

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

**KJV**

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# The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



*"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 October 2023

### Church Perpetuity — According to the Scriptures

**"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." Matt. 16:18**

Jesus personally built His church. The church is referred to and defined as the "household of God" and "the habitation of God through the Spirit".

**"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." Eph. 2:19-22**

**"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 Tim. 3:15**

Not only did Jesus build His church, but He also gave His church its LIFE and AUTHORITY.

**"(A Song of degrees for Solomon.) Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Ps 127:1;**

**"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20**

This "Life" and "Authority", FROM God and OF God, is what makes the Lord's N.T. churches perpetual. Upon Her origin and foundation by Jesus Himself, the church has always been here on the earth. She has remained present and intact, in spite of the "gates of Hell" attempting to prevail against Her. God's churches have been hindered and attacked through false doctrine, false religion, church splits, heresies, political figures and circumstances.

However, through the centuries, since Christ started His church on the Sea Shores of Galilee around 30 A.D., there has always been at least one local, visible, New Testament church congregation somewhere in the world. This church has consisted of saved, Scripturally baptized members who have covenanted and agreed together, in unity with God, to carry out the Great Commission. This church has had the Holy Spirit dwelling within her as Comforter and has been able to claim and show a true lineage that goes back to the original church Christ started. This is the church that towards the end of the four Gospels as well as in the book of Acts, had settled and was located in Jerusalem.

We know that it was God's intention for His church to be perpetual because He stated this clearly in both Matthew 16:18, previously printed, as well as Matthew 28:20, see below. He states the "gates of Hell would not prevail".

**"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things**

**whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."**

Essentially, Jesus is stating the powerful forces of sin and wickedness of this world, as well as the attempts of Satan, would not succeed in breaking down or destroying His churches. He says He would be with His church, empowering, guiding, and directing Her - even unto the end of the world. In both of these statements by our Lord to His Bride, Christ makes no provision or caveat that the Church might go out of existence, or be destroyed. In fact, He states she would carry on, and endure.

In Matthew chapter 4, Jesus calls out some brethren who were previously saved, and had been baptized by John the Baptist. (See John chapter 1). In accordance with Old Testament prophecies referring to John and the purpose of his ministry, Jesus used these individuals as a prepared material and built "his house".

**"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;" Heb. 3:1-5**

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There are many proofs that Jesus started and indoctrinated His church during His personal ministry. Some of these proofs being the instruction and authority He gave them concerning the practices of the Lord's supper, baptism, church discipline, and mission work. He also ordained specific men to fill the position of Apostle, within this first church.

**"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. 12:28**

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

These show and prove Jesus started, built, and prepared His first church to continue and carry on.

**"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Lk. 24:49**

**"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; *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. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. John 14:16-18**

Jesus speaks to His church here of "another Comforter". As the end of His time here on earth was drawing to a close, Jesus reassured His church that while He would be going back to His father in Heaven, He would not leave them "comfortless".

**"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." John 14:26**

**"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." John 15:26-27**

**"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." John 16:7-13**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8**

Here, in these Scriptures, the promise of the Comforter is explicitly given. Jesus not only declares that His church would be endued with Heaven's power and authority, but in conjunction with this, they would be witnesses of Him to the "uttermost" part of the earth. This word uttermost literally means the END OF, or LATTER END of the earth. So Jesus says here that His church would continue until the end of this earth!

**"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." Acts 2:1-4**

In this passage, the church in Jerusalem receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They receive the promise of the "*Paracletos*". This promise was prophesied and preached of by John the Baptist himself.

**"And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." John 1:32-34.**

In accordance with the promise by Jesus towards His church that she would be endued and empowered by Heaven, the church was to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel". In Acts chapter 2 we see the church in Jerusalem undertaking this commission. Peter and the rest of the apostles preached to the Jews from over 18 different countries and regions of the world that had gathered in Jerusalem. The Gospel was heard by these countrymen and no doubt carried back to their respective parts of the world. The Ethiopian eunuch heard the Gospel in Jerusalem and upon being saved and baptized, returned home to Ethiopia, proclaiming his conversion.

**"And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their way*, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Acts 8:27-39**

Beginning with the brutal murder of the deacon, Stephen, heavy persecutions began afflicting the church body in Jerusalem. Many members were scattered and dispersed into other areas and regions of Israel.

**"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to *his burial*, and made great**

lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed *with them*: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. 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: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their hands* on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Acts 8:1-17

We see here, the church in Samaria is started. This effort included multiple members being sent out from the church in Jerusalem: Phillip, Peter, and John. Phillip obviously did the preaching and baptizing sent out with a limited commission from the church at Jerusalem. It was Peter and John then being sent by the church at Jerusalem after the church heard of the work being done in Samaria by Philip. Peter and John then as ambassadors of the church in Jerusalem, being sent out with the authority of Christ by the church at Jerusalem, who then passed on the Comforter from the Jerusalem church to the body of believers in Samaria.

It was not because Peter and John were special, no, they were simply vessels and members acting on the will and decision-making of the church in Jerusalem under the authority of Christ. As they laid their hands on the saved, Scripturally baptized individuals of Samaria, these individuals were indwelt with the "*Paracletos*" and became "an habitation of the Spirit" in Samaria. This is lineage. This is perpetuity. Jerusalem perpetuated the existence of the Lord's church by birthing, or forming, another church in Samaria under the authority of Christ in the Jerusalem church.

**"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Acts 11:19-26**

By the previous verses, we see members of the church in Jerusalem are scattered to the area of Antioch. When news of the salvation of some Grecians in Antioch reached the ears of the Jerusalem church, they sent Barnabas, as an ambassador and representative of their wishes under the authority of Christ through the church. It's clear that by verse 26 a church was established in Antioch, obviously through the authority and lineage of Jerusalem. Church perpetuity being shown by the succession of one church bringing forth another church down throughout the ages continually just as Jesus promised in Matthew 16:18.

**“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.” Acts 13:1-4**

We see here, the Antioch church undertaking the Great Commission as well and beginning her efforts to perpetuate the establishment of God's churches. Paul and Barnabas were sent by the Spirit of God through the local church at Antioch. The authority to do God's work is only done through a local, New Testament church today. Anything done outside of that authority of Christ through one of His New Testament churches is done *without* Christ's authority.

**“And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, They were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: And there they preached the gospel. And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia: And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples.” Acts 14:1-7, 21-28,**

We can see in these Scriptures, that the Antioch church was responsible for the establishment of churches in the cities of Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium. Elders were ordained in each of these churches. These churches are referred to here as well as

in chapter 16 verses 1-5.

**“Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father *was* a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.”**

One of these elders was Timothy, as he is mentioned in Acts 16:1-5, along with a reference to these churches in Lystra and Iconium. Timothy later became the pastor of the church in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3).

**“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,”**

Ephesus was established by the authority of the Antioch church in Acts 19:7.

**“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.”**

In this account, these individuals were baptized by the authority of the church in Antioch, Paul being sent by the church, and the Comforter was passed to these in Ephesus through the laying on of Paul's hands. As we've discussed above, the Comforter is the "life" and "power" of the body of believers, that is in each local church.

In Revelation 2:1-7, another letter to the church at Ephesus, she is exhorted to repent otherwise she is in danger of losing her "life and authority", the Comforter.

**“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 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 this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst**

**of the paradise of God.”**

Although Paul and Barnabas were the individual missionaries, or men used to do the baptizing and laying on of hands, it was the authority of Christ through the church in Antioch that "authorized" them to do this. Not only does chapter 13 declare that Antioch sent them out, chapter 14:26 says that Antioch was the church who had "recommended" them to the work they'd been doing. Acts 20:17 also refers to the church of Ephesus and Paul's specific address to the elders of this body.

Acts 16 declares the events which occurred in Philippi. While the Scriptures don't specifically say a church was started here, Philippians chapter one makes clear there were "saints of Christ Jesus" and "bishops and deacons" that were there. In Acts 16 we see the conversion and baptism of Lydia and her household, as well as the salvation and baptism of the Philippian jailer. It is clear and evident that a church was established here in Philippi at some time and it is reasonable to assume it was started during the events of Acts 16, through and by the authority of Christ through the church in Antioch.

**“And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us. And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them**

And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed."

"After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them." Acts 18:1-11

Here we see the church at Corinth being established by the authority of Christ through the church at Antioch by Paul having been sent out by the church. In I Corinthians 1:1-2, the Holy Spirit through Paul addresses this church specifically. Again in Acts 18:27-28, Aquila and Priscilla send Apollos to the church at Corinth, of which they were members but living in Ephesus helping Paul with his missionary efforts.

"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:" I Corinthians 1:1-2

"And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ." Acts 18:26-28

Throughout the New Testament and the 1st century, we see the pattern of doctrine and practice that is church perpetuity. Proper lineage is ex-

plified and emphasized in the history of the early churches. Churches were recognized and given "life" when established and formed by the authority of Christ through a New Testament church. Churches did not create themselves or take the Holy Spirit upon them as Comforter by their own will or accord.

A Scriptural New Testament church never received the Holy Spirit through a man, or a board of men. God's work is solely and wholly done by and through His New Testament churches. We can see in the Scriptures over and over again that the perpetuation of the Lord's churches was done by His authority through His local churches.

Historically, the Lord's churches always extended an "arm" from one local church in order to establish another local church. We see this practice throughout the book of Acts as has been noted in multiple places. Even in modern history we can read this same practice in our forefathers as local churches established newly formed churches by extending an arm, or authority of Christ through that local body. This is church succession which is how we have church perpetuity.

If church perpetuity were dependent upon a man or a board of men, we do not have the promise of Matthew 16:18. That promise of Christ was made concerning His local church, not a man or board of men. Church perpetuity is held by the Holy Spirit of truth guiding a local body in doctrine and practice. Each local body is the pillar and ground of the truth preserved by Christ through that body as they will yield to the leadership of the Comforter. If a local body does not yield to His leadership, God will deal with them. However, as the great commission has been followed down through the ages, there are other local bodies that will yield to His leadership and the preservation of truth through her. Perpetuating truth throughout all ages just as Jesus promised.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:18-20

Man has tried since Jesus started His first church to try to "improve" on how to do God's work, specifically the establishing of "churches". We can see in the book of Galatians and Revelation where that heresies were already creeping in the Lord's churches because "man" thought of a "better" way of doing things than God's way. We know that God's way is the only true way, but in mankind's sin, we fool ourselves into thinking we can improve on God's way.

However, in the promise of Matthew 16:18, we see that throughout history, even in the books of Galatians and Revelation there were still some that were holding to the true way of God and had not departed from the faith. We can also see in secular history, that there were always a remnant of the Lord's churches that did not modernize or go along with changing the truths of God's Word. Hence, the council of churches that declared non-fellowship from those early churches in 251 A.D. that had compromised the doctrines of Christ. These churches that stayed true to the Bible showed that perpetuity of the truth has remained down throughout the ages.

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:1-8

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Revelation 3:8-11

"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Revelation 2:9-10

Jesus Christ never relinquished His authority, He simply sent His church out under His authority to carry out the commission and "WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU". We have only the order of the Bible to perpetuate the way of the Lord. The Lord's local, New Testament churches are under His authority to carry out His work as He commanded. His work is accomplished and perpetuated through His churches. To remove Christ as the Head of His local churches and to try to place the authority of perpetuating the truth of God's Word in a man or a board of men is to cease to do God work.

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Ephesians 3:21

Church perpetuity is to see God's truth through His local, New Testament churches continue from the time of Christ's first church until today. This can only be accomplished by church succession. One local church of God establishing another local church of God by the authority of Christ placed in that local body by another church of God down through the ages until today. God's way cannot and SHOULD NOT be improved on. It cannot be improved on because His ways are perfect.

"As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him." Psalm 18:30

"Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" Psalm 77:13

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4:1-6