

And, granting it is not just some one organization, ... yet should not the true Church be organized -- and if so, HOW?

Just what is the true Bible form of organization and Church government?

A startling new truth now comes to light, thru God's precious word!

Most of us have ASSUMED one or two central points in this important question -- taken them for granted without investigation. And this careless assumption has led most of us into error. It has left us open to be deceived!

The Bible cautions us to PROVE ALL THINGS! It is profitable for CORRECTION as well as for instruction in righteousness. The true Christian must be willing at all times to be corrected and chastened -- and must continually seek to GROW in knowledge as well as in grace!

It is the true remnant people of God who keep the COMMANDMENTS that the Devil is wroth with today. It is US Satan is seeking to deceive. He will deceive even the very elect IF POSSIBLE. And it is possible if we are careless, and assume things without careful study of all sides, and ample PROOF from the Scripture. We must be continually ON OUR GUARD, never trusting any man, or even a board or group of men, but God alone, thru His Holy Word!

So let us SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES! Let us begin at the beginning.

The CHURCH, as we know, actually BEGAN at Mount Sinai, in the days of Moses. (Acts 7:39)

True, this was the Church under the OLD Covenant, not the New. True, there is a vast difference between the Old and the New -- and part of just what constituted that difference is one of the important things we want to investigate. We want ALL the facts on the subject.

The CHURCH WAS MARRIED TO THE LORD!

At Mt. Sinai, God set up AN ORGANIZATION. Make no mistake about that!

In our quest to learn WHETHER God's people should join themselves together in an ORGANIZATION, having CHURCH GOVERNMENT, let us begin by recognizing that in the beginning, at Sinai, God Himself formed His people into an ORGANIZATION, having GOVERNMENT.

At that time God's people -- the ONLY people on earth who were the people of God -- were formed into a NATION. As such, they had LAWS, and GOVERNMENT. They were a KINGDOM. First of all, they formed a civil government. But in this government, God also placed certain church governments, giving them the rituals, ceremonies, and sacrifices of the law of Moses. Church and state were inseparable.

In any government, men are placed in AUTHORITY, with power to GOVERN and to RULE. There never was a government without MEN in authority, ruling over others. And perhaps without exception, there always is, and always was, some ONE MAN who was in actual fact, tho not always in name or title, the real head, or ruler. As God first organized His people, HE was their HEAD -- their King. But soon the Israelites wanted a MAN to be their king, like the Gentile nations around them. It is IMPOSSIBLE to have ORGANIZATION, or GOVERNMENT, without having a MAN as the actual and real head, even tho we SAY Christ in heaven is the Head, and continue to try to believe it that way.

A fact that many of us have never noticed is that THE OLD COVENANT WAS A MARRIAGE COMPACT!

When God first set up AN ORGANIZATION on earth, the people who formed this organization were MARRIED to the Lord. It was this MARRIAGE that bound Him and His people together.

In Jeremiah 3:14, the Lord says: "Turn O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I AM MARRIED UNTO YOU."

THE LORD DIVORCED HIS WIFE!

The making of the Old Covenant, as recorded in the 24th chapter of Exodus, was the MARRIAGE CEREMONY. If anyone may doubt this, let us merely ask, WHEN, if not here, did the Lord ever enter into a marriage ceremony, joining Himself and His people together as husband and wife? Where else, in all the Bible, can you find any account of a marriage ceremony?

The MARRIAGE ceremony was the OLD COVENANT CEREMONY! They are one and the same. It was this marriage, then, that established ORGANIZATION and GOVERNMENT among God's people.

We want to repeat that. We want you to understand it -- for it is of great importance -- it is the KEY FACT upon which the real truth, so long hidden, really hinges. IT WAS THE MARRIAGE THAT FORMED GOD'S PEOPLE INTO AN ORGANIZATION HAVING CHURCH GOVERNMENT!

That being so -- and it IS so, and none can deny it -- then it naturally follows that THE ORGANIZATION and the GOVERNMENT of God's people, at least as ordained and sanctioned by the Lord, EXISTED ONLY AS LONG AS THE MARRIAGE UNION WHICH ESTABLISHED IT!

If the marriage was done away, the ORGANIZATION and the CHURCH GOVERNMENT was at the same time done away. For it was only this marriage relationship which established the organization -- the kingdom -- the government, both civil and ecclesiastical.

When God first proposed the Old Covenant marriage, (Ex. 19:5- 6), He promised His people that IF -- notice the IF -- they would be obedient, as a wife should to her husband, they would become "a kingdom of PRIESTS, and an holy NATION." In other words, a GOVERNMENT of a religious character -- a CHURCH GOVERNMENT!

This is repeated in Leviticus 26. There the blessings to accrue for obedience are enumerated, together with the PUNISHMENT for DISOBEDIENCE. And what was that punishment to be?

Notice it! -- "they that hate you shall REIGN OVER YOU ... SEVEN TIMES" -- or 2520 years! (Verses 14-28).

Look at it, in your own Bible. If Israel, the WIFE, married unto the Lord, proves disobedient, Israel is to LOSE her government. No longer to be AN ORGANIZATION! Enemy nations shall REIGN OVER -- rule over -- the Israelites. Their own government no longer will rule them. No longer will they be an organization of their own.

This God threatened to turn the GOVERNMENT -- THE ORGANIZATION, if you please, over to the GENTILES for 2520 long years, TAKING ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT AWAY FROM HIS PEOPLE!

Now let us see whether He did that!

Israel, of course, disobeyed.

"And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I HAD PUT HER AWAY, AND GIVEN HER A BILL OF DIVORCE." (Jer. 3:8).

Surely that ought to settle the matter! Israel was DIVORCED! This out off the GOVERNMENT, the ORGANIZATION, from among God's people, and TURNED IT OVER TO THE GENTILES FOR 2520 LONG YEARS -- until the very present generation! Still other Scriptures PROVE it!

GOVERNMENT AND ORGANIZATION TURNED OVER TO GENTILES

Let us follow the story thru the Scripture. Let us see if the other Scriptures confirm this astounding truth!

Israel sinned first, and was taken captive to Assyria about 721 B.C. But the House of Judah remained, and as long as they did God's true BIBLE FORM OF ORGANIZATION and CHURCH GOVERNMENT continued with them.

But soon Judah was sinning even worse than Israel; and they too, were taken captive. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captured the Jews, destroyed Jerusalem, moved the Jews to the land of the Chaldeans. Among them was Daniel, the prophet.

Soon after this captivity, Nebuchadnezzar had the dream in which he saw the great metallic image. Of course you are already familiar with this.

Only Daniel could tell the king his dream, and its meaning, as GOD had revealed it to him. But notice a point in its interpretation:

"This is the dream," Daniel said, after describing the image, "and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, are a king of kings -- in other words, a WORLD RULER -- "for THE GOD OF HEAVEN HATH GIVEN THEE A KINGDOM." (Verses 36-37).

Note it! GOD gave the kingdom over to him! Now God never makes covenants with GENTILES. God never did, and never will, marry a Gentile people as such, or establish them as HIS kingdom, HIS government, HIS organization, HIS church!

Yet it plainly says, here, that GOD GAVE NEBUCHADNEZZAR A KINGDOM! How? and WHY? Since God could not have established or set up a kingdom in Babylon, among the Gentile Chaldeans, the only way God could have GIVEN Nebuchadnezzar a KINGDOM was to have given OVER to him the kingdom He had already set up -- the one set up AT SINAI!

Babylon never was the Kingdom, the Government, or the Church of God! But Nebuchadnezzar, under God's divine direction, TOOK CAPTIVE the people of God's kingdom and church. And so God GAVE OVER TO HIM the KINGDOM -- that is, the GOVERNMENT -- the AUTHORITY to RULE -- which had been set up at Sinai!

Understand it! The AUTHORITY to RULE and to GOVERN was now taken away from the people of God, because of disobedience, and this AUTHORITY was transferred over to NEBUCHADNEZZAR and HIS SUCCESSORS for 2520 years!

WHEN THE KINGDOM IS RESTORED

Now notice the truth revealed in this Gentile Image a little further.

The AUTHORITY TO RULE was not only turned over to Nebuchadnezzar -- not just temporarily -- but it was to continue in power of his successors 2520 years.

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom ... and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule OVER ALL THE EARTH." (Verse 39). Note it! The RULE God had transferred over to Nebuchadnezzar was to continue in the Persian Empire, and the Grecian Empire -- they were to bear RULE over ALL THE EARTH! Yes, and by God's ordination!

Then followed the fourth kingdom of iron -- the ROMAN Empire. In the latter days -- at the end of the 2520 years -- NOW -- in OUR generation today -- this Roman Empire is once more to be restored by a union of ten European Dictators, as foretold in Revelation 17.

And then what shall happen, at the END of this 2520-year Gentile reign?

"A STONE (Christ) ... smote the image," -- smashing this Gentile reign into pieces. Yes, CHRIST, at HIS SECOND COMING, is to SMITE it, and end it. What will happen then?

"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: ... but it shall break in pieces and consume all those kingdoms, and IT shall stand forever." (Verses 34,44).

Jesus' disciples understood that the KINGDOM, with all authority to GOVERN, whether civil or church government, had been taken away from His people, and turned over to Gentiles. You'll remember how they asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). But He did NOT restore it, then. He did NOT bring the government, the organization, the authority to rule, back from the Gentiles to His people! Consequently He did NOT reorganize His people, or establish any government, ecclesiastical or civil, among them! This the New Testament Scriptures, also, abundantly prove!

God had proposed to demonstrate, thru His people, what blessings and prosperity would naturally follow a civilization based upon HIS laws. And ALL the laws hang on that great basic principle of LOVE -- love to God, and love to neighbor. The principle of "GIVE" and of "SERVE", not of "GET" and "ACCUMULATE."

But, when His people Israel would not continue governing themselves according to His laws, based on this great fundamental principle, God turned authority of government over to the Gentiles, and gave them 2520 years to DEMONSTRATE, by experience, the fruitage of the Gentile ways of lust.

The 2520 years is now up. The Times of the Gentiles have run their course. And just LOOK at the results of this Babylonish Gentile civilization! Governments are overthrown, and now arming to the tooth to destroy one another. Business and industry is bankrupt under the principle of competition and strife and self-gain, want and poverty stalk the land, and millions are in want in the midst of plenty! Society is rotten and immoral, crime, racketeering, vice, gambling, run rampant. Religion is in confusion, torn by strife and division, in the grip of the GENTILE system of injecting ORGANIZATION and GOVERNMENT into the Church! Truly, in its every phase, our modern civilization is in BABYLON today!

Praise God, JESUS IS SOON COMING! Yes, coming to RESTORE the kingdom -- the government, the organization, to the TRUE people of God! Coming to DESTROY all this "BABYLON" which has visited such unhappiness to the world! Coming to reign and rule!

THE 12, THE 70, AND THE 7

But, did not Jesus SET THE CHURCH IN ORDER? Did He not REORGANIZE it again, at His First Coming? Did He not set up a definite "BIBLE FORM OF ORGANIZATION," and establish a definite "CHURCH GOVERNMENT?"

We have always ASSUMED He did! Yes, we have taken this carelessly for granted! But let us prove THIS point -- let us prove ALL THINGS! Let us search the Scriptures whether this assumption be so!

First, did Christ ever set up an ORGANIZATION, with its boards of HEAD MEN, with authority to GOVERN over the "spiritual affairs," or the "FINANCIAL AFFAIRS" of the Church?

Let us see if we can find such boards, or Scriptures giving them such authority.

True, Jesus did call out TWELVE disciples, who afterward were called "Apostles." But WHERE in the Scripture are they called "THE BOARD OF THE TWELVE" -- a term we hear freely used today, under claim of having "the BIBLE form of organization."

WHERE do we read of one of them being appointed as the "CHAIRMAN OF THE TWELVE" or another as the SECRETARY OF THE TWELVE? Is THIS Biblical and Scriptural? If so, where is the text?

When Jesus called them, and ordained them, did He give them AUTHORITY TO RULE? Just what did He give them POWER and AUTHORITY to do?

Notice it, in Luke 9:1-2:

"Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority" -- for what? To GOVERN? To RULE the Church? Notice carefully! Let us have a BIBLE REASON for all we accept and do! ... "... and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he SENT THEM to" -- He sent them to WHAT? To rule and govern? To have supervision over the spiritual affairs of an organization? Notice it, IN THE BIBLE! ... "He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick."

The word "apostle" means "one sent." The definition in Cruden's Concordance is "one sent forth. Used as referring (1) chiefly to one of the 12 disciples of Christ; or (2) to any of various other followers of Christ who did evangelistic work."

An apostle does not mean one IN authority, but one UNDER authority -- one SENT by the authority of another! The only power and authority Jesus ever gave even His original twelve was to heal the sick, and cast out demons. And He SENT them, not to rule, but to PREACH -- not to BEAR authority, but to MINISTER, to serve!

Nowhere in the Scripture do we find the slightest hint that the twelve constituted a higher-up church board, and nowhere were they ever given power to rule, or govern, or decide what doctrines the other disciples must believe.

WERE THE 12 CONTINUED ON?

Is there any Scripture giving plain instruction that the TWELVE were to continue on perpetually as a Church board? There is none!

Yet many have been led honestly to suppose that the apostles were to be continued exactly twelve in number, because a successor was ordained to replace Judas Iscariot. So let us SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES on this point, whether this is so.

What was Jesus' PURPOSE in ordaining twelve disciples? Let the Scripture say:

"And He ordained twelve, THAT THEY SHOULD BE WITH HIM, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." (Mark 3:14.)

Not that they should rule the spiritual affairs of an organization. Jesus ordained the twelve in order "that they should BE WITH HIM!"

Now notice WHY He wanted them to be with Him -- and WHY a successor was appointed for Judas!

Judas' successor had to be a man possessing a certain qualification -- because he was "ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 2:22).

Notice the necessary qualification. Not ability to govern, nor talent to discern and vote on right doctrine. Look at it in your Bible: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 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. (Acts 1:21-22).

Do you grasp it? Do you see plainly revealed here the PURPOSE of the twelve?

First, Jesus ordained twelve "that they should be with Him." Later, after His ascension, one of these was replaced. And it had to be ONE WHO HAD BEEN WITH HIM, along with the others, thruout His entire ministry, beginning with the baptism of John!

Why?

"TO BE A WITNESS WITH THEM OF HIS RESURRECTION!" Search the Scriptures as we may, we cannot find any other purpose for the twelve apostles, except to go out and preach, and heal, and to be WITH Jesus thruout His ministry, in order that they might forever PROVE the TRUTH OF THE RESURRECTION!

That was the only reason for the definite number of TWELVE! To suppose that this definite number of twelve was to be continued and perpetuated AFTER THEIR MISSION WAS FULFILLED is absurd!

Is there any statement that others later called "apostles" -- once SENT to preach -- merely evangelists -- such as Paul, Barnabas, etc., were "one of the twelve?" There is no such statement in the Bible! Rather Paul and Barnabas, after there were called apostles (as in Acts 14:14), went up to Jerusalem UNTO THE APOSTLES. (Acts 15:2). And here, at this conference, the Holy Spirit revealed truth TO BE WRITTEN AS PART OF THE INSPIRED SCRIPTURES, which were not yet, at that time, complete. Surely no "12 apostles" are authorized by the Scripture to receive such special instruction from the Holy Spirit, to made part of the Holy Scriptures, TODAY! Such an implication is little short of blasphemous!

True, Paul and a few others are called "apostles." But an "apostle" is merely "ONE SENT." If we could find one single Scripture where Paul, or any other than the original twelve, ever were called "ONE OF THE TWELVE", as we freely hear men style themselves today, then we would know the twelve continued on.

BUT THERE IS NO SUCH SCRIPTURE!

The words "The twelve" are NEVER used except to refer to the original 12 which companied with Jesus thruout His ministry, to be witnesses of His resurrection!

There is NO SCRIPTURE even hinting that the twelve were continued. On the other hand, every Scriptural indication is that THEY WERE NOT. Even the authors of "A History of the True Church" were unable to find any continuance of THE TWELVE in the TRUE Church!

That ought to settle the matter. The Scripture speak of FALSE apostles, and of "them which SAY they are apostles, and are not, but hast found them LIARS." (II Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2). Let us beware being deceived. It is the COMMANDMENT KEEPERS whom the Devil seeks, in these latter days, to deceive!

Let us be sure everything we accept is based on true BIBLE AUTHORITY, and not falsely read INTO the Bible by imputing a meaning to various scattered texts contrary to the plain, obvious intended meaning IN ITS SETTING!

HOW ABOUT THE SEVENTY?

Now let us look briefly at the "70".

Did THEY constitute a CHURCH BOARD? Was power to govern, or rule, or act as an advisory board in matters of doctrine or church government? Was THAT the purpose for which Jesus appointed them?

The ONLY PLACE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT where "the seventy" are mentioned is in the 10th chapter of Luke.

Beside the twelve, whom Jesus ordained "that they "should be with Him," for "a witness of His resurrection," and whom He sent forth to preach, "the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come." (verse 1).

Did they ASSEMBLE -- as a board?

No, they WERE SENT, not together but TWO AND TWO, on a special mission -- preparing for the personal visits of Jesus to these various towns and cities! Instead of assembling as a church board, THEY SEPARATED -- two and two!

What instruction did Jesus give them? Did He vest them with power to RULE, or set them up as an advisory board, or appoint them to be the LEADING elders?

No, He said, "Go your ways ... and HEAL THE SICK ... and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." (v.3,9). They were authorized only to heal, cast out demons, and preach! That is all!

They returned from this special mission (verse 17), and Jesus gave them power to tread on serpents and scorpions so nothing should hurt them. And THAT IS THE LAST EVER HEARD OF THEM! Their mission was ended!

Brethren, let us be honest! IF the Lord ever intended them to be a continuous church "BOARD OF SEVENTY", do you not honestly think we should find some further mention of "the seventy" in the Bible? Do you not think we should find, in the Book of Acts, where some of the elders or evangelists were "of the seventy?" Do you not think we should read of this "board" in the history of "the TRUE Church" -- IF they ever were such a board?

No, the simple truth, when we come to "search the Scriptures WHETHER these things be so," is that they never were a church board, and they ENDED their work and mission before Jesus was crucified!

The fact that in one or two instances Moses selected seventy elders for certain duties of that day, BEFORE God took the government away from Israel and turned it over to the Gentiles -- BEFORE He divorced Israel -- certainly has no connection with the seventy Jesus sent on this special mission.

WERE THE "SEVEN" A FINANCIAL BOARD?

And now a brief glimpse at "THE SEVEN."

Were they set up as a FINANCIAL BOARD? Were they appointed to receive and handle the TITHES of the whole world-wide Church? Did they ever supervise the financial affairs of the ministry, hiring and firing ministers, and paying them their salaries, or "allowances?" Were they set over THAT business?

Let's not be deceived, but look at this AS IT IS IN THE BIBLE, honestly!

In the early days of the NEW Testament Church, the brethren sold their possessions, had all things common, and took care of the PHYSICAL needs of their own widows and orphans.

In the 6th chapter of Acts, we notice in the first verse, the Grecians complained against he Hebrews, because their widows and orphans were being neglected in the daily ministration of material needs.

Then the twelve -- the ORIGINAL and ONLY twelve of the Bible, ordained to be witnesses of Christ's resurrection, -- called together the disciples and said, "It is not reason that we should leave THE WORD OF GOD, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men ... whom we may appoint over THIS business." (V. 2-3).

They were appointed over BUSINESS -- but what business? Note it IN YOUR BIBLE! The business of WAITING ON TABLES -- of feeding, serving, the MATERIAL needs of the widows and orphans!

And WHY were they appointed? So that the apostles might devote their time to the PREACHING of the Gospel, and the WITNESSING TO THE RESURRECTION, which they were sent to do, INSTEAD OF this business of ministering to the PHYSICAL needs of women!

The business for which the seven were appointed had nothing whatsoever to do with receiving and disbursing tithes for the ministry and preaching of the Word!

We should like to see any text in the New Testament showing that there ever was appointed any BOARD to act as a TREASURY for the tithes of the disciples, and to receive and disburse the money for the whole church! We say such a thing IS UNSCRIPTURAL and unless SCRIPTURE can be produced for it, such a practice ought to be discontinued!

If there is ONE LINE of scripture for such procedure under the New Testament, the editor of The GOOD NEWS agrees to print it in the next issue -- if any can supply it! This is our challenge, and we await replies!

JESUS' TEACHING ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT

There is not one single HINT in the New Testament of any Church BOARD with authority to rule, to govern, to decide doctrine, or to handle tithes and church finances (the whole church). In the later number we shall devote an article to explaining Acts 15, which certainly sets no such example.

Jesus never organized, or re-organized His church! There is NO SCRIPTURE for it!

All authority and power to rule is limited solely to each LOCAL congregation. But there is NO BIBLE AUTHORITY for any super-government, or organization with authority over the local congregations!

The plain teaching of Jesus is JUST THE CONTRARY! Listen! "Jesus called them unto Him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to RULE over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise AUTHORITY upon them, But so shall it NOT be among you." (Mark 10:42).

The AUTHORITY -- the GOVERNMENT -- the RULERSHIP -- was turned over to the Gentiles for 2520 years -- until Christ RESTORES the kingdom at His Second Coming!

WHERE CHURCH GOVERNMENT ORIGINATED

How then, did ORGANIZATION, and the idea of CHURCH GOVERNMENT get into the Church?

It came out of BABYLON! Spiritual BABYLON -- that is, ROME! The same as nearly all other false doctrines of Satan.

In the early 4th Century, Constantine, the Emperor, who officially started SUNDAY observance in the Western World, saw his Empire in danger of disintegrating.

At the time a great controversy was raging among the leaders of Christianity, over Dr. Arius' doctrine concerning the origin of Christ, as opposed to the Trinity doctrine.

We quote from Encyclopedia Britannica, (article ARIUS):

"This controversy over Arius' doctrine reached even the ears of Constantine. Now sole Emperor, he saw in the one catholic church the best means of counteracting the movement in his vast empire toward disintegration, and he at once realized how dangerous dogmatic strife might be to its unity. Constantine had no understanding of the questions at issue ... He summoned a general council (the Nicene Council). ... It was finally decided against Arius. ... Constantine accepted the decision of the council, and resolved to uphold it."

Thus it was CONSTANTINE -- the "BEAST" -- who injected and introduced into the church the idea of a BOARD to decide doctrine, and to rule.

Thus it was that CONSTANTINE made doctrine, as decided by a higher-up BOARD, the basis of fellowship and unity in the Church!

Jesus never said "By this shall all men KNOW that ye are my disciples -- if ye all speak the same thing the BOARD OF THE TWELVE vote on." That is the policy of some today -- but it is NOT BIBLE POLICY! Jesus said we should be known to be in the true Church IF WE HAVE LOVE one to another! And doctrine has only brought STRIFE!

In the next century, came the PAPACY in full bloom, starting the idea that the CHURCH is an ORGANIZATION having CHURCH GOVERNMENT!

Listen to authentic history! In the "Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature", Vol. 7, page 629, we read:

"The first pope, in the real sense of the word, was Leo I. (440-461 A.D.)" To him the plan of government of the Roman Empire was an obsession. He applied and adapted that form of government to the church, forming the PAPACY.

Myers Ancient History, says:

The Church (under Leo I,) set up "within the Roman Empire, an ecclesiastical STATE (government) which, in its constitution and its administrative system, was shaping itself upon the IMPERIAL MODEL."

Truly, an IMAGE OF THE BEAST!

Thus was CHURCH GOVERNMENT introduced into the Western world a century after Constantine (the "BEAST") injected the idea of church BOARDS to decide what doctrines the rest of the church must believe. And thus the very PRINCIPLE of CHURCH GOVERNMENT becomes THE IMAGE TO THE BEAST!

The whole thing is FALSE! It is NOT ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE! It is part of BABYLON! Those who are IN, and MEMBERS of such an organized church government, submitting to doctrines declared by unscriptural boards as a fellowship test, are IN BABYLON, and actually worshippers of THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST! And God is calling us, HIS people OUT of BABYLON today, before it is too late -- before the PLAGUES fall!

Brethren, let us have the courage to accept the TRUTH, and to COME OUT!

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

Finally, what is the very PURPOSE of he New Testament Church? Is it to BUILD AN ORGANIZATION?

Let us, now, finally understand it.

The first kingdom and government was set up by Nimrod -- the first ancient Babylon (Genesis 10). The Devil is the god of this world, and since Nimrod the kingdoms have built civilizations based upon the Devil's ways of SELF, and of GET, contrary to God's ways of LOVE, of OBEDIENCE, and of GIVE, as defined in God's LAW.

So God formed Abraham's children into A NATION, giving them HIS LAWS, to show how a nation would be blessed that would build its civilization according to His Commandments. At Mt. Sinai Israel was united to the Lord in MARRIAGE, as HIS GOVERNMENT, both state and church.

But when Israel went after the ways of other nations, breaking the Commandments, God DIVORCED Israel, and gave over the GOVERNMENT (which included CHURCH GOVERNMENT as well as state) to the Gentile kingdoms symbolized by Daniel's image and the four "beasts." He gave the government into Gentile hands UNTIL THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, when the government, church and state, shall be RESTORED to Israel!

When Jesus comes with POWER and great glory -- power to RULE, and the SAINTS possess the kingdoms of this world -- He will make a NEW Covenant with Israel and Judah, which NEW Covenant will be the MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB!

As the Old Covenant MARRIAGE ceremony set up Israel as a NATION, so will the new.

Now to WHOM will Christ be married, at the Marriage of the Lamb? Notice it, IN YOUR OWN BIBLE -- Revelation 19:7 -- He shall marry HIS WIFE! Note it!!!

Yes, His WIFE whom He divorced. A wife who is divorced is not free to remarry until the death of her husband! And so Christ, Israel's husband, DIED to REDEEM ISRAEL! And now Israel is FREE to marry AGAIN!

And who will the New Covenant be made with? Notice Hebrews 8:8 -- with Israel His wife He made the first covenant -- but later divorced -- Israel!

Then He shall RESTORE the kingdom to Israel -- both Church government and state. Christ will reign not only as King of kings, but also as LORD OF LORDS -- Church government, as well as state!

Christ's FIRST coming was to REDEEM -- not to restore.

Jesus never set up an organization, nor did He establish any church GOVERNMENT. He did not RE-ORGANIZE the Church!

Instead, He came calling INDIVIDUAL disciples out from among the church organizations, sects, and denominations -- out from among the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes -- out from among worldly Gentile organizations and contacts -- He called His saints to be SEPARATE -- to COME OUT!

The very word "ekklesia" from which "Church" is translated, means "called-out ones" as well as "assembly."

The New Testament Church is not a kingdom -- not a church government -- but an assembly of individuals CALLED OUT -- Spirit- filled individuals, and therefore a SPIRITUAL ORGANISM, not an organization.

The OBJECT of the Church is not to build up an organization, or a movement. Let us see this great purpose clearly.

The CHURCH is Israelitish. Not a Gentile Church just called "Israel." It IS Israel. But those who do not come by faith, and who are disobedient, are CUT OFF, the Israelitish-born, while Gentile converts, thru Christ, are ADOPTED into Israel. Thus, spiritually speaking, Israel IS the CHURCH.

And it is the CHURCH who shall be married to Christ -- Israel REDEEMED by the blood of the Lamb of God!

The CHURCH is God's instrumentality thru which, and in which, He is selecting a people for His name -- gathering OUT of "babylon" -- OUT of worldly ways, worldly organizations, various individuals, -- one here, and one there -- to repentance, faith in Christ, receiving of and being led by the Holy Spirit, and having HIS LAWS written in their minds and hearts -- living, individually, a life of trial and test, of OVERCOMING, that they may be thus fitted and trained for positions as kings or priests in the KINGDOM OF GOD, after Christ's second coming!

The CHURCH of God shall then become the KINGDOM of God. It is the CHURCH which shall be married to the Lamb, establishing God's GOVERNMENT on earth -- restoring the KINGDOM to Israel!

So THE CHURCH is God's instrumentality for overcoming the FAULT of the Old Covenant. That FAULT was disobedience. The NEW will be made with those in whose minds and hearts GOD'S LAW has been written, by His Holy Spirit! (Heb. 8:10).

And the MARRIAGE will not be made with some one organization! It is THE INDIVIDUAL SAINTS -- not some organization -- which shall possess the government, and rule. (Dan 7:18; Rev. 2:20-27; 3:21, etc.)

His WIFE shall have made herself READY! But how? By a "re-organization", or some "new movement?" What folly! Read Ephesians 5:25-27. The CHURCH is the collective body of individual saints who are sanctified and CLEANSED by Christ. Let us stop speaking of some organization as "the Church," or "our Church!"

Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be ROOTED UP!" Our heavenly Father never planted any super-organization, or established any church GOVERNMENT, or set man IN AUTHORITY over either spiritual or financial affairs, in the New Testament Church.

Any such "plan" was never planted of GOD -- and therefore IT SHALL BE ROOTED UP!

Our fellowship is first with God, and with Christ -- then with each other, in LOVE! The saints, so far as they know one another, are not to forsake assembling together for their mutual edification. For this purpose -- and that all things may be done decently and in order -- the Scriptures give us instructions for ordaining local elders and deacons, in every city -- every local congregation, or Church. But there is no super-organization over and above local congregations IN THE NEW TESTAMENT! And any such "plant" is certain to be ROOTED UP!

All such organizations and governments came out of BABYLON -- and are today a part of BABYLON!

Brethren, let us have the kind of co-operative FELLOWSHIP, based on LOVE, that was practiced by the early saints, as recorded in the Book of Acts. Let us work together, in unselfish effort to GIVE of the Gospel truth to the world -- to GIVE of the "waters of life" to as many precious souls as we can reach -- to give out the last warning message with great POWER!

But let us drop all effort to BUILD UP A MOVEMENT or AN ORGANIZATION. Let us quit working FOR organizations, and work FOR THE LORD -- and the salvation of souls!

What has split and divided up the saints in the Church of God? Nothing but ORGANIZATION -- which has led to politics, ministers lusting for rule and for power -- striving against each other, lining up the brethren on THEIR side, against the other! It is SUCH PREACHERS who have split up and divided our brethren!

God's Word commands us to COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, and be separate. God's last warning is "COME OUT OF BABYLON!!"

Organization and church GOVERNMENT has brought us only strife, jealousies, division, bitterness! It is not of God, and it can bear no other fruit.

The CHURCH OF GOD needs more of the POWER OF GOD -- more of HIS LOVE -- of HIS HOLY SPIRIT, that the work may now begin to go forth IN MIGHTY POWER! We ought to be ASHAMED of the pitiful, puny, weak, feeble work that has split up and divided brethren, reached but so very FEW with the message, with almost no real conversions! All this, while leaders desiring power to RULE send out misleading, exaggerated, deceiving statements designed to convince tithe-payers that "the work is progressing." What a mockery! What a tragedy! What a pity!

We praise God that many of the more-spiritual HAVE COME OUT! Let us obey GOD!