

#375 Kingdom: The Structure of the Church (edited)

I recently spent a weekend discussing the structure of the church with a person who has a strong concern for the shallowness of the church and its static condition of spiritual growth. Most discussions of this nature usually focus upon the pastor run churches or the church structures led by elders or the bishop governed groups. There is always a concern about the function of apostles and prophets and the “fivefold ministries” in the structure of the church. Other “structures” are designed like corporate enterprises that run a church like a business with employees.

Most religious people will relate church structure to how the church leaders are chosen, how they function and their authority within the government of the church. Most “church leaders” are expected to provide the pulpit ministry and provide the government for the church.

How Do We Choose Leaders For Our Church?

This is the first error committed because we assume that “WE” can have a church! Since the real church is HIS CHURCH, we make a serious mistake when “WE” choose leaders and then choose a certain structure of government and determine the way we will function. “WE” already have acted in an anti-Christ way by taking the place of Christ in the church! If Christ will build “HIS CHURCH” He must be given the sole right to set His own people in that church. The result of each group doing what is right in their own eyes is an orgy of denominations and multiple divisions and a refusal to fellowship outside their own structure.

This has created confusion within the “church” because each group is structured according to their own design. Many Churches establish their own unique government and then function in their ministry within their “system.” In some groups the ministry is based upon the government of the group. Whoever is the head of the government does the preaching and teaching. Since Christ is ONLY building one church it appears there must be some answer to this confusion. We wonder if He only has one government for His one church system. My theory is that His one government for His Church that He is building IS THE KINGDOM GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

Mat 16:15 He *said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Mat 16:17 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. 19 "**I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven**; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Regardless of which system men use to build the church it will always be a counterfeit of the one “the Christ, the Son of the living God” is building. The “real church” is NOT built upon ANY ministries by men or upon systems or structure designed by ANY flesh and blood concepts.

John 18:33 Pilate therefore entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?"

Jesus said He would build His “EKKLESIA” {His called out ones or assembly} upon the revelation by the Father that “Jesus Christ Is The Son Of The Living God.” Jesus CANNOT and WILL NOT build His church upon the natural understanding given by flesh and blood persons. Each revelation of Jesus Christ, in any of His offices in the church, can ONLY be given by the Father if the knowledge of Christ is to be valid and eternal.

Jesus asked Pilate “How did you come by that understanding that I am a king.” Did God reveal it to you or did you hear it from someone of flesh and blood origin? When we understand the difference between these two kinds of structures “the building of the church” will be clear.

The majority of the churches built by men are of the flesh and blood kind. Many people attend the church because they agree with the doctrine OR because the ministries are friendly and the atmosphere is good. Some come because they like the music or because they have a good program for babies or the youth. Some come because they are seeking for a mate and don’t want to go to the disco or bar.

In every generation, within the church age, men have tried every kind of structure, method and program that natural intelligence can devise and none have built the real church which IS HIS body. In fact, ONLY a counterfeit church has been built by any group with ANY man made system and the evidence can still be seen today on every continent. The shallowness and the static condition of the “church” today can be attributed directly to men trying to do the work that ONLY God can and will do. The pitiful condition of the church today is not the fault of the devil but can be directly laid at the feet of presumptuous men who have ignorantly tried to use flesh and blood methods to build something that CANNOT be built by any of earth’s methods.

This ignorance has frustrated multitudes today who care about the church and who recognize that this “system” designed by men is certainly not working or bringing the church to maturity. In fact after 2000 years about everywhere we go we hear that the ministries are just “laying foundations” over and over.

I saw a sign on a church building that said “The Place To Begin, And Begin Again” and I added “and again and again and again and again”. In other words all we are doing is “just begin” but we take the church no place after that. Are natural men so stupid that they can’t take the church on to maturity? Yes! The natural man has NO ABILITY to do what ONLY God can do. In fact ALL spiritual truth is foolishness to the natural man. No matter how clever the natural man is or how well he managed a business or how successful he was in other areas of the natural man’s ability, the natural man is completely beyond his capacity when he steps into the realm of the church. The natural man in the pulpit, doing the very best that he can to serve God, is more dangerous to the church than the devil ever was. Why? Because he will impregnate the church with his own ideas, philosophy and life and destroy the virginity of the church he violates.

2Cor 11:2 For, I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; **for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.** 3 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

The doctrine of the “eunuch life” MUST be revived in the church. ALL ministers MUST be “eunuchs” if they are going to keep and guard the church for Christ and present the church as a pure virgin to Christ.

Isa 56:3 Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from His people." **Neither let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree."** 4 **For thus says the LORD, "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, And choose what pleases Me, And hold fast My covenant, 5 To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, And a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off.**

The kings set eunuchs [men who had been castrated] over their wives and concubines to guard them and to prevent them from being impregnated by the guards or by any others.

Mat 19:12 "For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; **and there are *also* eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.** He who is able to accept *this*, let him accept *it*."

The "assembly of natural men" has reduced this tremendous principle of the Kingdom of God down to some carnal level about sex and celibacy. These "religious eunuchs" (like Adam) then proceed to impregnate their life, ideas and philosophy into the church and give birth to "believers after **their own likeness, according to their image.**"

Gen 5:3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years he became the father of *a son in his own likeness, according to his image*, and named him Seth.

Adam was created in the image of God but could only reproduce after his own image and likeness. Adam in the pulpit can ONLY do the same today. Today many are born into religious systems by the will of the flesh and by the will of man. Too many today are "attending" the church because of human persuasion and not because they are born of God.

John 1:12 But **as many as received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

There are millions of people in the "church system" that are only there because of human persuasion and NOT because they were drawn there by God or convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit. In fact some groups are so good at explaining salvation they can get people "saved" whether God shows up or not. They ignorantly think they are "adding to the church those who are being saved" by preaching and establishing their own methods and systems of "salvation."

Well, if men can't build the church how is the real church going to be built?

Jesus Christ Said He Would Do It!

Eph 4:8 Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN." 9 (Now this *expression*, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Christ is the author and finisher of the building of the church from HIS Ascended position far above all the heavens. He IS the ONE who sets these ministries in the church as servants to assist

HIM in completing HIS PURPOSE in and through the church. HE Alone appoints these ministries to function within the church which IS His body. He NEVER surrenders His Headship over the body to ANY of these men. Neither does He authorize these men to usurp His authority by appointing other men to these ministries.

One of the most grievous ignorance we have seen recently is carnal and ignorant men taking this “liberty and authority to themselves” to declare men to be assigned to these “ministries” and directly usurping Christ’s elevated position and sole right to set into His Church these ministries. These ignorant and arrogant men then declare that they are building the church by structuring the church according to their own ideas.

Eph 4:11 And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

The proof that these men have been appointed and set there by Christ is seen **in the church coming to maturity or perfection**. Some of the really carnal {midget} groups that I have seen are those “impregnated by the arrogance of these carnal men” who have appointed themselves to these ministries and given themselves the titles and positions of authority and headship in the “church they are building.”

If these “ministries” are not “equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ” they are false apostles and just more clouds without rain.

Jude 1:12 These men are those who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; 13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

2Cor 11:13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

1Cor 12:28 And **God has appointed in the church**, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, *various* kinds of tongues.

Not only is Christ active in setting the ministries in the church, which is His body, God also is active in setting His ministries in the church. My theory is that God is absolutely sovereign over the building of the church.

God has set these ministries in the church and He has NOT trusted this to men to appoint friends and cronies to these positions. After some “carnal, arrogant and presumptuous apostle” has appointed other apostles and ministries in the church, he then can become “The Chief Apostle” because he has other “apostles” under him, which he has appointed. When this happens we cannot be too far from having 1 star apostles up to 4 star apostles and then of course the “chief apostle” who is the “Pope Apostle.” He will be the “father of the work” so others can call him

“father” and he can call them “My Son.” It should be abundantly clear that this is another counterfeit system that Christ has not designed and He is NOT building His church this way.

But why this confusion between what Christ is setting in the church and what God is setting in the church? What, then, does the Holy Spirit set in the church OR has He also assigned HIS WORK to carnal men?

1Co 12:4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of **administrations**, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of **operations**, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. KJVR

The fact that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are each active in the building of the church should alert man to be extremely careful about interfering with their sovereignty.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and **My Father will love him, and We will come** to him, and make Our abode with him.

It is clear that the Father, the Son AND the Holy Spirit are ALL active in the church that He is building and actively involved in its function, its operation and its perfection.

Christ sets the administrations in the church, the Father sets the operations in the church, and the Holy Spirit gives the exact gift and guidance needed at the exact time it is needed.

Act 16:6 And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; 7 and when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; 8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a certain man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

When men take these **administrations** within the church to themselves or the **operations** to themselves or the **gifts and guidance** to themselves they are on dangerous ground. When men take the liberty to “impart gifts” or to “appoint ministries” we wonder why the earth doesn’t open up and swallow these ignorant persons.

Therefore, we can confidently say that EVERY system that has been devised by carnal men to arrogantly set up structures and systems and appoint “ministries” are doomed to failure. After 2000 years these systems have not produced “the Church” and my theory is they NEVER will.

There are many examples in scripture of carnal men giving excellent advise to the people of God and yet produce nothing in the purpose of God except wasted time and effort.

Exodus 18:14 Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit *as judge* and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?"

Exodus 18:25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 26 And they judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge.

Jethro had great natural wisdom and gave good advice! He was very intelligent and suggested great qualifications and insisted upon strong attributes for those whom Moses would choose to stand with him. However, what was the result of human wisdom?

Num 11:11 So Moses said to the LORD, "Why hast Thou been so hard on Thy servant? And why have I not found favor in Thy sight, that **Thou hast laid the burden of all this people on me?** 12 "Was it I who conceived all this people? Was it I who brought them forth, that Thou shouldest say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries a nursing infant, to the land which Thou didst swear to their fathers'?"

Num 11:14 **"I alone am not able to carry all this people,** because it is too

burdensome for me. 15 "So if Thou art going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Thy sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness."

Moses had hundreds of "leaders" of good moral qualities but Moses was still **"alone to carry the burden of Israel."** Natural men do have wisdom and come up with really good plans and systems to help God's people but they ALL fail. Why? Because God has determined that He alone is God and ONLY His plans are valid to complete His purposes. Many know that God is sovereign over all of His creation but then they decide to introduce their own ideas and methods into the church!

Numbers 11:16 The LORD therefore said to Moses, "Gather for Me **seventy men** from the elders of Israel, **whom you know to be the elders of the people** and their officers and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. 17 "Then I will come down and speak with you there, and **I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them;** and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you shall not bear *it* all alone.

God lets men do their own thing and try all their own ideas and systems until everything they design fail and finally they inquire of God how He has designed it to function, then God sets things in divine order.

Jesus Is Actively Overseeing His Church And Knows All Their Activities!

Rev 2:1 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, **the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands,** says this: 2 **'I know your deeds** and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false;

It is even more ignorant to assume that Jesus Christ has departed to some place far off and has left the church to be designed and built by men. Some really think that one day He will return to earth to see what we have done with the church and how beautiful we have made it.

He is the ONE who walks among the Lampstand Churches and knows everything that goes on in the church. He has no problem identifying these phony "apostles" or correcting the mistakes OR making threats to remove the Lampstand Church from its place! He will even permit the Holy

Place life and ministry to go into darkness by removing the light source. He has no problem identifying the lukewarm Christians and vomiting them out of His body. Why? Because He will build His church His way even if men are arrogant and don't approve.

However, the natural man thinks what was designed 2000 years ago is no longer relevant today and must be adjusted for the 21st century. The fact is this; Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, is still active in the church and sees and corrects everything and keeps it current and relevant in the 21st century. The problem is not that Jesus Christ has abandoned the church but that carnal, arrogant and ignorant persons have attempted to wrestle the church out of His hand and take it for themselves.

My fear is that the "deep darkness" awaits those who misuse the church and continue to impregnate the church with their own ideas and methods. These winds without rain assume that Jesus doesn't know who these people are or what they are doing in His Church. They neither know Christ nor do they understand the building of the church. Many are ignorant of the scriptures. The real church is His body so it is not reasonable to assume that He has left it for some earthly person to abuse and tattoo as they will.

2Pet 2:12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, 13 suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, 14 having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;

2Pet 2:17 These are springs without water, and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. 18 For speaking out arrogant *words* of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, 19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved. 20 **For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.**

May God grant us the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of Him and to save us from our self. May God grant us the understanding to stop implementing our good ideas and new and better programs and systems to build something that Jesus will fully reject as just wood, hay and straw and send His fire and destroy it.

1Cor 3:13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is *to be* revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work