

The Organized Church

By Burnell D. Johnson

“Christ is the Head of the church” (Eph. 5:23). “He (Christ) is the Head of the body, the church’ (Col. 1:18). “Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him” (I Cor. 12:18).

How inconsistent some people are who claim to believe in organization! Yes, they actually go around trying to tear down and destroy the organized church ! They pose as Christian workers, but just ignore God’s organization and treat it and its author with contempt.

“The Church...which is Christ’s body” (Eph. 1:22,23), “the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10), the “spiritual house” (I Pet. 2:5), “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in Whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in Whom ye also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Eph. 2:20-22); such a church they declare to be *no church*, and laugh to scorn the man or woman who is content with membership in such a church as that! “Why don’t you join an *organized church*?” they say.

When God has already “set the members every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased Him,” and “by One Spirit (not water) are we all baptized into one body” (I Cor. 12:13) they come around and very solemnly say to these members of Jesus Christ: “Now since you are Christians, don’t you feel it your duty to join an organized church? How can you feel safe outside the church?”

They claim to believe that nobody can save people from their sins but God, but when it comes to organizing, they can give Him all kinds of pointers, and show Him how to make a church that is a church! Thus, these enemies of God’s church organization (whose object is “to draw away disciples after them”—Acts 20:30) “by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple’ (Rom. 16:18).

And thus, when the body of Christ has been deliberately rent and torn into several hundred fragments, they gravely tell you that this is only organizing the Church of Christ together!

So when this so-called “servant of Jesus Christ” tells you that believers, who have been “added to the Lord” (Acts 5:14), need to be organized together, and then instead proceeds to organize them apart, do you think that is all right?! They make you believe that to be “added to the Lord” is to belong to nothing! But to join a religious society, unknown in Scripture, that has both sinners and saints in it, is to be a member of the organized Church. What a God-dishonoring falsehood!

Do you dare tell me the Devil is not the instigator of all this work of ignoring and repudiating God’s perfect and complete organization by separating saints from each other and yoking them up with unbelievers, thereby consolidating the temple of God with idols, blending in unhallowed fellowship, righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness? Please see II Cor. 6:14-7:1.

Ever since Pentecost the devil has been influencing men to tempt God “to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples” besides “the yoke of Christ.” It is amazing to see how successful he has been in making people believe the awful lie that God’s Church on earth could not exist but for these worldly corporations that divide and bind God’s people apart, and yoke them up with unbelievers!

“God hath tempered the body together” (I Cor.12:24). “There is one body (church), and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:4-6).

“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: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:11-16).

This glorious organization is no idle dream or fancy sketch, or untried experiment. In actual results no other organization is comparable with it!

Worldly governments, secret lodges, business partnerships and man-made corporations can bind men together outwardly, so long as their selfish interests can be made to harmonize; but of the true church we read—“The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:32).

Why then do we not see such conditions in every town and neighborhood where professed believers live? Only because they have turned away from God, “the fountain of living waters,” to the “broken cisterns” that men have made! The Lord says in Jeremiah 2:13, “My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

Talk about organizing people together, whom God has already made “of one heart and one soul!” It is utterly absurd! And it is far worse than absurd; it is downright wickedness to organize people into a so-called church of God, who lack this experience, and therefore would not pretend to be Christians except for membership in this institution which thus often makes hypocrites of them.

God does not want anybody united as Christians who are not held together purely by “the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 5:5). While they have this, they are perfectly united, and when they lack it, an outward organic unity is a farce and a delusion.

As to the influence of these organized substitutes for God’s Church, there is plenty of proof that they are leading millions to accept Christianity without personal salvation; and this hardens their hearts, gives them a false hope, and drives them farther away from God and repentance and truth as revealed in the Scriptures.

“Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love.”
How different!