

(1 Cor. 14:26, 29-31, 37 emphasis mine).

Peter also spoke of this **order** and said, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:10,11). If anyone neglects or hinders the ministration of the gifts from God to one another they will not be good stewards of the grace of God and they quench the spirit.

This one aspect alone is so different than most assemblies today, where all the body is stifled and silenced by the one man pastor ministry and the commands of men, with their programed order, where all are bound up and unable to freely edify one another. Instead they are drawn to the exalted man who does most of the ministry. This is wrong and needs to change.

Scripture speaks of a plurality of "elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). Never do we read of one man in the New Testament called "The Pastor" over all doing most of the ministry and getting a regular salary.

Furthermore, we read of the church gathering in homes and having a meal together as they wait on the Lord and ministered to one another, in prayer and fellowship. The institutional church structures today with their programs and clergy, have hindered many of these functions in the church.

In fact, when examining man's order as opposed to God's order we see that **almost everything** that is done today, from walking into a large building with a denominational name, called a "church", and everything that is on man's programed order, from the Pastor's role over all that often quenches the spirit in others, to their "services" that do not allow the body to minister freely, with the pastors sermon, the pulpit, worship leaders, women leaders, false authority, collections, constitutional laws of man, ushers, theater type environment, salaried ministers, tithing, tax exemption rules, altars, rituals, exalted priest, the silent body ministry, show time religion, no consensus decisions and many more, are all based on the traditions of men and not after Christ.

A Wise Master Builder

God's order was revealed to apostolic workers and also handed down to believers in scripture.

Paul said that God made him a wise master builder (1 Cor. 3:10), to lay the foundation and to show God's order for the churches. We see men like Timothy and Titus bringing others to remembrance of Paul's ways in Christ (1 Cor. 4:17) and the order he handed down was for every church everywhere (1 Cor. 4:17, 1 Cor 14:33).

God's Order in Scripture

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest **set in order** the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:" (Titus 1:5).

Here we see that Paul had a definite "order" for them to be in. The order Paul speaks of here was given by the command and leading of the Spirit and it was not by man's order and wisdom, with programs and philosophies based upon traditions of men.

Paul often warned christians against following man's traditions and order and to beware of anything that was not after Christ (Col. 2:8).

In writing to the Colossians Paul also said, "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." (Col. 2:5).

This "order" among the Colossian believers was a spiritual order and Paul was able to behold it in the spirit. This is God's order, not man's order and to walk in this order a person must be in faith and the leading of the Spirit. No man can make this happen in their lives or in the assembly, although many try to.

Paul wrote of how believers "ought" to behave in the church and said, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Timothy 3:15).

All believers should keep this order, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." (2 Thess. 2:15).

Paul taught the same things "everywhere" and in "every church". (1 Cor. 4:17). So are any churches today exempt? Why would any christian want to do anything different? "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD..." (Psalm 37:23) This has always been God's way.

True spiritual authority flows from Christ to the body as we all live and speak the word of God. Authority is not a static position (Matt. 20:25-27), but only as we abide in Christ and are directed by Him (John 15:5).

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GOD'S ORDER IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

1 Timothy. 3:15
Titus 1:5



**Examining the functioning of
the body of Christ, the church, when
gathered together in God's order
Ephesians 4:15,16 1 Cor. 14:26**

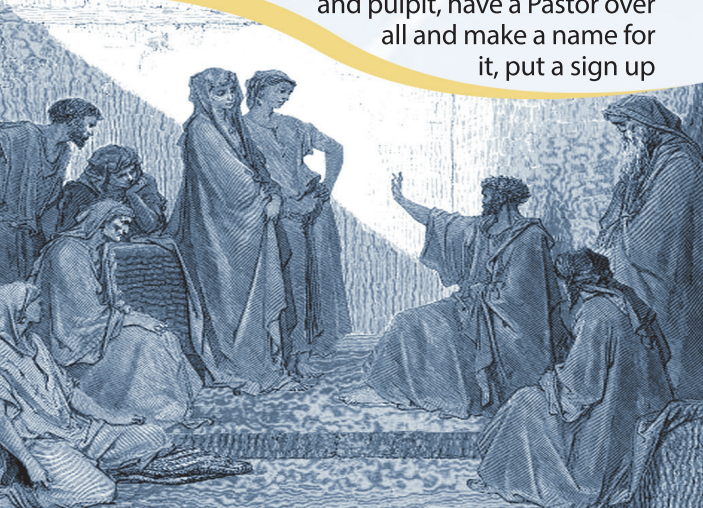
GOD'S ORDER | AND MAN'S ORDER

God's order in the body of Christ is His spiritual working in every part as he leads and empowers believers in all things. Though hidden from the eyes of natural men, it is there nevertheless. This order begins in the spirit and the patient waiting on God as He leads into all gifts, ministry, fruits of the Spirit and sets the order. No person can know this order unless they are in Christ, and walk in the spirit. But sadly, many Christians today are drawn away from God's order and rule in their hearts into a religious form of man's order and exalted leaders.

Man's order does not begin in the spirit, it begins in man's natural mind and human wisdom, and is regulated by programs and traditions of men in the rudiments of the world that can make the word of God of no effect.

Jesus said, "I will build my church" and he is fully able to do this by his power and might, which he has been doing all along. But if you ask many believers today, "how is a church built?" They would say something like, "well, first you save up money for years with a gathering, or one that meets in a school or community center and then you buy a piece of land or go into debt, hire a construction crew and you pay them to build the church building. Then you

put some pews in it, build an altar and pulpit, have a Pastor over all and make a name for it, put a sign up



on the lawn, register with the government and there you go, the church is ready.

Then the whole assembly comes in and sit in rows facing the back of each others heads as they look forward to the exalted man on the podium, or "altar", who gives a message to the church every week.

But this is not how Jesus Christ builds his church, nor has he ever built His church this way. Christ builds his church from the inside out and this work starts from within all believers. The "church" is the body of Christ (*Eph. 1:22, 23*) and a living organism. It is a spiritual house made up of living stones (*1 Peter 2:5*), which is built up in the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is the starting point of Jesus building. It is not a man made religious building or a corporation with bosses and employees. Jesus Christ is the head of the church, which is his body, he is not the head of institutions and man made forms.

The Lord Builds the House

In God's order, all believers must "...grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (*Ephesians 4:15,16*). This edifying (or building up) of one another in love is how Christ builds His Church from the inside out.

In God's order He arranges all things after His mighty working in the saints (*Heb. 13:20, 21*) as believers labourer together with him (*1 Cor. 3:9*). This order begins in the peace of God and by His rule (or governing) in the spirit (*Col.3:15,16*) as we wait on the Lord for ministry in the body one to another (*Rom. 12:3-8*). Only then can we grow up into him (*Eph. 4:15*).

Despite the multitudes of believers who gather in these religious forms, with their various spiritual moments, the evangelistic aspects and some other good ministration seen in many of them, there is a great problem in the churches today and it must be addressed. It is still true today that, "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it" (*Psalms 127:1*).

Many Christians who gather today may seem to be rich and increased with goods and think they have need of nothing, but many are unaware that



they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked" (*Rev. 3:17*). Jesus said these serious words to the Church of Laodicea, but he also said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him and he with me" (*Rev. 3:20*). Jesus wants to dwell in the hearts of all those who will open to him and to "sup" with them, and to participate with them in the assembly as they gather. Without this participation of the Lord among the church they are in danger. Jesus said to the Laodicean church, "I will spue thee out of my mouth." (*Rev. 3:16*). Similarly, all should consider this question, "is Jesus Christ standing outside knocking or is he in the midst being able to effectually work in believers as they assemble?"

For Christians to be able to function fully as the body of Christ, they need to withdraw from man's order (*2 Thess. 3:6, Rom. 16:17, Eph. 5:11*) and walk in God's order, even though this will be very hard for some.

The commands of the Lord in this **order** were spoken of by Paul to the Corinthians when he said "...when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying...Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.³⁰ If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.³¹ For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted... If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are **the commandments of the Lord.**"