



## Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????

### And what about the early church????, on: 2011/10/8 12:21

I have to chuckle when I see a title thread that starts out with 'early church' and a posting by one of those we call the 'church fathers'. I am puzzled as why the posters only go to the second century. I mean if you are going to the early church then take it back to Christ and the Apostles. And for the record I am not a Cambelite Church of Christ.

When one reads Mat.18 one sees Christ is building his church and he is still building it today. The church was birthed in Acts 2 through the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. At first the early believers met in the temple but later separated and formed its own identity in Jesus. In the first 30 or so years the church was a living breathing, ORGANISM. Not the organization that evolved in the second century. That is not a typo. Organization began creeping into the church at the close of the first century and evolved into the monstrosity we have today.

Reason being the church was turning away from the Holy Spirit by the end of the first century. One could observe that the church at the end of the first century was not the same dynamic church that one saw in the first 30 years being birthed and spreading out of Jerusalem. This early church was full of life and joy of Jesus. It had signs and wonders. The pagans were drawn to the church in Acts because it offered something their religions could not offer. It offered life. The life of Jesus.

Has anyone ever wondered how did the early church survive and even thrive? I mean the Acts church had no Bible, no church fathers, no Sermon Index, Yet they grew and preached the gospel. How did they do it? They had the Holy Spirit. In all honesty the early Acts church had more of a dependence on the Holy Spirit then the American church does today. Actually the theology of the American church does not allow for the working of the Holy Spirit.

For the first 3 decades or so the church in Acts was in dependence on the Holy Spirit and remarkably the church flourished. Even in its first doctrinal crisis there was no appealing to the church fathers. None to appeal to. But during the circumcision controversy James said it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us. There was an appeal to the Holy Spirit and his wisdom.

If we believe that Revelations was written around 90 AD or so there is a powerful plea of Jesus to the churches of Asia Minor. To all of the seven churches Jesus says he that has an ear let him hear what the SPIRIT SAYS to the churches. This is almost like a prophetic cry as the churches were starting to listen to men and not the Spirit.

The amazing thing is that same Spirit is still speaking today. Where you ask? China, Iran, Africa. But not in America or Europe. You look back and long for the revivals of times past. You want to see another Jonathan Edwards or Owen Roberts.

Saints look around the world and revival is happening. Look at China. China is called the modern day book of Acts. Look at Iran. Does anyone know what is happening in Iran? Are you aware that in 1979 there were only 500 believers in Iran under the Shah. Now 30 years, later there are over 100,000 believers in Iran controlled by Islam. Voice of the Martyrs estimate between 500 to 600 people a day are coming to Christ in Iran and that number is expected to grow. That is the Spirit moving. That is revival.

There were some Chinese house church leaders who were touring some American mega churches. When asked what they thought of the American churches. They respectfully answered, 'It is amazing what the American church can do..... without the Holy Spirit.'

Blaine Scogin

**Re: And what about the early church????, on: 2011/10/8 13:27**

Quote:

-----'It is amazing what the American church can do.....without the Holy Spirit.'  
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Fact check: Who said this?

Not that I dont agree with that statement because I do... I just hear a lot of "quotes" like that from pulpits, etc and I wond er if they are were actual quotes, or just made up by some preacher somewhere to make a point.

Krispy

**Re: Krispy, on: 2011/10/8 13:45**

I remember seeing that quote in a magazine but don't remember which one. It might have been something out of VOM. Maybe someone ekse in the forum might know.

Blaine

**Re: - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/8 15:53**

Hi Krispy :O)

Paris Reidhead quotes a "Chinese Christian" saying this in his sermon "Ten Shekels and a Shirt."

Doug

**Re: And what about the early church???? - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/8 16:57**

Hi martyr:

You said:

"I have to chuckle when I see a title thread that starts out with 'early church' and a posting by one of those we call the 'ch urch fathers'. I am puzzled as why the posters only go to the second century. I mean if you are going to the early church then take it back to Christ and the Apostles."

Answer: There are controversial scriptures that various camps within modern Christianity disagree on. They each claim some plausible grammatical reason for their differing interpretations, and they each claim to be led by the same Holy Sp irit in coming to their differing interpretations. They all have the Bible, and the same Spirit, and yet they somehow all still disagree.

Their was however, unanimity among the early Church Fathers on many of these same controversial Scriptures. (With o thers, like Church polity, there was not.)

However, where their interpretation of Scripture was universally agreed upon, there is very strong proof that that interpre tation is the correct one.

martyr, you wrote:

"The amazing thing is that same Spirit is still speaking today. Where you ask? China, Iran, Africa. But not in America or Europe. You look back and long for the revivals of times past. You want to see another Jonathan Edwards or Owen Rob erts."

The Spirit is speaking in America and in Europe. The test of the Spirit "speaking", or rather as I would say, the Spirit "tru ly working", is not some outward, great, movement or revival, but rather it is the inward awakening, regeneration, and sa nctification of at least one, and only one, miserable soul. You know, dear martyr, that the angels rejoice in the Third Hea ven over the "revival" of only one.

Recall too, that Jesus wasn't interested in great movements. He didn't consider it a failure that the multitudes never cam

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e around to His inspired way of thinking and doing. Instead, He was content to work with only a few. With only twelve men primarily, our Lord was content to teach, train, and model before the way, the truth, and the life!

We are grateful that God seems to be working mighty revivals in many other parts of the world, but that does not necessarily mean they do things the way Jesus wants them to. I am sure you would ultimately agree, the Truth of God in the hearts of men is far more important than great, outward movements.

When even one soul trembles at God's Word; to get it right, to learn it, obey it, live it and become it, the Spirit is speaking and working MIGHTILY!

"...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isaiah 66:2

**Re: And what about the early church???? - posted by StarofGOD (), on: 2011/10/8 22:15**

martyr wrote..

" They had the Holy Spirit. In all honesty the early Acts church had more of a dependence on the Holy Spirit than the American church does today."

This why I think the verse is not just preaching, etc. but of the Word becoming flesh, divine partaking of His holiness. There are millions of Bibles in the world, it is the obedience to it that we lack.

Amo\_8:11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

**Re: Dietolive, on: 2011/10/9 11:15**

Doug,

Brother I appreciate your post and the spirit in which it was written. While your observation may be valid I must respectfully take a different view. Or rather offer a different angle. The fact that there may be different interpretations of scripture should not stop us at the second century. We can go to Acts and see how the early church operated and did so with consensus. They operated in an accord with the Holy Spirit.

When you look at Acts 15 the young church was facing its first doctrinal crisis. The crisis was how to view these new Gentile believers coming into the church. One party in the church was saying that in addition to believing in Jesus the Gentiles had to be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses. Paul and Barnabas were saying that salvation was solely by faith in Jesus Christ.

The upshot of all of this was a conference convened in Jerusalem. The apostles and elders were in uncharted waters. There was no Sermon Index, no church fathers, no creeds to reference. There was the Torah and other Old Testament scriptures. But God was doing a new thing in the early days of the Acts church. The new thing was the Holy Spirit.

There was much discussion and debate and no doubt much prayer for the Spirit's wisdom. What emerged was the letter to the Gentiles. There is an interesting phrase in that letter that says 'it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us'.

I share Acts 15 because this is one example of the Acts church listening to the Spirit and not to men. And this is where the concern lies. We have this collection of men called the church fathers. We elevate them as the final authority in certain matters. But they are only men. Whether it be the church fathers or the Puritains they are only men. We do better to listen to the Spirit through his word.

The scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Jesus spoke the same thing to the churches in Revelation when he said that he that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. That same Spirit is still speaking today.

At the risk of being heretical, we do better to set aside the church fathers and listen to Jesus.

Blaine

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**Re: - posted by looserchapel (), on: 2011/10/9 12:42**

Brother Blaine you expressed in a remarkable way what I have in my heart for a time now... it's sad but I believe God can work this out...

Blessings

**Re: , on: 2011/10/9 14:47**

Bonjour my brother. And amen. I am so sorry my French is limited. But may we truly listen to his blessed Spirit.

Blaine

**Re: Star of God, on: 2011/10/9 14:52**

Sister do agree. There is a profound mystery when we partake of that holy nature that becomes the incarnated word in our lives.

Blaine

**Re: The Emliwering Spirit, on: 2011/10/9 17:15**

Ever since I started this thread I have been thinking about the early church. Not the one of the second century. But the early church of Acts. I stand in awe of how God used a group of 'unschooled, ordinary' men and women to accomplish the work of preaching Christ to the then known world. How did they do it?

I mean imagine. You are one of the eleven disciples in Mat. 28. You have been charged to go and make disciples of ALL the nations. You have no game plan, no strategy, no mission board to back, not even a group of intercessors to pray for you. So how are you going to accomplish this monumental task?

I imagine the disciples forgot that Jesus said he would be with them till the end of the age. A promise for us today. Jesus was going to empower the disciples for world evangelism and discipleship. This promise is restated again Acts 1:8 when we see Jesus telling the apostles they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them. They would be witnesses of Christ in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. An activity that still goes on today. God was and still empowering his church to go and witness of Christ and make disciples in his name. When you read Acts you see this is what common, unschooled people did. They were advancing the kingdom of God.

It is hard for us in the 21st century to wrap our minds around this. We feel the more complex things are the greater the advancing of his kingdom. We read Acts like a Tim LaHaye novel, something like Christian fiction. I leave with you with his true story as reported by Open Doors.

A few years ago two young Chinese peasant sisters came to Christ. With Bibles being scarce they had only one New Testament given to them to share. They only had a few weeks of discipling. Persecution was a threat in that area so the trainers could not stay long. A few months later a brother followed up on the sisters to see how they were doing. Here is how the conversation went.

Brother....Sisters, what have you been doing?

Sisters with bowed heads and meekness.....Honorable brother we have been sharing Jesus and starting churches. (SI please hold your judgement. This is China after all.)

Brother with condescending look.....Oh really! Starting churches? How many people in your smallest church?

Sisters with respectful pose and quietly talking to each other.....Honorable brother our smallest church has 25 people.

Brother still with condescending look.....Oh really. Ok. How many people in your largest church and how many churches have you started.

Sisters still with submissive bowed heads quietly talking to one another.....Honorable brother our largest church has over 5000 people and we have started over 30 churches.

Brother with stunned look.....5000 people and 30 churches. How did you do this? You only had a few weeks of training.

Sisters with resolved looks at brother.....We pray to the Holy Spirit and do what he tells us to do.

End of story.

Blaine

**Re: Setting aside the Early Church Fathers and only "listening to Jesus" - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/9 17:21**

Brother Blaine:

You said:

"At the risk of being heretical, we do better to set aside the church fathers and listen to Jesus."

All that you said concerning the history of the Church in Acts 15 was of course true, and I appreciate (what appears to me to be) your gentle and balanced spirit. I wonder however, and please consider this, if there is something amiss in your formula for determining the truth?

As I understand it, you advocate looking to the Scriptures, and praying for the Spirit to give the proper interpretation; in the end seeking a consensus in the {local} Body.

And I would say that this has been done for centuries since the Reformation, with hundreds of resulting denominations and many more splintering off every year. I don't doubt the sincerity of the believers, nor do I doubt that they believe they are seeking the Lord's Spirit for guidance.

What I have no doubt about though is that they nonetheless come to different conclusions. How can this be? The Bible is true; the Spirit is available: what then lacks?

Could it be all the false understandings about the Bible itself, and the nature of "truth" and the nature of "culture." I would think so.

I also think, that what you say about "setting the church fathers aside and listening to Jesus", misses the point.

The point was that the Church Fathers were in fact agreed on many things. It is highly unlikely that all of them could have gotten the exact same thing wrong in exactly the same way.

Many of them write within one lifetime of the apostles themselves. How likely is that they were all wrong about such important things? Very unlikely.

The problem, as I see it then, is that much of the things that the Fathers all seemed to agree upon are things that are against our popular doctrines and against our modern Hollywood-inspired western culture.

So, even though the evidence is therefore so strong for a particular interpretation, the modern western Church marches out every plausible argument against it: the Fathers were affected by their culture, they were just pharisees, they majored on minors, they were legalists, etc. Its all just grasping for straws.

Question: Why didn't the Church Fathers of the second century just all get together and pray that the Spirit would give them the true understanding of some particular passage?

Because it wasn't even necessary; they were only one or two generations removed from the apostles; They could go to Corinth to read the original autographs and hear what the Apostles had taught verbally, either from the elders who heard Paul, or from their sons; they could go to Ephesus and speak to the ancient men who had sat at John's feet. There was no mystery.

We don't have to wonder and hope and pray about what the interpretation was, if the whole second century Church und

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erstood it only one way.

In any case, just my thought for you to consider, if the Lord leads your heart to do so.

Be well in the Lord my Brother,  
Doug

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/10/9 19:00**

Amen Brother Doug.

Here is the problem. So many things that the Evangelical Church in North America, considers true is false. So many practices of the modern evangelical church are cultural and not Scriptural. The early church fathers were much closer to the apostolic original than our modern churches and we would do very well to look to them more even if it goes against everything you felt was right in your church situation.

Here is the problem it sounds very spiritual to say we just need to listen to the Holy Spirit or follow Jesus but the original Apostles called our Master the Lord Jesus Christ and not just a glib Jesus and that the Holy Spirit to the Apostles was a person of the Trinity who was given to those that obeyed Him.

The Holy Spirit led into obedience and sacrifice in the days of the Apostles. And the Holy Spirit was not just for their comfort or to receive a "word" from for their selfish spirituality.

We need to really ask if we have the genuine article and if we are willing to look to the early church fathers as having more truth than us. This might be true!!

**Re: , on: 2011/10/9 23:13**

I've tried using the ECF, those that were contemporaries to the Apostles and those disciplined by those contemporaries to prove out a post-trib resurrection and a coming anti-Christ but it doesn't persuade many.

I have a much longer list of quotes, but can't find it right now but this link says a lot on just that one topic ...

[http://www.totall.exagorazo.net/Post-Tribulation/Mirrors/Last%20Trumpet%202000/www.geocities.com/lasttrumpet\\_2000/ecf/index.html](http://www.totall.exagorazo.net/Post-Tribulation/Mirrors/Last%20Trumpet%202000/www.geocities.com/lasttrumpet_2000/ecf/index.html)

Much to my displeasure, I was forced to study cults, heresies and the RCC for far too long and found that the great majority of these splinter groups that you mention, Doug, are because of one person that wants a following, so he adds a new teaching or new law to GOD's Word and wha-lah - all of these off-shoots of protestantism.

Paul lamented with tears, that as soon as he would leave \*Ephesus that ravenous wolves would rise up from among the number there and twist doctrine - so this problem is nothing new and Satan has the wisdom of who to pick, who's open to some sort of ego-trip, like Mary Baker Eddy or Joseph Smith, etc. etc. that will cause another split between us - but Paul said that division was necessary to separate the approved from those who are not. Some followed Jesus just for the fish and bread - others to gainsay over others.

The only sure fire way to prove out a doctrine is with The Word of GOD and a good working knowledge of the Greek, 'if' in a debate - but even then, the word heresy defined from the Greek is "the opinion chosen" and if a person isn't open - nothing on earth will dissuade them - not The Word of GOD nor the words of those who knew the Apostles.

The further on and away from the contemporaries of the Apostles, the less reliable these ECF become. I only know that from being forced to debate a RCC scholar/author.

When the ECFs begin to contradict the contemporaries of the Apostles, that's when one realizes that what Paul said was

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true - as soon as he left the Church, it started and if a person cannot be shown error from using The Word of GOD alone and with the original languages and grammar - that is what Jesus told us would happen as well.

New ideas make somebody, somebody, and that's the way every schism in church history started.

We're praying for John 17 to come soon. Hope more join in. Amen.

**Re: The Ministry of the Holy Spirit, on: 2011/10/10 0:49**

Respectfully we must come to an understanding of the Holy Spirit's ministry in the church today. His ministry is an ongoing ever present dynamic. The same Spirit that spoke to the church in Acts is still speaking to the church today. God told Moses in the burning bush 'I AM that I AM'. Jesus told the Jews that before Abraham was born I AM. Jesus in answering the Sadducees said I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead but of the living. He is a present reality.

If the Spirit be God and the scriptures say he is. Then the Spirit is a present dynamic speaking to the church even today. I began this thread by asking the question how did the Acts church preach the gospel without the church fathers or a complete Bible. They had the promise of Acts 1:8. They had the Holy Spirit and the gospel was marvously preached. People were converted, lives were changed, and the kingdom grew. All without the church fathers, Greek and Hebrew word studies, and so forth. We bless God that such are available. But one wonders is the church in America doing any better with our Bible schools, seminaries, word studies, church fathers and so forth. We have correct theology but do we have the Spirit. Do we have Jesus. Peter and John were two ignorant fishermen. The NIV called them unschooled, ordinary men. But the Jewish leadership took note they had been with Jesus.

In places like Iran and China great moves of God are taking place. Revival if you will. These places lack many of the resources we have. They do not even have Bibles. But they have the Holy Spirit moving in power.

I say again the Acts church had a greater dependence on the Holy Spirit than the church in America. And look what they accomplished. The church in China and Iran have a far greater dependence on the Holy Spirit and look what they are accomplishing. VOM estimates 500 or more people come to Christ a day in Iran. I doubt very seriously if that many come to Christ a month in this country. It goes back to the power of the Holy Spirit.

Also I get concerned when we elevate a body of men, as the church fathers, as the sole repositories of truth. That may not be the intent. But it seems there is this attitude they got it all together. Let us remember they are only men. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. He is the one who will lead us and guide us into all of the truth.

Respectfully,

Blaine Scogin

**Re: Jesus-is-GOD - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 0:53**

Hello Sister, (and a pleasure to meet you!)

First, I think you are on the right track regarding there being only one second coming of our Lord...

Second, regarding the rest of what you said, I think you have written well. I would just like to say a few things to clarify some. I ask you to please bear with me:

I am sure a great number of divisions have occurred because of and through "deceit" and the desire to find something new. Deceivers, by definition I would think though, would found "cults" however, not true Christian denominations as I was speaking of in my post.

You seem to realize this when specify the cult founders of so-called "Christian Science" and of "Mormonism." I was not referring to how cults are founded, (i.e. through deceit and lies), but how well-meaning Christian denominations are founded, (i.e. through looking to the Word and lots of people agreeing together that they are "feeling led" by the Spirit to understand some certain text or texts differently than others.)

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For context, please zip through the history of the western Church with me. First, we have Jesus, then the apostles, then their direct disciples (now we're into the second century). Then we have their disciples, and then theirs, and so on.

Then comes Constantine, and his Church/State hybrid. Then the Bishop of Rome becomes a worldly prince (now we're into the 7th century). Then over 1200 years of gross darkness, with only little sparkles of light shining forth here and there.

Then we have the dawning day of a massive Reactionary Movement: the Reformation. (Now we're into the 16th century.) A lot of good comes from it, but a lot is lost. Because the movement is in the main fueled by a Reaction against Roman Catholicism, new errors are added in the opposite direction, while many "Catholic" doctrines and practices are thrown out, and even some errors are retained.

Time goes by, and well-meaning Christians come along who want to purify Protestantism, (they then follow the sincere method I've outlined above); over several centuries this process is repeated hundreds of times, and finally we arrive at today.

This is the "long version" of what I was trying to say. Therefore, the "looking to Jesus alone for the true interpretation" method obviously isn't perfect. There are a lot of subjective variables attached that may affect one's views of which interpretation is correct: (like Bible knowledge, ancient language knowledge, properly understanding the nature of logic, and of logical fallacies, the contemporary culture and how much one allows that to influence his interpretations, denominational inertia and the nature of "conservatism", etc.)

Then, dear Sister, you speak of absolute proofs:  
You write:

"The only sure fire way to prove out a doctrine is with The Word of GOD and a good working knowledge of the Greek, 'if in a debate - but even then, the word heresy defined from the Greek is "the opinion chosen" and if a person isn't open - nothing on earth will dissuade them - not The Word of GOD nor the words of those who knew the Apostles."

I agree there is no such thing as absolute proof when debating a person against his will. For instance, the dead rising again and telling you so, would logically be absolute proof; but Abraham in Paradise confirmed the utter irrationality of proud arrogant people. They will refuse to believe something, even if the dead themselves rose again and told them so.

My second clarification then regards the nature of the proof that I am talking about. When I say: when the Early Church all agreed on a doctrine, that is great evidence that this was the understanding of the apostles who had just recently been teaching them.

This is my point: The fact that the earliest Christians all agree on a particular interpretation of Scripture is a PREPONDERANT amount of evidence, logically; it is MIGHTY evidence, but only to one who is SEEKING to know.

Finally, I do not expect people to listen to or even consider this evidence, those people I mean, who have already steadfastly determined in their hearts that they will NEVER submit to what the earliest Christians after the apostles believed, if it means having to change their views.

That, dear Sister, would require a miracle of God's grace, something the strongest logical proofs alone are incapable of working in the human heart.

Thanks for reading, and I wish you well in the Lord,  
Doug

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**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/10/10 1:07**

Quote:  
-----In places like Iran and China great moves of God are taking place. Revival if you will. These places lack many of the resources we have. They do not even have Bibles. But they have the Holy Spirit moving in power.  
-----

Brother,

what many do not understand is that the Chinese home church network has rules, authority structure and submission that many would not follow in the West considering it "cultish" and "controlling". The Holy Spirit in these believers leads them to sacrifice for the Gospel in submitting to authority, and church practice and doctrine. Watchman Nee established much of what the church order is for the home churches and part of this order in scripture was headcoverings for the sisters. (which is practiced by many in home churches).

Watchman Nee's desire was to go back to the Early Church Fathers and Apostles and see what is the most Biblical Church practice and he gleaned much from the "brethren" movements which were an attempt to do this. A great book on this subject of church structure that has been practiced throughout the 2000 years by small remnant groups is: The Pilgrim Church by B.H. Broadbent.

The fact is that the Holy Spirit is not a license for us to be free to practice our religion how we want but leads us into submission to authority and to biblical doctrine and practice. The Spirit of God leads into all truth. That truth is not defined by us but we must lose our own wills and allow the Spirit to lead us into this truth and obedience to God's will.

We want to follow the Apostles Traditions. Also we want to follow the ways of those after the apostles. It is clear those traditions were not diluted or changed much till AD 300. To say all the churches became legalistic somehow right after the 12 apostles died is not right nor valid.

The confusion modern evangelicals have with the concept that it is all by grace and that you cannot lose the salvation is one of the major problems when therefore reading "ANY" church fathers even letters RIGHT AFTER the apostles NONE of it works with the New Testament and it is like reading a legalistic rule book compared to the idea of grace that many portray. But when the New Testament is read rightly with the right emphasis on Grace and Truth and in the fear of the Lord then those other writings fit very clearly.

Many evangelicals have no idea or cannot fit the idea in Revelation why the Spirit of Christ says repeatedly: "We will be judged by our works" I know thy works!

The Church Fathers relied on the Spirit of God and saw great exploits in their day, as the Gospel spread to the 4 corners of the earth, with great unity and blessing from the Lord.

**Re: , on: 2011/10/10 2:07**

Hi Brother Doug. I don't see where you and I are in any disagreement, foundationally speaking.

Only here, in this one paragraph, if I could just add a bit of my understanding -

""You seem to realize this when specify the cult founders of so-called "Christian Science" and of "Mormonism." I was not referring to how cults are founded, (i.e. through deceit and lies), but how well-meaning Christian denominations are founded, (i.e. through looking to the Word and lots of people agreeing together that they are "feeling led" by the Spirit to understand some certain text or texts differently than others.)""

If Jesus promised that His Spirit would "lead us into all truth", then these who are "feeling led" to understand differently than what is Truly Biblical, are being "led" by what spirit? Is there any "spiritually neutral ground"? And if "heresy" is defined by GOD as, "Choice, to choose for oneself, the opinion chosen" - then to me, it would seem the source of their non-

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Biblical beliefs are no different than the same source who would stretch things even further to be called a cult... ie, same spirit or "a different spirit", or a "different Jesus", as Jesus 'is' The Word of GOD and no lie is of the truth. Any belief that is against what The Word of GOD in it's/His entirety states, is from the father of lies to divide HIS Body --- same 'source' that would produce a cult as well.

I believe the controversy may be over a thread posted here on the Revival section. A thread that I've thoroughly enjoyed, but know that the topic is the most debated topic on any forum and one that won't be resolved until The LORD returns, though we pray that as the darkness increases in this world that His Light will be poured out all the more. It's possible that that may happen, from reading Daniel :) and then at the same time - we'd see the fulfillment, once and for all of John 17 - Jesus' prayer and ours.

And if the thread that I read on this Revival section, that quotes the ECF on 'Salvation' is being questioned - I know that Brother Blaine would agree with those quotes, doctrinally and by knowing that they are from those who sat under the Apostles, themselves. Rather amazing thread at that. Is there a link for it? - I can't find it on a web search and there's subtitles that we're instructed to see that need a link to see.

The LORD Bless you and I pray that we all see that, on this particular thread - that in the end - it 'does' indeed take His Spirit to lead us into all truth, as you, as well as Blaine have agreed on - and that it does take our own 'freewills' to receive His True Truths.

The thread that may be in question is, in my mind, an important one - especially in these days.

His Best to you both.

**Re: The Centrality of the Gospel, on: 2011/10/10 9:50**

Respectfully, brothers and sisters,

The New Testament reminds us of the centrality of the gospel. The Apostle Paul writes 1 Cor.15 that he passed on to us, even today, what he also received. That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose on the third day according to the scriptures. In essence this was the message that the early church in Acts proclaimed and lived out. And this is the same message the church of today proclaims and lives out. The gospel message is about faith and life in Jesus Christ.

But how are we to live out the reality found in Jesus. It has to be through his Spirit. I raised the question in this thread how did the Acts church spread and live out the gospel. It was with a dependence upon the Spirit. Before the church fathers or even the Bible the Holy Spirit was present shepherding, counseling, guiding the young church. His gifts were present to build up the church. His servants were empowered to preach the gospel and do miracles to authenticate that gospel.

Saints this is what I am trying to convey. The church in Acts was successfully dynamic because of her dependence on the Holy Spirit. I know I am sounding like a broken record. But when you read Acts how could the first century church do what she did without the Spirit? For that matter how can the churches in China, Iran, and India do what they are doing without the Holy Spirit. Jesus taught that apart from me you can do nothing.

Greg and Doug I seem to hear you say that dependence on the Spirit of truth apart from the church fathers will lead to doctrinal error. I don't think so. If one is holding to the gospel message as Paul articulated 1 Cor.15 and faithful in reading the New Testament under the instruction of the Spirit God will preserve him from false teaching. The promise of John 10 is the sheep will not listen to the voice of the stranger. Of course a Christ-centered fellowship would be a great help.

Brothers I am not trying to be divisive in my posts but urge for a dependence upon the Spirit of Jesus. I think we all would agree that the gospel is central in our walk with Jesus and its message is what saves the lost. I pray that we would be filled with the Spirit's power so we can live out and proclaim that message.

Respectfully,

Blaine

**Re: martyr - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 10:28**

Dear Brother Blaine -

First: I don't deserve your respect dear Brother, so I appreciate your humility in specifying so. I respect you too.

Second: You provoke several thoughts when you say:

"Respectfully we must come to an understanding of the Holy Spirit's ministry in the church today. His ministry is an ongoing ever present dynamic. The same Spirit that spoke to the church in Acts is still speaking to the church today."

and again:

"Then the Spirit is a present dynamic speaking to the church even today. "

Dear Brother, please consider the promise of our Lord that you implicitly refer to:

"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 16:12-13

I think a fundamental misunderstanding of these verses undergirds the WHOLE basis for why there are hundreds of denominations today, and for why we still argue over whether or not to take this or that apostolic instruction literally today.

Getting John 16:13 wrong creates a HUGE problem for us. But how could we be so wrong about how to apply these verses? How can this be?

Question: Who was Jesus speaking to when He gave this promise? Answer: The apostles.

Question: Who must have been the recipient of these promises then? Answer: The apostles.

Why? Because they were going to establish the Church after Jesus went to Heaven. Here Jesus is promising the apostles that they would be given supernatural and infallible insight and understanding, after Jesus left them.

This promise was NOT given to other Christians then, nor unto us, today. Do you see what I am saying dear Brother? (When this "clicked" for me, it made all the difference...)

Only the apostles were promised the inspiration of the Spirit, not us. This promise was not given to us, but to the apostles. That is why we can trust the rest of the New Testament.

How can we use this verse to prove (correctly), that the New Testament is infallible true, and also use this verse (incorrectly) to prove that we will necessarily come to the correct conclusions if we just sincerely pray hard enough for the Holy Spirit's inspiration. The verse only proves the apostles' inspiration; not ours today...

Brother Blaine - You go on to say:

"People were converted, lives were changed, and the kingdom grew. All without the church fathers, Greek and Hebrew word studies, and so forth. We bless God that such are available. But one wonders is the church in America doing any better with our Bible schools, seminaries, word studies, church fathers and so forth."

I wish to clarify here that when you state that they did all of what they did without the Church Fathers, Greek and Hebrew word studies, etc., you are missing the point. The Bible Helps you mention do not "empower" Christians for victory; they rather only "help" us establish the truth that the infallible apostles gave us. They obviously didn't need those things back then, because they (unlike us) were promised to be "infallibly" led in the truth.

Finally, you say:

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"Also I get concerned when we elevate a body of men, as the church fathers, as the sole repository of truth. That may not be the intent. But it seems there is this attitude they got it all together. Let us remember they are only men. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. He is the one who will lead us and guide us into all of the truth."

I understand you. Please understand though, that we are not elevating a bunch of fallen men to be the sole repository of truth. The apostles, (and only the apostles), were given that promise. Their writings alone are the sole repository of truth, (excepting the Old Testament, of course.)

Please understand though, that when the Early Church Fathers on the other hand, join together with one voice on a particular doctrine, it is strong proof that their position is the correct one, because they were in a much better position to know better than we are today.

However, the vast majority of Protestantism today rejects the testimony of the Fathers, claiming instead (implicitly) some kind of inspiration to interpret the Scriptures correctly, based on promises NOT EVEN MADE TO THEM.

Do you see, my dear Brother?

With warm regard and like-respect,  
Doug

**Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2011/10/10 11:16**

Doug said, "Only the apostles were promised the inspiration of the Spirit, not us. This promise was not given to us, but to the apostles. That is why we can trust the rest of the New Testament."

But this verse (Jn. 16.13) is not about a promise of infallible inspiration of the Scriptures. It's about being led into all the truth.

"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."

Yes, our Lord was speaking to the apostles when He said this. But the promise is for us all-- to be led into all the Truth, and into "things to come." The Holy Spirit in the earth is our One Guide into the Truth. When He is not given His rightful place we are quickly in the paths of error.

As to the "early fathers," they must be held to the same test we all are. If what they said lines up with Scripture (and in a lot of cases it does), then, Amen. If not... I am not obliged to follow them.

And so... I think it is a serious mistake to go to them as supposedly the ones who were the correct interpreters, in all cases, of what the apostles meant. Sure, a lot of what they said was good. Why so? Because it lines up with Scripture.

And of course we have a special love for those early ones, many of whom paid with their lives for their devotion to our Lord.

But what they said must be held to the test of Scripture. We have the privilege-- and the responsibility-- of being guided by the Holy Spirit Himself in our Christian walk. He, of course, will never lead us in ways that are contrary to Scripture.

...Doug, are you familiar with David Bercot? What you are asking us to espouse is Bercot's teaching (Will The Real Heretics Please Stand Up).

AD

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

**Re: , on: 2011/10/10 11:19**

Quote:  
-----This promise was NOT given to other Christians then, nor unto us, today. Do you see what I am saying dear Brother? (When this "clicked" for me, it made all the difference...)

Only the apostles were promised the inspiration of the Spirit, not us. This promise was not given to us, but to the apostles. That is why we can trust the rest of the New Testament.  
-----

Brother Doug, forgive me for feeling shook and needing to reply to a post not addressed to me...

As I read the whole of the N.T., I see that there's only One Holy Spirit of Truth, Who Constantly testifies only To the / His Truth that we hear/read and bears witness within all of us when we're exposed to a lie against The Truth ... it's just a question if we "choose" to believe the Truth that His Spirit is testifying to. Heresy is choice. That "choice" we make, every time we choose to believe a lie against the truth that His Spirit is witnessing/speaking through to us and why Paul put the responsibility on each of us individually to adhere to "sound doctrine" as equally as "living the life".

If we were alone on a deserted island, He would still lead us into all truth, if we only listen and kick aside our personal viewpoints. He is Faithful to "lead His Sheep by His Voice, so that they will not follow another".... Same Spirit of Christ.

The Apostles were the only ones that had the 'Authority' to write Scripture and set up the first Church - but the Same Spirit that dwelled in them - dwells in us and "even shows us things to come" and can be counted on to lead us into all Truth - if we're Open to it.

Brother Doug, I'm sorry and sad that I can't agree with you on this one at all and pray you'll reconsider, down the road - though my words have no weight whatsoever - we can pray one for another on all of these things. Thank you.

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2011/10/10 11:47**

Doug you wrote: "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 16:12-13

I think a fundamental misunderstanding of these verses undergirds the WHOLE basis for why there are hundreds of denominations today, and for why we still argue over whether or not to take this or that apostolic instruction literally today.

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Question: Who must have been the recipient of these promises then? Answer: The apostles.

Why? Because they were going to establish the Church after Jesus went to Heaven. Here Jesus is promising the apostles that they would be given supernatural and infallible insight and understanding, after Jesus left them.

This promise was NOT given to other Christians then, nor unto us, today. Do you see what I am saying dear Brother? (When this "clicked" for me, it made all the difference...)

Only the apostles were promised the inspiration of the Spirit, not us. This promise was not given to us, but to the apostles. That is why we can trust the rest of the New Testament.

---

I too found this portion of what you wrote very unsettling. And I can not agree with you on...

God bless  
maryjane

**Re: ADisciple - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 12:21**

Hi ADisciple,

You wrote:

"Doug said, "Only the apostles were promised the inspiration of the Spirit, not us. This promise was not given to us, but to the apostles. That is why we can trust the rest of the New Testament."

But this verse (Jn. 16.13) is not about a promise of infallible inspiration of the Scriptures. It's about being led into all the truth."

I am not sure what different outcome is effected between promising someone "unerring inspiration" and promising someone "all truth." They come to one and the same thing.

You write:

"Yes, our Lord was speaking to the apostles when He said this. But the promise is for us all-- to be led into all the Truth, and into "things to come." The Holy Spirit in the earth is our One Guide into the Truth. When He is not given His rightful place we are quickly in the paths of error."

Dear Brother, (or Sister), may I ask you, How do you know for certain that this promise given to the apostles before there was a New Testament Bible, was also given to us today, after there is one?

You write:

"But what they said must be held to the test of Scripture. We have the privilege-- and the responsibility-- of being guided by the Holy Spirit Himself in our Christian walk. He, of course, will never lead us in ways that are contrary to Scripture."

Yes, of course, we must read the Scripture and compare all things to them, asking God in prayer to open our eyes and give us understanding. However, infallible understanding is not promised to us all; it is not promised to every individual believer. This should be obvious, if we consider the offices and gifts that the Holy Spirit is said to give to the Body.

I understand that what I am saying is "shocking" to some, (as our dear Sister also writes), but it is still true. Consider this if you will, in the light of the Scriptures themselves. Would Paul, (infallibly inspired), have written the following, if he believed that all individual believers were all already given the gift of infallibly knowing "all truth" for themselves?

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

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.

Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" I Cor. 12:27-30

You finish:

"...Doug, are you familiar with David Bercot? What you are asking us to espouse is Bercot's teaching (Will The Real Heretics Please Stand Up)."

Yes, my friend, I am familiar with David Bercot, but he is not the only witness. You may be surprised to find out that John Wesley believed that we should highly esteem the united testimony of the Early Church Fathers, as well as even John Calvin, (though he only went back as far as the post-Nicean Church Father, Augustine.) There are many more...

My dear Brother or Sister: I am humbly asking you to consider the evidence before us: that our many modern doctrines and traditions are of recent invention; and that our current faith-traditions are at the most only a few hundred years old. I am asking the reader to be willing to look back to teachers in the Body from before the founding of his or her denomination.

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

ons.

I appreciate you taking the time to read and reason with me. That it is a sacrifice and labor of love is not lost upon me.

Be well in the Lord,  
Doug

**Re: Jesus-is-God and MaryJane - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 12:35**

Dear Sisters:

I know what I was taught in Church was probably the same thing you were taught in Church. I understand therefore that the notion, (that we all aren't given, (at least potentially) unerring inspiration regarding "all truth"), is VERY unsettling, as well as shocking to you. It was to me as well, when I first considered the Scriptures in this regard.

However, as I wrote to ADisciple above, the Lord has blessed us with one another, each with varying ability and supernatural gifting. Not everyone is a teacher, nor did God intend everyone to be. God did intend that we stick together, and consider, and serve, and help, and learn from one another. This as individule members of the Body of Christ, the Church, both now and from the beginning.

Not everyone knows it all, but God does. He knows the hearts, and knows who wants His truth and are willing to obey it without reserve.

Thank you for reading and considering what I have told you. If you love me, please pray for me. I will do likewise for you dear Sisters.

Sincerely,  
Doug

**Re: , on: 2011/10/10 12:49**

Greg

You said:

"We want to follow the Apostles Traditions. Also we want to follow the ways of those after the apostles. It is clear those traditions were not diluted or changed much till AD 300. To say all the churches became legalistic somehow right after the 12 apostles died is not right nor valid."

Can you honestly read through a work such as the 'Shepherd of Hermas' (a highly popular early work) and maintain that it is not at all legalistic and is in firm agreement with the New Testament?

**Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2011/10/10 12:55**

Doug asked, "Dear Brother, (or Sister), may I ask you, How do you know for certain that this promise given to the apostles before there was a New Testament Bible, was also given to us today, after there is one?"

Because I read the verse in context. In these chapters (John 14,15, 16) Jesus is speaking to His disciples about His pending leaving them, and the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

His promise is that the Holy Spirit will lead us into "all the truth."

Doug said, "Yes, of course, we must read the Scripture and compare all things to them, asking God in prayer to open our eyes and give us understanding. However, infallible understanding is not promised to us all; it is not promised to every individule believer. This should be obvious, if we consider the offices and gifts that the Holy Spirit is said to give to the Body."

What is promised to us all is that the Holy Spirit will lead each and every one of us "into all the Truth."

And to this end, our Lord has set in the church various ministries to help the saints along the way. They are for the profit of all-- to lead us into "all riches of the full assurance of understanding."

Doug said, "I am humbly asking you to consider the evidence before us: that our many modern doctrines and traditions are of recent invention; and that our current faith-traditions are at the most only a few hundred years old. I am asking the reader to be willing to look back to teachers in the Body from before the founding of his or her denominations.

Brother, (I am your brother) in increasing numbers, Christians in our day are recognizing that the denominational system is very wide of the mark as set forth by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the Scriptures. So, yes, we must earnestly seek to discover the Mark again, and press toward it.

If those in the early church were running well... great! But I'm not going to keep my eye on the good runners. I'm going to keep my eye on the Mark. Otherwise, how will I know when some of these other runners veered off the course and went down some other trail (which some in the early church did)? If I follow them, I'll end up in the ditch too.

You want me to go back to the early church. But let's go back to the beginning. Said Paul, "Follow me, AS I FOLLOW CHRIST." (Implying that if at some juncture he didn't follow Christ, don't follow him anymore.)

AD

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2011/10/10 13:02**

by dietolive on 2011/10/10 6:35:47

Dear Sisters:

I know what I was taught in Church was probably the same thing you were taught in Church. I understand therefore that the notion, (that we all aren't given, (at least potentially) unerring inspiration regarding "all truth"), is VERY unsettling, as well as shocking to you. It was to me as well, when I first considered the Scriptures in this regard.

However, as I wrote to ADisciple above, the Lord has blessed us with one another, each with varying ability and supernatural gifting. Not everyone is a teacher, nor did God intend everyone to be. God did intend that we stick together, and consider, and serve, and help, and learn from one another. This as individual members of the Body of Christ, the Church, both now and from the beginning.

Not everyone knows it all, but God does. He knows the hearts, and knows who wants His truth and are willing to obey it without reserve.

Thank you for reading and considering what I have told you. If you love me, please pray for me. I will do likewise for you dear Sisters.

Sincerely,  
Doug

---

Doug

I appreciate your response and I will pray for you. I read through both your posts and am sharing them with my husband. Of course I agree that no one person knows everything, but at the same time I do believe that as a follower of CHRIST I can trust that HE will lead me in all HIS ways. JESUS will not lead me in a way I should not go. Now I also firmly believe we need other brothers and sisters daily around us to encourage us and even point things out in our lives that we might not see so that we can help each other walk in the LORD but all things must be tested to the WORD of GOD.

---

AD wrote: If those in the early church were running well... great! But I'm not going to keep my eye on the good runners. I'm going to keep my eye on the Mark. Otherwise, how will I know when some of these other runners veered off the course and went down some other trail (which some in the early church did)? If I follow them, I'll end up in the ditch too.

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You want me to go back to the early church. But let's go back to the beginning. Said Paul, "Follow me, AS I FOLLOW CHRIST." (Implying that if at some juncture he didn't follow Christ, don't follow him anymore.)

AD

---

This is it exactly. Amen!!

God Bless  
maryjane

**Re: MaryJane - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 13:11**

MaryJane: My respect and regards to your husband ma'am.

You wrote:  
"Doug

I appreciate your response and I will pray for you. I read through both your posts and am sharing them with my husband. Of course I agree that no one person knows everything, but at the same time I do believe that as a follower of CHRIST I can trust that HE will lead me in all HIS ways. JESUS will not lead me in a way I should not go. Now I also firmly believe we need other brothers and sisters daily around us to encourage us and even point things out in our lives that we might not see so that we can help each other walk in the LORD but all things must be tested to the WORD of GOD."

Please pass along to him, if you will ma'am, that I agree with all that you have just written here. I too trust that God will never let me down or fail me.

I have only tried to reason that we all are not promised infallible understanding of the Scriptures, and therefore need the various offices and gifts of one another for this very reason.

Thank you for your prayers Sister.

May you and yours in well in the Lord,  
Doug

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2011/10/10 13:20**

Doug you wrote: Please pass along to him, if you will ma'am, that I agree with all that you have just written here. I too trust that God will never let me down or fail me.

---

I will for sure pass this along also. I share everything with my husband as a sister in the LORD I feel it is vital that my husband know what I am up to on the internet :) My darling husband is one of those brothers in CHRIST that I mentioned who GOD gave me to encourage and give correction when its needed. And both are often needed!

God bless you and keep you  
Maryjane

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/10/10 13:23**

Quote:  
-----Can you honestly read through a work such as the 'Shepherd of Hermas' (a highly popular early work) and maintain that it is not at all legalistic and is in firm agreement with the New Testament?  
-----

Though I have not recently studied or read the Shepard of Hermes Epistle I do not agree with your statement that it is fully legalistic and not consistent with Scriptures. And to throw out all the Early Church Fathers based on the reading of one of the epistles is wrong also.

I challenge anyone to read all of the early church fathers right after the writings of the New Testament they are full of truth and exhortations towards holiness of living and to maintain the testimony of the Lord in one's walk and life. It is also strange that justification by faith is not mentioned nearly as readily as other New Testament writings. Part of this is to realize that justification is our foundation and to walk that justification out in daily walk was more important to the early church fathers. Easy believism did not exist at all because the cost to be a disciple was clear in those days namely with persecution for all that called on the Name of Jesus Christ.

When I first read the early church father writings I felt they were all legalistic and it seemed like a different Christianity to me. But I have now clearly come to see that they are more consistent with the true spirit of christianity. May God give us eyes to see and not to accept everything that is modern as true. Modern Evangelicalism is full of inconsistent truths that are not founded on Scripture and not in church History. May we be brought to the fear of the Lord again in our churches.

**Re: ADisciple - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 13:30**

Dear Brother,  
You write:

"His promise is that the Holy Spirit will lead us into "all the truth."

and,

"What is promised to us all is that the Holy Spirit will lead each and every one of us "into all the Truth."

And to this end, our Lord has set in the church various ministries to help the saints along the way. They are for the profit of all-- to lead us into "all riches of the full assurance of understanding."

My dear Brother, I am not sure what is proved by your simply restating your position. I know what you believe.

I asked you though, how do you know for SURE that the promise of being led to all infallible truth given to the apostles was also given to you?

You write:

"You want me to go back to the early church. But let's go back to the beginning. Said Paul, "Follow me, AS I FOLLOW CHRIST." (Implying that if at some juncture he didn't follow Christ, don't follow him anymore.)"

No, no. This is a straw man argument. Neither Brother Greg to my knowledge, nor I, have ever said any such thing.

Of course we urge the reader to go back to the Scriptures; back to the apostles' doctrine. That has been the whole point

Regarding the Early Church: I am merely affirming what would be obvious to any impartial court of law: The united testimony of the early Church, when they overwhelmingly agree with one another on something, is highly decisive in establishing

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hing the truth, because they knew the apostles and/or their direct disciples, or had easy access to those who did.

"Let every man be convinced in his own mind." I understand if, in the end, we just don't see this the same way.

I wish you well,  
Doug

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/10/10 13:43**

To me also I don't see the validity of the argument that the early church Apostles were more Spirit lead then the Early Church Fathers especially the one's preceding the Apostles. The Church seemed to be wrought and used by the Holy Spirit of God greatly for the first 200 years of its existence and then some councils and meetings brought slowly about a declension in the midst of the testimony of God.

To say the church was in apostasy right after the last Apostle died is not true and would be inconsistent with clear church history. It is more clear that in our day the church is in apostasy where every man does what is right in his own eyes. Even the use of a forums such as this where people can view their ideas flagrantly for all to see and to believe shows the atmosphere of Christendom we are in. There needs to be a calling back to submission to biblical authority and teachableness on the part of many of the brethren of the Lord.

This does not mean we cannot think or consider things on a medium like this in which the Lord Himself has used in my own life greatly to grow me in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. But we must be careful to use these forums in a way that will be open to learning especially from view points we are not used to.

I personally am not stuck on the early church fathers and have not read them much in the past 5 years but I am of the view that we must humble ourselves as modern evangelicals to learn much from their purer testimony in Christ. Oh brethren may we find in ourselves this humility to learn and not label everything as legalistic that does not fit with our lifestyle, likes or dislikes.

Lord Jesus head of Your Church. Teach us and restore us back to your original intentions in a locality of believers who assemble in your prescribed ways and traditions you set forth in your Holy Apostles. For your Holy Name sake we ask this. Amen.

**Re: Lord Jesus head of Your Church. Teach us and restore us... - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 13:48**

Amen Brother Greg.

Be well,  
Doug

**Re: , on: 2011/10/10 14:21**

Brother Doug, what I have seen in the 35 yrs that I've been in the Church is the Spirit of Truth, otherwise known as The Comforter and mainly "The Spirit of GOD" and "The Spirit of Jesus and Christ" being all One in the same, having One function - as Jesus did, as He stated to Pilate at His trial...

Joh 18:37 " .... To this end was I born,  
and for this cause came I into the world,  
that I should bear witness unto the truth.  
Every one that is of the truth heareth My Voice."

Quote:  
-----"I have only tried to reason that we all are not promised infallible understanding of the Scriptures, and therefore need the various offices and gifts of one another for this very reason."  
-----

Elsewhere, Jesus states that anyone who is 'willing to do the will of the Father, will Know if His doctrine is true.

Brother, what I mean to say is - over the yrs that I've been in the Bible, I've met countless new-born Christians that hadn't the time as yet to read the Word enough to counter heresies and those who's ability to "study - to be a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" but The Spirit of Christ gives them, what they call, "a feeling" that a teaching is either true or not.

And others that I know have a distinct way of discerning truth from error by a gift of GOD made especially for them. When they hear error preached, they simply report that they "didn't understand what that person was preaching" - yet when truth is preached, they get that witness and understanding that only His Spirit can give and they are rejoicing for what they hear.

'Our' infallibility is not the test for HIS Faithfulness to guide His Sheep away from hirelings, heretics, false prophets and such. IF HIS Spirit did not constantly witness and guide us into all truth - we wouldn't have a Church left, if it were up to Satan --- but even a babe in Christ can remain open to "that Voice" that constantly leads - not only in sound doctrine, but even in the little things and decisions of life. He's The Good Shepherd that leads His Sheep to safe Pasture and protects them from those wolves that Paul feared would come after he left/died.

Quote:  
-----I understand that what I am saying is "shocking" to some, (as our dear Sister also writes), but it is still true. Consider this if you will, in the light of the Scriptures themselves. Would Paul, (infallibly inspired), have written the following, if he believed that all individual believers were all already given the gift of infallibly knowing "all truth" for themselves?  
-----

If a person is alone on a deserted island, His Spirit is Still testifying to Truth. There are no favorites among His Sheep. He is speaking regularly to everyone of His Sheep - but the problem of our listening to His "bearing witness to the truth" is just that, our problem and again, as heresy is defined as "choice" - it's our choice whether we 'hear' His Faithful Voice/leading/Spirit.

Babes, teachers or prophets will stand before Him accountable for what they believed, because HE is never silent in His attempts to lead us into all truth - unless we're reprobate.

Thanks again for your reply and bearing with mine.

**Re: Jesus-is-GOD - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 14:37**

Dear Sister - no, thank you for bearing with me!

Well said.... The general truth of what you are writing in your last response cannot be denied; that Christ in general guides His flock, for His glory, and for their good and edification.

At the same time, we must understand that the Bible is "special revelation", i.e. it contains, not promptings or feelings, or inclinations, but rather, concrete facts and instructions.

I will say this, dear Sister: Put a Bible on your castaway's island. Let him read the apostles very seriously and very literally, and you will find that he basically comes to the same conclusions that the Early Church Christians came to, for they used the very same method.

They rejected the culture of the world around them, endeavoring to not let it affect their very serious and very literal reading of the inspired apostles doctrine and traditions.

May I humbly suggest that we go and do likewise? Perhaps we will turn this ugly world upside-down again too.

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

Be well in the Lord, my Sister!  
Doug

**Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2011/10/10 14:40**

Doug asked, "I asked you though, how do you know for SURE that the promise of being led to all infallible truth given to the apostles was also given to you?"

I know for SURE because, as I said, I read the verse (Jn. 16.13) in its context.

Its context is the coming of the Comforter, who obviously is given to more than just the apostles.

It's an astounding statement, I know, so I can understand why you are struggling with it. But we who are Jesus' disciples have this promise-- that the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, will guide us, lead us, into ALL the Truth.

Who is That? Christ Himself. HE is "...the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

This dispensation will not close out till the Holy Spirit has brought those in the church into "all the Truth," to the point that "as He is, so are we in this world."

Wonderful hope!

...What you said about "the straw man argument" went over my head. Sorry. Did you understand what I meant? I am simply reminding you of the counsel of the apostle Paul, who advised us that we should follow him only as he followed Christ.

It's good counsel.

And so I do not intend to go blindly by what the "early church" (defined as the church from AD 100 to AD 300 or so) believed. You say that because of their proximity to the apostles, they are the best interpreters of what the apostles taught. That may or may not be so. The stand I must take is that if, with the help of the Holy Spirit and my own conscience I can be convinced that what they believed is what the apostles actually taught as revealed in Scripture... great.

If not... I am not obliged to follow them.

And the same principle applies to any teachers and churches down through the ages of the church from then till now.

AD

**Re: , on: 2011/10/10 14:56**

Greg

I think I have to respectfully disagree on that one. While I by no means think that their writings are heretical or to be , I believe many of them (not all) drifted from the spirit of the new testament when it comes to soteriology (I listed some examples on the early church and fear of the Lord thread).

To be honest, I find a great deal of the writings not challenging and edifying, but crushing, discouraging and soul destroying. (then again, I have the same reaction to most of the sermons promoted on this site) .

If any of you want to judge from that I am a backsliding or even unconverted false christian then by all means go ahead.

**Re: ADisciple - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 16:21**

Dear Brother,

You write:

"Doug asked, "I asked you though, how do you know for SURE that the promise of being led to all infallible truth given to the apostles was also given to you?"

I know for SURE because, as I said, I read the verse (Jn. 16.13) in its context.

Its context is the coming of the Comforter, who obviously is given to more than just the apostles."

Please realize that while the Scriptures do teach that all believers receive the Holy Spirit, they also teach that not all are apostles. Can you see that the promises made to the apostles are for the apostles? That logically, they do not necessarily apply to evangelists, prophets, pastors, or teachers, as well as those who hold no spiritual office in the Church?

Don't you realize that not all are teachers? That not all have the gift of interpretation? Do you see it, my Brother? I hope you see it, for this becomes exceedingly clear once we step back, let the prejudice of our assumptions fade away, and read John 16 in the context of what ALL the apostles had to say about the Spirit's ministry to the rest of us, who are not the apostles.

You said:

"...What you said about "the straw man argument" went over my head. Sorry. Did you understand what I meant? I am simply reminding you of the counsel of the apostle Paul, who advised us that we should follow him only as he followed Christ."

A straw man argument is a logical fallacy, whereby one implies that the other has said something he has in fact not said; erecting an easily demolished argument that he then proceeds to easily demolish.

I never said we want to go back "only" to the Early Church Fathers.

You write:

"And so I do not intend to go blindly by what the "early church" (defined as the church from AD 100 to AD 300 or so) believed."

This is another straw man. I never said we should go "blindly" by what the "early church" believed.

Finally you say:

"You say that because of their proximity to the apostles, they are the best interpreters of what the apostles taught. That may or may not be so. The stand I must take is that if, with the help of the Holy Spirit and my own conscience I can be convinced that what they believed is what the apostles actually taught as revealed in Scripture... great.

If not... I am not obliged to follow them.

And the same principle applies to any teachers and churches down through the ages of the church from then till now."

Amen. Let there be peace between us.

Be well today,  
Doug

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

**Re: Butters - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 16:30**

Dear Butters-

The true gospel will seem soul-crushing when compared to the easy-going, easy-believing gospel in vogue today in the West.

Don't give up, keep looking unto Jesus; for He has promised to bear you up in His arms, and carry you all the way. We just need to surrender ourselves to His will, and believe.

Our mighty God is at work!

Can you feel Him working within? Don't give up, give in!

God bless you dear Butters,  
Doug

**Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2011/10/10 17:50**

Doug said, "Please realize that while the Scriptures do teach that all believers receive the Holy Spirit, they also teach that not all are apostles. Can you see that the promises made to the apostles are for the apostles?"

But your claim is that Jn. 16.13 is exclusively for the apostles.

I disagree. The context of the verse shows otherwise.

Please read John chapters 14, 15 and 16. Or look particularly at Jn. 16. 14,15, the two verses immediately following the verse in question. Jesus is talking about the coming of the Holy Spirit, and He says, "He shall glorify Me." And then, "He shall take of Mine, and shew (it) into you." This is, wonderfully, for all of us. And so with verse 13. This is about the coming of the Comforter to lead the disciples of Christ-- not just the 12 apostles-- into all Truth.

That's my take on this, Doug. No use labouring this further. You have another opinion. We will just have to leave it at that.

**Re: ADisciple - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/10 21:34**

I understand Brother.

I won't try to bring anything else to this.

Be well,  
Doug

**Re: , on: 2011/10/10 22:20**

Respectfully brothers we may have a different understanding of scripture. But in the end we all love Jesus. Hopefully we have learned from one another. I know my thoughts have been sharpened through the interaction in this thread. I commend all of the posters who have conducted themselves with civility and respect toward one another even in disagreement. May God blesses each and everyone of you.

I may come back and post on this as God gives me insight. I have followed through on this thread and the post have been thought provoking.

Much blessings.

Blaine

**Re: Returning to Acts, on: 2011/10/11 10:24**

This thread has promoted me to read and meditate again through the book of Acts. In most of our Bibles the book Luke wrote is called the Acts of the Apostles. But it also should be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit. All through out that book we see the Spirit birthing and brooding and nourishing a young, dynamic church that is full of life and wonder of Jesus. We see a church that is a living, breathing, ORGANISM, not an organization.

I find Acts 9:31 to be quite revealing of the life of the church in Acts. The verse says.....Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened and encouraged BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, it grew in numbers, living in the FEAR OF THE LORD.....I find the last part of the verse insightful as the Holy Spirit must have been the one to lead that early church in reverential awe of God.

I think the above verse gives us a clue of the dynamic of the Holy Spirit in the church in Acts. As I said in one of my previous posts we read Acts akin to Christian fiction. The idea of a church empowered by spiritual power and authority is something foreign to our western mindset. Even in those parts of the world where the Spirit operates in greater freedom we read reports of healings and miracles with disbelief.

But some will say and I agree that joy is in the gospel and not experience. When Tom White of VOM was in Iran some time ago, he attended a house fellowship of Iranian believers. This was during the time of the protest over the presidential elections two years ago. Tom asked through his interpreter what their greatest motivation for living was. The young adults shouted in their Farsi language SALVATION. Here was a church in oppressive Iran that had the joy of Jesus.

Dare I say that the believers in Iran have far more joy in Jesus than we in America have. Could it be that they have the Holy Spirit we so desperately lack?

Respectfully submitted,

Blaine Scogin

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/10/11 12:01**

Quote:  
-----I think I have to respectfully disagree on that one. While I by no means think that their writings are heretical or to be , I believe many of them (not all) drifted from the spirit of the new testament when it comes to soteriology (I listed some examples on the early church and fear of the Lord thread).Â

To be honest, I find a great deal of the writings not challenging and edifying, but crushing, discouraging and soul destroying. (then again, I have the same reaction to most of the sermons promoted on this site) .

If any of you want to judge from that I am a backsliding or even unconverted false christian then by all means go ahead.  
-----

My friend, thank you for being honest with your statements and feelings. Yes the true Gospel is not well accepted in this earth and neither was it in our Lord's time. Â It is a Gospel of sacrifice, death to self, a picking up of a cross. It means death to all of our ambitions and goals and even ourselves. Â It means suffering, privation of these worlds goods even. It means everything opposite than is valued in this worlds system.

The early church fathers had some of the same spirit as do these preachers on SermonIndex thus your reaction is correct that they are the same. But let me encourage you that the way of the cross only has joy if it is embraced and walked in. Â If one does not fully commit to Jesus Christ then his life is one of compromise having enough of Christ to make him miserable in the world but having enough of the world to make him feel guilty before Christ.

Salvation is not just positional or something we believe with our minds. It affects the whole man.

This is the "salvation to the uttermost" that Scripture speaks to us and is the "everlasting Gospel" and the "Gospel unto obedience for all nations"

We are in dangerous days of religious deception where many are promoting a Gospel that damns men giving them enough of Christ to appease their conscience but not save their soul for eternity.

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

This was the message preached in the great awakening:  $\hat{A}$  Flee from the wrath to come.  $\hat{A}$  And when George Whitefield was asked of the greatest problem in his day over 250 years ago he said: "The greatest bane in American Christianity is the unconverted minister."

Thus false conversion in our day is even worse a problem in the pulpit and pew. May God send a sifting of the true and false.

I am not judging you brother at all, we are just declaring truth here in this post and pray it encourages you and many others on the "narrow" way that leads to life that Jesus Christ preached about in Mathew 7.

**Re: Greg, on: 2011/10/11 12:11**

Brother in all respect, I can attend a Voice of the Martyrs conference and hear speakers who have endured persecution and be more edified than reading Tertullian. Sorry brother. He and Eusebius and Cyprian don't cut it for me.

Respectfully submitted,

Blaine

**Re: , on: 2011/10/11 19:36**

Greg & Doug

I greatly appreciate the gentle spirit in which you responded to my rather sensitive thoughts. I would like to mention a few things though which frustrate me a little.

- The word Gospel (euangelion) literally means 'Good News'. Sure there is a load of watered down stuff that is counterfeit, but still if the real gospel doesn't sound anything like good news then I'd have to question whether it really is a gospel.

-So much of what you both write is polemical against American easy-believism. I don't know whether you think I come from that background or not but for the record I'm not an American (I'm from the UK) and from quite a young age I was taught and have always believed that being a Christian entails a complete life surrender - no easy believism there.

-There is also much polemic against 'the world' and 'worldliness' without much specific on what these definitions actually mean. I reject the attitudes and practices of the world that are opposed to Jesus. However, I refuse to reject the things in the world that are part of God's good creation (food, humour etc.) I drank some coffee today - most of the western (and eastern) world drinks coffee so therefore my coffee drinking is worldly and sinful? Hardly.

I am not intending to be undermining - I'm actually trying to figure out answers to some pretty serious questions. I sometimes think a lot of the stuff here is way too extreme - then again it might actually be the real deal and all the time I really have no idea what side of the fence my soul sits in all of this. Hence my general spiritual misery.

**Re: Butters - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/11 23:42**

Dear Butters -

You wrote:

"The word Gospel (euangelion) literally means 'Good News'. Sure there is a load of watered down stuff that is counterfeit, but still if the real gospel doesn't sound anything like good news then I'd have to question whether it really is a gospel."

How can we express something so wonderful and so profound, and yet so simple in such a small space? I rather think, my dear Brother (or Sister), that the anointed preaching on this site may be of better service to your seeking soul. So much of our "communion" can be lost in our written "communications"...

But I will try to answer for myself. Please understand: the one writing to you now is a man who was rescued from the pit; from the devastation of sin. I was going down, down, hard into hell. When it is said of one, "He raised the beggar from the dunghill", that pretty well represents me, spiritually-speaking. I was no good, and of no use to God. I was hopeless.

I was rubbish.

But then God shined out in my darkness, and shined on me... Why me? Who am I? Nobody! But God said to my soul:

REPENT OF YOUR WAYS.  
BELIEVE IN ME.  
GO WHERE I LEAD YOU.

Now I serve Him! I was a slave to sin with nothing to look forward to but sinking into the blackness of darkness forever. Now, I am a servant of the living God. I know Him, because he knew me. I love him, because He loved me! And that, my friend, was, and still is, GOOD NEWS.

You wrote:

"So much of what you both write is polemical against American easy-believism"

You have seen some of what I have written concerning the need of the world around me. Yes, I do live in North America, the U.S.A. specifically, where the people are drunk on consumerism, and worship the State, and Sport, and the Entertainment Media. Sadly, many around us profess Christ, but do not stop worshipping these things.

You wrote:

"There is also much polemic against 'the world' and 'worldliness' without much specific on what these definitions actually mean."

Please don't get hung up on things that aren't even mentioned in the New Testament. Rather, if you do as I was trying to get across earlier in this thread, you will be in the Right Way. It doesn't even require being an Early Church scholar.

Get alone. Get a Bible. Ask God to open your eyes, believing He will show you new and marvelous things out of His Word. Start in Matthew and read through to Revelation. Try very hard to read it like you've never read it before. Read it like your life depended on it. Read it like you had seen the very same book in your hands fall out of a hole in the sky.

Read with it with vigor! And as you do, take care to read it very seriously, and very literally, taking care to accept parables and hyperbole as such. Read history as literally true; read dialogue as literally true. Read commandments as literally true.

And as you do, by all means, please do NOT trust your "feelings", for our OWN SPIRIT can and will deceive us whenever we come across the HARD sayings, if we choose to allow them to corrupt the plain meaning of the Holy Words before our eyes.

You wrote:

"I am not intending to be undermining - I'm actually trying to figure out answers to some pretty serious questions. I sometimes think a lot of the stuff here is way too extreme - then again it might actually be the real deal and all the time I really have no idea what side of the fence my soul sits in all of this. Hence my general spiritual misery."

I never believed you were, dear Butters.

As for how serious all of this is, yes it is just that serious. Much of the Church in the West isn't convinced of this however, and so much the more is the shame on our Lord's face because of it.

Be well dear Butters. Please know that I will be remembering you in my praying.

Sincerely,  
Doug

**Revivals And Church History :: And what about the early church????**

**Re: , on: 2011/10/12 17:24**

Doug

Thank you. I have my questions and concerns, but I feel it is pointless expressing them without being honest about my spiritual state. Thank you for promising to pray: please pray that I would know the love of Jesus in a deep and transforming way as right now he seems very distant.

Bless you

J

**Re: Butters - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/12 17:44**

I've indeed been bringing you up in my prayers, and as the days go by, know that I will continue to be praying for you.

Please write again when and if you are led to. I know there are others here who care about you too.

Love in Christ,  
Doug

EDIT 10-24-2011: I'm still praying for you...