

BUILDING APOSTOLIC CONGREGATIONS

The Aim of Primitive Christians

CHRISTIANITY IN ITS BEGINNING

- Acts 14:21-23 ASV And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, (22) confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. (23) And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed.

FINDING THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

- ▣ 1. An Organization—Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3:1ff; Titus 1:5ff.
- ▣ 2. An Assembly—Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 11:18
- ▣ 3. Taught—Acts 20:7; I Cor. 14:19
- ▣ 4. Prayed—Acts 12:5; I Cor. 14:15
- ▣ 5. Sang—Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; I Cor. 14:15
- ▣ 6. Lord's Supper on 1st Day—Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20

AN IMPORTANT MATTER FOR BIBLICAL PRIMITIVISTS

- ▣ 10. Supported Preaching—II Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16
- ▣ 11. Disciplined Unruly Members—I Cor. 5:1-5
- ▣ 12. Discussed Congregational Activities—Acts 6:1-5

THE “ORDERING” OF CHURCHES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- ▣ 1 Timothy 3:14-15 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: (15) But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
- ▣ Titus 1:2-5 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; (3) But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; (4) To Titus, *mine* own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. (5) For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

CORINTHIAN ORDERING: UNIFORMITY THE REPEATED THEME

I Cor. 4:17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

I Cor. 7:17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches.

I Cor. 11:16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

I Cor. 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES OF CHRIST

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- ▣ 6. Lord's Supper on 1st Day—Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20
- ▣ 7. Gave on 1st Day—I Cor. 16:1,2; Acts 2:44-45
- ▣ 8. Treasury—Acts 5:1-4
- ▣ 9. Relieved Needy Saints—Acts 4:34-35; 11:29-30; I Cor. 16:1
- ▣ 10. Supported Preaching—II Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16
- ▣ 11. Disciplined Unruly Members—I Cor. 5:1-5
- ▣ 12. Discussed Congregational Activities—Acts 6:1-5

A New Testament Church

- ▣ 1. An organization—Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3: 1ff; Titus 1:5ff.

Organization of a New Testament Church

- Phil. 1:1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.
- Acts 14:23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Organization of a New Testament Church

- 1 Tim. 3:1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;. . .*
- Titus 1:5 *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee. . . .*

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- ▣ **1. An Organization—Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3:1ff; Titus 1:5ff.**
- ▣ **2. An Assembly—Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 11:18**

Assembly

- Heb. 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
- I Cor. 11:18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

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- ▣ **3. Taught—Acts 20:7; I Cor. 14:15**

Teaching and Preaching

- Acts 20:7 And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.
- I Cor.14:19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

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- ▣ 4. Prayed—Acts 12:5; I Cor. 14:19

Praying

- Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.
- I Cor. 14:15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

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- ▣ 5. Sang—Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; I Cor. 14:15

Singing

- Eph. 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. .
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- Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

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- ▣ 6. Lord's Supper on 1st Day—Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20

Lord's Supper on 1st Day

- Acts 20:7 And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.
- I Cor. 11:20 When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

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- ▣ 7. Gave on 1st Day—I Cor. 16:1,2; Acts 2:44-45

Gave on the 1st Day

- I Cor. 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. ²Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.
- Acts 2:44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; ⁴⁵And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.

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- ▣ 8. Treasury—Acts 5:1-4

Acts 5:1-4

- ▣ Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, ²And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. ³But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? ⁴Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

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- ▣ 8. Treasury—Acts 5:1-4
- ▣ 9. Relieved Needy Saints—Acts 4:34-35; 11:29-30; I Cor. 16:1

Relieved Needy Saints

- Acts 4:34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, ³⁵And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.
- Acts 11:29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: ³⁰Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.
- I Cor. 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

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- ▣ 9. Relieved Needy Saints—Acts 4:34-35; 11:29-30; I Cor. 16:1
- ▣ 10. Supported Preaching—II Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16

Supported Preaching

- II Cor. 11:8 | robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service.
- Phil. 4:15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. ¹⁶For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

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- ▣ 11. Disciplined Unruly Members—I Cor. 5:1-5

Discipline

- 1 Cor. 5:1-5 It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. . . . ⁴In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

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- ▣ 12. Discussed Congregational Activities—Acts 6:1-5

CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS

- ▣ Acts 6:1-5 And in those days, the disciples having multiplied, a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews occurred, because their widows were overlooked in the daily serving. (2) And the Twelve called near the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not pleasing to us, leaving the Word of God, to serve tables. (3) Therefore, brothers, look out among you seven *men* being witnessed to, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this duty. (4) But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word. (5) And the saying pleased all the multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of *the* Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch.

ANSWERING THE QUESTION: HOW CAN WE BE AN APOSTOLIC CHURCH?

**THE EVIDENCE EXPLAINS BOTH
WHAT WE DO AND WHAT WE DO
NOT DO**

- ▣ 6. Lord's Supper on 1st Day—Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20
- ▣ 7. Gave on 1st Day—1 Cor. 16:1,2; Acts 2:44-45

**AN ESSENTIAL DISTINCTION:
APPLYING THE LIST AND
EXPANDING THE LIST**

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY LIMITS

- ▣ 1. An Organization—Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3: 1ff; Titus 1:5ff.
- ▣ 2. An Assembly—Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 11:18
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SINGING

- ▣ Eph. 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. . .
- ▣ Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
- ▣ 1 Corinthians 14:15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

SINGING

BUT---SHOULD INSTRUMENTAL
MUSIC BE A BIG ISSUE?

IT SEEMS PRETTY MINOR TO ME!

**VISITORS MAY WONDER WHY
CHURCHES OF CHRIST MAKE AN
ISSUE OF SUCH A MINOR MATTER**

Instrumental Music Seems Minor

- ▣ THE VOICE OF VARIOUS RELIGIOUS SOURCES...
- ▣ 1. CATHOLIC - "... the first Christians were of too spiritual a fibre to substitute lifeless instruments

▣ **ALTHOUGH!!!**

Cavarnos, BYSANTINE SACRED MUSIC

- ▣ 3. PRESBYTERIAN - "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to Him." - JOHN CALVIN, Commentary on the Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. 529

**THAT IS A RATHER
MODERN SENTIMENT!**

- ▣ 7. BAPTIST - "I would as soon attempt to pray to God with machinery as to sing to Him with machinery." - CHARLES H. SPURGEON

Instrumental Music Historically Considered

• **GREEK ORTHODOX** - "The execution of Byzantine church music by instruments, or even the accompaniment of sacred chanting by instruments was ruled out by the Eastern Fathers as being incompatible with the pure, solemn, spiritual character of the religion of Christ." -- Constantine Cavarnos, **BYSANTINE SACRED MUSIC**

• In Eastern Europe, the music performed in the Eastern Orthodox cathedrals and monasteries is exclusively sung without music. Bishop Kallistos Ware says, "The service is sung, even though there may be no choir... In the Orthodox Church today, as in the early Church, singing is unaccompanied and instrumental music is not found."¹

• Wikipedia

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Instrumental Music Historically Considered

- **METHODIST** - "I have no objection to instruments of music, in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen." - **JOHN WESLEY** (founder)
- **METHODIST** - "Music as a science, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity." - **ADAM CLARKE** (commentator)

Instrumental Music Historically Considered

- **BAPTIST - "I would as soon attempt to pray to God with machinery as to sing to Him with machinery." - CHARLES H. SPURGEON**

WHAT WAS APOSTOLIC PRACTICE?

- ▶ “*Opposition to Instruments*: The earliest references to Christian services mention singing but are silent about instruments. In the fourth century, some writers took note of the difference between the non-use of instruments among Christians and their prominence in pagan sacrifices and in the Jewish temple. Theodoret (*Quaes. Et. resp. ad Orth. 107*) and Niceta (*Util. Hymn. 9*) explained that instrumental music belonged to the childhood state of God’s people and was among those practices of the Old Testament, such as sacrifice, circumcision, Sabbath, that had been abrogated in the New Testament, whereas singing without accompaniment was useful for quieting the passions and lifting the thoughts to God. . . . **The organ appears to have moved from the court ceremony of the emperor to the church, but only in the west, and it is debated whether this occurred in the seventh century or the tenth.**”
- ▶ Everett Ferguson, ed., *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990).

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6. Lord's Supper on 1st Day

THIS ISSUE MAY SEEM SMALL AND UNIMPORTANT

9. Relieved Needy Saints—Acts 4:34-35; 11:29-30; I Cor. 16:1
10. Supported Preaching—II Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16
11. Discipline Unruly Members—I Cor. 5:1-5

THE LIMITATIONS AND BOUNDARIES OF APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

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**FOLLOWING APOSTOLIC
AUTHORITY IS THE GREAT
DIVIDE IN DEFINING
PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY**

11. Discipline Unruly Members—I Cor. 5:1-5

THE UNITY OF INTENT

- 1 Corinthians 1:10 KJV Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.
- Philippians 3:12-16 KJV (12) Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. (13) Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (14) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (15) Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. (16) Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES OF CHRIST

- ▣ 1. An Organization—Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3:1ff; Titus 1:5ff.

IS THAT IT???

- ▣ 5. Sang—Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; I Cor. 14:15
- ▣ 6. Lord's Supper on 1st Day—Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20

THAT IS WHAT IS IN
THE BOX!!!

- ▣ 12. Discussed Congregational Activities—Acts 6:1-5