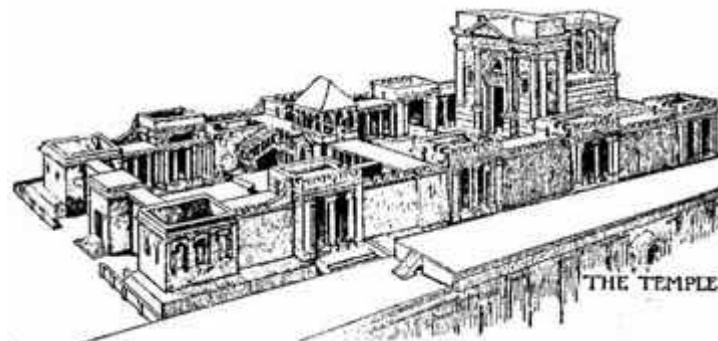




# Temples And Churches



Jesus preached a Kingdom to which he was King and told us to preach the same. He appointed His Apostles a Kingdom to serve as His Father had appointed unto him and they in turn appointed other men. What is the Church appointed by Christ? What does it do and what is its purpose, and how should it function?

In the King James Bible we see the word Church translated from the Greek word *ekklesia*, and of the four Gospels it only appears in Matthew. The definition of *ekklesia* is 'an assembly called out'. It is one word composed of two words that individually mean 'called' and 'out' but together they take on a new sense of *oneness out of many*.

The first century church was called "The Way" which in the Greek would be "hodos" that would mean that Christians might call themselves Hodosians or Hoodoos. The words *ekklesia* or *hodos* are not proper nouns but merely a description and can describe different things.

First, the *ekklesia* can be all people who are called out of sin or the ways of sin to seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness.

We see this in Re 18:4 "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, ..." This is not just being called out of sin but being called out of the sin of Babylon. Babylon is an assembly too.

God calls men out to believe and do according to His way as we see in Ex 18:20, "And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do."

*This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. Ac 18:25*

Ideally, God instructs the people *for no man should have to teach his brother for all shall know the Father*<sup>1</sup>. But realistically men who believe may, from time to time, need help with their unbelief<sup>2</sup>. Christ knew this and appointed men to serve in this task. They needed help to do this job and appointed more people to aid them in the daily ministration of their duty in the Kingdom. They never appointed rulers over the people. Any Church who would do that would violate the basic teachings of Christ<sup>3</sup> and the precepts of the Bible laid down from the beginning<sup>4</sup>.

This particular group of men called out by Christ to learn, to minister and to serve the Kingdom Christ preached was at hand, was also called the *ekklesia* or church. This group was appointed a Kingdom but were not the Kingdom as a whole.

And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; Lu 22:29

They were not appointed a Kingdom to rule but to serve.<sup>5</sup> Yet, they were called out to be separate, to perform a particular function for His Kingdom. They in turn appointed other men chosen by the people.<sup>6</sup> These appointees of Christ, called out by him, assembled in one accord were clearly an *ekklesia*, a called out assembly of Christ called in English the church.

Some say the word *ekklesia* means an assembly but it is literally translated 'called out' and was not just an assembly. The words *agora*<sup>7</sup> and *paneguris*<sup>8</sup> as well as *trugao*<sup>9</sup>, *sustrepho*,<sup>10</sup> *sullego*<sup>11</sup> *sunathroizo*,<sup>12</sup> *ochlopoieo*,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer 31:34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

<sup>2</sup> Mr 9:24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

<sup>3</sup> ARTICLE X - The prime directive of the Church Luke 22:25 <http://www.hisholychurch.net/study/polity/articlex.html>

<sup>4</sup> 1Sa 8:

<sup>5</sup> Lu 22:25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

<sup>6</sup> Ac 6:3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

<sup>7</sup> 58 any assembly, especially of the people

<sup>8</sup> 3831 a festal gathering of the whole people to celebrate public games

<sup>9</sup> 5166 to gather in ripe fruits

<sup>10</sup> 4962 to twist together, roll together to collect, ... to assemble

<sup>11</sup> 4816 sullego to gather up. to collect in order to carry off

<sup>12</sup> 4867 sunathroizo to gather together with others. to assemble. to be gathered...

*sumbibazo*,<sup>14</sup> *sunagoge*,<sup>15</sup> *episunagoge*,<sup>16</sup> *sunago*<sup>17</sup> *episunago*<sup>18</sup> *heorte*, *koinon*, and *thiasos* all include the concept of an *assembly* with a slightly or drastically different inference than what an individual might be thinking when they hear the word.

An *ekklesia* is not just any assembly but it is, "the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship, for the transaction of public affairs".<sup>19</sup>

The word *ekklesia* was a political term, not a religious term. Jesus was the King and the Bible used the term *ekklesia* for a good reason. In classical Greek "*ekklesia*" meant "an assembly of citizens summoned by the crier, the legislative assembly." The princes of Israel were originally composed of the elders of each family group. Their power or authority was not collective or democratic but individual and consensual. If they decided something it was done by accord and not by vote of the majority.

In Acts 7:38 we see a reference to "the church in the wilderness."<sup>20</sup> The people were *called out* of the Egyptian bondage and the Levites were *called out* of the walled in camp to be God's ministers to aid in keeping Israel free. The Apostles were *called out* to serve God by serving the people. They were to maintain an entrance<sup>21</sup> to the Kingdom of Heaven ministering to it under the *perfect law of liberty*<sup>22</sup>. Did not Jesus come *to set at liberty them that are bruised*?

All this is no different than Abraham being called out of Ur and Haran or the distinction made between those who followed the ways of Cain and his city state and those who walked with God as free souls upon the earth.

### **Are men the property of the State? Or are they free souls under God?**

#### **This same battle continues throughout the world?<sup>23</sup>**

We were all called out of sin. What sins? Is it the sins of bowing down and serving other gods in the shape of men or their man made creations? Is it the sins of coveting and even taking by force from our neighbor under the license of civil government? Is it the sin of ruling over our neighbor, even democratically? Is it the sins of oppression, injuring and even killing the innocent strangers under the excuse of self defense against threats imagined or unreal or the assumption of superiority or national self-righteousness?

Order alone is not the purpose of godly government but a strengthening of the character of all in bonds of love and charity. Even Sodom was destroyed because it failed to strengthen the poor in the midst of affluence.

This is why God has called men out. In hopes that they will be strengthened and that they in turn will strengthen others in the ways of God. The Levites were called out to strengthen the people in a free nation and that nation was to be a priest by example to all nations of the world. This is God's purpose for His Kingdom

Jesus called men out to follow him in service. These were the men he called out and appointed. These were the men he prayed could live in the world<sup>24</sup> but not be a part of it as they ministered and taught his ways

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<sup>13</sup> 3792 to collect a crowd, gather the people together

<sup>14</sup> 4822 *sumbibazo* to cause to coalesce, to join together, .. knit together: in affection.

<sup>15</sup> 4864 *sunagoge* a bringing together... (as of fruits)... assembling together of men,

<sup>16</sup> 1997 a gathering together in one place

<sup>17</sup> 4863 to gather together, to gather

<sup>18</sup> 1996 ... to bring together to others already assembled. to gather... in one place.

<sup>19</sup> R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, 7th ed., pp. 1-2

<sup>20</sup> Acts 7:38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and [with] our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

<sup>21</sup> 2Pe 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

<sup>22</sup> Jas 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [therein], he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

<sup>23</sup> Cecil B. DeMille in "The Ten Commandments."

<sup>24</sup> Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we [are].

of freedom and love. These servants belonged to Jesus but were as brothers. The Levites before them also belonged to God and were servants of the congregations of the people<sup>25</sup>.

When Jesus *called out* his disciples to teach and assemble them for service to the Kingdom<sup>26</sup>, he did so under remarkably similar conditions as Moses had done centuries before. He also applied restrictions upon them, limiting their office. In order to understand his *called out* assembly we must look back into the origins and context of the Gospel.

The word *ekklesia* is not always translated into *Church*, some say *assembly*, *congregation* etc.. Wycliffe calls all *ekklesias* '*churche*'. While, Tyndale always calls them *congregation*. The word *ekklesia* has several senses which include being *called out* and being *gathered together* for the functioning of society and government.

Tyndale made some good points concerning elder instead of priest and repentance instead of penance. The word 'elder' is not an office of appointment. An elder is a status or condition. It is usually an older man who is the head of a household by natural position. Elders might be appointed to an office or position but there was no actual appointed office of Elder. Repentance is always from the Greek word 'metanoia' which is singularly defined as "a change of mind" and has nothing to do with penance or punishment.

In the matter of congregation verses church in exchange of *ekklesia* the distinction is not so clear cut.

We see an example of an assembly that believes it has the power to exercise authority in Mark 15:1 "And anon in the dawning the high priests held **council** with the elders and the scribes, and the whole congregation, and bound Jesus and led him away, and delivered him to Pilate."<sup>27</sup>

Tyndale translate 'sunedrion' in Mark 15:1 as congregation the same way he translates *ekklesia* as congregation. The KJV always translates that word 'council'. The words are not the same. The word 'sunedrion' means "any assembly (esp. of magistrates, judges, ambassadors), whether convened to deliberate or pass judgment"

The apostles were also an assembly or congregation of ambassadors [apostolos] but they are never called a 'sunedrion' but the Sanhedrin was, especially when they sat in judgment of Jesus and the apostles. Yet, Tyndale calls them a congregation. All assemblies and congregations are not the same despite the fact they profess God or Jesus.

The orthodox Church in the time of Tyndale and Wycliffe was organized by a hierarchy of top down authority. They were promoted from those above and went up by steps.<sup>28</sup> This was forbidden to the *Church in the wilderness*.

I think the world of Tyndale and his valiant efforts and great sacrifice but I disagree with Tyndale's translation of 'ekklesia' as 'congregation'. The Church built and appointed by Christ is supposed to be the "called out" separate group that serves the congregation of the people. To call the called out ministers the congregation is a misnomer.

Wycliffe took "churche" from the old English "kirke" which is often attributed to a pagan temple in earlier times. He always translated *ekklesia* "*churche*" even in context where the Bible was speaking of a governmental assembly in Ephesus not the religious body of Christ. In 1526 William Tyndale and in 1535 Myles Coverdale translated *ekklesia* as "congregation". Tyndale only used the word *church* in Acts 19:37 in reference to that pagan temple of Diana and he was translating the word *hierosulos* [robbers of churches] into English, not *ekklesia*.

***For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Ac 19:37***

In this chapter we see ministers of Christ being accused in Ephesus of being *church robbers*, *guilty of sacrilege*. *Sacrilege*, which is from the Latin *sacrilegus*, one who steals sacred things. *Sacrilegus* is a word which includes *legus*<sup>29</sup> which is the Latin word that has to do with "*binding together*" from which we get words like legal and legislate.

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<sup>25</sup> Nu 3:12 And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;

<sup>26</sup> Lu 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

<sup>27</sup> From Tyndale's 1534 New Testament (updated by David Daniell):

<sup>28</sup> Ex 20:26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

<sup>29</sup> lex, legis, legus, legere

*Sacred* is defined “Dedicated to or set apart for the worship...” And worship<sup>30</sup> has to do with allegiance. There are few ways more clear to show our allegiance to God than by feeding his sheep and loving one another. By these acts we demonstrate our love and faith in the Father.

They did not steal the money from the vault but they stole the hearts and souls of the people who had been seduced and lead into the pagan ways of the gentile institutions.

What was this “church” that claimed to have been robbed by these ‘Christians’? The assembly [ekklesia or church] at Ephesus was fashioned according to the doctrines of Diana, e.g. Artemus in the Asiatic traditions. It’s center was a massive temple similar in design to the front of the US treasury. It could seat over 24,000 people to give you the idea of its size. Each of its 127 columns had been contributed by a king as it was strategically located on major trade routes. The most interesting thing was its purpose. It contained a great vault which was considered one of the safest depositories in Asia Minor. This temple actually functioned as a bank more than a religion. The “high priest” was also a credit officer making loans and collecting interest, managing valuable property and in charge of security for those who deposited valuables in the temple in the course of commerce and trade.

It also provided a form of social insurance through a system of Qurban. There were regular and sizable contributions by members made in the hopes of a secure return, profit or gain. The, so called, “statues” received by its patrons were made of silver. There was coinage of money and the issuing of script. It was not only a bank but a community treasury on a national and international basis.

This reference to a temple as a bank is not uncommon. The temples in Egypt acted much like a bank, issuing script, coining forms of money, making loans and collecting interest. These temples of ancient times also acted as investment houses for mining, trade and even military ventures. Great returns could be had with such investments in temples like Janus and Diana.

Temples also acted as welfare systems for the poor in order to gain their popularity among the common man. The contributions guaranteed a social security in case of disability or even old age relieving the family of that responsibility. The patrons of the temples were the assembly of its members who would often meet to decide terms and matters of the business of the temple. The Temple of Diana, as we have seen, could seat over 24,000 investors or their representatives at one time , which included smaller member banks.

No one suspected these Christians of breaking into the vault of Diana but it was clear that they were a threat to the depositors. This idea becomes less strange to our thinking when we realize the tables that Jesus turned over in the golden Temple of Herod were also “banks”<sup>31</sup> and the money changers were the bankers of Judea.

Judea had also adopted the Roman system of Qurban, called in the Bible Corban. This required funds to be deposited to care for the people. These funds did not sit idle but were invested to create a profitable return. Like any tontine system of entitlements new funds were always coming in to pay for any entitlement demands made on the temple while invested funds were still at work. Great profits could be had, vast sums crossed the temple’s tables, fees were collected and other public buildings including temples were built in other parts of the world with the extra funds and the addition of new members.

Such social systems of welfare and security have always been a part of government. It is the **left hand of government**. The Levites were vested with this office and the Porters of the old testament managed the funds. They were the Gatekeepers of the temple treasury. For centuries they had been elected by the people in a pattern of ten families choosing one minister, ten ministers choosing one minister, so on and so fourth. These were the officers or priests of the national treasury. Simply by withdrawing support a minister could be fired by the people.

The right hand of government was to maintain the peace both domestic and foreign. In the days when there was *no king in Israel* every man did according to his own God given conscience<sup>32</sup>. Law and justice as well as national security was in the hands of the people who assembled themselves in voluntary armies based on a pattern of tens and

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<sup>30</sup> Worship <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/worship.html>

<sup>31</sup> The word for “*table*” of the moneychangers which Jesus overthrew is the same word for “*bank*” in Luke 19:23

<sup>32</sup> Jud 17:6 In those days [there was] no king in Israel, [but] every man did [that which was] right in his own eyes.

fifties, hundreds and thousands<sup>33</sup>. These leaders were titular in their authority and held office by respect and mutual agreement of those they served.

There was a measured loss of liberty when the people sinned against God and asked Samuel to establish a centralized authority within the right hand of government. A new problem arose because now leaders acting as Benefactor imposed taxes. Former freewill contributions became compulsory and the nation was no longer sustained by *love of neighbor* but by the demands of governing agents. This power corrupted the leaders even though it was to be limited according to the constitution laid out by Moses<sup>34</sup>. This evil system contrary to the nature of God also spread to the temple where the priests soon began to demand a temple tax.

As history of Israel stumbled under the corruption of kings and the avarice of priests they steadily lost site of the mystery of their success as well as the Character of God's Kingdom. They often returned to rituals with little or no understanding of their true purpose.

By 160 B.C. the Hasmonian Dynasty, which was ruling Judea, mixed again the right hand of God's government with the left hand. The Hasmonians in violation of the Law set down by Moses granted power to the Levites to own land and collect taxes. New corruption seeped into the Kingdom so that by the arrival of Jesus there was a considerable mess to clean up.

No one could fire the Porters except the King. Before the kings the Porters, officers of the public treasury, were chosen by the people in the pattern mentioned above. The Porter was a Levite minister or a member of his household. He was responsible for the free will offering. The tithing was only to support the Levites and their families which could be rather a large group. Each of the ten families shared a portion of their prosperity with the family of their minister according to His service<sup>35</sup>.

A family was not just a Father and Mother and children but consisted of the eldest living Father and all his children including his Married Sons. In Israel no one was Sui Juris as long as his Father and Mother lived. The authority always rested with the Elder of the family until his passing. With the advent of Kings or central government some of that patriarchal authority passed to the government.

The right of the Father, or as the Romans called him the *Pater Familias*, was absolute and beyond the government's control or jurisdiction. The Greeks had brought in different ideas which were now filtering into Judea with the introduction of a Hellenistic philosophy.

In Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* it was preached that the children were not the property of their parents but rather the *property of the State*. It also called for the collection of all gold and silver so that *iron could be used as money*. It also instituted a common system of welfare and food distribution financed by compulsory taxes. Land also belonged to the State and everyone was required to pay a use tax on the land or that property would be taken from them and given to another. Youngsters were removed from the family at an early age and trained up to follow directions and precepts of the State. Fear and respect of the State was more important than love of family and the 'ruling elite' worked their influence unknown to the incompetent general public. This philosophy required entertainment, distraction and a system of social security of welfare and pensions which was ministered by the temples.

Augustus Caesar had established many such temples as a part of government services and Judea was no different. It too established a system of Corban. All this was diametrically opposed to what Moses had taught and Jesus did not fail to point it out.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ex 18:25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

<sup>34</sup> De 17:16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of [that which is] before the priests the Levites:

<sup>35</sup> Nu 7:5 Take [it] of them, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service.

<sup>36</sup> And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do

In the original government of Israel the authority to govern remained in the hands of the People through the family units represented by the Elder of the family. The Elders or Patriarchs of these families held the power of government called by the Romans *Patria Potestas*. This was the government instituted by God. Men like Cain, Nimrod, Pharaoh and Caesar had another idea. They wish to assume the office of Father<sup>37</sup>. It is from this jurisdiction that the State derives much of its power and authority. The Romans break this authority down into classified divisions.

***But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:* Mt 6:3**

In the Gospels we see the mother of Zebedee's children<sup>38</sup> requesting two offices in the Kingdom preached by Christ. The left and the right hand seats on either side of the King. She knew Jesus was high priest<sup>39</sup> and King. Jesus knew he was come to be the King who returned every man to his family and every man to his possessions.<sup>40</sup> The right hand of government was to return to the people as it was meant to be by God. This burden would make the people stronger. Taking their God given responsibility back would make men whole again for such governments only work when men and women do according to the spirit of God.

The right hand of government was called the *imperium* by the Romans. It was divided into the *merum* which dealt with foreign aggression the *mixtum* which dealt with the "wicked" within the jurisdiction of the civil state. These powers rested within the province of the Father of Rome, the Patronus and were left to his administration.

Originally, this *power* rested with the *families* but as Romans became apathetic this voluntary system of mutual *national defense* and domestic *hue and cry* was replaced by a central government which led to civil war and more power resting in the hands of the State in the form of Caesar. The same corruption had grown during Israel's history and also its remnant, Judea.

The temples were a part of the left hand of government and originally depended upon the free will and sin offerings of the people. The ancient altars of clay were formed of every man to his neighbor. John said it best in Luke 3:11 how this worked.

***He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.***

But on a planet where nations rise up against nation the individual love of justice must come together and be ready for the assaults of the wicked of the world. This is in part why Altars of stone were established and temples of sacrifice first began in the story of mankind. God has no use for burnt offerings<sup>41</sup>. As the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, so also are these altars and temple designed by God for man's sake. They were to bring him together as one body, one nation. These altars were meant to provide a system of social welfare entirely based on love, hope and faith. It is the sinew of these virtues that binds the Kingdom of God, for these are the Character of God according to His Spirit. These are of symbols of His Name.

These national treasuries, altars of trust are made so that men may exercise charity and hope beyond the family into the community and nation while maintaining freedom under God. These are the instruments of His great society. As the right hand of man is freely given in the service of justice to our fellow man so also the left hand serves those in need with individual discretion. In order to obtain the greatest reward of charity it must be a choice made daily by the freewill of those who give and the humble acceptance of those who receive. Both elements of society gain God's grace in this endeavor of social fellowship.

During times of great trials and great tribulation, it is not distant dictators, hypothetical philosophies or detached doctrines that cultivate loyalty, courage and sacrifice in men but it is the personal sacrifice of brothers that

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ye. Mr 7:9-13

<sup>37</sup> Mt 23:9 And call no [man] your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in Heaven.

<sup>38</sup> Mt 20:21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

<sup>39</sup> Joh 3:30 He must increase, but I [must] decrease.

<sup>40</sup> Le 25:10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout [all] the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

<sup>41</sup> Isa 1:11 To what purpose [is] the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

Mr 12:33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love [his] neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

nurtures man's virtuous nature. It is the shared bread in hunger and the donated cover against cold and the sweat, blood and life given freely that teaches love and patience, virtue and fortitude and binds souls together as one body, one nation. It is the daily sacrifice of self that brings man to the willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice to live or die in service to the Lord.

***Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*** Joh 15:13

A nation bound together in such brotherhood cannot be broken. Jesus knew that a nation built on force, control and compliance will falter and fail as it has always done. When love fades in men, men fail. When charity is not exercised men grow weak. When faith does not accrue allegiance is abated. You use it or lose it.

Those who studied the histories of Israel understood the bloody sacrifice and burnt flesh of the Pharisees were nothing more than a travesty of God's plan. Those who had sought to learn the ancient mysteries of the Kingdom knew that the altars of Abraham and Moses were built of men, not of dead stone. These unregulated individuals of noble conscience were men of grace to whom contributions of charity were granted by the freewill of the people. Their purpose was to care for the needy and needs of the community. They realized that these altars were a form of unregulated social insurance that strengthened the receiver as much as those who gave. It was this system that brought the whole nation together in a living network of brotherhood. No man could take from or injure an Israelite without injuring the whole nation. No one could conquer such a nation unless they conquered every man and women. The more you fought them the stronger and more resolved they became. There is great power in hate and fear but love lasts, it endures.

These ancient systems were designed to keep the nation strong and free in the face of what was often great adversity. The feasts were ceremonial rituals. Their purpose was to keep the nation together as one people in practical ways. They were designed to strengthen community by bringing families and congregations of families together into a national community.

The people knew the family was the foundation of all society and there was no wisdom in weakening it unless your hope was tyranny. Sons and Daughters look to their Father and Mother to teach them the lessons of life. The family was an extended family and the community intertwined under the perfect law of liberty. Each successive generation knew that they had to care for their own parents as well as the needy. Those who were without family support were cared for as a matter of custom as a common assurance. In a system of charity there is no entitlement but only hope.

Moses established an assembly of Levites to minister to the congregations of the people. The Levites had been *called out* by him in the wilderness when the people tried to set up a central bank like the temples in Egypt. They enumerated deposits vested in their Golden Calf as the people broke off their earrings.

Again this seems a foreign idea to most modern Christians. These people were not impractical. It is historical naivety to imagine that this molten calf of gold was anything more to the people than a depository of wealth designed to bind the people together into loyal community of contributors and investors.

Moses had gone up the mountain. Without his charismatic hold on the people divisions began to creep into their thinking. The people were afraid that if they were attacked groups would divide and flee with their own safety in mind. This would make them vulnerable. By depositing all their wealth in the Golden Calf they were assured that no one would leave without departing destitute. Gates were set up and men and wealth were kept in as well as out.

This was a common practice used in city states in order to protect from trade deficits, marauders and guarantee loyalty and continued power of the *ruling elite*. Of course they had to have a system of accounting for their contributions and deposits. Some form of exchange amongst themselves was provided but regulated in value. Aaron being knowledgeable of the "arts of the temple" accommodated the people in this alternative binding monetary system. When the people *broke off their golden earrings giving them unto Aaron* they were confiding their trust in him. He became the trustee of the temple, high priest and benefactor of the people. This *cestui que charitable* trust was managed by the "priests" for the people.

Moses was disappointed and called the people to turn from their sinful ways of entrusting their riches in the unrighteous mammon. The Levites as a people *came out* first and Moses told them to go in and out the gates with their



sword at their sides. Under the authority of Moses they maintained an entrance and exit to the camp<sup>42</sup>. The people were free again and the bank of the Golden Calf was dismantled.

Still some system was needed to teach and aid the people in the ways of the Lord. The Levites were the first born of the Kingdom. They were to be the national priests to manage the common funds of the people. Moses knew where corruption would come from. Lovers of soft things were not the ones to put in charge of riches. The Levites had proved their faith and courage but still Moses forbid them to own land in their own name. Jesus did the same requiring that his ministers were to sell all they had, give to the poor and follow him. The apostles also did this requiring new appointees to do the same. We see Joses in Ac 4:37 sold land in Cyprus which as a Levite he should not have had, laid the money at the foot of the apostles and became Barnabas. *But* immediately following that Ananias does the same but held back some of the wealth and is struck dead.

These ministers of Christ's Kingdom were dependent upon the contributions of the people who only shared a portion of their wealth according to their service. These ministers did many thing to make their constituents successful. They aided with education, business, agriculture, marriage counseling. Every aspect of their life was important to the minister. I heard a minister of a "church" say that he did not have to worry about taking care of the widows and orphans because the government did that now.

Rome did that then with their Qurban and a vast system of welfare, but Christ said that social security systems like Corban which took the place of the family made the law of God to no effect<sup>43</sup>. He told us not to apply to any other Father on earth but Our Father in Heaven. He told his ministers that were appointed the Kingdom that they were not to be like the princes of the Gentiles called benefactors<sup>44</sup>. This was not new to God's Kingdom. Proverbs warns us to put a knife to your own throat if you sit and eat with a ruler because he serve deceitful benefits.<sup>45</sup>

Christians did not apply to government benefits, social security and welfare in Rome. Such benefits were readily available but they operated much different than Christ, Moses and Abraham. The first century Church bypassed the Roman and Hellenistic system of Herod like Corban and developed their own system according to the teachings of Christ and the prophets. We see in Acts 6:1<sup>46</sup> the *daily ministration to the widows and orphans* was being neglected.

The church established by Jesus Christ did not say go down to the Roman welfare office. It did not say join the system of Corban offered by what John later calls the *synagogue of Satan*.<sup>47</sup> It did what Moses had done. It told the people to look out amongst itself and find men they trusted and bring them to us and we will appoint them over this business. This common welfare was the business of the Church because the Church was the left hand of government, the Kingdom of God.

The Apostles did not appoint these ministers from the top down but were simple overseers of what the people decided for themselves. Like Jesus if they saw these men acting in a corrupt way they would fire them too but the people could go back and reelect them. Jesus did not mix the left hand of government with the right hand and so therefore all contributions were voluntary.

This had not been the case with the ministers in Judea for years. The month before Passover messengers, once called *singers*<sup>48</sup>, were sent from Jerusalem with an '*issued proclamation*' demanding the temple tribute which could

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<sup>42</sup> Ex 32:27 And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, [and] go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.

<sup>43</sup> Mr 7:13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

<sup>44</sup> Lu 22:25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

<sup>45</sup> When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat. Pr 23:1-4

<sup>46</sup> Ac 6:1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

<sup>47</sup> Re 3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

<sup>48</sup> Singers were like the heralds of the king who announced his will but in God's kingdom the people were originally the *princes of Israel* for there was no king. The heralds or *singers* carried the message from public servants but the decision was carried back from the people to those servants. There was no authority for proclamations to the people. Ezr 7:7 And there went up [some] of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, ...

only be paid with the temple issued coin, the half-shekel of the sanctuary. The money exchanging bankers would have their 'tables' set up across the country to make exchanges for those coins which for a short time would be in high demand and exchanged at a premium. "On the 25th of Adar business was only transacted within the precincts of Jerusalem and of the Temple, and after that date those who had refused to pay the impost could be proceeded against at law, and their goods distrained, the only exception being in favour of priests, and that 'for the sake of peace, lest their office should come in disrepute.'"<sup>49</sup>

The offerings of the people in support of the government was always voluntary in the Kingdom of God and at their own discretion. God meant men to be free. This is why he took them out of Egypt and told them never to return nor should their leaders do anything to return them to that condition.

Such discretion and freedom of choice left the responsibility of government in the hands of *the people, by the people*. The people knew from common sense and hard learned lessons that if they did not take responsibility to secure their rights and their neighbors' rights then they would soon suffer the consequences. Virtue rewarded virtue while sloth and avarice were their own companions. The people learned to give generously and discretely in freedom or faltered into folly and failure.

About 78 B.C., the Pharisees, which were a political party, thought they had a better idea. They decided to exercise authority over the people. They felt they had been neglected by the people. They managed to enact a law to enforce the temple tribute upon the people.<sup>50</sup> The right hand of government used its power on the left side of God's Kingdom thereby increasing both sides while at the same time reduced the position of the people. Not only were they drained of funds but they also lost the maturing benefit of exercising responsibilities and rights.

The Singers had gone from being the messengers of the people to being the Heralds of the *ruling elite*. They were able to do this because the people became slothful and centralized the right hand of government. That strong branch of the errant kingdom became the enforcing arm of the charitable left hand to the oppression of the people.

***The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.*** Pr 12:24

The money-changers were not involved in nickel and dime purchases where you could tip over a table and send change rolling on the floor. The tribute could exceed 7,600,000 denarii in one month. The money-changers were allowed to charge a silver *meah*, or about one-fourth of a denar. Their cut on this one event could be 950,000 denarii worth about \$9,000,000 today. "Thus the immense offerings ... to the Temple passed through the hands of the moneychangers."<sup>51</sup>

When Jesus fired the bankers of the temple by laying a string whip across their shoulder according to His office of King he was able to turn over their lucrative appointments to more worthy officers.

The King could not arbitrarily put men into these positions. If the people were to function as free souls under God they had to choose their own ministers and those ministers chose the next level of ministers in a pattern of tens and hundreds.

Jesus had thousands of followers that understood this system and it would only be a matter of time before the old guard was forgotten and the new was in place to handle the business of the temple.

With so much wealth at stake those priest needed to get rid of this Jesus. Jesus had been warned. His message of a Kingdom based on liberty that was within their reach was not popular with those in power. The ministers of the Kingdom had perverted many of the safeguards built into the system to prevent corruption.

We have seen that both pagan and Israelite temples were created to bring the people together and provide for the common welfare. These temples were forms of national banks but they varied greatly in many areas of their structured system. Understanding these differences and how these financial institutions were to function is an essential part of understanding God's Kingdom at hand.

That Kingdom is spiritual, virtuous, moral and righteous. Yes, and it is in us too. It comes as we do the will of the Father. It is edified in turning around and following the precepts, doctrines and teachings of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>49</sup> Alfred Edersheim's book *The Temple*, p. 71.

<sup>50</sup> Salome- Alexandra (about 78 B.C.), that the Pharisaical party, being then in power, had carried an enactment by which the Temple tribute was to be enforced at law Alfred Edersheim's book *The Temple*.

<sup>51</sup> New Unger's Bible Dictionary

Israel was a Kingdom and a government and as a government it required a national treasury. The wisdom of God designed the kingdoms banking system. It is clear that God originally did not want the people to centralize the power of their government. He made it obvious that their desire to vest power in such a central government was a sin, and according to what God told Samuel it was one of the sins that the people were always returning to since He brought them out of Egypt.<sup>52</sup>

God's precepts are no different when it came to banking and He made it clear in the Old Testament concerning usury, banks and just weights and measures:.

*My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse: My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird. And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives. So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.* Proverbs 1:10-19.

The centralization of the wealth of a nation is as disastrous to liberty as the centralization of power for money and lucre is power.

Lucre is *the excess of revenues over outlays in a given period*. It is the increase from the use of wealth. In one sense the Levites or ministers of God's Kingdom shared not only in the produce of those they ministered to but in the *lucre*. As each family prospered so did God's ministers. This was a natural built in governor of God's plan. His minister wanted to see families prosper and worked diligently to see that they did. In systems where the administration could compel the payment of tribute, usury and lucre the need for the prosperity of those they served lessened.

When ministers could gain personal wealth and were not dependent on the continued freewill offering of the people their focus shifted from serving others to personal gain. This is why the Levites were not allowed to own property in their own name and neither were the first century ministers of the Church. Christ never changed this.

All these temples made great effort to keep their systems, the national treasury and their keepers honest. Integrity was the name of the game when dealing with vast sums of money. These systems varied in many ways and no matter how you arranged things greed often took the better of men if not bad management.

The rules governing who could be ministers in the ancient institutions were inventive. Many temples required that ministers of the temple became *eunuchs* or if women, they remained virgins. There were controllers and accountants, overseers and the right arm of government to insure honesty.

God's system was simple. The money did not remain in buried vaults but in the pockets and purses of the people. They were the controllers of the treasury. They held themselves to account. They set personal policies of the tithing and offerings.

Israel was called a commonwealth and it was. The Kingdom of God is too but how that wealth is to be held in common is the difference to be considered. It was the network of the Kingdom which was kept alive by their living altars of dedicated unregulated men who had no personal wealth but belonged directly to God through the Christ. Everything in the culture of Israel directed people toward a nation based on brotherhood and love including their common feasts and the need for continuous freewill decisions of concern and love for one another.

When the people relinquish their responsibility to govern their personal wealth for the good of all they tempt men to take power not meant to be given. Such avarice and sloth in the people breeds the same in their children and in the governments they choose for themselves and is rewarded with administrators of greed and craftiness.

They soon fall to the temptation of usury and when that drains the treasury they result to deflationary means of strangling milk from a dead cow. We often here of inflation driving up the cost of goods. The goods are not worth more but the money has become worth less.

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<sup>52</sup> 1Sa 8:8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

Plutarch's idea of taking all the funds of the nation into a common treasury and issuing iron coins was clearly not Biblical. Such schemes have historically been disastrous. Besides contributing to the bondage of Egypt. The rule has been the same from ancient time till today.

***Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.*** De 25:13

Anthony and Cleopatra had lowered the purity of their coins. Nero reduced the weight of the denarius from 3.5 grams to 3.36 and reduced the fineness from 98% to 93.5% silver setting a precedent for future changes. Before the middle of the third century AD coins had become only 40% silver and by its end was just .02% silver.<sup>53</sup> The prices of a modius of wheat went from 8 drachmas to 120,000.

In the first year of the fourth century Diocletian attempted to enforce price controls, but even under the threat of capital punishment they were an utter failure. Inflation continued from 600% to over 40,000%. Society was crushed under a series of depressions in the economy for centuries. A pound of gold would cost 2.1 billion denarii

Central banking, usury and debasing of coins were evidence of a problem that originated in the people. The governing powers created by the people were simply a manifestation of that same failing.

The Temple as well as the Church was a national bank for the Kingdom. It is *treasury of the Lord*. The coin in Judea was minted in the temple. The temple was the center of the legal system, money system and charity system of the government. Coinage should be in the hands of the people but it is part of the job of the Church to preach a system of honest weights and measure. Speaking the truth is one of the great services of the Church.

The Church is not like the banks of the world or the treasuries of the gentiles. They do not demand deposits or store wealth. They are to assist in the circulation and distribution of the love and freewill charity of the people. As the ministers of the Kingdom they provide a system where by the people may aid one another so that they do not have to turn to centralized systems of usury and subjection.

The governments of the gentiles continued to oppress the people and the people continued to turn to those benefactors who plunged them into hopeless depressions.

***And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.*** Ac 11:28

But the Church had been trained and prepared for the inevitable decay and collapse of the world.

***Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.*** Ac 11:29-30

They had already been setting up this system starting at Pentecost with 120 families and 12 apostles.

***And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*** Ac 2:46-47

Thousands of people became apart of Christ's government because they saw the corruption and failure wrought by following the government policies of the Pharisees and Hellenistic Rome.

***And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*** Ac 6:1

This was a tremendous change in the lives and practices of the people. They had to continue to improve and expand this process of donation and distribution. When their numbers increased they continued the pattern and sought new men to fill the roles of ministers of His Kingdom serving the people both near and far through a vast network of individual ministers.

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<sup>53</sup> "By the reign of Claudius II Gothicus (268-270 A.D.) the silver content of the denarius was down to (Michell 1947: 2). As a consequence, prices skyrocketed. A measure of Egyptian wheat, for example, which sold for seven to eight drachmas in the second century now cost 120,000 drachmas. This suggests an inflation of 15,000 percent during the third century." Bartlett, citing Rostovtzeff 1957: 471

***Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples [unto them], and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.***<sup>54</sup> Ac 6:2

These tables were the bank counters of the temple that Jesus took from the Pharisee and Sadducee money-changers who received the contributions of the people at the point of a sword. But these banks of God's Kingdom had returned to the freewill offerings of the ancient paths of the Kingdom.

***Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.*** Ac 6:3

They elected those they trusted and the apostles appointed them as overseers. They did not appoint those they chose but those chosen by the people. As Jesus said it was not his job to choose who would sit on the left hand of His Kingdom but it was God. Each man must look into his own heart and choose those who he would have serve him in the Kingdom. There is no top down authority in the Kingdom except the Lord Living in the hearts of every man who seeks the LORD's Kingdom.

***But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*** Ac 6:4

There was a great deal of teaching needed to inform the people of how the Kingdom was to operate. The people had been taught lies for years about the nature of the Kingdom and the Character of God. While the Pharisees were fighting over *jots and tittles* they forgot the spirit of the Law which is love and liberty under God not license and control and oppression under men.

***And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:*** Ac 6:5

With billions of dollars in money, land and benefits at stake and thousands lining up to the fruitful *tables* of the Christians, is there any wonder that Stephen was the first recorded martyr of the Church.

Those ministers of the Kingdom who called themselves bondservants while preaching the perfect law of liberty were themselves separated from the world in many ways.

They could not exercise authority over the people. People could choose men from amongst themselves to settle civil matters and disputes. We see examples of this voluntary process in the ancient Biblical times in Ruth 4:2<sup>55</sup> when Boaz called the elders of the families to judge his case. These men were like early juries in America jurisprudence who always decided "fact and law".

Many today who claim to be the Church established by Jesus do not attend to the daily ministration that was so much a part of the first century Church as well as the Church in the wilderness. When widows and orphans are in need and cry for help these churches send them to the governments of the world. Those governments collect the tribute from the people contrary to the ways of the Kingdom and compel the people under the force of law to pay in their contributions. These are the ways of the Benefactors of the Gentile states.

The Kingdom of God is a government based on faith, hope and charity not like the Helenized, Romanized<sup>56</sup> and Babylonian governments of the world. In the "world" the charity system had become entitlement programs and the government was now entitled to demand payment. Contributions were no longer freewill offerings and sin offerings were extracted by a system of authoritarian courts imposing fees, fines and penalties upon the people. The systems had their appointed gods<sup>57</sup> who judged the people and compelled by force their compliance to the will of the elite.

Those Churches who fail to preach the Kingdom disregard Christ. Those who take the tithe and send the children of God to the Qurban of Roman systems to be bound under tribute betray their office. The people are delivered into a system not unlike that of Rome and Egypt and Babylon. They are bound in these systems because the ministers of what is often called the Church have failed to preach the Kingdom and serve the people and have failed to tend to the daily ministration.

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<sup>54</sup> 5132 trapeza AV-table 13, bank 1, meat 1; ...the table or stand of a money changer,

<sup>55</sup> Ru 4:2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down..

<sup>56</sup> Rome vs US <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/romeus.HTM>

<sup>57</sup> There are gods many <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/theosgod.HTM>

The people are deceived and have been lead astray from the righteousness of the Kingdom of God into the force and control of the governments of the world while the ministers repeat their prayers and sing their songs. All the nations suffer under the delusion that Jesus did not come as the King in the flesh<sup>58</sup>. They imagine that His Kingdom will come through observation<sup>59</sup> when we were told that His Kingdom comes when His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven<sup>60</sup>.

While these Churches sing in their fine buildings and bow their heads in displays of adoration they are deceived and fail to understand the Gospel of love and liberty. They have a form of godliness but deny the power of God's ways. ***Having a form of godliness, but For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.: from such turn away.*** 2Ti 3:5-7

Scribes and Pharisees who crucified Christ had all the right words to pray to God in Hebrew. They had their temple and their daily sacrifice of blood, and their robes and altars and feasts days and Sabbaths and their Bible but they did not know the LORD, His Son or His way.

Today, men have twisted both Old and New Testaments to form religious practices that delude the people and hide the true Gospel. When men began to open their eyes to the truth or speak about the actual message of Christ their eyes were often plucked out and their tongues severed. Millions died in the name of heresy. Millions more were persecuted and oppressed by men calling themselves the Church.

Men have forgotten the ways of John the Baptist and tried to edify God's Kingdom by force. Men take the name of the LORD in vain every time they give lip service to Christ but fail to do the will of the Father. They Baptize with water but not the Spirit of God.

There is a serious question today as to who is the ekklesia, the church, the house of God, His brethren and family. Who are His bondservants? Who teaches his Way by living according to his precepts, doctrines and ordinances of Christ the King? Who is that called out congregation of services appointed to minister His Kingdom? Who is the body of Christ, the corpus of Christ, the appointed Corporation of Christ the King? Where are the ministers of the Kingdom of God which is at hand?

The answer is not found in letters of names and the spelling of words. Nor is it found in buildings of wood and stone. It is found in the Spirit by which they live and by the Character of their hearts and minds.

I once asked, "Will the real Church stand up."

The fact is, it has always stood up but the people must learn to see it, seek it and find it.

*Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?* Mr 8:18

He clearly said that his appointees are not to exercise authority over the assembly of the Kingdom or even over each other.

*And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye [shall] not [be] so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.* Lu 22:25-26

Across the country and around the globe there are men and women who know the spirit of Christ and receive His Holy Spirit. They seek to serve rather than be served. They also hear that call in the hearts and in their minds, like those early disciples called out to serve the Kingdom. They are willing to let go of the gifts, gratuities and benefits of the kingdoms of world and seek treasures in the Kingdom of God which is at hand.

*From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* Mt 4:17

*And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.* Mr 1:15

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<sup>58</sup> 2Jo 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

<sup>59</sup> Lu 17:20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

<sup>60</sup> Mt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven.

The Church offers courses and materials, as well as assistance in setting up, Churches, congregations and auxiliary churches. We provide assistance and have a number of publications and tapes available to aid local congregations and ministers in coming together in accordance with the Gospel.