

The Great DELUSION

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by Robert G. Theophilus

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Are there any Bible verses we can point to that would enable us to know how certain men, some 2,000 years since the foundation of Christianity, have somehow been given the responsibility to teach the Bible and to establish organizations they call "churches of God." How does someone become a true minister of God? Is it something someone can suddenly decide to do? Or is it the result of other men appointing them to be pastors, or elders or deacon?

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 (Php 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 [I,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 firstborn 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 biblical 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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The world is awash with Christian churches of all kinds not to mention the many non-Christian religious organizations that also exist in great numbers. Religion has existed since the beginning of mankind.

In Old Testament (OT) times, everybody was worshiping idols including the ancient nation of Israel. Israel was never called and they were never given access to God the Father or to God the Word who would have enabled them to understand God level spiritual truth. They were given repetitive and laborious physical and symbolic ceremonies to perform as a way for them to demonstrate their obedience to God. It had to be physical things because they could not understand spiritual truths and God could not have held them responsible for failing to follow them.

Then, the promised Messiah (Hebrew) or the Christ (Greek) came to Israel. This Messiah or Christ was the Son of God, the holy spirit God the Word made flesh (Php 2: 5-8; Luk 1:35). It was the time of God the Word's First Coming to Israel. At that time He was to accomplish many things and 2 of them of great importance to us was the training of His disciples and dying as God the Father's perfect sacrifice for sin. Upon being called, chosen, repenting and remaining faithful until the time of their natural death, men can become part of God's Kingdom by a resurrection from the dead either at Christ's Second Coming or at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment.

At the end of His ministry to Israel, Christ ascended to His Father (Act 1:9), and His disciples on the day of Pentecost, became apostles and set out to accomplish the mission Christ personally gave them to

preach the Gospel to every creature.

Mar 16:15 And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.** [Man is a creation of God or creature.]

Of course, given the very primitive and slow means of travel then available, it was impossible for the apostles to accomplish the mission given them. Not only was distance a major impediment but there were many parts of the world that had not yet then been discovered. Having been given the "Great Commission" and being able to fulfill it are 2 different things. Imagining that somehow in some way they were able to reach all human beings then alive on the earth and to preach the Gospel to them, is simply wishful thinking.

Their commission was to preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE (Mar 16: 15). How this will happen is described in the following study which you can access by clicking on the following link: [Was the Gospel Suppressed?](#)

Also, Christ clearly said that the Gospel would be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and that then the end will come.

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.

What is the end mentioned in Mat 24:14 is fully explained in the following study which you can access by clicking on the following link: [What is the End of the World and When Will it Happen?](#)

After Christ's return to His Father, He made it possible for some Christians to be evangelists, preachers, elders, and teachers to assist the apostles.

Eph 4:10 He [Christ] that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

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

These individuals didn't appoint themselves nor were they appointed by a man or an organization of men. Eph 4: 10--11 is clear that it was Christ's doing. There are no examples or instructions in the New Tes-

tament as to how men can appoint themselves or appoint others to the positions of apostles, evangelists, preachers, etc. and there is a very good reason why this is so as will be explained as you continue reading through this study.

Christ initially used men to fill the various positions mentioned in Eph 4: 10-11). At first and for a time, God's Church was made up of several groups of people or congregations dispersed across the geographical locations these early ministers were able to reach. However, as we know, Christianity from its very beginning came under attack, first by the Jews and then by a great new false Christian religion which persecuted all other religious group that would not accept their teachings. The persecutions became so intense that truly converted Christians had to flee into the wilderness which is to say, far away from the great population centers of the day to avoid being imprisoned or put to death. The result was that God's Church, true Christianity, ceased to exist as it did at the time of its foundation. God's First Century Church, from its very beginning was not a visible-to-the-world organization that men could decide to join if they so desired.

True Christians met in their homes so as not to be visible to their persecutors.

Rom 16:5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

1Co 16:19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

Col 4:15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

Phm 1:2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:

True Christianity was considered a heresy and its founder, Jesus-Christ, was thought to be a false prophet that was rightfully put to death to protect people from being misled by Him.

Joh 11:45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

They had just seen the resurrection of Lazarus who had been dead 4

days and whose body was already a rotting, stinking mess.

Joh 11:46 But some of them [who saw the resurrection of Lazarus] went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

Joh 11:47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

Joh 11:48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

Here is the dilemma faced by the Pharisees who were part of the religious ruling elite of the day and who also had been given limited powers by the Romans to govern Israel.

They feared that if Jesus was allowed to continue He would attract more and more people and they would lose their influence (religiously speaking) over the people and the governing powers given them by the Roman government. So what could they do to preserve their status and rights.

Joh 11:49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, **Ye know nothing at all,**

Joh 11:50 Nor consider [nor do you realize] that it is expedient [necessary] for us, that one man should die for the people, [the nation of Israel] and that the whole nation perish not. [That it not again fully come under the rulership of Rome.]

Joh 11:51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied [It was from himself; it was not something God had shown him he should tell the people] that Jesus should die for that nation; [Israel]

Joh 11:52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

Caiaphas said, that Jesus dying would result in the children of God who were then scattered across the nations in being gathered as one nation

as they were before their scattering. The Jews and Caiaphas thought of themselves as being God's people and as being children of God. Israel was God's chosen nation for the purpose of their becoming God's kingdom of priests and a holy nation according to the OT Scriptures.

Exo 19:6 And ye [Israel] shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

The Gospels and the New Testament had not yet been written and the Jews and their high priest did not nor could they have known that the nation of Israel that would be God's kingdom of priests and holy nation would be spiritual Israelites who are not physical Israelites.

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.

Salvation would be extended to the Gentile (all non-Israelite nations) nations of the world and physical Israelites, to be saved, themselves will have to become spiritual Israelites whose circumcision is that of the heart. Those circumcised in the heart are those called and chosen by God the Father whose abiding attitude is to try to obey God as best they can in all things.

Now, continuing with OT prophecies that would have been known by the Jews and the Pharisees and which led them to think they were God's chosen people. Let's be clear that the physical nation of Israel was God's chosen people in OT times but God's chosen people in NT times are all those from the nations of the world (the Gentiles) whom God the Father would call and choose. The members of the physical nation of Israel will also be called and if they follow their calling, they too will become part of God's spiritual nation.

Let's continue looking at the OT Scriptures the Jews and the Pharisees would have known and which would form the basis for what is being said in John 11: 47=52.

In Ezekiel God says, He will gather His sheep from the countries where they are scattered and bring them back to their own land which is Israel.

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.

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.

Christ, while He was among them, had also said that He was the good shepherd who would bring back the lost sheep of Israel into one fold. The Jews, consisting of the tribes of Benjamin, Levi and Judah, were only 3 of the 12 tribes of Israel. The word “Jew” is a nickname that represents these 3 tribes.

Joh 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Joh 10:12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

Joh 10:13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

Joh 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

Joh 10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Joh 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

The Jews and the Pharisees then felt fully justified in conspiring to have Jesus put to death given it would be the fulfillment of something prophesied in the OT. They then saw themselves as being zealous in their obedience to God and working at bringing to pass an important OT prophecy. In doing so, the high priest was admitting that Jesus of Nazareth, was the promised Messiah but also that He must die to save the people and the nation. This would satisfy their ultimate goal of eliminating Jesus' influence over the people that was putting in jeopardy their reputation

as the great and highly knowledgeable teachers of the Scriptures.

Joh 11:53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

The Great Persecution of Christians

True Christianity from its very beginning was persecuted and no punishment was too great to put an end to their influence over the people. As Christ had told His followers:

Joh 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

The early Christian church was not and could not be a highly visible-to-the-world organization of men as it would have been exterminated. Indeed, Christ did say the true church would never die out but that did not mean He would prevent its persecution. As was previously mentioned, true Christians met in their homes and stayed out of the public eye to avoid attracting the attention of their persecutors. Eventually, the persecutions became so intense that they had to flee into the wilderness which is to say, far away from the great cities of the day to avoid being imprisoned and put to death.

God's Church then ceased to exist [as originally constituted](#).

God allowed a great scattering to happen to His Church. Of course, He had the power to prevent it but His plan was that His Church would change its way of existing. As surprising as this will be to many of you reading this study, there would be no more men that would be apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors and teachers of His Church. The following Scriptures make this very clear and easy to understand.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past [\[OT\]](#) unto the fathers [\[physical nation of Israel\]](#) by the prophets, [\[men sent by God\]](#)

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days [\[started on the day of Pentecost\]](#) spoken unto us [\[truly converted Christians\]](#) by his Son, [\[the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman\]](#) whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; [\[God made the worlds, the universe and spirit beings\]](#)

[by His Son, not by a 3rd being called the holy spirit\]](#)

The effective administration of God's plan of salvation cannot depend on men. God the Father is the only one who can call men to salvation and God the Word is the only one who can open their minds to understand the God level spiritual truth of the Bible.

God's First Century Church as originally constituted was not to continue. Only the apostles had been personally trained by Christ; only they and those they trained had truth received directly from Christ. After the Great Persecution and the scattering of Christians, much of this truth was lost. No man today can claim to have absolute truth that all are to believe. Christ did not personally teach them nor will He ever do so according to Heb 1: 1-2.

How then are we to understand the changeover that occurred in the organization of God's Church?

The Gospel writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are a transition point between the Old Testament and the New Testament which, by the way, should be more precisely called, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The books written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John lead into the epistles of Paul, Peter, James and John where we find explained the major changes brought about by Christ's First Coming as to who actually is God's nation in New Testament times.

God's nation of Israel in NT times is a spiritual nation composed of all those called, chosen and faithful from the nations of the world. In order for men to become part of God's spiritual nation of Israel it is necessary for them to be called by God the Father and for them to follow their calling. Israel is no longer a physical nation where one becomes part of it by being born into it. Ancient Israel never thought the Gentile nations of the world (non-Israelites) could ever be part of God's nation as they thought of themselves as being the only ones who could ever be God's people.

For a time, the new spiritual nation of Israel existed together with God's OT physical and unconverted nation of Israel who held on to its physical and symbolic ritualistic religion but events show that it was not God's plan that they should continue to co-exist. The members of the true church, God's spiritual nation of Israel, was driven into the wilderness. The physical nation of Israel rebelled against the Romans ruling them. The Romans came and destroyed Jerusalem and the second temple. Those who weren't killed, fled and scattered into the nations of the world. It was the end of the OT physical nation of Israel and of the Levitical priesthood.

Timeline and Sequential Progression

The books of the Bible give us knowledge of how God did things at different points in time but not everything written continues to be pertinent to all times. There is a timeline flowing through the Bible and some verses are historical, some are prophetic and some are doctrinal. Errors in understanding come from failing to distinguish between these 3 categories of verses. The OT, to a great extent, is physical and material and the NT is mostly spiritual. A common mistake is to spiritualize historical occurrences and make them into requirements for NT Christians which they are not. New Testament Israel is a totally different nation from that of ancient Israel which was never converted and could not understand God-level spiritual truth. God's Church or spiritual nation of Israel following its scattering existed in those God called and chose. They were isolated from each other and could not come together to form large, visible-to-the-world organizations and even if they could have they would not have done so. They would all have been put to death as heretics.

God's plan progresses from one stage to another. New Testament writings are about God's spiritual nation. Old Testament ceremonies, rituals, sacrifices, offerings, etc. and the priesthood established to carry them out, are totally inapplicable to God's NT Church. Of course, the law and the 10 commandments continue to be fully applicable but of significance to this study are the fundamental changes made to the priesthood as God's nation went from being a physical nation to a spiritual one, and in how God is administering His NT church.

The Levitical priesthood ended with the destruction of the 2nd temple and the scattering of Israel after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Was it intended by God that this priesthood be changed and replaced by another priesthood of men who would act as pastors and teachers of His Church?

The Ministry of God's Spiritual Nation

God's Spiritual Nation

God's OT nation of Israel was a physical organization of men. It had a priesthood of men, a ritualistic and symbolic physical worship of God, and was never converted. God could not teach them spiritual truth which can only be know by revelation.

God's NT spiritual nation are all those from the nations of the world who have been called and chosen, who followed their calling and who are

remaining faithful. This spiritual nation is different in many significant ways from the physical nation of OT Israel.

Let's examine what are those differences.

Christ High Priest, Mediator and Apostle

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

There can be NO HUMAN INTERMEDIARY between God's called and chosen ones and God. Their one and only mediator is the resurrected and glorified Christ who now sits at the right-hand of the holy spirit God the Father as the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

Heb 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Heb 4:14 Seeing then that we [\[truly converted Christians\]](#) have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

In God's NT spiritual nation of Israel, there is no human being who can be considered its high priest. Christ is the high priest of God's spiritual nation and its only intermediary between God and men.

Kings and Priests

Another relevant difference between OT and NT Israel has to do with who are its priests or ministers.

Rev 1:6 And hath made us [\[truly converted Christians\]](#) kings and priests [\[in embryo, to be born as glorified spirit beings in God's Kingdom by a resurrection from the dead\]](#) unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1Pe 2:9 But ye [\[truly converted Christians\]](#) are a chosen generation, a royal [priesthood](#), an holy nation, [\[they are God's\]](#)

holy nation of spiritual Israel or God's Church mentioned by God in Ex 19: 6] a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

1Pe 2:5 Ye [truly converted Christians] also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

NT Christians are the living stones of God's spiritual house or temple, and a holy priesthood, offering themselves daily as living spiritual sacrifices.

1Pe 2:10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

The people from the many nations of the world whom God is calling do not constitute a physical nation; they are from many different nations. But once called and chosen, though coming from the many different nations of the world and not being together in one physical/geographical location, they become a nation, a spiritual one, God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church.

Living Sacrifices

In OT Israel, the sacrifices offered were physical but in God's NT spiritual nation of Israel, the individual members are the living sacrifices being offered to God. There is no priesthood required to offer them. Their sacrifice on a daily basis is to put to death their old man, their previous life of sin and to strive to live in newness of life with a mind regenerated by the in-dwelling presence of the holy spirit God the Father and of the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Col 3:9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him [the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman] that created him:

Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth should not serve sin.

God's Temple

OT Israel had a physical temple which was God's house but in NT times God's temple are God's called, chosen and faithful.

1Co 3:16 Know ye not that ye [truly converted Christians] are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1Co 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1Co 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

2Co 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Ministry of Men

In OT Israel God had instituted the priesthood of the order of Aaron to offer sacrifices for the people and conduct various symbolic ceremonies. In NT times, God says that there are some men who are given certain responsibilities which are as follows:

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

The first thing to notice is that most of these offices of responsibilities do not continue in New Testament times.

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

In OT times, God communicated with His physical nation using prophets. A prophet is a man to whom God has given knowledge that he is to give to God's nation which in the OT was physical Israel. In NT times, God is no longer sending any prophets (men) to represent Him as apostles, evangelists, preachers and teachers to His spiritual nation of Israel.

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days [started with Christ's First Coming and the foundation of God's Church on the day of Pentecost] spoken unto us [truly converted Christians who collectively are God's spiritual nation and temple] by his Son, [the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman responsible for teaching all things to God the Father's called and chosen ones] whom he [God the Father] hath appointed heir of all things, by whom [God the Word] also he [God the Father] made the worlds;

In NT times, God's spiritual nation or God's Church is being taught by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

But, who is going to preach the Gospel to the world which Christ said would be preached to every creature.

Mar 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

The only way the apostles' mission could be accomplished was for it to be done in type. It was impossible for them to go to all the nations of the world in their lifetime given the rudimentary modes of travel then available to them such as horses, donkeys, sailboats, etc.

How did this fulfillment in type of the Great Commission occur?

This happened through Peter's inspired sermon to Jews OF ALL NATIONS who were in Jerusalem on the Day of the first NT Pentecost.

Act 2:5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of **every nation under heaven.**

How the Gospel will reach every creature is explained in the following study which you can view by clicking on the following link: [Was the Gospel Suppressed?](#)

Let's continue reading Ephesians 4.

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

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of 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;

Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

The reason God's First Century church had ministers was to provide assistance to God's called and chosen ones in becoming better Christians.

The ultimate objective of God's First Century church ministry was to assist babes-in-Christ to become spiritually mature adults who can no longer be made to doubt their beliefs by the many deceivers in the world and those who would arise right from within God's Church. The goal was to make God's elect independent of them (the ministers) and render them able to read their Bible on their own and get the correct meaning out of it.

God's elects' SALVATION CANNOT AND HAS NEVER DEPENDED ON MEN; it is the holy spirits of the Godhead who are doing the work.

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

Joh 14:16 And I [Christ] will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye [my disciples] know him; [the Comforter and Spirit of Truth] for he [I, Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Joh 14:18 I [Christ] will not leave you [my disciples and all truly converted Christians through the ages] comfortless: I [Christ] will come to you. [my disciples and all truly converted Christians throughout the ages after my ascension to my Father.]

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, [spirit] 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 Comforter is the resurrected and

glorified Christ who like His Father is holy and spirit and is therefore the holy spirit who will come to the disciples and all truly converted Christians through the ages and teach them all things.]

The success or failure of God's plan of salvation for mankind cannot depend on men who cannot be trusted to remain true and faithful to their calling.

The verses we have just reviewed make it clear and leaves no doubt that GOD IN NT TIMES DOES NOT HAVE A MINISTRY OF MEN TEACHING HIS CALLED AND CHOSEN ONES. God the Father teaches men while they are being called and God the Word upon becoming chosen (these are those men who follow their calling) teaches them all things.

Let's go back to determining why there are so many different churches both Christian and non-Christian including the several different churches of God that arose after the death of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong the Pastor General of the Worldwide Church of God organization.

Why so Many Different Churches?

A first point worth mentioning is that according to your Bible, Christ founded only **ONE** Church and He said that it would never 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.

Can there be several different Christian churches in the world whose doctrinal differences are so great that none of them are able to join any other Christian church? What about the many different churches of God that arose after the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) became a mainstream Christian church of this world? They, like the churches of the Christianity of this world, are also kept apart by doctrinal differences that none are willing to change. The result is that we have several organizations of men who claim to be God's church but the Bible says there is only one possible true Church of God.

Why is there no lack of men who claim to have a special relationship with God and that they are the only ones who receive knowledge from Him about what men have to do for them to live forever in a wonderful paradise following the death of their physical bodies. Only those, they say, who follow their teachings can ever hope to go to heaven at the time of their death so obedience or disobedience to them is a matter of

immortal life or of dying forever. When it comes to the new, several and varied churches of God, the big selling point is not having to go through the Great Tribulation which is always just about to happen. It has been just about to happen for the last 40 years and even after all their failed prophecies, they are still saying it.

The Bible gives us the example of Simon the magician who was a false prophet building a following using sorcery to make people believe he was doing so by the great power of God.

Act 8:9 But there was a certain man, called **Simon**, which beforetime in the same city used **sorcery**, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

A sorcerer was someone who was successful in getting people to believe that he had the power to cast spells and charms to heal people, to predict the future by astrology, to protect people from evil spirits, to curse enemies through rituals, and to produce seemingly miraculous acts.

Act 8:10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, **This man is the great power of God.**

Act 8:11 And to him they had regard, because that of **long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.**

Act 8:12 But when they [**the people of Samaria Simon had bewitched with sorcery**] believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Act 8:13 Then **Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip**, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Act 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

Act 8:19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Act 8:20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with

thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

Why did Simon want this power?

He was one of the many false prophets who prior to his conversion to Christianity had gotten a following for himself by using sorcery. He was so impressed when he saw how baptized people by having hands laid on them were given access to the holy spirit God the Word that he wanted this power for himself. He wanted it so he could to go back to developing a following for himself as he had been doing before.

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.

2Pe 2:2 And many [of the truly converted] shall follow their pernicious [destructive, tending to cause death] ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

Why did Simon want his own group of followers?

False prophets would come in among GOD'S TRULY CONVERTED for the purpose of having them follow them so they could do with them what all false prophets have always done: USE THEM TO MAKE MONEY.

2Pe 2:3 And through covetousness [because of their great love of money and always wanting more of it] shall they with feigned words [pretending to believe what truly converted Christians believe; telling them what they want to hear] make merchandise of you: [use you as a means to make money like a merchant making money by selling merchandise] whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

The false prophets would be "many." They would come among the truly converted and it is the many of the truly converted who would follow after them.

2Ti 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

2Ti 4:3 For the time will come when they [truly converted Christians] will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; [They will look for and join themselves to people who are supposedly teachers of the truth who make them comfortable in their lusts and reassure them that they will not lose their salvation.]

2Ti 4:4 And they [truly converted Christians] shall turn away their ears from the truth, [this is something which they voluntarily do; they are not forced to do so; it is something they choose to do.] and shall be turned unto fables. [truly converted Christians will believe the lies of the men they have chosen to teach them.]

There were to be false teachers in the world and among God's truly converted. Some of you who are reading this study may be following some of them. Would the many false teachers in the world and among the truly converted be the reason why there are so many different churches of God since the death of HWA. Were there false teachers in sheep's clothing among the ministry of the WCG who were ravaging wolves waiting for the right opportunity to establish their own "true" church of God? Have some of us seen this happen?

Let's see, presently we have the Church of God International (founded by Garner Ted Armstrong, the son of HWA) and for a time there was the Global Church of God (no longer exists). Currently in existence we have the Living Church of God, the Restored Church of God, the Philadelphia Church of God, and the United Church of God who are offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG). All of these, except the Church of God International, came into being after the death of Mr. Armstrong Pastor General of the WCG. And, those who are their founders are former ministers of the WCG.

If they truly believed what they were teaching while ministers in the WCG which supposedly was God's one true Church, how can they have founded new "true" churches of God whose teachings change WCG doctrines. These so-called churches of God differ in doctrine not only from the WCG but between themselves and this is one of the main reasons why they cannot and will not get together to form a single church.

But, there is an even bigger reason why they will not come together: **MONEY.**

Any church of God would welcome any other church of God joining them but none want to come under any other church of God and no longer be the head of their own organization, and lose control over the money, properties, vehicles and buildings they have accumulated.

Let's continue our analysis.

Here are some of the many possible reasons why there are so many different Christian religions in the world including the many churches of God that are splinter groups from the WCG.

1. Men's lust (having a great desire] for money, fame and for power over others.
2. The Bible is greatly misunderstood by men (Mat13: 10-11).
3. Some men, all of a sudden, have decided on their own that they have been called by God to preach the Gospel.
4. Some have decided on their own they have been called by God to be ministers or have been appointed by men who gave themselves the authority to do so.
5. These men all think that God is working out His plan of salvation through men and specifically, through them.
6. They believe that no one could be saved without belonging to a physical and visible organization of men who say they have the truth.
7. They understand God's Church as being a visible organization of men teaching men who have not been given to know the truth as they have. They see themselves as intermediaries between God and men.
8. They think God only ever works through one man at a time, that they somehow have become that man, and that God's truth enters the church through one man who then teaches it to ministers who teaches it to the non-ordained members of the church.
9. They see how easily people can be fooled and they see religion as a means of making lots of money for themselves. Many of the main-

stream Christianity preachers are fabulously rich with one of them owning not one, not two but three executive jets which of course, he says are needed for him to do God's work.

10. These men have great speaking skills and charismatic personalities which attracts and maintains the interest of a lot of people who financially supports them. People follow them because they are entertaining and interesting.
11. The source of their authority for saying someone is an apostle or an evangelist is their belief that if a person is acting as what they think is the way an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, etc. would act, then that person has a ceiling from God to be an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, etc. A totally non-Biblical concept.
12. They don't know the very great differences between God's OT nation of Israel and God's NT spiritual nation which is not an organization of men visible to the world being taught by men who claim to have the truth of God to teach to them.
13. The basic and fundamental reason is their great desire for power, money and fame which we have sometimes heard described as being vanity, lust and greed.

The Great Delusion

So, overall, what is the great delusion affecting men we see heading up the different churches of God as well as the many other Christian churches of the world?

It is the belief that God in NT times is working out His plan of salvation through men. God's First Century church did indeed have men acting as apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc. but it was given to them by Christ as made clear by Eph 4:10-11; they did not choose themselves and place themselves in these offices of responsibility nor were they appointed to these offices by men or organizations of men who gave themselves the authority to do so. On seeing how the early church of God was organized, men have concluded that it was the way it would always exist. So some men, suddenly, rose up one morning and declared that God had called them to do a work for Him. They see themselves as having to preach the Gospel to the world and to be teachers to those they can get to follow them.

Both the men who since the great scattering of God's First Century Church have appointed themselves or who were appointed by an organization of men as evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc. and those who follow them, are being misled. Those who pastor and teach them may

be as well-intentioned as one can be and those who follow them may be as sincere as it is possible for human beings to be but yet both are deceived.

God is the only who can decide who will be called and when they will be called. It is not something any man can do.

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.

Only God the Father can make it possible for men to understand the God level spiritual truths contained in the Bible. And, salvation does not depend on how much truth a person has; rather, the requirement is that God's called and chosen one put into practice the truth they have been given to know and work at increasing their knowledge through their studies of the Bible. Christians have to satisfy what God requires of them not men who say they are God's representatives.

Conclusion

Religion has always been part of the human condition. Men have worshiped the moon, the sun and the stars and have worshiped idols of wood and silver they have made for themselves. They never knew who was the true God who created all things and that He is the only one who is to be worshiped. This is generally the state of the world today.

It was only with the coming into being of the OT nation of Israel that men learned that they should not worship idols but still the practice continued. Nowadays, people still worship all kinds of idols. Of course, but for the truly converted, nobody knows who and what is God and how He is working out His plan of salvation for mankind.

The Christian religions of this world are based on the OT Levitical priesthood with adaptations having been made as required to make it more readily acceptable to people considering social norms have greatly changed from the days of OT Israel. Modern-day Christianity, including the several churches of God now in existence, have developed their own symbolic ceremonies based on those of the OT Levitical priesthood and some of the teachings found in the books of the NT.

Three false beliefs are the source of the great delusion affecting men who say they have a calling to be apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors or teachers.

A delusion is a false belief that cannot be changed by conflicting facts which is why it is impossible to change the beliefs of deluded people.

The first false belief is that acting like an apostle, evangelist, etc. is proof of having received a calling from God to be an apostle, evangelist, etc. This is how Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong came to be known as an apostle.

The second false belief is that God's church as it existed in the First Century would remain unchanged through the ages. There would always be apostles, evangelists, prophets, preachers and teachers and congregations of faithfuls that they would administer.

The third false belief is that God's one, true Church is a visible organization of men which all those who come to conversion must join to be saved. They do not understand that God's NT church is spiritual and not a physical religious organization administered by men who think they are God's true ministry. God and the Word are the ones responsible for calling and teaching all those who come to conversion by opening their minds to understand the spiritual truth contained in the Bible as they study it. Salvation in NT times is between the individual Christian and God through Christ, God the Word.

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

Heb 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We **[truly converted Christians]** have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

The priests of God's NT spiritual nation of Israel or of God's Church are the individual true Christians called and chosen by God the Father. They are the living sacrifices of God's Church dying daily to their past lives of sin as they strive to obey God in all things. They are God's temple in which God and the Word live, they are God's holy nation and kingdom of priests and their teachers are God the Father and God the Word. They are by themselves or in small groups living invisibly among the nations of the world. Conversion is something that goes on in the mind and is not visible to others. In any group of people it is impossible to know who are the true Christians who may be there. This is why the members of God's Church cannot come together to form large groups nor is there any need for them to do so.

God's NT Church is spiritual which means it exists through God the Father calling and choosing men and God the Word teaching them. No man can call anyone to salvation and no man can make it possible for men to understand the spiritual truth of the Bible.

Salvation is not a work of men; it is all God's doing.

No man or organization of men can ever truly claim that but for their being there doing what they say is God's work, God's church would cease to exist and the salvation process would cease.

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 [truly converted Christians] by his Son, [the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman who teaches all things to the holy spirit God the Father's called and chosen ones] whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Since the great scattering of God's First Century Church, He is not sending men (a prophet is one sent by God with a message for His people) to teach His spiritual nation of Israel. It is being taught by the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman.

If it were God's will that His Church remained as instituted in the First Century, He certainly has the power to do so. Heb 1:2 makes clear that this was not His long term goal for His Church. God's Church is a spiritual nation consisting of those called and chosen by God the Father and who are being taught all things by God the Word.

Study Summary

God's NT church is spiritual, composed of individuals called and taught directly by God and Christ, not by a visible organization of men.

Christ is the only high priest and mediator of truly converted Christians; not any man or organizations of men claiming to be God's Church.

Truly converted Christians are the priests, kings, and living sacrifices of God's spiritual nation which is God's one and only true Church.

Salvation depends on our individual relationship with God, not on being members of organizations of men claiming to be God's Church.

The church exists invisibly in all of God's called, chosen and faithful not by their being members of any human organization.

Men developing organizations which they say are God's Church are driven by their lust for money, fame and power.

