



FOOTPRINT 15

ORGANIZATION

PART 1 — WHO IS THE CHURCH

God has a special plan in terms of organizing His church. In order to gain a concept of that plan, we must first establish what the church is, from God's point of view.

The Greek word that is translated church is *ekklesia*. It signifies the company or assembly of the called-out ones of Christ. This is affirmed by God through His prophet when she stated:—

“From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth.”

E. G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, pg. 11 (1911)

God's church is not a building. It is not an organization of man's devising. It is not a federation, or confederacy or even association, for there is no division, no separation, no such thing whatsoever. God's church is, and always has been, one church, one body, one whole, one unit with Jesus as its Head and Cornerstone, and its members constituting His body.

In addition, God's prophet also states in Acts of the Apostles that:—

“The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God. **Ephesians 3:10.**

"The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son.... In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people." **E. G. White, Acts of the Apostles, pg. 11 (1911)**

This is fully disclosed and revealed in the Scriptures as they declare the church to be the body of Christ in this world. Note the following:—

"I, Paul am made a minister; who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church." **Colossians 1:23, 24**

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." **Ephesians 1:17-23.**

"As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." **1Corinthians 12:12.**

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members are not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." **Romans 12:4, 5.**

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." **1Corinthians 12:27.**

"For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." **Ephesians 5:30.**

In addition, this Church or assembly of Christ's people is said to be God's "house" or "God's building," thus:—

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; 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."

1Timothy 3:14, 15.

"Christ [was faithful] as a Son over His own house; Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." **Hebrews 3:6.**

"Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." **1Corinthians 3:9.**

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." **1Peter 2:5.**

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." **Ephesians 2:19-22.**

This is why we have designated this church, HIS Vine Free SDA Church, to be a *spiritual* body of believers as a part of God's church on earth. We have identified ourselves with other believers of like faith, who are also a part of God's church on earth. Though removed in time and space, yet they, as we, are as much a part of God's church as any believer anywhere in the world. And we are all a part of the same church, that is, God's church, those who, pursuant to **Revelation 14:12** are "keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

There are certain identifying marks about God's church that makes it fairly simple to discern who is and who is not a part of that church. In **Article 2** of our **Constitution**, we make it clear that:

"Christ is the Head, Foundation and Cornerstone of this Church and we, the individual members, make up His body. He has appointed the Holy Spirit, the other Comforter, **John 14:16**, to be the grand sovereign, reigning and guiding Personage in the Church, for He will not glorify Himself, but will speak only those things which He hears spoken to Him from the throne of God in heaven and He will then lead us into all truth. **John 16:13-14**. This body is thus yielded to the Holy Spirit, as appointed by Christ, in every facet of its life and operation."

Alonzo T. Jones states the following:—

"It is perfectly plain that membership in the church of Christ depends altogether upon our being members of Himself; upon our being joined personally to Him in the Spirit and by the Spirit.

“Since the church is His house, His building, our being members of His church depends altogether upon our being ‘lively stones’ from having come to Him the ‘living stone,’ and having been made alive by Him, in the Spirit and through the Spirit, and thus prepared for a place in that ‘spiritual house.’

“Membership in the church of Christ, then, comes not by belonging to something that is called a church in order to belong to Christ. It comes altogether by belonging to Christ, in order to belong to the church. And the difference between the two things is just the difference between the mystery of God and the mystery of iniquity.

“The mystery of iniquity exalts the form, the name of ‘the church,’ and then calls, and sweeps, and forces, all the world into that so-called church. The people are the same as before, though they are designated or denominated differently. They conform to different forms than they did before; but in character, in life, they are the same as though they were not members of the church at all.

“But the true church, the church of Christ, is His body in the world; and is therefore Himself manifested in the world, in the flesh. In order to belong to this Church is it essential first of all to belong to Him. Membership in His Church depends altogether upon the person's being first of all a member of Him. Being in this church and of this church depends altogether in our being in Him, and of Him. When people, having heard His call, come personally to Him, and come into the church by coming into Him, and are in the church by being in Him, that makes a new people. That changes the individual, ‘into another man.’ And these people, and one these, compose the church of Christ, His called out ones, the assembly of his chosen.” *“The Medical Missionary,”* **October 24, 1906.**

PART 2 — THE CHURCH AS ONE BODY

The word “Confederation” as used in the articles of our Constitution is not referring to some legal standing or contractual agreement between this spiritual body and another. Rather, it is merely a term indicating that all spiritual bodies that have the same basis of beliefs as we do, the testimony of Jesus being fully set forth in the Statement of Beliefs and the Footprints, who are already one in Christ as His body, stand together in agreement with His principles of doctrine, beliefs, lifestyles, etc., and have bonded together in the unity of His love and commitment to His truth. **Nothing more, nothing less.**

In so doing, we are identifying one with another that we may more fully support one another in the things of God, in assisting one another with burdens that may come to bear upon one part of the body or another, to offer solace and

guidance to one another as to the things of God, with the Holy Spirit being the sole party that will lead and guide us into all truth. As Paul stated in **Ephesians 2, beginning at verse 19:—**

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” **Ephesians 2:19-22.**

Let us develop this thought a little further as to the body, and its being a spiritual body. Referring first to 1Corinthians 12:12-27:—

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. . . . Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” **1Corinthians 12:12-27.**

Quoting from Elder Jones:—

“Thus Christ's called-out ones are members of Him, and compose His body, the church, just as the members of the human body—hands, feet, eyes, etc.,—compose the human body. And Christ is the head of His body the church exactly and as truly as the human head is the head of the human body. And Christ is the head of each particular member of the church which is His body, exactly and as truly as the head of the human body is the head of each particular member of the human body.

“The head of the human body is the intelligence, is the will, is the judgment, the decision and the direction, of the whole human body, and of each particular member of the human body. So also is Christ the intelligence,

the will, the judgment, the decision, and the direction, of His whole body, and of each particular member of His body, which is the Church.

“No member of the human body—no arm, no leg, no hand, no foot, no finger; not even any joint of any finger—can make a single intelligent motion, except as, in that particular motion, it is directed, by and from the head. Just so no member of Christ's body which is His church, is to perform any action, and cannot perform any Christian action, except as in that particular action, he is directed by and from Christ who is his Head. Thus is the will of God done in His people on earth, as that will is in heaven.

“No member of the human body is ever directed or controlled in its action by any other member of the human body. Every member is directed and controlled in its every action by and from the head alone. So also it is in the body of Christ, and among the members of His body, which is His Church.

“While in the human body no member directs or controls any other member in what that member shall do, at the same time all other members of the human body respond promptly on the instant, to the slightest intimation from the head that they shall help any member of the body in whatever that member may be directed by the head to do. So also it is in the body of Christ, and among the members of His body which is the church.

“Thus there is no schism, no division, and no friction in the human body, nor among the members of the body, because each member is directed and kept in all its ways by and from the head alone. And thus, and thus alone, it is or can ever be that there shall never be schism, or division, or friction in the body of Christ, and among the members of that body, which is the church. Then no member claims, and much less asserts dominion over another's faith, but each and all are helpers of the other's joy; no one seeks to please himself, but only "to please his neighbor for good unto edification"—to his building up. **2Corinthians 1:24; Romans 15:1, 2.** **Alonzo T. Jones, “The Medical Missionary,” November 7, 1906.**

But God does not stop there. Jesus, as the Head, has given us the Holy Spirit, not just as the other Comforter, not just as the agent of regeneration of the divine within corruptible man, not just as the writer of God's law and character upon the heart of flesh that God gives to every man that believes, **Hebrews 8:10-12**, but as the Supreme Organizer of His church.

“It is not by might nor by power, it is not by manipulation nor by machinery, it is not by any human contrivance or conception, it is not by any initiative or action of the members that this organization by and from the head is accomplished, but ‘by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts.’ **Zechariah 4:6**. As in the human body it is God who hath by His creative power ‘set the members

every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him,' so also in the body of Christ, which is His church, it is God, who by the power of His organizing Spirit hath set the members every one of them in His body.

"Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." **Ephesians 4:8-13.**

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another [divers] kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." **1Corinthians 12:4-13.**

PART 3 – THE CHURCH — ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Holy Spirit, then, is the only means of the organization and unity of the body of Christ, which is the church. And from Christ, the Head, alone, through His Holy Spirit alone it is unified, and organized and led in the work of Christ in the world. It is impossible that it should be otherwise. **A. T. Jones, *The Medical Missionary*, November 7, 1906.**

To further highlight this fact, we turn to **the book of Acts**, where the church was formed to its highest measure and accomplished the most in the shortest time frame, as they were the only church that has ever operated solely after God's order, directed solely by the Holy Spirit.

Quoting from "***The Medical Missionary***," **November 21, 1906**, we find the following excerpt:—

“IN the order of the Church of Christ **the book of Acts** occupies the same position as that of **the book of Genesis** in the order of the earth and the world.

“As no science, philosophy, or progress in the things of the earth and the world, can ever be true or safe that leaves out the Creation, the Fall, the Flood and the Peopling of the Earth, of **the book of Genesis**, so likewise no advancement or order of things in the church can be true or safe that leaves out the sole headship of Christ, and the sovereignty and reign of the Holy Spirit, in **the book of Acts**.

“In His last talk with His disciples before the cross Jesus, after having told them that He was going away, said, ‘I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.’ **John 14:18**.

“It is by the Holy Spirit that Christ comes to us and dwells in us. For thus it is written, ‘The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory. . . grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might, by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.’ **Ephesians 3:14-17**.

“Accordingly, to His disciples He continued, ‘At that day [the day when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, should come to them] ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.’

“Then the first thing in **the book of Acts**, on the day and occasion of His ascension, is the statement that He ‘being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.’ ‘Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.’ “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.’ **Acts 1:4, 5, 8**.

“They did as they were commanded, and **the second chapter of Acts** is the story of Pentecost.

“**The third and fourth chapters** is the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple, Peter's sermon after it, and the arrest of Peter and John by the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees of the Sanhedrim. The next day Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrim, the elders, the scribes, the priests, and the high-priest and his relatives.

“Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost,’ made answer. The Sanhedrim and their company, though compelled by the Spirit to take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, yet ‘straitly threatened them’ and ‘commanded

them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.’ The brethren being let go went to their own company and all together prayed ‘and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.’ **Acts 4:8, 13, 17, 21.**

“**The fifth chapter** is the account of Ananias and Sapphira, in the matter of the sale and gift of their property, in which they agreed together to deceive. And this was ‘to lie unto the Holy Ghost,’ and ‘to tempt the Spirit of the Lord.’ The consequences were immediate and dreadful. Next the apostles were all arrested by the high-priest and council and put in the common prison. ‘But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.’ **Acts 5:3, 9, 19-20.**

“**The sixth and seventh chapters** is the choosing of men ‘full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom’ to have charge of the finances and daily distributing, and of Stephen, ‘a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost,’ speaking before the council with his face shining ‘as it had been the face of an angel.’ **Acts 6:5; 15, chapter 7.**

“**The eighth chapter** is the preaching of the gospel in Samaria and their receiving the Holy Ghost, ‘the angel of the Lord’ telling Philip to go from Samaria to the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, and as he arrived there a man in a chariot was passing, reading **the book of Isaiah at what is the fifty-third chapter**, and ‘the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join yourself to this chariot.’ Philip did so and preached unto him Jesus; the man believed and was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing; and ‘the Spirit caught away Philip and he was found at Azotus.’ **Acts 8:26, 29, 39-40.**

The ninth chapter is the conversion of Saul by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Himself, his being ‘filled with the Holy Ghost;’ ‘the churches walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost;’ and the raising of Dorcas from the dead. **Acts 9:17, 18, 31, 36-42.**

“**The tenth chapter** is an angel of God speaking to Cornelius in a vision and telling him to send men to Joppa for Peter who would come and tell him what he ought to do; of a vision given to Peter to prepare him for the coming of the men; the Spirit telling him that the men had arrived and that he was to go with them; of his going with them and preaching to the house of Cornelius and of the Holy Ghost falling on all them that heard the word.

“**The eleventh chapter** is Peter's rehearsing the preceding experience to those at Jerusalem who were so full of prejudice and bigotry that they could not believe that God could save anybody but themselves. But when Peter had told the blessed story, even they held their peace—at least for a while—and glorified God that He had granted repentance unto the Gentiles. Also the

preaching everywhere of those who had been scattered abroad by the persecution that arose about Stephen; the church at Jerusalem sending Barnabas to Antioch to help "for he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith;" of Barnabas's going to Tarsus to seek Saul; of Saul's coming to Antioch; and of the coming of the prophet Agabus who foretold the coming of a dearth.

"The twelfth chapter is Herod's imprisonment of Peter, the church's praying for him, of his being delivered by 'the angel of the Lord;' of Herod's being smitten by 'the angel of the Lord.'

"The thirteenth and fourteenth chapters is 'the Holy Ghost' saying to the church at Antioch, 'separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed;' of Saul 'full of the Holy Ghost' rebuking the sorcerer; of the preaching in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia; of preaching to almost the whole city, the next Sabbath; of the Jews' contradicting and blaspheming, and therefore the turning of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles; of the disciples 'filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost;' of the healing of the impotent man at Lystra; and of their return to Antioch 'whence they had been recommended to the grace of God,' and their calling the church together and rehearsing 'all that God had done with them.' **Acts 13:2-4; 9-11; 14; 44-46; 14:8-10; 26-27.**

"The fifteenth chapter is the settlement by the Holy Spirit of the controversy as to circumcision; and the sending forth of the letter beginning 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us.'

"The sixteenth chapter tells that Paul, Silas and Timothy were 'forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia;' therefore they assayed to go into Bithynia, 'but the Spirit suffered them not;' and they came down to Troas, and there in a vision a man of Macedonia appeared to Paul and said, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us;' and 'immediately' they endeavored to go, and went. **Acts 16:6-10.**

"Persecutions drove them out of Macedonia, and **chapter seventeen** tells of Paul in Athens, and **the eighteenth** in Corinth where 'the Lord' spake to Paul 'in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city.' **Acts 18:9, 10.**

"Chapter nineteen tells that Paul, having coming to Ephesus, found there some disciples and asked them, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?' They replied, 'We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.' Then they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and Paul laid his hands on them and "the Holy Ghost came on them.' **Acts 19:1-6.**

“In the twentieth chapter, Paul is on the way to Jerusalem and at Miletus called to him the elders of the Church of Ephesus; and in his words to them he said ‘the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me;’ and take heed to ‘yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.’ **Acts 20:23-35**.

“In the twenty-first chapter, when Paul came to Tyre, the disciples ‘said unto Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem;’ **Acts 21:4**, and when he came to Caesarea, the prophet Agabus took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said, ‘Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle.’ **Verse 11**. He went on to Jerusalem, and beginning **in the twenty-first chapter** and reaching to **the end of the book** there is one of the most remarkable chains of the direct providence of God that ever occurred in the world. And **in chapter twenty-seven** ‘the angel of the Lord’ stood by Paul on the ship in the awful storm and assured him of his own safety and also of all the others that were on the ship; **Acts 27, 23, 24**, and **in the twenty-eighth and last chapter of this wonderful book**, among the very last words we find Paul saying to the Jews who had come to hear him, ‘Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,’ **Acts 28:25, 26**, etc.

“From only this mere sketch of **the book of Acts** it is perfectly plain that the one thing that stands out clear and plain and prominent above all other things, throughout the whole book, is that the Holy Spirit was the grand sovereign, reigning, and guiding Personage. And next to that great thing there stands clear, plain, and prominent throughout, the splendid truth that the Christians constantly recognized that sovereignty, reign, and guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

Thus it is that this spiritual body, a part of the body of Christ, recognizes, accepts, and welcomes the sovereignty, leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit so that it may do the work Christ has called us to do in these last moments of earth's history, spreading the word of Present Truth to every nation and kindred and tongue and people as directed by the Spirit.

With that being said, we also recognize that there are other parts of the body of Christ that are of equal importance (there are no ranks or caste in Christ, all are equal in Him as brothers and sisters regardless of calling). Those are what we refer to as sister churches or ministries or home study groups or even individuals standing alone on Present Truth. They are a part of Christ just as we are. They recognize the same message, the same platform, the same sovereignty of the Holy Spirit as we do and join together with us to carry God's message to the world as part of one body, the body of Christ.

But we also recognize, as set forth clearly in **the book of Acts**, that no one can do anything of any value or meaning apart from the Holy Spirit and His anointing on each member of the body.

First, the disciples sitting in the upper room were all specifically chosen by Christ. They didn't just up and follow Him because of His teaching, or like Judas, pursuing some alternative to that of Christ. Rather, they were called personally by Him.

Secondly, they had spent three and a half years with Him, taught personally by Him, sent by Him briefly as His ambassadors to other communities of the Jews; yet, with all that being so, He told them to wait to preach a single word after His ascension because they were not qualified to say a thing until such time as they had been endued with power from on High by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

This is so for at least the following two reasons: **1)** in their preaching they must preach the Word; and this they could not do without the Holy Spirit; without the Spirit of Him whose the Word is. Without the Spirit they would preach their own thoughts and conclusions, instead of the word of God in truth. All through the gospels it is shown how mistaken were their views of His teaching; and how ready they were always to state their own views and to build on their own suppositions. And whether a man shall preach his own suppositions and his own views, when he is sent to preach the Word of God, is a consideration of mighty consequence. But without the Holy Spirit that is just what they would have done. **2)** Another reason is that Christ through the Holy Spirit was to have sole charge, sole authority, and sole guidance, of the Church and of all things to the Church; and if they were not themselves personally and individually possessed of the Holy Spirit, they could not understand His leading nor His work. Without the Holy Spirit themselves, they could not understand His leading nor His work. Without the Holy Spirit themselves, they would be making and pushing plans of their own, instead of asking to know, and watching to see, what was His will and His way. Thus they would be working at cross purposes with the Holy Spirit, and then with one another. And whether they should work according to plans and devisings of their own, instead of according to the mind of the Spirit, was a consideration of mighty consequence. Yet without the Holy Spirit themselves, that is just what they would have done.

Thus all parties that are indeed a part of us will also be equally cognizant of the necessity to be organized and governed as we are so that we can work together in the unity of the Godhead, being one with Them and They with us and thus accomplish God's purpose with each individual part of the body. For one part is a hand, one part is an arm, one part is a finger or a leg, etc., etc. Each part has its own role to perform in carrying out the work of Christ through His church. So

each part is independent in itself to do the work Christ calls them to do through the Spirit, yet dependent on the whole for support, encouragement, instruction from other parts of the whole so that all remain as one.

“IN the order of the Church of Christ, each separate, local company of believers, is an independent, self-governing church, under Christ in the Holy Spirit.

“The believers at Jerusalem composed ‘the church’ at Jerusalem. The believers at Ephesus were the Church at Ephesus. The believers at Cenchrea were ‘the church which is at Cenchrea;’ ‘the church of the Thessalonians,’ ‘the Church of God which is at Corinth,’ etc. The believers of the house of Aquila and Priscilla were ‘the church in their house.’ The believers of the house of Nymphas were ‘the church which is in his house;’ and those of the house of Philemon were ‘the church in thy house.’

“The companies of believers of a certain region or country were ‘the churches’ in or of that country or region; as ‘the churches of Galatia,’ ‘the churches of Asia;’ or collectively ‘the churches of the Gentiles,’ ‘the churches of Christ,’ ‘the churches of God,’ etc.

“Each church had the care of its own affairs, the sending out of missionaries from its own membership, and the preserving of order and Christian discipline in its own membership; as in the electing of the seven deacons by the church at Jerusalem; the sending out of Paul and Barnabas by the church at Antioch; the dealing with the transgressor at Corinth, and indeed with all who offend.” **A. T. Jones, “The Medical Missionary,” December 19, 1906**

Likewise, as part of God’s order, in each church there were ordained "elders"—not an elder or a bishop,—but always elders or bishops; as the "elders" at Jerusalem; **Acts 15:2; 16:4**; the "elders" in "every church;" **Acts 14:23**; "elders in every city;" **Titus 1:5**; to the saints which are at Philippi "with the bishops and deacons." **Philippians 1:1**.

Beyond this order of things, in all the New Testament there is, in truth and righteousness, absolutely nothing but the church as the body of Christ, Christ Himself in Person as the Head of the Church and of each individual in the church and the Holy Spirit, and the angels of God as the guide: And even in the matters of the angels of God, it must be understood that even they are subject to the guidance of the Holy Spirit (**Ezekiel 1:20**); so that in truth beyond the order of things outlined above there is absolutely nothing but the church as the body of Christ, Christ Himself as the Head of the church and of each individual in the church, and the Holy Spirit as the guide of the church and of each individual in the church.

Thus, in point of organization, beyond the local individual church there is absolutely nothing but the church as Christ's body of which he is the Head.

In point of government, beyond the local individual church there is nothing but just Christ alone as the Head of the church and of each individual in the church.

In point of guidance and administration, beyond the local individual church there is nothing but the Holy Spirit to the church and to each individual in the church.

Thus beyond the local individual church as well as in it, the bond of unity of the church of Christ is the Holy Spirit, and her unity is only the unity of the Spirit.

Beyond the individual local church or congregation, there was no federation or formal association of any kind. Of the churches in Judea, there was no federation nor formal association, nor of the churches of Galatia, nor of Asia, nor of any other district, province, section or region to any extent nor in any way whatever. Beyond the individual local church or congregation there was only the church as the body of Christ and Christ as the Head of the church and of each particular member of the church, and the Holy Spirit as the guide of the church and of each particular member of the church.

That is our organization and the organization pattern of each part of the body of Christ of which we are but a part. But with that organization as set forth in **the book of Acts**, the gospel was actually preached to all the then known world, "to every creature which is under heaven," within the lifetime of men who were then already at the fullness of manhood. That, and more, is what can be accomplished now if we allow the Holy Spirit free reign in this part of the body, and those we are, have and will bond with do likewise.

PART 4 – THE CHURCH — UNITY

We must also remember, that one of the primary focal points of man's organizational structure is the attempt to establish some form of "unity" amongst its various members. For example, in the days of Elder Jones, there was a federation of various churches from thirty-two denominations begun, of which there was no "unity" whatsoever. Elder Jones puts it like this:—

“In this Federation there are thirty-two separate denominations. Those, then, who compose this Federation have already built thirty-two machines solely to accentuate their differences and their total lack of unity. Is it, therefore, in any wise likely that, in the building of this extra machine by all of them together, they will be any more united in spirit or in any real Christian unity than they were before they built this "new" machine?

In a word, is Christian unity the fruit of human machinery? even though the machine that is to effect this unity be a thirty-third one built by the very ones who have already built thirty-two in emphasis of their decided lack of unity? and all of the thirty-two still held, and to be held, intact in the presence of the thirty-third one? No. No. No; that is not and never can be in any sense the way to Christian unity. The only unity that can ever by any possibility be thus attained is a mere political, governmental, formal, outward, human and worldly unity; and thus a unity never for piety, for only for power.” **A. T. Jones, *The Medical Missionary*, January 20, 1909**

That is why this spiritual body recognizes that any form of man’s organization, based on man’s thinking, that is, one that sets man at the top and not Christ leading through the Holy Spirit, cannot be utilized by us when joining together with other spiritual bodies of like faith. We must remember we are already one family joined together, regardless of how many miles, regardless of racial makeup or culture, for all are one in Christ. By joining, we mean simply the identifying and bonding with another part of Christ’s body in order to accomplish more of God’s will working together than we ever could remaining apart from the rest of the body.

Thus, one of the identifying characteristics of this true body of Christ is the fact that our unity is not based on some man-made creed or dogma, but on that established by God in present truth. Jones puts it in this fashion:—

“Christian unity is unity not from the divine Spirit, nor thus by the divine Spirit; but is ‘the unity of the Spirit’ Himself. Christian unity is not a unity derived by people from the divine Spirit, nor primarily caused among people by the divine Spirit. It is ‘the unity of the divine Spirit Himself; it is known only in the Spirit; and is obtained by believers in the receiving, and being possessed of, the Holy Spirit Himself.’

“Christian unity is far more than union among Christians. It is far more than even the union of all Christians. Christian unity is nothing less, and nothing else, than the divine unity itself, possessing Christians. As excellently expressed in this Council itself by the most evangelical speaker in any or all of the evangelical speeches made in the Council, Christian unity ‘is not a unity of brotherhood’ even; it is far more than that; for Jesus prayed ‘that they all may be one’—not as James and John are or may be one—not as Andrew and Peter are or may be one, BUT—‘as Thou Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one IN US.’ ‘That they may be one, even as WE are one.’ ‘I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in One.’ **John 17:21-23.**

“Christian unity then is nothing less and nothing else than the divine unity itself, as that unity is in the very Godhead. The unity of the Godhead is the

unity of Spirit in the Spirit; for the Godhead is only Spirit. And all who 'have been made to drink into this one Spirit,' of the 'one Lord,' through the 'one faith' of the one Christ, and of the 'one God and Father of all,' and are possessed of this 'one Spirit,' and 'live' and 'walk' 'in the Spirit,'—all these are one in Him and with Him in the very 'unity of the Spirit,' which is the divine unity itself.

“This is further shown in the words of the Scripture defining Christian Fellowship: ‘That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. . . . This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth; but if we walk in the Light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another.’ **1John 1:3-7.**

“By this Scripture it is plain that Christian fellowship is not primarily fellowship with one another; but fellowship with the Father and with the Son; and then fellowship with one another as the consequence of this fellowship with the Father and the Son. It is only when Christians ‘walk in the light as He is in the light,’ that ‘we have fellowship one with another.’ That Light is God. Walking in the Light is walking in God. Thus we have fellowship with Him; and having fellowship with Him we have it with one another. And this Life and Light is ‘declared,’ so that, having the Life and walking in the Light, we may have fellowship with Him; and this in order that we may have fellowship with those whose ‘fellowship is,’ truly and primarily, ‘with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.’

“That and that alone is Christian unity.” *Id.*

“The work committed to us by the Lord will advance rapidly only when we labor in unity....‘Yes,’ says one, ‘this is exactly what I believe in—consolidation.’ But Christian unity is not what the world calls consolidation. Unity among brethren results in consolidation with Christ and with the heavenly angels. Such consolidation is Heaven-born.” **E. G. White, Letter 67, 1903**

Elder S. N. Haskell in his book, “The Story of Daniel the Prophet,” pg. 257, portrays the proper church and how it is organized as follows:—

“Then it is that Daniel sees the language of the heavens interpreted. The universe is composed of suns, many of them mightier than our own, and each sun is the center of a planetary system, and each planet is accompanied by its satellites, a vast circle within a circle, moving in perfect order, performing its revolution in its allotted time, making, to the ear of Jehovah, the music of the spheres. The immensity of space is filled with universes, and all revolve about

the throne of God; all are held in their orbits by rays of power from his throne of life; each shines with a light reflected from Him who is the fountain of life; each is guided in its path by the eye of him who sits on the throne.

“This is the type of God's order for his church upon earth. The perfect order of the heavenly bodies is a pattern for family and church organization. Each little company should shine as a star. God looks with pleasure upon the clusters of worshipers as they move in perfect order, each bending to the influence of the higher powers. As it is the power of God in the sun which holds the earth in its course, so His power, working through the highest organization on earth, controls those of smaller power. In the family, children should obey parents, and parents should obey God, even as the earth follows the sun, and the sun circles about its center—God's throne.

“The perfection of this system will characterize the last church, which will have developed the character which was looked for in ancient Israel. God's people are a peculiar people, and their peculiarities will live in the virtues of Christ, which they reflect; this fits them to become a royal priesthood. To Daniel the angel said, "They that be teachers [margin] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." And so the prophet had the privilege of seeing a nation or company of teachers among the saved, who carried forward the work which his own race might have done. As Christ was a teacher, who spoke with authority which none could resist, so the remnant church will be teachers by virtue of the Christ life within them.

“It was a beautiful picture, that last scene which fell upon the eyes of Daniel. So many times disappointment had been the outcome when the beginning looked so promising, but in the end it is a glorious triumph. Those who are taken from the depths of sin will shine as the stars in the firmament.”

PART 5 — THE CHURCH— DISCIPLINE

Because this is so, we state in **Article 9** that anyone wishing to bond with us as a part of the body of Christ is welcome to do so and that we have the expectations that such will do so in the unity and love of the Holy Spirit, grounded in the Fundamental truths given us by God and set forth in the Statement of Beliefs and the Footprints. But those who have so joined and then later determine that they cannot abide in the Spirit are welcome to leave. Although a procedure is set forth to remove someone who does not go voluntarily, that is a last resort. Elder Jones refers to this as Christian discipline. He states the following:—

“CHRISTIAN discipline is the best thing in the world. It is the only true discipline. It begins with the individual himself, before God, and is

accomplished in the fear of God, by the word and Spirit of God. The individual puts himself, and keeps himself, under discipline to God.

“This discipline is not accomplished by means of a set of rules, but by the living principles of the will of God. Every person is free to adopt, or not to adopt, these principles. If he does not adopt them, he cannot be a Christian, however much he "tries." And having adopted them, and so become a Christian, he can remain a Christian only by maintaining true-hearted loyalty to those principles every moment of his life. He will not sanction for a moment, he will not overlook nor wink at all, he will not apologize for, in any degree, in himself, any lack of perfect conformity to the living principles of the will of God, as made known in the word, and by the Spirit, of God.

“This, and this alone, is Christian discipline. This is the discipline that belongs in the Christian church. And it is the only discipline that becomes the church. Indeed, it is the only true discipline that there can be in the church; anything different from this is not true discipline; so far as it differs from this, it fails to being true discipline.

“No person is compelled to be a Christian. This is a matter that always rests wholly upon his own free choice. But having chosen, and having professed, to be a Christian, he is bound by his very profession to maintain, in unswerving, perfect loyalty, the principles of that profession; that is, the principles of the word and Spirit of God. and whenever he loosens down this discipline; whenever he entertains in himself any disloyalty to these principles; whenever he adopts, or allows the practice of, any other principles, just then he owes it to the Christian profession and to the world to make it publicly known that he no longer belongs to that profession; this should be made known as openly and publicly as was the profession at the first.” **Alonzo T. Jones, Advent Review & Sabbath Herald, January 25, 1898**

We have an example of one who was not willing to make an exit when they could no longer abide in the discipline as that defined above in the Bible. That example is Satan himself. Lucifer, in his original place in heaven, chose to have his own way apart from God; he chose not to hold the principles of the word and Spirit of God; he chose not to conform to the discipline of heaven.

All this he was at perfect liberty to do. There was in heaven no disposition to compel him either to hold the principles or to conform to the discipline of that place. But when he had chosen other principles than those of heaven, and had refused to conform to the discipline of that place, the only proper or honest thing for him to do was to leave that place. Yet when this was suggested, he considered it an outrage; and with great show of virtuous indignation and injured innocence, he resented and utterly rejected it. It was not enough for him that he should have

his own way; but he must have his own way *in his own way*—he must have his own way in heaven, it was not enough for him that he should be at liberty to adopt the principles of hell; but the principles of hell must become the principles of heaven. It was not enough for him that he should be free to refuse conformity to the discipline of heaven, and to adopt the confusion and anarchy of hell; but this confusion and anarchy must be made to prevail in heaven. In short, heaven itself must be turned into hell, righteousness must surrender to sin, God must give place to Satan.

This simply could not be. And as the rebel and his adherents would not go, they had to be cast out. They resisted: "and there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." **Revelation 12:9**.

But God has set forth provision so that a person who has "fallen" from his professed beliefs, regardless of reason or cause, is not automatically cut off from Christ or His body, any more than Satan was. Satan, as Lucifer had and was given opportunity to repent before **Revelation 12:9** took place and God followed the principles set forth in His Word just as surely as He expects us to. This is a crucial part of organization because it involves specifically persons who have been an organic part of the body of Christ, and any part that goes missing or ceases to function in the love and unity of the Holy Spirit affects the whole body and every effort must be made to restore the body to its previous status. Those principles are set forth in the following:—

"It becomes all those also to know of a surety that the principles which they represent are none but the principles of the word and Spirit of God; that the discipline which they maintain is nothing else than the discipline of the word and Spirit of God; and that the way in which they seek to maintain this discipline is strictly the way of the word of God and Spirit of God.

"Upon this the word of God is perfectly plain. Therefore let us read:—

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." **Galatians 6:1**.

"What is the position of the man?—He is 'in a fault.' What are the spiritual to do?—'Restore such an one.' 'Restore' him. What does 'restore' mean?—'To bring back to a former and better state;' 'to bring back from lapse, degeneracy, or a fallen condition, to a former state.' Then what has the man's fault done to him?—It has separated him from the good and proper relation of his profession in the body. Is he, then, by his 'fault,' already separated?—Surely; or else there is no meaning in the direction to 'restore such an one,' which is to

bring him back and set him in his place again. If he is not separated, he does not need to be, indeed he cannot be, restored.

“His fault, then, his violation of principle, has separated him from the place which his profession proclaims that he occupies. But the Lord does not want him to be separated from these principles; for these principles are life, and to be separated from these is to be separated from life. The Lord does not want this, and the ‘spiritual’ do not want it. Therefore the Lord directs, ‘Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one,’ and the spiritual always have the desire to do so; and being ‘spiritual,’ they are able to go about it all ‘in the spirit of meekness.’

“In another place the Lord of Christians and of Christian institutions says, ‘Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.’ **Matthew 18:15.**

“If he hears you, what have you done?—‘Thou has gained’ him. ‘Gained him’ to what?—To the right, certainly; to that from which his ‘fault’ had separated him. He is already separated; ‘his fault’ has done that. And you are to gain him, you are to restore him.

“Then for what is it that you speak to him?—To ‘gain’ him, to ‘restore’ him—not to condemn him, not to find fault with him, not to separate him. Nothing needs to be done to separate him; he is already separated by ‘his fault.’ Everything that is done is to ‘restore’ him; everything that is said is to gain him. And if what you can do will be done not to restore, if what you can say will be said not to gain, then you have nothing either to do or to say in that matter; your part is to become ‘spiritual.’

“But if he will not hear you, if he will not be restored, if he will not be gained, what then?—‘Then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ **Verse 16.**

“And if he will not yet hear, if he will not yet be restored,—what then?—‘If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.’ **Verse 17.**

“And if still he will not hear; if still he will not be restored; if he holds to his fault; if he holds to his violation of the principles, and his disregard of the discipline, of the word and Spirit of God; if he persists in the separation which his fault has made,—what then?—‘If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.’ **Verse 17.** ‘A man that is an heretic [one that persists in choosing for himself against the word and Spirit of God] after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.’ **Titus 3:10, 11.**

“He being already separated, and now subverted and condemned of himself, it must be known that he has repudiated the principles and the

discipline of the Christian profession, lest that profession itself be subverted and condemned by sanctioning the principles of the devil under the profession of allegiance to the principles of Christ.

“Such is the course, and the only true course, of the exercise of Christian discipline anywhere in the Christian connection.... while there is no place for a church trial, there is no place for anything but church discipline; that is, Christian discipline of the word and Spirit of God. That is what the church and church organization in the world are for; for the church is the pillar and ground, the support and stay, of the truth of God in the world.

“We firmly believe that with the presence of the Holy Spirit, God is giving to His organization both the love and the practice of Christian discipline; and the churches must be ready to rise to this call, and the people to fall into line with it.” **Alonzo T. Jones, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 25, 1898**

PART 6 — THE CHURCH — INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

Having said all of this, there is still a pattern to hold to in each individual body as to its organization within itself. God has set forth that pattern in the nation of Israel. It began with Him at the center of the camp, or the work or local church/ministry of today. Moses was His mouthpiece and administrator, which would be the pastor of the local church or ministry. He was then assisted by seventy chosen men from the twelve tribes, which would equate to the elders God chooses from among the local body. Then, he appointed captains over thousands, hundreds, etc. for further delegation of responsibility to care for the welfare of the people. This would equate to the deacons and deaconesses.

These were not be tyrannists, or dictators, or power-mad individuals, but those who were servant-minded, serving God and the body to build up the people in their most holy faith. **The book of Acts in Chapter 6** sets forth a prime example of this when, as the body of believers grew, complaints arose from within the midst regarding neglect of some portion of the body as to distribution of goods to meet the needs of the people. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the apostles told the others to choose from among themselves seven men, not just any men, but those who were of honest report and full of the Holy Ghost and set them over this business serving the body so that they could devote themselves full time to preaching the Gospel message and building up the body of Christ.

Pertaining to this matter, Ellen White says the following in practical application to today's church. ***Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 9—The Seven Deacons***

“The disciples of Jesus had reached a crisis in their experience. Under the wise leadership of the apostles, who labored unitedly in the power of the Holy Spirit, the work committed to the gospel messengers was developing rapidly. The church was continually enlarging, and this growth in membership brought increasingly heavy burdens upon those in charge. No one man, or even one set of men, could continue to bear these burdens alone, without imperiling the future prosperity of the church. There was necessity for a further distribution of the responsibilities which had been borne so faithfully by a few during the earlier days of the church. The apostles must now take an important step in the perfecting of gospel order in the church by laying upon others some of the burdens thus far borne by themselves.

“Summoning a meeting of the believers, the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit to outline a plan for the better organization of all the working forces of the church. The time had come, the apostles stated, when the spiritual leaders having the oversight of the church should be relieved from the task of distributing to the poor and from similar burdens, so that they might be free to carry forward the work of preaching the gospel. ‘Wherefore, brethren,’ they said, ‘look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.’ **Acts 6:3**. This advice was followed, and by prayer and the laying on of hands, seven chosen men were solemnly set apart for their duties as deacons.

“The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole.

“That this step was in the order of God, is revealed in the immediate results for good that were seen. ‘The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.’ This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons. The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success.

“To the early church had been entrusted a constantly enlarging work—that of establishing centers of light and blessing wherever there were honest

souls willing to give themselves to the service of Christ. The proclamation of the gospel was to be world-wide in its extent, and the messengers of the cross could not hope to fulfill their important mission unless they should remain united in the bonds of Christian unity, and thus reveal to the world that they were one with Christ in God. Had not their divine Leader prayed to the Father, 'Keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are'? And had He not declared of His disciples, 'The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world'? Had He not pleaded with the Father that they might be 'made perfect in one,' 'that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me'? **John 17:11, 14, 23, 21**. Their spiritual life and power was dependent on a close connection with the One by whom they had been commissioned to preach the gospel.

"Only as they were united with Christ could the disciples hope to have the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the co-operation of angels of heaven. With the help of these divine agencies they would present before the world a united front and would be victorious in the conflict they were compelled to wage unceasingly against the powers of darkness. As they should continue to labor unitedly, heavenly messengers would go before them, opening the way; hearts would be prepared for the reception of truth, and many would be won to Christ. So long as they remained united, the church would go forth 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.' **Song of Solomon 6:10**. Nothing could withstand her onward progress. The church would advance from victory to victory, gloriously fulfilling her divine mission of proclaiming the gospel to the world.

"The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel. Those to whom was given the responsibility of the general oversight of the church were not to lord it over God's heritage, but, as wise shepherds, were to 'feed the flock of God, . . . being ensamples to the flock' (**1Peter 5:2, 3**); and the deacons were to be 'men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.' These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness and decision. Thus they would have a uniting influence upon the entire flock."

In summary, we refer to the same writing quoted above, where God's servant said the following:—

"Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the organization of the church was further perfected, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained. Every member was exhorted to act

well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents entrusted to him. Some were endowed by the Holy Spirit with special gifts—"first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.' **1Corinthians 12:28**. But all these classes of workers were to labor in harmony.

*"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." **1Corinthians 12:4-12**.*

"The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God's people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures. They maintained that he who is called to stand in a position of leading responsibility in the church 'must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.' **Titus 1:7-9**.

The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a

division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted.

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.’ **1Corinthians 14:33**. He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old. He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God.”

Amen.