

Are Preachers
the Means Used by
God to Bring Men to
Salvation?

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THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

Is it possible for God to call men to repentance without preachers and are they the means used by God in administering His great, plan of salvation for mankind? In other words, would there still be converts possible without preachers and has there been times when there were no preachers and God continued to build His Church without interruption? Let's examine what the Bible reveals to us about this.

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

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

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

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In the minds of just about everyone is the idea that God is using men to call people to repentance and that without preachers it would be impossible for His plan of salvation to succeed. This way of thinking comes from having been exposed to the churches of this world's way of doing things before our conversion and these ideas continue to influence the way we think. It is inaccurate information which we can correct by examining what the Bible says is the way God is proceeding to bring salvation to mankind.

According to the Bible, men are unreliable and cannot be trusted to remain faithful to the truth. The New Testament (NT) provides abundant and clear evidence of men who have been given to know the truth and who departed from it to return to their former lives in the world. ([Men Who Hold the Truth in Unrighteousness](#)) Generally, preachers are using religion as a means of providing a life of luxury for themselves and their enablers by giving their followers a feel-good message of salvation where everybody will be saved without there being any need to change their lives as Christ died for the sins of mankind and all one has to do is to be saved is to be born again in an emotional come-to-Jesus moment.

Many false prophets are gone out into the world preaching a guaranteed salvation without the requirement to obey God or to have works as the Bible calls it. All they have to do is belong to their organization and give it abundant financial support. But, were those called by God to preach to His called out ones to enrich themselves on the tithes and

donations of the faithful; live in luxurious homes in exclusive neighborhoods, drive expensive cars, wear the latest designer clothes, be TV personalities and travel the world on their personal jets doing what they call “the work”? This we will explore in more detail as this study progresses.

Another point of importance to consider is the ability or lack of, of men to make God level spiritual truth understandable to the unconverted. Of course, it is possible for men to preach but how do those hearing them understand what they are saying in its correct biblical sense? And, where and how did they get what they claim to be the truth of God? Was it through scholarly study of the Bible with dictionaries, Hebrew and Greek lexicons, Bible commentaries, etc.? If so, then anyone can study the Bible with those study aids and get to know the truth and become able to preach it to others. And, if the truth is what they discover, why is it that it is not the same truth as all the others who are also studying the Bible with dictionaries, lexicons, etc.? Does God have several different true truths depending on who is doing the studying and based on their personal intelligence and ability to study?

The Dilemma

Is it possible for men to know God’s truth without it being taught to them by preachers? Are there always true preachers available to preach? Where do true preachers come from? What happens when there are no preachers? Can God communicate with men without preachers? Is His plan of salvation put on hold until true preachers can be raised up? Does the success or failure of God’s plan of salvation depend on having true preachers available? Preachers are but fallible men and Christians are warned not to rely on men.

In order to get answers to these important questions, let’s examine what the Bible says about God’s servants of which some are preachers and teachers and who are those they can preach to, whether men preaching to the unconverted is the means used by God to bring men to conversion, whether there has always been preachers/teachers in God’s Church and whether it is possible for God’s Church to exist and grow without them?

Let’s start by reviewing Christ’s instructions to His disciples when He sent them out to preach and see how current day preachers measure up against the standards established by Christ.

The Disciples are Sent Out to Preach

In the Bible we have the example of Christ sending the disciples to preach to the lost sheep of the House of Israel i.e., the northern kingdom which was taken captive by the Persian Empire. Did they prepare for their ministry by securing large amounts of money and clothing for themselves; were they surrounded by trusted followers who escorted them as they went about preaching the Gospel; did they have an abundant food supply with them and did they have the best transportation possible for their time? Let's read on in Matthew 10.

Mat 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: [The disciples were sent only to Israel not to any of the Gentile nations.]**

Mat 10:6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mat 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. **[The kingdom of God was represented by those sent by Christ and who were given the powers mentioned in Mat 10: 8 which included even the ability to raise the dead. This is how the Kingdom of God was at hand.]**

Mat 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. **[Their preaching was not as a means to make money.]**

Mat 10:9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

Mat 10:10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

Mat 10:11 And into whatsoever city or town **[of the lost sheep of the house of Israel]** ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; **[Who will hear and accept their message]** and there abide till ye go thence.

Mat 10:12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

Mat 10:13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

Mat 10:14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your

words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. [In other words, don't have anything at all to do with them.]

Mat 10:15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. [They will have been called and will have refused their calling and in the day of judgment, that is, the Great White Throne Judgment, they will lose their salvation. Sodom and Gomorrah were never called and have yet to be given their chance for salvation; they will have it in the resurrection of the Last Great Day.]

Those sent out by Christ to preach were to draw their sustenance from those who were willing to listen to them and believe them (Mat 10:10); they are the ones who were worthy. It was not a given, nor ever intended as made clear by the verses we have just read, that because of the great importance of their mission, the disciples, the preachers sent out by Christ, were to be given access to and reside in the best possible accommodations of their days. In today's terms that would be Christ's messengers living in 5 star hotels, going around in chauffeur-driven limousines, traveling the world in executive jets and generally expecting the respect, honor and fame given royalty and Hollywood celebrities. Yet, that is exactly what they do, living lives of luxury off the tithes and offerings of those who follow them.

The Preachers of Romans 10

In the book of Romans, in the 10th chapter, we are given more information about preachers. The context is Paul expressing his earnest desire that Israel might be saved. He had been sent to Judah or the southern Kingdom of Israel (the tribes of Judah, Levi and Benjamin collectively known as the Jews) and they had refused to hear him to such an extent that he turned from them and went to the Gentiles (Act 13:46; Gal 2:9). The message of Rom 10 is primarily about Israel but is also applicable to the Gentiles (both are unconverted) and of course the point of interest to us is what is being said about "preachers."

Rom 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. [Only those called by the holy spirit God the Father can call on the name of the Lord (John 6:44) and only those who repent, believe and remain faithful will be saved. (Rev 17:14).]

Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

These are all very good questions. Let's start with the first one: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Ancient Israel and Israel in the days of Paul, who rejected Christ and put Him to death, are the ones about whom this question is being asked. The physical nation of Israel and those who came back from captivity to build the second temple and whose physical descendants were in Jerusalem when Christ came among them are the ones who have not believed Christ nor Paul. As an unconverted nation they also represent the Gentile nations who are also unconverted.

So, how will it ever be possible for them to call on Christ who they have not believed even when He came among them for a time? Paul went to the Jews and was persecuted by them and rejected by most of them. Christ tells us that the Jews and the Gentiles will only be able to call on Him when the holy spirit God the Father calls them (John 6:44). God the Father was not calling everybody at the time when Paul wrote this epistle but there would come a time when all those who were never called (of Israel and of the Gentiles) would be called; that would be the time of the Millennium and the Last Great Day. It will be God's doing, not by men acting as preachers (Joel 2:28).

This pretty well answers the other questions asked by Paul: "and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" It will be by the holy spirit God the Father calling them; there is no other way. Conversion does not come from simply hearing the truth; if that's all it took, the world generally would be converted as there is an abundance of preachers and the Bible has been translated into many languages and is widely available.

The Bible tells us to beware of false prophets or teachers as many have gone out into the world and some would be among them.

2Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, [God's truly converted] who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try [test] the

spirits whether they are of God: because **many** false prophets are gone out into the world.

These false prophets/preachers/teachers claim to be true Christians, quote Bible verses, make lengthy sermons about what they think the Bible means and have large followings. Israel and the Gentiles are hearing the word of God which these false prophets often quote verbatim right out of the Bible but that does not lead to their becoming truly converted Christians. So what was Paul saying in Romans 10:14

Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

In the last part of Rom 10:14 Paul asks: “.....and how shall they hear without a preacher?” In other words, is it impossible for individuals to become converted without someone preaching the truth to them? Can God bring about the conversion of men without a human preacher teaching them the truth? Does God’s ability to communicate with men depend on true preachers teaching them? If so, what about the many years when there were no true preachers including the very days in which true Christians are now living? This will be discussed in detail later on in this study.

Rom 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

The very first condition that has to be met for someone to be a preacher is that he has to be sent. And who can and does send them? Men just can’t decide to become preachers any more than they can decide to be apostles; they have to be sent like Paul and the disciples were sent. OT preachers were prophets sent by God to Israel and many were reluctant to take on the task given them by God like Jonah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, etc. Simply read the opening verses of these books to see how these prophets and preachers resisted accepting the task God was giving them. The OT prophets and the NT apostles were commissioned directly by God. It was not men appointing themselves or being appointed by other men to go out and preach. In NT times, God only speaks to converted men by His holy bible (Heb 1:1-2) which is the Word, Christ in writing.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in **these last days spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

When I say, God speaks to men, I mean God the Father calls men and then God the Word teaches them by opening their minds to understand the God level spiritual truth of the Bible.

Let's continue reading through Romans 10.

Rom 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

Israel did not believe the prophets God sent them and put many of them to death and the Gospel was not preached and could not be preached until there was a perfect sacrifice for sin that would be accepted by God the Father making sure God's plan of salvation (John 7: 37-39).

Joh 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**

Joh 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that **Jesus was not yet glorified.**)

Christ preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God at His First Coming when He came to suffer and die for the sins of mankind: past, present and future. Isaiah is speaking about all those to whom in the future, the Gospel would be made known and that not all those who will hear it will believe it. The time of the OT is not when God was calling everyone to salvation neither is that time now. This will occur during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. Let's continue our analysis of Romans 10.

Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The word of God in NT times is the Holy Bible which is Christ in writing to the truly converted. Knowledge of the truth (faith) comes from

hearing (understanding) the word of God (God's Holy Bible) as the holy spirit God the Father enables the mind of those called to understand the spiritual truth of the Bible. There is no other way for men to accept and understand the God level spiritual truth contained in the Bible.

Simply physically hearing the words, in itself, is insufficient to give comprehension of their spiritual content. The "hearing" in this verse refers to "understanding" the spiritual truth of the word of God. Otherwise, simply broadcasting worldwide the Bible on television would result in everyone becoming converted as they would all hear it.

Understanding is by revelation from God. It is not something any man can ever do. Understanding is what gives God's called and chosen ones knowledge of the holy which is more than a simple repetition of what is written in the Bible.

Pro 9:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom:
and the **knowledge of the holy is understanding.**

It is not the doing of preachers who are but men with no ability to enable men's minds to understand God level spiritual truth. This is something that Paul makes clear in the following verses of 1 Corinthians.

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God gave the increase.**

One's faith is knowledge that one believes to be true. If the knowledge one believes is God's truth, then this person has Godly faith. However, preachers are only an instrument used by God to expose men to the truth of the Bible; people are not converted because of their preaching to them. Acceptance and understanding of God's truth is by the holy spirits of the God family working in the minds of men who are being called. God is the One who decides who is called and the time of their calling. As Paul says: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God gave the increase.**" (1Co 3:6) In other words, the understanding of God's truth is through God enabling the minds of those He has called or is calling to understand spiritual truth. One can preach the very truth of God all day long to men but unless God opens their mind to accept and understand spiritual truth, their work is in vain. Hearing the truth even from true preachers like the disciples and Paul did not and does not result in men becoming converted.

God's Church is being built by the holy spirits of the God family. The holy spirit God the Father calls men (John 6:44; 65) and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman teaches them all things (John 14:26) and they study God's holy Bible.

Zec 4:6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, **Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit**, saith the LORD of hosts.

Zerubbabel was involved in the building of the 2nd temple in Jerusalem but God says that His true temple is a spiritual temple and that it is being built by His spirit i.e., by Himself, the holy spirit God the Father who calls men and by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who teaches them all things. It is not something that men, even truly converted men, can do. The truly converted are the temple in which God the Father and God the Word live. (1Pe 2:5; Acts 17:24; 1Co 6:19; 2Co 6: 16; John 14:20; 23)

Christians are God's building i.e., it is God doing the building.

1Co 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, **ye are God's building**.

Let's continue reading Romans 10.

Rom 10:18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

What is it that they have not heard? Isaiah says it is the Gospel but as previously stated, the only time when the Gospel will be spread all over the world is during the Millennium and the Last Great Day and it will be by the holy spirit God the Father calling all men. (Joel 2:28) This verse of Romans 10 is looking far ahead to that time and is speaking of ancient Israel that will be in the resurrection of the Last Great Day and of the Gentile nations which though not circumcised in the flesh are Israel spiritually speaking in that they both have the same unbelief and resistance to God's truth. Physical Israelites though circumcised in the flesh remained unconverted and were just like the Gentiles.

Rom 2:28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

Rom 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

God is saying through Paul that Israel (ancient Israel and the Gentile nations) though all called during the Millennium and the Last Great Day, will not massively come to conversion i.e., "...have they not heard?"

Were they not given to understand God's truth when God called them all and yet the many remained unconverted or did not endure in their conversion. Yes, they will all have heard it but the many will act as though they had not. They will not follow their calling (Mat 22:14) or fail to remain faithful to it (Mat 7:13-14).

Rom 10:18 cannot be talking about the Gospel message having gone out into all the earth and unto the ends of the world in the days of Isaiah or of the apostles.

It was impossible for them to do so given the rudimentary means of travel and communication in Paul's days, the fact that God's Church would remain the "little flock" (Luke 12:32) i.e., it would never be a large organization visible to the world and active in it (John 17:15; 1Co 5:10; Rom 12:2); and that its membership for the greatest part would not be the great and mighty people of the world, the highly intelligent ones and those with the abilities to develop and manage large organizations such as would be needed to publish the Gospel to the world. God's people for the greatest part are the little people of this world (1Co 1:26).

God's prophets would never be able to preach the Gospel to the world i.e., to every man in every country in the world which must include those who have died, those presently alive and those yet to be born. All have to have heard and believed the Gospel to be saved.

This was not possible in the world in which Paul lived and it is not even possible in our modern technologically advanced world. Many parts of the world live in poverty and misery and are without any of the technological marvels we take for granted and in some cases, men are living deep in the jungles of the world and have yet to be discovered. Every man must have heard and believed the Gospel to be saved.

Rom 10:19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people [the Gentiles were not and are not God's chosen physical nation as Israel was but after Israel refused to obey Him, God offered the Gentiles the opportunity to become part of His spiritual nation], and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

Rom 10:20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. [God would call the Gentiles to salvation.]

God had initially revealed His existence only to ancient Israel but they had no interest in obeying Him. God did not do so for the Gentile nations of the world. They found God because He called them; not whole nations but individuals in the nations of the Gentiles at the time when the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman became available (John 7:37-39) which was only after the death of Christ as God's perfect sacrifice for sin and His resurrection to His former glory that He had as God the Word before becoming a mortal, flesh-and-blood man (Php 2:7-8).

God was not spiritually calling ancient Israel; they were only required to keep the letter of the law, not the spirit of the law. It was a physical calling to a physical people while in NT times, God has a spiritual nation of Israel which includes the truly converted from the physical Israelites as well as from the Gentile nations and their calling is directly from the holy spirit God the Father not through a human mediator like Moses nor through preachers. You will recall that God spoke to Moses and he transmitted God's message to physical Israel but Christ is the mediator of the new covenant; not a man or men (preachers)

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and **one mediator between God and men**, the man Christ Jesus;

Heb 9:15 And for this cause he [**the resurrected Christ**] is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, **they which are called** might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Heb 12:24 And to **Jesus the mediator of the new covenant**, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. **[Abel's death did not result in making salvation possible as Christ's death did.]**

Let's continue with Rom 10.

Rom 10:21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying [**Preaching as a means of making money and receiving the praises of men.**] people.

Preachers were sent to the House of Israel in captivity (Mat10:6) and to Judah (Act 13:46; Gal 2:9) but they refused to hear them as they had refused to hear the prophets sent to their forefathers. Salvation would now be offered to the Gentiles and some of them would become converted. Phys-

ical Israelites and the Gentiles from the day of Pentecost onward would be offered salvation but God would only be calling a limited number of individuals until the time of the Millennium and the Last Great Day when all will be called (Joel 2:28).

Rom 10, read in isolation of other related Scriptures and without keeping in mind the big picture of how God is administering His plan of salvation for mankind, makes it seem preachers are essential to transmitting God's truth to others but are they?

Not all Called are Chosen

Before we continue, it should be realized that the reason why ancient Israel was not receptive to the prophets God sent them was that they did not have the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman opening their minds to understand God level spiritual truth. Hearing the truth and the Gospel is not sufficient for either understanding or conversion to occur. It is as well the reason the Jews of Paul's days were also not, for the most part, receptive to God's message given them by Paul. Some, like the Thessalonians (Act 17:11), did critically review against the Bible what Paul taught rather than rejecting it without bothering to verify if the Bible supported or not his teachings. The time when all will be called is during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. Even then, of all those called, it is the few that will follow their calling (Mat 22:14), and of those who follow their calling, it is the few that will remain faithful (Mat 7:14).

This explains why Israel and the Gentiles did not then, are not now and will not in the future massively, positively respond to their calling. Let's continue our analysis.

Philip and the Eunuch

In the book of Acts we read about Philip going to the eunuch of the court of Candace that was reading Esaias and could not understand it. God sent Philip to explain it to him and the eunuch was baptized.

Act 8:26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. [Here again we have a man that was sent directly by God. It was not someone who all of a sudden decided to preach to others or who was appointed by other men to do so; the angel of the Lord sent him.]

Act 8:27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethio-

pia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

Act 8:28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

Act 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

Act 8:30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

Act 8:31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

Act 8:32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

Act 8:33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

Act 8:34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

Act 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

So here, we have an example in the Scriptures where the assistance of a man was provided directly by God to explain the meaning of the Scriptures. This has led to the common belief that truly converted men are needed to explain the meaning of the Bible to other men. Romans 10 and Acts 8 are used by men as the proof that they are needed to explain the Scriptures to the unconverted but none of them can claim to have been sent directly by God as the apostles and Philip were. They are all self-appointed or were appointed by other men who also appointed themselves.

God is not appearing to anyone in NT times to commission them to preach as He only speaks to men by His Son, Christ, the holy spirit the Word whose message we have in writing, God's Holy Bible.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

And, there was a very long period of time, 1,260 years, when God's Church was persecuted, many were killed and others fled into the wilderness to escape the wrath of a new great false Christian church that had arisen shortly after the foundation of God's New Testament Church. There then ceased to be preachers/teachers and organized congregations as everyone who was not captured and put to death fled into the wilderness and became scattered. How was it then possible for men to come to know, accept and understand the truth of God and become converted?

It is important to realize that the focus of true preachers are the converted of God's Church not the unconverted in the world. As the familiar saying goes, you can only preach to the converted and the only way anyone becomes converted is by the holy spirit God the Father calling them and their accepting their calling

Understanding God's Truth without Preachers?

For those of us who have been long term members of God's spiritual nation or God's Church, we know that God's Church has no commission to preach to the world as those in the world do not have the mind to understand God's spiritual truth. And, we also know that it is impossible to force men to believe anything they have not chosen to believe because of the absolute free moral agency given to mankind by God (Deu 30:19). Only God can open the minds of men to accept the truth and this occurs when someone is called. And, it is God who decides who is to be called and when. It is not the doing of men.

Rom 9:15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

Those being called from the day of Pentecost to the beginning of the Millennium were predestined to be called.

Eph 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

During the Millennium and the Last Great Day, all will be called.

Then, the big question to be answered is how does God's message or truth get to people without human preachers? Is it possible for an individual to learn God's truth simply by being called and reading the Bible on his own? Christians have to prove all things with their Bible (1Thes 5:21); they are to try (test) the spirits (1 John 4:1). If they can't correctly understand the Bible on their own how can they prove all things and test the spirits if they have to rely on men (preachers/teachers) to do so; men who are often deceivers and false prophets?

How much truth must a person know to be saved? Is there a set quantity below which salvation is not possible? Is it sufficient to only know some basic truths such as the necessity of keeping the Sabbath holy? What is God's criterion for salvation? Is it how much truth a person has? Or, is it to what extent the person is obeying the truth that he has?

In the parable of the talents, some had received only a very little bit of truth i.e., one talent and this was sufficient for salvation providing the person made an effort to grow his talent and of course to live his life according to the truth he had. God looks on the heart i.e., is the individual really trying to obey Him or is he just putting on a show to impress others while in private continuing to live his life as before his conversion?

So, what is important is not how much one knows but how much one is trying to obey God after having been called. Some have more knowledge (10 talents) and some have much less (1 talent) but all must be making an effort to grow the knowledge they have by studying their Bible and live their lives as best they can in accordance with the truth they have. If they do these things then regardless of how much knowledge they succeed in acquiring, they will be saved. What God wants from us is our obedience. Having a broad and in-depth knowledge of the Bible without obedience leads to loss of salvation. It's not how much you know, it's how much you obey to what you know.

Is it possible to get a correct knowledge and understanding of at least some of the Bible truth without preachers? In other words, is it possible for a truly converted Christian to, on his own, read the Bible and correctly understand it and get growth in knowledge and understanding?

In 1Co 14:26-40 God through Paul tells us that not only is it possible but that it is something that is expected and that true Christians should covet.

1Co 14:39 Wherefore, brethren, **covet to prophesy**, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

There is always a requirement for individual members of God's Church

to study and if studying, it was understood they would discover truth not taught them by the apostles and which when they met, they were to discuss among themselves and prove out with their Bible. This is what 1Co 14: 26-40 is all about. The following study on this web site provides a detailed explanation of these verses: [The Ministry and God's Truth](#) I would urge you to read it as you will then clearly understand what it means for a Christian to prophesy and see how prophesying is directly related to what is being said in this study. It would take up too much time and space to repeat it all here.

In God's First Century Church when there were teachers taught by Christ Himself, the focus of the ministry was to make spiritual adults of newcomers to the faith i.e., the babes-in-Christ.

Eph 4:14 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;

These ministers had no other truth to teach the faithfuls but the foundational truths of God's Church they had received from Christ. Christians are commanded to study (2Tim 2: 15) and have growth which is knowledge above and beyond the foundational truths taught by the ministry.

2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

If there is no possibility for Christians to have growth in knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures as a result of their personal studies, why bother studying? And, why would God command Christians to prove all things (1Thess 5:21) if they can't do so by reading and understanding their Bible on their own? How can they detect false prophets and reject them (Rev 2:2). Christians have their mind enabled by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to understand spiritual truth and their criterion of truth must be and can only be God's holy Bible; not men, not Bible commentaries, etc.

Paul expected and strongly encouraged every Church member to prophesy i.e., to study so as to have truth to discuss (prophesy) when they assembled with other truly converted Christians which they were to examine against the Bible (1Co 14:39). This is how truly converted Christians have spiritual fellowship with each other, and with God whose spirit is in each and every one of them.

1Jn 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and *truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

Men are not the portal or gateway through which God's truth is revealed to His saints. They have their minds enabled by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to understand spiritual truth.

What Happens When There are No Preachers?

During the time of great persecution that came upon God's Church, the foundational truths taught the apostles by Christ were lost. There was for that long period of time (1,260 years) no one teaching it in the congregations of God's church which were small (sometimes it was just a single person in a given area; other times, it was small, local groups), not organized, scattered and invisible to the world, a situation similar to the one in which true Christians are presently living.

If this be the situation that existed for some 1,260 years, does it mean that during that time, all conversions ceased; that there were no new members added to God's Church and that basically the Church died out to only start up again when the promised end-time Elijah would come and restore to Israel returned from its captivity, the foundational truths that had been lost? (Mat 17:11) ([The Second Elijah and the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord](#))

But God's Church was never to die out (Mat 16:18) so how were men called to salvation when there were no true preachers from whom the truth could be heard as Paul says in Rom 10:14? This raises a lot of important questions needing answers as to how God's plan of salvation is being administered when there are no preachers. Whatever Bible-based answer we come to is particularly relevant to us today who also find ourselves without true preachers.

Another relevant question is just who are the true preachers? Is it men suddenly feeling inspired and starting to preach or being appointed by other men as preachers? Was the Gospel preached to the world during the 1,260 year long persecution that came upon God's true Church? If not, how was it possible for people to be saved when to be saved one must have heard the Gospel, repented and believed it?

Mar1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is

the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

What is the Gospel that all are to believe? There are several different gospels being preached by the different religions of this world. And, even in the organization called the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), it was taught that the Gospel message was that Christ at His 2nd Coming would take over the governments of this world and with the First Resurrection saints teach the nations, bring them to conversion and make this world heaven on earth. But Christ said you have to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to enter into the kingdom of heaven and that it is invisible to all those who have not been born again and who are still mortal, flesh-and-blood, mortal human beings. How then could it exist on the earth among flesh-and-blood, physical/material human beings for whom spirit is invisible? In 1Co 15 which is called the resurrection chapter it is made abundantly clear that flesh-and-blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; corruption, the material bodies with which we are all born cannot inherit incorruption i.e., immortal spirit life.

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

We now have natural, physical/material mortal bodies but it is not the only kind of bodies we can have.

**1Co 15:44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.
There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.**

1Co 15:49 And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Those who inherit salvation will bear the image of the heavenly i.e., they will be born again not with a material, flesh-and-blood body but with a body composed of spirit in which dwells immortality, the heavenly body.

Since the death of the original apostles and of the First Era church members, how did those who lived during the 1,260 years when there were no preachers, hear the good news that Christ brought from God the Father? How was it possible for them to be saved? If if it is necessary to hear and believe the Gospel, and repent, and if the means for men to hear it is from preachers as Rom 10:14 seems to be saying, then their time of salvation has yet to come and God's Church ceased to exist during the long years of persecution? And, in our days, when there are no true preachers, are there no longer any conversions occurring? Will the Church remain stagnant or cease to exist until Christ's 2nd Coming?

How many have to be converted for God's Church to continue to exist? Hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands? But it was to be the little flock according to Jesus. It would never be big and it would never be part of this world while remaining in the world. As a minimum, more than one would be required but would it have to be a great number of people?

Is the success of God's plan of salvation dependent that there be men that can act as preachers? Are human preachers an absolute requirement for God's plan of salvation to continue being in force and to ultimately result in some conversions which would keep God's Church alive?

Hearing the Gospel of God

If we recall how we were called, I think if we are truthful, we will readily admit that we either did not have a good knowledge of what was the Gospel or, if we did have some knowledge of it, we really did not understand it. We accepted our calling and committed to obeying God mostly for other reasons, God called us all in different ways that were suited to our various personalities, individual life experience at that time, the religious beliefs we had, etc. God's calling basically made us realize the reality of His existence and that salvation required that we obey Him.

Even now, what is the Good News is something that since the beginning of Christianity has lent itself to a great variety of interpretations? There are almost as many versions of what is the Gospel as there are churches. In the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), it was preached that the Gospel was Christ taking over the governments of this world at His Second Coming and establishing God's Kingdom on the earth. For the Roman Catholics, its going to heaven at the time of death and living eternally a life of ease and fulfillment.

If understanding Christ's Gospel message is a requirement for salvation then very few if anyone to date has been saved and potentially, very few if any will be saved during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

So what is the requirement that must be met when it comes to the Gospel?

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

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Mat 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in

all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

By the time that we come to the end of God's plan of salvation for mankind, the Gospel will have been preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. And, all those who hear it must repent and believe. The following study explains how the Gospel will be preached to all the world and unto all nations: [What is the end of the World and When will it Happen?](#) I would encourage you to go through it as it explains how the Gospel will be preached to each and every person that has existed since the beginning of humanity.

Believing the Gospel is what is required of those coming to conversion.

The requirement is not to understand it as odd as this may seem. Over time and through much study it is possible to come to understand the Gospel message but it is not something newcomers to the faith for the most part can do.

Christ came preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of heaven or of God.

Mar1:14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Christ gave many examples using parables of what is the Kingdom of heaven and as we know, parables were not spoken to make God's truth easier to understand.

Mat 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

Mat 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

And what we have since the passage of Christ are the parables, we don't have Christ to explain them to us. The Gospel message in all likelihood was not understood by those who heard it but nonetheless some committed themselves to obeying God and began their conversion.

The Gospel is simply God's message to mankind that the day is coming when humanity and the kingdoms of men will end and be replaced by the Kingdom of God. This present universe will melt with fervent heat (2Pe 3: 10;12) and be replaced by a new one (Rev 21:1) and there will no longer be any flesh-and-blood men alive in this new heaven and earth. There will only be beings who are holy and spirit and who along with the

holy spirit God the Word and the holy spirit God the Father will constitute God's immortal family, nation and kingdom. Mankind will **not always exist** and will come to an end **at the end** of God's plan of salvation for mankind.

We all have heard about the kingdom of God but most of us including converts to come will not really understand what it is and their salvation will nonetheless be possible. It was not preached for 1,260 years and is not being preached now, yet, conversions are occurring or God's plan of salvation is on hold until Christ's 2nd Coming occurs. As existing true converts die out, the Church will cease to exist but Christ said this would never happen.

Those called are responsible for following the truth they are given to understand which can be not all that many things. The condition is the commitment to obey God's truth as it is revealed to us. We don't have to know certain truths or have a certain amount of truth to be converted but we do have to have an attitude of obedience to the truth that we are given to know and to the truth we will come to know as we grow in knowledge and understanding as we study the Bible.

It is undeniable that understanding what is the Gospel cannot be the criterion for salvation as if it were, even today, most sincere Christians called out by God do not know what it is but we do need to believe that one day God will establish His Kingdom bringing to an end, the age of man. In the first century there arose several schools of thought as to what it was Christ meant when He spoke about the Kingdom of God and doubt was expressed about His 2nd Coming as time was going by and Christ still was not returning to establish the kingdom He spoke about.

We read about this in 2Pe 3.

2Pe 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

2Pe 3:4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

2Pe 3:5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

2Pe 3:6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

2Pe 3:7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the

same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

2Pe 3:8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Current Day Conditions

Since the destruction of the WCG as it existed under the administration of HWA and the rise of the many false churches of God there really have been no true ministers of God preaching the truth restored to God's Church and even less the Gospel which they understand to be Christ setting up the Kingdom of God on earth at His Second Coming which is an impossibility as previously explained; in other words, that message is not the Gospel.

We now find ourselves in the same circumstances as God's Church during the time of the great persecution which is that there are no organizations of men who are God's Church. Has God stopped calling men to salvation and are we now in a spiritual dead zone so-to-speak awaiting a true prophet to come and restore truths to God's church?

But, the Bible says there are no more prophets to come to God's Church (Heb 1:1-2). The Two Witnesses will prophesy to the world and, God in the last day in which we are living, only speaks to truly converted Christians by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman dwelling in their minds enabling them to understand their Bible as they study it. So how is God's Church continuing to exist and how is God calling men to conversion and how do those coming to conversion learn the truth and grow in knowledge and understanding without a true ministry (preachers/teachers) located in a large visible and organized group that men can see and join?

God's Church Without Ministers

Is it possible for God's Church to exist without ministers? Is God's Church a group of people sitting in a hall with a man preaching to them? Or, is God's Church simply all those who have been called and chosen by the holy spirit God the Father and who are remaining faithful to their calling wherever they may be in the world, whether organized or not into groups, and whether they know or not of each other's existence? Is it necessary to have human preachers for men to be called? Is it required to be part of

a group to belong to God's Church and must that group have a minister preaching to them?

If the answer is yes, then for lengthy periods of time in the history of the true Church and including today, the Church ceased to exist as there were no ministers and no organized groups networking among themselves but God's Church was never to die out.

Mat 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

It must therefore be possible for God's Church to exist in the true Christians scattered across the world who are without ministers, not organized into groups and who often are individuals by themselves. God's Church since the beginning has been a virtual group i.e., the members of God's Church have been scattered all over the earth, don't actually meet face-to-face in most cases, have in common revealed truth from God, all work to increase their knowledge of the Scriptures and to reduce sin in their life and, all report and are accountable to God. The "church" is not an organized group of people meeting in a hall with someone preaching to them.

God's Church is spiritual. True Christians have been called by God the Father and are being taught (given understanding) by God the Word of the truths of the Bible as they study it. It is not and cannot be the doing of any man. The administration and success of God's plan of salvation does not depend on men.

Who, What and Why Ministers?

How are men called to salvation? Is it by ministers preaching the Gospel to the world? What does the Bible tell us about the calling out process?

A minister is one who serves or attends to the needs of another. The reason for their existence is not to serve themselves though most of the times this is what they ultimately do . In the case of God's Church, they are to serve the needs of the members and of the church when in the first century it existed in little scattered congregations.

God tells us why He then had ministers:

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The first thing of importance to note is that God, in this case, God the Word, is the one that gave *some* men to be apostles, prophets, evange-

lists, pastors and teachers. And, another point of importance to realize is that these offices of responsibility would not always exist.

Since the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ, and the foundation of God's NT Church on the day of Pentecost, God is no longer sending prophets to the physical descendants of ancient Israel nor to His spiritual nation of Israel. The holy spirit God the Father now teaches true Christians by His Son the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath **in these last days spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Christ is the one who personally commissioned His disciples to be apostles with the task of going to the lost sheep of Israel and Paul to the Jews and after, to the Gentiles. Evangelists assisted the apostles in their work. In the epistles but for the original apostles, there are no others mentioned and God is not appearing to anyone to commission them as He now only speaks to His Church through the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman which is invisible to flesh-and-blood human beings.

God speaks to NT Christians by the Holy Bible as they study it and the holy spirit God the Word enables them to understand it. And, when there are no apostles, there can be no evangelists as their role is to help apostles. Now, continuing with 1 Co 12.

1Co 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

Men do not have the authority to appoint themselves as apostles, prophets or evangelists nor are they appointed by other men.

Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

And, what is it that pastors and teachers (can include elders who are not pastors), that existed in the First Century Church were to do?

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

The focus of the ministry's work is God's Church and their role is to be the helpers of the joy of the truly converted which is knowing the truth. The ministry's role is to support and help members of God's Church to become better Christians. Another one of their responsibility is to do the work of teaching the foundational truths of God's Church to newcomers to conversion.

1Co 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

Paul taught new converts the very same truth the apostles had been personally taught by Christ: the foundational truths of God's Church. Paul and, the pastors and teachers that came after him, were to teach those very same foundational truths to God's Church. And, the members of God's Church are the ones who are to build on the foundational truths of God's Church after having proved them and mastered them (1Co 3: 12-15). Otherwise, it would be pointless for God to command Christians to grow in knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures by studying their Bible if the foundational truths are the only Bible truths that a true Christian can know.

Pro 4:7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

2Ti 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

1Th 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

2Pe 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

And lastly, the ministry was required to administer the financial and material needs of the congregations of the First Century Church.

The main spiritual responsibility of the ministry then was to faithfully teach the foundational truths of God's Church to the regular members. And the overall goal of the ministry was to make spiritual adults of the babes-in-Christ that came into God's Church so they can no longer be made to doubt the truth they have on hearing the clever deceptions of

men trying to deceive them i.e., the false prophets and the false teachers.

Eph 4:14 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;

In other words, their goal was to make the faithful independent of men including themselves, the ministry, who are also but fallible men who are quite able to stray from the truth (Act 20:30) and who have done so in the past, are doing so now (the many false churches of God) and will do so in the future. All Christians have to be spiritually mature adults able to read the Bible on their own and get growth in knowledge and understanding as they do so. Salvation is between God and the one called; not between God, the ministry/preachers/teachers and the called out one. Salvation is a personal and individual relationship that is maintained between true Christians and God not through a human intermediary.

All Taught of God

At His First Coming Jesus said something that was incomprehensible to the Jews that were following Him and continually trying to trip Him up publicly to discredit Him in the eyes of the people.

Joh 6:45 It is written in the prophets, **And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.**

It would appear, contrarily to what has been commonly believed, that the ministry is not essential for salvation or to the execution of God's master plan of salvation and it only makes sense that the success or failure of God's plan not depend on fallible human beings.

Since the great scattering of God's First Century Church, there have been no visible, organized groups of God's true Church as God's Church is spiritual. It exists by the work of the holy spirits of the Godhead. It is only during the transition between the Old Testament and the New Testament that for a relatively brief time, there existed congregations of God's Church with ministers teaching them. Their teachers were the apostles and those the apostles trained. They knew the truth given the apostles by Christ and this is what they taught. Since the death of the apostles and of the men they trained to be ministers and the scattering of the First Century Church because of persecution, much of the truth was lost. There are no men today who can claim to know them and God is not appointing men to be ministers anymore because God and the Word are its teachers. God's

Church will never die out because it is kept in existence by God and the Word. It is not by the doing of any man or group of men.

God and the Word are the ones who will make possible the great and final harvest of men which began on the day of Pentecost of those who can be saved because upon being called by God the Father they will follow their calling and remain faithful until the end of their lives. During the time of the Millennium and during the Last Great Day, God will call all men and those following their calling and remaining faithful will be saved.

They will be God's Church and its members will be found all over the world. They will not move to Jerusalem to form a community of believers which will become large and the world center of true religion to which all the nations will go to hear the word of God and become converted. Remember that the conversion process is individual and personal between God and those He calls.

During the Millennium and the Last Great Day, God's Church will continue to exist without human preachers and teachers as it does now. Those coming to conversion will learn the truth by studying their Bible with a mind enabled to understand spiritual truth by the presence of the holy spirit God the Father who is calling them. If they accept their calling the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman will teach them all things as they study God's word to mankind, His Holy Bible.

Ultimately, all true Christians are taught by the holy spirits of the God family even when there existed a ministry in the First Century Church.

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. [in understanding]

Joh 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

1Th 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye

know him; for he dwelleth **with** you, and shall be **in** you.

Joh 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you into all truth:** for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, **that shall he speak:** and he will shew you things to come.

This is not being said solely to the disciples to whom Christ was then speaking but to all truly converted Christians until the end of mankind.

The True Prophet/Teacher to Israel

In the Bible God says there will come a time when He will give Israel a true prophet/teacher. That will occur when the remnant of the end-time nations constituting Israel returns from its captivity among the Gentiles and Christ returns to Israel a second time. He will then spend 3 1/2 years confirming the covenant with them (Dan 9:27). It will be the time of the making of the New Covenant with the descendants of physical Israel. After, the holy spirit God the Father will call all men to salvation (Joel 2:28) and those that repent and believe will become part of God's spiritual, New Covenant nation of Israel or God's Church.

Let's read through Acts 3: 19-23 which talks about the prophet that is to come to Israel. Here, Peter was talking to Israelites not to the world.

Act 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when **the times of refreshing** shall come from the presence of the Lord;

What is the **times of refreshing** that shall come from the **presence** of the Lord? Please note the refreshing that is to occur will be due to the "presence" of the Lord. The time when the Lord, Christ will again be present in the physical nation of Israel is after His 2nd Coming.

Christ is not coming back to the world but to end-time Israel as He did at His First Coming and the first thing that He does on His return is to rescue them from their captivity among the Gentiles.

Jer 33:7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.

At the time of His ascension back to His Father, here is what two men in white apparel standing by said to the disciples that were watching Christ as He ascended and disappeared in the clouds.

Act 1:9 And when he had spoken these things, while they

beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Act 1:10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

Act 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.**

Zec 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Very plainly, Jesus at His 2nd Coming is returning to Israel and for a very special purpose. It is the **times of refreshing** which we learn in Acts 3:21 is also the **times of restitution of all things**.

Now, continuing with our review of Acts 3.

Act 3:18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

Christ came, suffered and died and was God the Father's perfect sacrifice for sin making salvation possible for those who will repent and become converted at the time of "refreshing" which is the time when Christ will come to Israel a second time as God's true prophet and teacher who will not misguide them as the former false prophets and teachers had done.

Act 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

Act 3:20 And he [**the holy spirit God the Father**] shall send Jesus Christ, [**the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman**] which before was preached unto you:

Act 3:21 Whom the heaven must receive **until the times of restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Act 3:22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; **him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.**

At Christ's First Coming the nation of Israel was not being called. Christ only spoke to them in parable so they could not understand what He was really saying. At His Second Coming to Israel, they will be able to understand Him (hear him) because that will be the time of Israel's calling. He will no longer speak to them in parables. His teachings to them will be clear and they will all be able to understand Him. They will then have to make the decision to follow their calling or lose their salvation or as is stated in Act 3:23 quoted below, they "shall be destroyed from among the people." They will not become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel which will inherit salvation along with the Gentiles that will be called and chosen during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

Act 3:23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

These verses are talking about a time that will come when the resurrected and glorified Christ who is the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman will be sent by God the Father to Israel (the remnant of the end-time nations constituting Israel returned from their captivity among the Gentiles; this is not the modern-day nation of Israel living in the Middle East) and be a prophet that Israel will not only physically hear but that they will also understand what He will tell them, spiritually. This did not happen at Christ's First Coming to Israel.

This is the time of the beginning of the calling of Israel which will continue throughout the Millennium and the Last Great Day and which will also include the Gentile nations of the world who upon repentance and belief will also become part of spiritual Israel.

Christ at His Second Coming to Israel will teach it the very same truths He taught His disciples at His First Coming which Paul calls "the foundation" (1Co 3:10) which he and the apostles taught to the converts of their days. This information will bring them to the crossroads where they will have to choose as all those who have been called and will be called to conversion have had to choose and will have to choose (Deu 30:19). They will have to choose between life that comes from committing themselves to obeying God to the best of their abilities or death which will result from refusing to submit themselves to God upon not only hearing but understanding God's spiritual truth taught them by Christ Himself.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

In time, all will be called and every person called must choose and not choosing is choosing death. God's calling cannot be ignored. Once one is given to know the truth, ignoring it is choosing death.

God says there is a time coming when He will give a true shepherd to Israel. Who is this true shepherd?

The Work of the True Shepherd

The shepherds of ancient Israel i.e., the Levitical priesthood used their position of influence and the prestige that comes from being priests to exploit the people instead of teaching them the law they had received and administering it correctly over the people. Ancient Israel and the priesthood established to administer God's law and the various sacrifices and offerings commanded by God failed to obey God with any consistency. In time they became completely dissatisfied with the requirements placed on them and their spiritual state is given us in the book of Malachi.

[Correctly Understanding the Book of Malachi](#) is a study available on this Web site which plainly explains what the Book of Malachi is really talking about.

The shortcoming of the Old Covenant was that the law, statutes and judgments were not internalized by the Israelites (the people and the priesthood), they were not something that ever was a part of them and they had never really accepted them and therefore, they were not using them to guide their lives in their interactions with other Israelites and in their relationship with God. It was something that never became a part of them.

However, God says there is coming a time when He will write His law in their hearts; it will be a part of their minds (their hearts) and those who accept it will then become part of His holy nation.

Jer 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and [write it in their hearts](#); and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

God will give them the ability to understand His spiritual truth and He will be the God of those that commit to obey Him and those that do so will be His people. This is the calling out process done by the holy spirit God the Father (John 6:44; 65). God's people will be the Israelites as well as any

Gentile that follows God's calling but unfortunately not everyone called follows their calling (Mat 22:14) or remains faithful (Mat 7:13).

Eze 36:26 A new heart [a mind that can understand God level spiritual truth and this occurs when being called] also will I give you, and a new spirit [The holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman will come to dwell with those who follow their calling. (John 14:23)] will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. [God will make it possible for Israelites and the Gentiles to understand spiritual truth and this will occur at the time God will call them. Ultimately, all men who have ever lived will be called and given a chance for salvation.]

The shepherds of Israel as a physical nation and as a spiritual nation are the ones Eze 34 is talking about and what He has to say about them is not good. These shepherds did not only exist in OT Israel but also and most importantly in God's NT spiritual nation of Israel which is God's Church.

Let's read what God has to say about the shepherds.

Eze 34:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Eze 34:2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? [They are using their positions of power and influence to enrich themselves and to lord it over those they are supposed to serve.]

Eze 34:3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.

Eze 34:4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. [This is a good description of the tyrannical and insensitive rule of ministers in organizations of men calling themselves God's Church in our days and of which, some of us have been the victim.]

Eze 34:5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when

they were scattered. [The men in authority in organizations of men calling themselves God's Church drove out all those who opposed themselves to their tyrannical ways and to their distortions of the Scriptures to increase the number of people attending their worship services and their collection of tithes and offerings.]

Eze 34:6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. [The men acting as ministers in these organizations of men couldn't have cared less about those they drove out because they objected to their abusive ways. They either had to accept to be exploited and mind-controlled by them or they were disfellowshipped.]

Eze 34:7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Eze 34:8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

Eze 34:9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Eze 34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. [There is a time coming when God will no longer let these shepherds abuse and exploit their members living luxuriously off of their tithes and offerings and tolerating no one pointing out their misuse of brethren's money.]

Eze 34:11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. [God says, He, Himself will seek His sheep and gather them out; it will not be by men acting on His behalf as pastors, preachers, teachers, elders.]

Eze 34:12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my

sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

This process started with God's New Testament Church which became the victim of persecutions first from the Jews and then from a new, great false Christian religion. God's First Century Church had to flee into the wilderness to escape the wrath of this new, great false church and was scattered. The shepherds of God's flock are God the Father and God the Word in New Testament times. God's nation or Church is spiritual. The holy spirit God the Father calls men to salvation and those who follow their calling become chosen. Then, the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman teaches them all things (gives them understanding) as they study God's holy Bible. It is a process that will continue until the time of the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Last Great Day.

Eze 34:13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. [This is the time of the physical restoration of Israel to the Promised Land; a restoration that will be both physical and spiritual.]

Eze 34:14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

The following verses of Jeremiah makes it clear that God will restore Israel in the end-time to the wealth and glory it had before its downfall after the death of Solomon when it became a divided nation and went into captivity: the Northern Kingdom of Israel went into captivity under the Assyrians and some 100 years later, the Southern Kingdom, Judah (the tribes of Levi, Judah and Benjamin) went into captivity under the Persians.

Jer33:7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. [This is end-time Israel being brought back from its captivity among the Gentiles, resettled in the Promised Land where they are made to prosper and become wealthy and powerful as at the first i.e., as when Israel first entered the Promised Land.]

Jer 33:8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

Christ at His 2nd Coming will spend 3 1/2 years restoring to Israel the truth they had been given and had lost. At the end of this 3 1/2 years of instruction, end-time Israel will have to choose to enter or not into the New Covenant (many will not). Those that do will have their iniquities forgiven and become God's spiritual nation of Israel or His Church and those who don't will continue on as the physical and unconverted nation of Israel that will exist throughout the Millennium.

Jer 33:9 And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

Jer 33:10 Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast,

Jer 33:11 The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD. [Israel will be restored both physically (all of physical Israel) and spiritually (those entering the New Covenant.)]

Jer 33:12 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down.

Jer 33:13 In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the LORD.

Now, continuing with our reading of Ezekiel 34.

Eze 34:15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.

Eze 34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; [those entrusted with feeding the sheep but who instead fed themselves from the sheep] I will feed them with judgment.

The true shepherds, prophets and teachers of spiritual Israel are the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. God the Father is the one that calls men to salvation and God the Word is the one that teaches all things to those called and chosen by God the Father. Those that are chosen are those that follow their calling and commit to obeying God to the best of their abilities.

The conversion and teaching of God's chosen ones is a process that occurs in the minds of men. It is through thoughts from God's mind entering or being shared with men's mind enabled, while being called and upon conversion, to receive and understand these thoughts coming from the mind of God. God the Father and God the Word are the true shepherds, pastors, preachers and teachers to spiritual Israel not men.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; [God the Father speaks to the truly converted by His Son, the Word of God, Christ in writing, the Holy Bible as they study it.]**

1Co 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God gave the increase.**

In Deuteronomy 30, God tells us how it is that what He wants from Israel and all of mankind which here is represented by Israel, an unconverted nation like the Gentile nations of the world, is not that mysterious or difficult for them to know.

Deu 30:11 For this commandment **[to obey God by following His commandments]** which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.

Deu 30:12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

Deu 30:13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

Deu 30:14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. [The means for them to obey God is not something which is far away and cannot be reached by them so that it is impossible for them to do it. Rather it is something very near to them; it is something they can do upon being given to know the truth; it is themselves deciding to obey God which is something that is in their heart (their mind) and in their mouth (by what they say). It is in their heart when God calls them and they accept and remain faithful to their calling.]

Deu 30:15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; [As stated in Deu 30:14, it is in your power to decide what you will do. God says to them He has set life and good and death and evil before them (the blessings for obedience and the cursings for disobedience). This is what happens when God the Father calls men; He places life and death before them and they have the power and are free to choose one or the other.]

Deu 30:16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

Deu 30:17 But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; [If you refuse to choose life; refuse God's calling preferring to continue with your life before you were given to know the truth.]

Deu 30:18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: [God urges those He calls to choose life but will accept, if they do so, their decision to choose death. He will not force

anyone to choose life against their will. (Rom 8:14) God makes it clear that He gives man the ability to choose life or death; accepting or not their calling or, not remaining faithful to their calling.]

Deu 30:20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. [The reward to physical Israel for submitting to God was to prosper in the physical Promised Land they would be entering while the blessing for spiritual Israel will be immortality as glorified spirit beings following their resurrection from the dead at their appointed time.]

God has given mankind the absolute power to choose so that when he is offered life, he is fully free to choose it or not and be fully held responsible for his decision which is to say, receive immortal life in God's Kingdom or suffer the second death which is forever. And, of the greatest importance for us to realize is that it is not a choice that will come to us from other men. It will be by the true shepherds the holy spirit God the Father calling men and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman teaching all things to those that accept their calling and remain faithful to it. They are taught by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman opening their minds to understand the Bible as they study it and thoughts from the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman enter their minds (hearts) giving them understanding of what they are reading.

Christians are not to trust in other men and they always have to prove the truth of what is told them by reference to their Bible. This is the responsibility God places on all truly converted Christians. They can never just relax and put their trust in a man no matter how trustworthy he may appear to be. Their salvation is between them and God not between them, a trusted minister and God.

Warning to God's Faithful Saints

In God's First Century Church there were apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers and elders in God's Church (Eph 4: 11-12)

God says He is the one who set them in His Church (Eph 4: 11-12) and when remaining faithful to their calling they were useful to the brethren who nonetheless have to prove with their Bible everything they taught.

A true minister uncorrupted by power and the desire for riches can be and is very useful to those members of God's Church seeking to increase their knowledge of God's truth. Unfortunately, the temptation is always there and is very difficult to resist to become celebrities in the Church and to start competing to rise in the hierarchy of church offices from deacon, to elder to teacher to pastor. It is always challenging for those having authority and power not to become corrupted by them. This is why God told those in His First Century Church about the danger of being a master or teacher.

Jas 3:1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

Being called to be a preacher/teacher does not insulate men from the very real and very strong temptation to use their position as a means of building their personal fame and fortune. The great temptation is to preach for filthy lucre.

Tit 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, **not given to filthy lucre;**

Tit 1:11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, **for filthy lucre's sake.**

1Pe 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not **for filthy lucre**, but of a ready mind;

Religion in the world, like it or not, is big business. The churches of this world and the organizations of men calling themselves "churches of God" ceaselessly work to increase the number of people attending their services and contributing financially to their organization. The leaders of these churches and their immediate supporters, live a life of luxury which they greatly enjoy and which they do not want to lose. They are preaching for filthy lucre's sake. Men, truly converted men, despite their best intentions and initial zeal to do the right thing, once becoming preachers/teachers who are charismatic and enjoy the enthusiastic approval of a growing group of people, almost invariably finds themselves on the slippery slope of becoming drunk on their own fame and celebrity. Being liked and respected by more and more of the brethren becomes a goal in itself which replaces the original good intentions and desire of being a faithful and unafraid teacher of God's truth come what may.

The ministers and leading men in the organization called the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) went on to start their own versions of God's Church or to associate themselves with a former, high ranking minister of the WCG who was successful in establishing a "new" Church of God and are dutifully preaching whatever doctrines they are told to preach by their new leader whether they are consistent or not with they used to preach while in the WCG.

The lure of fame, notoriety, money, etc. are very difficult to always resist and most preachers/teachers eventually lose their initial ideal of wanting to preach the truth no matter who it may indispose. A feel-good message of salvation will attract and retain more "faithfuls" than one where salvation requires doing the work of changing one's life to bring it more in line with the requirements of God's law. More people means more money.

Organized religion is and as always been big business. There are always many looking for someone to inspire and lead them, to give them an emotional lift and to reassure them that one day they will become part of God's Kingdom. And, they are quite willing to financially support those who will do so even to the point of closing their eyes to the abusive use of the money they give them.

The Conclusion of the Matter

Men read Eph 4: 11 and come to the conclusion that a Church always has all of the offices of responsibility listed in that verse.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

This verse is why in organizations of men calling themselves "churches" we find men appointing other men as apostles, evangelists with some thinking of themselves as being prophets.

In Mat 28: 19 we find the commission Christ gave to the apostles to teach all nations and in Mat 28:20 He adds that they are to teach them to observe all things I (Christ) have commanded you. Based on these 2 verses, Leaders of different religious groups have concluded that they have a commission to preach the Gospel to the nations of the world including the WCG when it was headed up by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

But, the apostles were commissioned by Christ Himself; they didn't appoint themselves as apostles nor did any other man. Paul was also commissioned by Christ. What human being can commission another human being to be an apostle?

There are no more apostles to come after the original apostles. The men sent by Christ to the lost sheep of Israel have accomplished their mission and Christ did not come back to commission anybody else to go preach the Good News to anyone.

There are also to be no more evangelists i.e., men going out to preach the Good News to the world. The world does not have the mind to understand it and hearing it is not how God calls men. Men are called straight out of the world in as many different ways as there are different individuals with diverse levels of intelligence, education, literacy, life experience, etc. God comes to them as they are and tailors His message according to their individual characteristics so that it will have meaning to them and start them being curious about spiritual things which they had always rejected before.

Conversion occurs as a result of the holy spirit God the Father sharing some of His spiritual truth with those He is calling and giving them understanding of it. Initial conversion is as a result of thoughts from God's mind, in this case God the Father, being shared with the one being called. It is the very reason why man of all the animals created is the only one that was given mind power. It is the means by which God can communicate with His creation.

The conversion process continues if we accept our calling by thoughts from the minds of holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman entering the minds of those following and remaining faithful to their calling. This mind-to-mind communication process is how true Christians come to know and understand God's spiritual truth as they pray and study their Bible and try to obey God in all things to the best of their abilities.

The Gospel will be preached to all the world by the holy spirit God the Father opening the minds of men to understand spiritual truth when all men are called during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. They will learn it by reading and studying their Bible; there are no more prophets to come from God except the Two Witnesses whose message will be to the world.

Basically, for most of its existence God's Church has been without an established ministry but God's plan of salvation has continued uninterrupted. God's Church continues to have elders who are Christians who simply are long time members of God's Church (elders in the faith), some of whom can be teachers if they have the natural ability to teach. They can be by themselves or in one of the possible small groups of Christians that can be found all over the world.

The hard-to-believe truth is that God's Church is not a single, master, phys-

ical organization which provides spiritual leadership to all other congregations or groups of true Christians including Christians who are by themselves and are be found all over the world.

The true Church exists as a spiritual organism which is not a physical organization. The true Church consists of called, chosen and faithful individuals who stand by faith i.e., no one can impose on them what they are to believe; they believe what they believe because they have freely and knowingly chosen to do so. God calls men all over the world and true Christians most of the time do not know of the existence of each other.

God's Church is a virtual organization which is one where all its members are not physically located together. All truly converted members report so-to-speak, and are accountable to, God the Father wherever they may be in the world and whether they are in small groups or all by themselves. They all have the same desire to obey God and are growing their knowledge and understanding of God's truth through study of their Bible and prayer and collectively though not physically together, they ARE God's Church.

The true church in light of these considerations, the true nature of God's Church is to be individuals by themselves or in small groups who are truly converted and are spread all over the world and who are not part of any religious organizations of men.

There is not now nor has they ever been any central headquarters church of God where was found a Pastor General who was the spiritual leader of the Church and through whom God's truth entered God's Church. Even in the days of the apostles, no such organization existed and Paul is the striking and evident example that Peter did not and never exercised doctrinal control over the Church nor was it a central organization with all other congregations being subordinated to it.

Gal 2:6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat (see Gal 2:9 below), (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference **added nothing to me:**

Gal 2:9 And when **James, Cephas, and John**, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

One doesn't have to be a member in good standing of any central headquarters church of men to be part of God's Church.

God's church is a non-material and invisible thing which is difficult to define and conceptualize in the way it really exists as it goes against the notion that God's Church is a visible organization set up according to the way all other human organizations are set up.

God's Church are all those who have been called chosen and who are remaining faithful wherever they may be on the earth, by themselves or in smaller or larger groups.

Its true preachers and teachers are and can only be the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word. The Father calls men and the Word teaches those that follow their calling. God the Word made flesh suffered and died to make it possible for men's sins to be forgiven upon belief and repentance and, for those who remain faithful to their calling, to be resurrected to glorified, immortal spirit existence as part of God's Kingdom.

Christ is the author and finisher of the faith of those called and chosen by God the Father.

Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For most of its existence, God's First Century Church has been without a true ministry or a ministry of any kind as it has existed in men called out all over the world by God the Father. They did not usually form congregations and for the greatest part don't even know what other true Christians there may be around them. A very similar situation to what actually exists nowadays.

Whether congregations come to exist or not, the true shepherds and teachers of God's Church are the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman. They entered in function on the Day of Pentecost at the foundation of God's New Testament Church and their work will come to completion at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment which happens at the end of the Last Great Day. Exceptionally, in OT times, the holy spirit God the Word worked with men chosen to be the prophets whose message to the physical nation of Israel would be written in books for preservation for those God would later call and who would constitute His spiritual nation of Israel. These books we find in one book which contains them all, the Holy Bible

All of humanity will have been called and given the same opportunity

for salvation. All those who lose their salvation will die the second death from which no resurrection is possible. Those who are saved become glorified spirit beings as the Lake of Fire engulfs the earth and God's present creation melts with fervent heat (2Pe 3: 10; 12) and is replaced by a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21: 1).

PostScript

Is everything written in this study to be accepted without verification with your Bible? Of course not, God holds each and every Christian responsible for proving all things with their Bible and for studying it on a continuing basis to increase their knowledge and understanding of it.

Your spiritual conversation or fellowship is with God through His Holy Bible and with other truly converted Christians you may know as you talk about, discuss, and jointly explore the Scriptures.

1Jn 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

When doing so you are engaging in prophesying i.e., speaking to others the truth God has shown you through your attentive and detailed study of your Bible. Other true Christians who are also engaging in regular study of their Bible are also getting understanding of aspects of the truth of God that are different from what others have found. Discussing these spiritual findings in an iron sharpens iron attitude with other true Christians when there are any known and willing to do so, is what Paul talks about in 1Co: 14: 26-40 which is covered in detail in the following study:

[The Ministry and God's Truth](#)

Be of open mind like the Bereans (Acts 17:11) and be a new wine skin that is able to receive new information (new wine) without blowing up.

Mar 2:22 No one pours new wine into old wineskins. The wine would swell and burst the old skins. Then the wine would be lost, and the skins would be ruined. New wine must be put into new wineskins.

As God tells us all, study (2Tim 2:15), prove all things (1Thes 5:21) and hold fast to what is good.

That is the true Christian way of those making up God's true Church.

