

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" 1 Corinthians 14:8

KJV

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"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls..." Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith

April 2025

God's Order in a New Testament Church

When studying God's order in a New Testament church, we must always keep in mind some basic principles:

- *Christ, alone, is Head of His church. (Colossians 1:18)
- *God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)
- *God is a God of patterns. We must use these patterns to understand Biblical order. We must prove everything we find in the New and Old Testaments to make sure we are on the right track. (Hebrews 8:1-6)
- *A church has no authority outside of the authority God gives her. (Matthew 28:18)
- *A NT church must carry out the works she is commanded to carry out. (preach the gospel, baptize, start churches, vote for adding/removing members, practice church discipline) (Matthew 28:19-20)
- *There is an infinite amount of questions or "what if's" we can throw in, but those cannot drive our understanding of the doctrine. God's Word must be the basis for that alone for understanding. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
- *God is not the author of confusion. (I Corinthians 14:33)

Before Jesus gave His church the great commission, He removed all doubt as to who has the authority. Most all of the battles our churches have endured have been over a false teaching that churches have

the authority to do what they want to do.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:18

Jesus started His church and founded it upon Himself. He is the Chief Corner Stone.

"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." Matthew 16:18

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2:18-22

To go against the doctrines that Christ has laid out would be to lay another foundation.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:11

Jesus is to have the preeminence in all things, especially in His local church. He is the Head of His local churches. A New Testament church can do nothing without Christ as her Head. Without the vine, the branches cannot produce any fruit.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him 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: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he 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. For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;" Colossians 1:14-19

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

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Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." John 15:1-8

The "thing" made doesn't have the right to question why it was made. Jesus started His church, He built it and gave her life. She has no ability to challenge what God has established.

"Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?" Isaiah 29:16

When considering "church authority", we must remember that a church is the body of Christ. A body cannot function without her head. Christ provides all nourishment for the body. A church will die without Christ as her Head. If a church were to act on her own "authority" by bringing in false doctrine, she would be removing Christ as her Head and be in danger of God removing her candlestick, the Holy Spirit as Comforter.

"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." 1 Corinthians 11:3

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church," Ephesians 1:22

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

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." Ephesians 5:23

"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." Colossians 2:10, 16-23

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." Revelation 2:5, 14-16

To understand how God deals with His people, with the world and the kingdom of Heaven, we must look at the pattern of the tabernacle and establish the order God has set.

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may

dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it. Exodus 25:8,9

The pattern in Heaven was already completed. Man could not change the pattern. God's glory did not fill the tabernacle until it matched the pattern that He had already laid out. Moses had no input on the pattern, could not make it easier to follow, nor could he make it more inclusive. God gave the wisdom needed to Bezaleel and Aholiab in order for them to build the materials after the pattern. This pattern could not have been followed properly without divine wisdom/gifts. Man could not replicate these patterns. Bezaleel could not use this wisdom to change or alter the pattern.

"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." Hebrews 8:5

"Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD commanded him, so did he. And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up. And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark: And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the vail. And he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses. And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward. And he lighted the lamps before the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the vail: And he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle. And he put the altar of burnt offering by the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash withal. And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys." Exodus 40:16-38

Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had

put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it: And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it withal. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning." Exodus 36:1-3

It is clear God's will was for them to build this tabernacle. He gave them everything they needed to do so. He told them why He wanted it built. He commanded them to build it. God's glory did not fill the tabernacle until Moses finished the work.

What was the purpose of the tabernacle? God had a desire to dwell with His people, to have fellowship. God wanted people to have the ability to honor and glorify Him. His desire was to meet and commune with His people.

"And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Exodus 25:22

"And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Leviticus 26:12

"And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." Exodus 6:7

What did being the people of God mean? The children of Israel were God's ambassadors here on earth. God said He had brought them into the land of the Amorites... and destroyed their enemies from before them. God destroyed the Amorites by the hand of His people. Israel carried out the destruction as God commanded, but it was attributed to God alone. Israel only acted on God's behalf. Israel was God's arm, exacting His vengeance. God's people have power when acting in God's name. By sinning, David gave the enemies of God occasion to blaspheme. God's people are viewed and considered as representatives of God both good and bad. When considering the work we see God do through His people, it is clear the power comes from God and God alone. His people do not have power on their own. Israel was the fewest of all people. God chose them to demonstrate His power through them. In Israel's first conflict upon leaving Egypt, God set this precedence. All of Israel's battles were already won. They were already decided. If Israel didn't show up to the battle, would they still win?

"Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites. And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there. And they turned and went up by the way of Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he, and all his people, to the battle at Edrei. And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon. So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land." Numbers 21:31-35

"And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess

their land; and I destroyed them from before you." Joshua 24:8

"Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember *that* which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid *wait* for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. And Saul gathered the people together, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah." 1 Samuel 15:1-4

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." 1 Samuel 17:45,46

"Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also *that is* born unto thee shall surely die." 2 Samuel 12:14

"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye *were* the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he *is* God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face." Deuteronomy 7:7-10

"The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." Exodus 14:14

Could Israel dictate what battles they wanted to fight; what laws they wanted to follow? The children of Israel had sin in their camp with Achan. They did not follow God's law/instructions. They lost their battle because they were not following God. God was not confined to what Joshua or Israel decided when they went to fight Ai without consulting God.

Consider again, when Israel was not following God concerning the Ark of the Covenant. They were trying to use the ark as a means to force God to be in their favor. It does not work and the ark is taken and the glory of God departs. Man has never and can never force the hand of God. However, God also follows the order that He has established.

The Israelites still had to physically carry out what God had commanded. If they refused to hearken to God and didn't show up to battle, then they didn't get the victory. For example, look at all of the nations they let stick around and later on pollute themselves with by bringing in their false doctrines. Could God have wiped out all the nations that opposed Him with his own power? Absolutely. What way did God choose to demonstrate His power though? Through His chosen people obeying His commands.

"But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel. And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which *is* beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; *and* make not all the people to labour thither; for they *are but* few. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them *from* before the gate *even* unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water." Joshua 7:1-5

"And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ebenezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek. And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men. And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies. So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth *between* the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God. And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband. And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken." 1 Samuel 4:1-4, 21-22

God's order of working through His people extended beyond just dealing with the world. God charged Joshua and Israel to examine the camp and discover the sin. Joshua was to go family by family, person by person to find the sin in the camp. Did God remove the sin in Israel? Yes, He absolutely did but not by His own hand. God lead and directed Joshua and the Israelites by His Word to remove the sin.

What about Achan? What was his relationship with Israel and with God? We do not know how many days passed from when Achan took the spoils from Jericho to the time that he died. There's a minimum of two or three days mentioned plus the time it took for the battle at Ai to take place. What did Achan and his family eat during this time? Did they not still receive manna from heaven? No doubt his fellowship with God was broken, but until he was cut off from Israel he received benefits from being a part of the nation of Israel. Regardless of Achan's relationship with God, Israel was held accountable until they put him out.

"And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put *it* even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *There is* an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed

thing from among you. In the morning therefore ye shall be brought according to your tribes: and it shall be, *that* the tribe which the LORD taketh shall come according to the families *thereof*; and the family which the LORD shall take shall come by households; and the household which the LORD shall take shall come man by man. And it shall be, *that* he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel. So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: And he brought the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarahites: and he brought the family of the Zarahites man by man; and Zabdi was taken: And he brought his household man by man; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide *it* not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, *it was* hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day." Joshua 7:10-26

Does God have the ability to deal with His people Himself? God judged Israel and killed "much people". God absolutely has the ability to carry out judgment against His people. He had the earth open up and fire consumed people and a plague broke out amongst them. These are all examples of God carrying out judgment Himself on His people. However, was this the way God wanted to deal with His people? The point of the law was to give Israel the ability to keep herself pure in God's eyes. God wanted Israel to judge herself through the Word of God and to make herself fit to be the people of God.

"And *when* king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took *some* of them prisoners. And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah. And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because

of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is* no bread, neither *is there any* water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Numbers 21:1-9

"Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took *men*: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, *Ye take* too much upon you, seeing all the congregation *are* holy, every one of them, and the LORD *is* among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard *it*, he fell upon his face: And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who *are* his, and *who is* holy; and will cause *him* to come near unto him: even *him* whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be *that* the man whom the LORD doth choose, he *shall be* holy: *ye take* too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that *was* under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that *appertained* unto Korah, and all *their* goods. They, and all that *appertained* to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that *were* round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up *also*. And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed. The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates *for* a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel. And Eleazar the priest took the brasen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad *plates for* a covering of the altar: *To be* a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which *is* not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses. But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the

LORD. And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah. And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed." Numbers 16:1-7, 31-50

How does God work today? Jesus and His ways have not changed. God works in His kingdom through his New Testament churches.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Hebrews 13:8

The Comforter will do all these things when He is come.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 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. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you." John 16:7-14

In John 13, Jesus is speaking to His church. The Comforter is only given to His New Testament churches. The world cannot receive the Comforter.

"*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." John 14:17

John 16:8 clearly states the Comforter will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. The Comforter is not given to the world so how does He do all these things to the world? He does it through His local church, yet the work gets attributed to God in John 16.

The following Scriptures provide clear evidence of how the Comforter fulfills what was promised in John 16. The Lord working through the church in Jerusalem with the world around experiencing the effects of the Comforter's work.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came

together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:1-8, 14-21, 37-47

The Lord's local churches are ambassadors for Christ. New Testament church members doing God's bidding are administrators in the kingdom of Heaven. Ambassadors do not make laws, cannot change laws, and do not do their own bidding.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Corinthians 5:20

The church in Corinth was referred to as the espoused bride of Christ.

"Would to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:1-3

Marriage is a picture of Christ and His local church. What relationship is a church to strive to have with Christ? One that is perfect, where they are one flesh. The goal of a church is to be one with Christ. A church is to sanctify herself through the Word. A church made up of sinful members cannot be sinless, but if they will heed to God's Word, they can be perfect in their doctrine and practice. We are to use the Word to cleanse ourself individually and as a church. God's order in His New Testament churches is that each church follow the doctrines He has laid out in His Word and being faithful to carry them out according to the will of Jesus Christ, the Head of each local church.