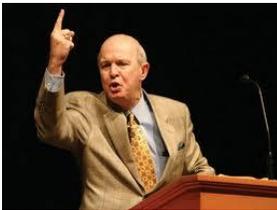


The Mother Catholic Church and Her Protestant Daughters



Many things done in the modern day church is not according to the New Testament pattern. Those who call themselves “Christians” should want to go back to God’s original plan for his church. Those who call themselves “Christian,” I cannot understand why this desire does not burn within their hearts.

Error in doctrine leads to error in judgment and practice. Whatever happened to “*contend for the faith once delivered to the saints?*” Are we to ignore and not search the scriptures to determine what the New Testament Church was like? For example, we have the traditional “one minister” to the church or parish, whether he is called a pastor, elder or priest. Where is there any scriptural substance for this practice? Where in scripture do we find such a method? It seems most do not care that this is part of the *apostate religious system* that had its beginning with the papacy and the Church of Rome. The New Testament saints knew nothing about a *one man ministry over the local assembly*. Scripture proves contrary. The local church had a multiple ministry made up of elders or bishops who were part of the assembly. (Acts 20:17, Phil. 1:1, Titus 1:5)



The Mother Church (Catholicism) gave birth to her Protestant daughters. In the Mother church system, the priest is head of the local church. He tells the congregation what to believe and controls who can and cannot preach. The whole congregation is under the rulership of this one man. The Protestant daughters follow the lead of the Mother Church. Though their doctrines may differ (even among themselves...different denominations), they are controlled by *one man* called the “pastor.” He is the Protestant version of the Catholic priest and he basically rules the church. Is this scriptural? No.

The danger of the “one man ministry” is the exaltation of the man. In fact, most people will choose a church based on who the pastor is. Is he likable? What does he preach? Is he charismatic? Most people put their pastor on a pedestal. He is the one in charge and rules. He is the pre-eminent “one-man show”. We have a sample of this man mentioned in scriptures.

“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.”

What did this man do? He lorded it over God’s heritage. He ruled the flock and usurped a one-man power over them. Can we find that today?

Who has the power to ban people from church? The pastor.
Like Diotrephes, who has the pre-eminence in the church today? The pastor.

This is why *plural eldership* in the assembly is so important. A multiple ministry shared makes it more difficult for one man to rule over the people – to be another Diotrephes.

Is Your Spiritual Life Organized by a Schedule?



In the Institutional Church setting our way of relating to one another is set by a schedule made up by the one-man pastor. People have learned to become spectators who sit quietly in their pews as a pastor gives his weekly “sermon,” which is a man-made tradition that never originated with the believers in the New Testament.

One of the powerful tools in man-made tradition is the matter of music, which traditionally starts with a *choir*, another man-made tradition that does not originate with Scripture. Music sets the tone for what is to follow in a typical Sunday Institutional setting. Do you ever notice how the music is arranged from pep to mild and back to pep? I happen to notice this, and one Wednesday morning when I was doing the tape ministry up in the back balcony of the church, the pastor was going over some songs with the choir of what they were to sing that Sunday. I sat and watched and enjoyed the music actually. It was to match his message. But now when I think back all I can say is, “Wow.” Because I came to realize that the one man sets the atmosphere for the weekly gathering, and **not** the holy Spirit. This is *institutional life*, not *organic life* where we can edify one another when we come together. Instead, we have a *preplanned* program where we have a few *preplanned songs*, listen to a *preplanned sermon*, collect money and then go home while catching a few chats with people on the way out the door.

The other day I was reading where Saul was anointed King. This man started out humble and submissive to God and had the power of the holy Spirit upon him. But then came the time when God’s heart was broken over Saul going his own way in disobedience to Him. The Lord departed from Saul and there was a distressing spirit from the Lord sent to trouble him (1 Sam. 16:14). The only way Saul could find comfort and relief from the tormenting spirit was to have David play his harp for him. This would soothe him until the next time.

This story relates how we bring many unsaved people to church rather than lead them to Christ. Let’s face it, many “church people” invite non-believers to church rather than share Christ. I had a guy stop me the other day in a grocery store to hand me a business like card to invite me to his church for Easter service. He started handing out cards to others around me. Most people do not know how to share Christ, but they sure know how to invite someone to “their church.” We hope our *program*, *the singing*, and the *pastor’s teaching* will convert them. So what we get are buildings that end up being hiding places for unclean spirits. Why? Because there are many unconverted people sitting in pews pretending and trying to be a “Christian.” They conform, but undergo no transformation. These are the “gimme, gimme,” people rather than “one anothering” people. They need *to be fed* whether it is through the music or the pastor’s teaching. They are moved by the music that will fill them with tears and joy. Music is a powerful tool, but music can also become a *substitute for Christ*. One person related to me about music, “*I once WORSHIPPED it as my saviour from depression, and it meant everything to me. I’d have been lost without it, I thought, but I was lost IN it. Music had a profound hold on my emotions. It can be used to HOOK people into a demonic fellowship.*”

In the modern church service worship has become synonymous with music. Is there anything wrong with music? No. What has happened is that music and singing have been elevated to a place of prominence in church services. In the NT music was not the prominent role, nor did it invoke the mood for worship when the saints gathered. There were no choirs! There were no choirs in the New Testament early church. The choir has its roots found in the pagan Greek temples and Greek dramas. The Greeks had trained choirs to accompany their pagan worship.

Two Prominent Things That Take Place in Church Service.

So there are two prominent things that take place in the church service (which no one in the NT gathered together for a “*church service*”) and that is the role of *music* and the *sermon*. Both are planned! What does this mean? It means there is no *spontaneous flow coming from the heart of the people to edify one another*. It also means the holy Spirit is not free to move among the people. They are given a time to sit, stand, sing, sit again and listen, stand for final prayer (by one man) before the mass exit out of the building. In many ways, it is no different from the Roman Catholic Church service.

How does one organize and schedule inspiration? When gathering together with a brother or sister, does our gathering have to be predetermined by schedule of rules, bulletins, and other agendas? Structure kills and that is why a lot of people sit in pews with an emptiness inside – they long for a deeper relationship with God. Some have been accustomed to accept church life for what it is, others know there is something wrong but can’t put their finger on it, and others who don’t know any better. ***One thing no one can do and that is legislate intimacy.*** The way of life is spontaneity. It flows from the heart, not by a predetermined schedule. God is not limited to Sundays at 11 A.M. or Wednesday nights at 7:00 P.M.. Life in Jesus is lived and spontaneous.

Not only is the *music predetermined*, but also the *weekly sermons* (a practice not found in Scripture). With a pastor’s busy schedule, one wonders where he gets the time to be alone with Jesus. Some pastors are so busy that they can get sermons online (<http://www.preaching.com/sermons/>). Or he may consult his commentaries or other books containing sermon outlines.

The average evangelical pastor is not a man of the Scriptures. Many of them are teaching false doctrines. It is the ***responsibility*** of every Christian who loves God to reject false teaching and refute them with sound doctrine. However, within the Institutional Church, where the pastor has gained control over the people and how they worship, is off limits to the “lay” person in the pew. To approach him would be as though one where questioning God Himself! ***The Biblical command is to simply withdraw ourselves.***

James tells us that we cannot be friends with the world. Many preachers compromise the truth in order to conform to this world, and many sitting under their teachings are also compromising the truth as well. Jesus warned us of this. Jesus rebuked the church at Pergamos of this error. He says,

“But I have a few things against you because you have there those who hold [observe and practice] the teaching of Balaam, who taught the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication” (Rev. 2:14).

Balaam taught Israel to compromise God’s law. Today many are compromising the teachings of Christ.

Jesus also continued,

“Moreover, you also have those who [teach] the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate” (v.15).

The Nicolaitanes were known for imposing hierarchical, dictatorial type “government” structures over their congregation. Jesus said he *hates it*, but yet people sit in their pews and pay no attention to the thing Jesus hates.

Men have taken control by means of a **Title** (Pastor, Bishop, Reverend, etc.) which puts him in a position that *elevates* him as “lord over God’s heritage.” He enters in with his Seminary Degrees and title, which is supposed to mean in the minds of the people that he is more qualified and knowledgeable of the scriptures than the average holy Spirit filled disciple of Christ. He will say all the right things, he can twist Scripture and back what he is saying by clever theological arguments and intellectual sounding words and people gullibly accept it as truth. On the surface his teachings appear to be words of wisdom, logic and truth, but he is not rightly dividing the word of God. ***We are warned that wolves will come from within.*** We have false teachers among us with stealthily destructive heresies. Many people follow as authoritative their destructive ways; and because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed (2 Peter. 2:1-2).

The pastor, as with the Catholic priest, is the mediator between God and His people. The saints have allowed him sole rulership, headship and authority over their life instead of Christ and staying faithful to His words. The one man rulership predetermines what his sheep should think by music and through his sermon, and the people love it so. This is simply IDOLATRY – spiritual fornication. Idolatry is the worship of idols, images, or anything made by hands, or which is not God. It is excessive attachment or veneration for anything, or that which borders on adoration. Idolatry can be a profound love or admiration for anything or anyone – an image, a statute, a deceased saint, *a preacher, a pastor*, Pope, and includes the Nicolaitanes error which Jesus said He hates.

Instead of performing *religious duty* and trying to find intimacy with Christ *through one man*, why not seek Jesus and commune with Him? Learn to be intimate with Jesus by taking the example of Mary at His feet rather than live by a schedule the Institutional System has set for us to follow. Spend time with Jesus and in the word of God and let the holy Spirit teach you. Learn how to fellowship with Jesus because without Him there is no fellowship with one another.

As someone has seriously asked, “How would we, as believers, meet if we had never been to, never even seen, a “Sunday church service? And how would we meet if we had never seen nor heard of a church building? *Intimacy*

There is no mystery what Paul taught the church at Corinth. (1 Cor. 14:26)

*“How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, **every one of you** hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”*

As one person has well stated, “This situation is ideal in that the people feel more responsible to pray and look to Christ as the head of the Church. This dependency on Christ causes the people to exercise their faith and honor Christ as head of the church. This act of faith enables the captain of the Lord’s hosts to take his place as head and lead the people in the way they should go. Joshua 5:13-15. The end result of this is the brethren dwelling together in unity and the Lord being in the midst.” Psa. 133:1-3, Matt. 18:20.

So instead of gathering together to see what we can get from *one man* who has lorded it over God’s heritage, **every member** should be prepared to contribute according to his or her ability. (1 Cor. 12:11) This doesn’t mean that every single individual is *forced* to minister when they gather, but we should come prepared and ready to participate as the holy Spirit leads the meeting.

All God’s people are priests. We are a royal priesthood. No one is better than the other, we are all equals. Yes, God has elders/shepherds to watch over the flock and to feed them, but not to lord it over the flock. There comes a time when WE ought to be teachers. (Heb. 5:12)

As we search the scriptures, we see that the result of the *one man ministry* is actually a clever trick of Satan to take the leadership of the church away from Christ and put it into the hands of a man who is capable of being deceived and led astray just like anyone else, it is then Satan becomes the head of the church through the corrupted man. The proof can be seen all around us in millions of religious movements and churches.

Ministry within the assembly does not focus on *one member*. The goal of spiritual gifts is for **mutual edification**.



“What is it then, brethren? When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.” 1 Co 14:26