

“I will build MY church!”

by Robert Schmid

When the Lord God called Abram and said, “Go...”, “Abram went...”.

That was the beginning of what became the physical Nation of Israel, the Congregation in the Wilderness. God entered into a marriage relationship with Israel. But, because of adultery, the (old) covenant was broken and Israel was scattered throughout the world.

Then, in the **fullness of time**, the Lord God came to earth by causing His Word to become His firstborn son via being born of the virgin Mary and called His name Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ then lived, suffered, died and was resurrected according to the scriptures.

At the appointed time, “when the day of Pentecost had come...”, God sent forth His Holy Spirit and established a new covenant with the spiritual nation Israel consisting of people from every nation who received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This then was the beginning of the New Testament Church, fulfilling Jesus Christ’s prophecy when He told His disciples: **“I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”**

Lets consider a very basic, biblical fact. Jesus said: **“I will build my church”**, but He did not call His church the “Church of Jesus”! We all know that the biblical name of the church is the “Church of God”. Twelve times the N.T. speaks of the “Church of God” or, the “Churches of God”. There is only one conclusion we can draw; Jesus must be **God**, otherwise **His** church that **He** build could not be the “Church of **God**.”

Well, as we know from history, no sooner did Jesus Christ raise up the Church of God, Satan laid the groundwork for a counterfeit church in competition to the Church of God. Considering the deceiver and liar he is, he did not call his church by its true name “The Church of Satan”, rather than he called his church “The Catholic (or Universal) Church”, and since he had to enter into an alliance with the Roman Government, Satan’s church became known as the “Roman Catholic Church”. Satan’s church is a **mixture of good and evil**: Yes, there is a church – that’s **good**, but its another church – that’s **evil**.

The true Church of God, after an initial growth period, became the persecuted “little flock”, scattered throughout the world, lost historically, whereas the false Roman Catholic Church continued to grow to eventually engulf the whole world.

A false concept and pattern was set in motion when Satan raised up a competing church organization by given that church a new name. Eventually this false church /state organization splintered into hundreds of false church organizations each under its own distinct new name – each competing against the others.

In the booklet, Where is the True Church, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote: “WHERE IS the original *true* Church that Jesus Christ founded – the one the living Jesus Christ STILL HEADS today?” Mr. Armstrong wrote that the true Church was to be KEPT in the name of the Father—God and he listed the 12 passages that speak of the CHURCH(es) OF GOD in the N.T. He then explained that in some N.T. instances, a descriptive term is added to the name, as the “Church of God” at Corinth, or the “Churches of God” in Judea.

So, after writing a whole chapter explaining that the only correct name of the true church is “**Church of God**”, he suddenly makes the statement that “today, it (the name) is the “**Worldwide Church of God**”. Undoubtedly there were some valid, human reasons for changing the name from “Church of God” to “Worldwide Church of God”, but in doing so Mr. Armstrong followed a concept and pattern established by the false church.

Lets understand that no one can organize the true “Church of God” into a human organization. Human organizations are inherently divisive. The Church of God is inherently united. Every time someone raises up a new church organization with a new distinctive name, a fence is erected that is causing division (1 Cor. 1:12). Church organizations can be a useful tool **to serve** the Church of God, but they **can not be** the Church of God.

The only acceptable Biblical suffix to “Church of God” is to identify where it is located. This does not mean that every church organization with the name “Church of God” has all the right doctrines, but, at least it tells us that it is not the “Catholic Church”, not the “Lutheran Church”, etc., etc., etc..

Is there any church organization, or Church of God that has **all** knowledge, **all** understanding, **all** correct biblical doctrines, so that they can teach **everybody** else? I don’t believe so. I believe that we **all** need each other so that we can **all** learn from each other. Most importantly I believe that the channels of communication must be kept open amongst **all** people. However, people must be free from human bondage so that the Spirit of God can teach us **all** in spirit and in truth.

I can’t help but be reminded of Herbert W. Armstrong’s words from his February 1939 Good News article, “DID CHRIST Reorganize THE CHURCH?”, where he said: “What has split and divided up the saints in the Church of God? Nothing but ORGANIZATION----which has let to politics, ministers lusting for rule and for power----striving against each other, lining up the brethren on THEIR side, against the other! It is SUCH PREACHERS who have split up and divided our brethren!.....Organization and church GOVERNMENT has brought us only strive, jealousies, divisions, bitterness! It is not of God, and it can bear no other fruit.”

Mr. Armstrong’s words were prophetic and (I believe) inspired. History has already proven that he was correct.

What is the solution to the problem? I am afraid that the only solution is: “Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.” **Come quickly Lord Jesus.**