

## **Bible Study - Restored Truth #8 - The Government of God**

### **June 22, 2013**

In 1 Cor. 11:3, Paul writes: *But I want you to know...*[This is something we in the Church of God need to know] *that the head of every man is Christ; the head of woman is man; and the head of Christ is God.* The word head carries the sense of seizing. It can refer to the head as the part of the body that can most readily be taken hold of. Literally or figuratively it can be used to describe the head of the body, or the head as the top or superior. In the context of what Paul is saying, the head refers to authority. God is in authority over Christ. Christ is in authority over man. Man, which should be understood as a husband, is in authority over a woman, or his wife. No man is in authority over every woman, only his wife. One addition to this structure is parents' authority over their children. Even though Paul doesn't mention this addition, it completes the structure of the topic to be covered in this study.

There are two points about 1 Corinthians 11:3 to understand. The first is someone in each relationship is the boss. In other words, authority governs each one of these relationships.

Second is the relationships being written about are family relationships. God is the father; Christ is the son; Christ is the older brother; man is the younger brother; man is the husband and parents are over their children.

John 14:28 God is the supreme authority. Notice what Christ says about God the Father. *You have heard that I have said to you that I am going away and coming back to you. If you love me, you would rejoice, because I said, I'm going to the Father: for my Father is greater than I...*

The word 'greater' in Greek means larger. Specifically, it can refer to age, but in this case doesn't because God and Christ have lived forever. God the Father is greater than Christ. He is in a higher position of authority.

John 12:49 Christ says: *For I have not spoken on my own authority but the Father who sent me gave me a command what I should say and what I should speak.*

One cannot give another a command and expect it to be done without being in a position of authority to do so.

John 14:30 Notice now what Christ says. *I will no longer talk much with you. The ruler of this world is coming...*[Satan the devil] *He has nothing on me...*[That is what God's Church should be striving for in their personal lives. Satan can have nothing on God's people when Christ's example is followed in doing what God

says to do] (vs 31) *But that the world may know that I love the Father and as the Father gave me commandment so I do.*

Christ spoke what the Father said to speak, and Christ did what the Father said to do. In both cases Christ is very specific He was given a command to do those things. God the Father is the supreme source of all authority. He establishes who is in charge and who is not in charge.

Dan. 2:20 In his preliminary comments to Nebuchadnezzar before interpreting the dream of the image, Daniel made the following comments. *Daniel answered the king and said, blessed be the name of God forever and ever: wisdom and might are his. (vs 21) And he changes the times and the seasons: He removes kings and he raises up kings: He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.* This is the purpose of these Restored Truths Bible Studies. They are designed to help people learn God's knowledge, to become wiser in God's word. These studies help people develop a much wiser biblical perspective than previously held. Remember, it is God who makes kings and God who breaks kings.

Prov. 8:15 Solomon's words are written in the context of wisdom. Wisdom comes from God and living by God's Word. Notice what Solomon says: *By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. (vs 16) By me princes rule and nobles, all judges of the earth.* God is not only responsible for kings being in power, but also for those in lesser positions of authority. God puts people in positions of authority; and God takes those same people out of authority.

Rom.13:1 *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities...*[Every person in God's Church is to be subject to the governing authorities] *For there is no authority except from God...[God the Father] and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.* Leaders of civil governments are appointed by God. God the Father is the supreme authority.

Heb.1:1 *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets...* [This is how God communicated with people in the Old Testament] (vs 2) *Has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds...*[God the Father is supreme Creator. He made and created the universe through Jesus Christ. He told Christ what to create. Christ spoke and created it] (vs 5) *For to which of the angels did he ever say you are my Son, today I have begotten you?* (vs 8) *But to the Son he says your throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.* (vs 9) *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness: therefore God, your God, has appointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions.* Christ loved God's way of life. Christ did things God's way. God established Christ's authority. The word 'scepter' in the Greek refers to a stick or a

wand, simply a baton of royalty. The scepter of righteousness is the scepter of God's law. That is the definition of righteousness. God's Law will be the rule in God's Kingdom. Christ will govern through the implementation of God's law.

John 17:1 God the Father established Christ's authority. John 17 is Christ's prayer to God the Father prior to His arrest. *Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come: glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify you. (vs 2) As you have given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. (vs 3) And this is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (vs 4) For I have glorified you on earth: I finished the work which you have given me to do. (vs 5) Now, O Father, glorify me together with yourself with the glory which I had with you before the world was.* Of course, these verses go back to John 1:1.

Consider one final verse to show how God the Father established Christ's authority. John 3:35 *The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.*

Gen. 2:20 God the Father also established authority within the human family. *Adam gave names to all cattle, and to birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. (vs 21) And the Eternal God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. (vs 22) Then the rib, which the Eternal God had taken from the man, he made into a woman, and he brought her to the man (vs 23) And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman...[Which simply means from man, because she was taken out of man] (vs 24) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined...[cling to] his wife: and they shall become one flesh.* When two people get married, they are to leave their homes and go establish their own home, and begin their own families, with the husband in charge.

1 Cor. 11:7 Paul reestablishes the same point in Genesis 2 where woman came from man. *For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God: but woman is the glory of man. (vs 8) For man is not from woman but woman from man. (vs 9) Nor was man created for the woman; but woman for the man.* So, women were created to help their husbands. This is the role and responsibility for which God created her. Of course, the feminist agenda has turned the role of the woman in marriage on its head. Women have been convinced they know better how to rule than men. Why? Because men have done such a bad job of fulfilling their God created responsibility to lead.

Eph. 5:23 Paul is very specific about how a man is supposed to be in authority over his wife. *For the husband is head of the wife...[The same Greek word found in 1 Corinthians 11:3] For the husband is head of the wife...[Has*

authority over the wife] *as Christ also is head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. (vs 24) Therefore just as the church is subject to Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything. (vs 25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.* A wife's submission is a whole lot easier, when her husband loves, cares for, supports and helps his wife.

Eph. 6:1 This deals with children and their relationship to their parents. *Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right...[Disobedience to parents is wrong!]* (vs 2) *Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with promise.* (vs 3) *That it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth.* (vs 4) *And you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath: but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.* To understand God and His authority is to understand how God operates through a hierarchical structure or government. God has put in place His government for the benefit of those who understand it, accept it, and submit to it.

John 1:1 In these Restored Truths Bible Studies one cannot get away from this verse. The reason is because this verse goes to the origin of truth. The origin of all the restored truths begins right here. *In the beginning...[This is where it all starts] was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* (vs 2) *He was in the beginning with God.* (vs 3) *All things were made through him and without him nothing was made that was made.* This verse clearly describes two beings, God, and the Word. John shows the Word became flesh, who was Jesus Christ. He became the Son of God, and God became the Father.

Heb.1:1 The writer of Hebrews provides more detail about how God and the Word worked together. *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets* (vs 2) *Has in these last days spoken to us by his son whom he has appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds.* God is the Creator, but He did all the creating through Jesus Christ. In creation of the universe the line of authority is clearly established. God said to do it and Christ did it.

Col.1:15 speaks of Christ' role of creating and what He is in authority of. *He is the image of the invisible God; the firstborn over all creation.* (vs 16) *For by him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth...[Christ created it all] visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created through him, and for him.* (vs 17) *And he is before all things, and in him all things consist.* (vs 18) *And he is head...[He is in charge, in authority over] of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he may have the preeminence.*

There is a chronology to God's creation. It began with God and the Word; God and the Word created angels. After creating the angels, they created the physical universe. When God created the earth, He put one of His

most magnificent created angels over it to be ruled.

Luke 4:5 *Then the devil...[Satan the devil] taking him...[Jesus Christ] on a high mountain showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment...[Christ got a view of all the governments, all the seats of power on earth at that time] (vs 6) And Satan said to him, all this authority I will give you...[Christ] and their glory: for this has been delivered to me and I give it to whomever I wish.* From whom did Satan receive his authority? God the Father gave him this authority.

Isa. 14:12 shows Satan was given a throne. Before having his name changed to Satan, Lucifer was an angel of morning light, a morning star. When he rebelled against God, he became Satan. He became God's adversary, which is what Satan means. Notice Lucifer was given a throne over the earth. *How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning. How you are cut down to the ground: you weaken the nations. (vs 13) For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit in the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north...[the location of God's throne] (vs 14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High.*

Satan wanted to be in charge. He wanted to be the top dog, as it were. He wanted to be the top boss. He attempted to take away God's authority and confer it upon himself. However, Satan was unsuccessful. Lucifer rejected God's government. As a result, as seen in Restored Truth Bible Study #7, the earth was turned into a condition of waste and emptiness. So, God re-created the earth, created mankind and gave man the opportunity to accept His government.

Gen. 2:15 *Then the Eternal God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. (vs 16) And the Eternal God commanded the man...[this shows the Eternal God was the one in authority. He commanded the man] saying, of every tree of the garden you may freely eat (vs 17) but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die...*

This is a command for Adam to eat from all the trees in the Garden of Eden, except one tree, but Adam chose not to follow God's command.

Gen. 3:17 *Then to Adam he said, because you have heeded the voice of your wife...[Adam didn't exercise the leadership God created man to exercise as head of the family. Adam abdicated his responsibility, by listening to his wife and following her decision to disobey God. When Eve said, "here," "Adam," "eat," Adam should have said, "no," "I will not disobey God"] you have heeded the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you saying, you shall not eat of it (vs 19) In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread*

*till you return to the ground...[where man came from] for out of it you were taken: for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.*

Adam rejected God's government; and the problems of the earth today are directly tied to his rejection. By partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve rejected God's government over them. As a result of their rejection, governments developed by men since the very beginning of mankind's existence are historically, and currently, disastrous for the people who live under them. These governments are not God's government. On two separate occasions after the Garden of Eden, God has tried to install His government on the earth. Once it was rejected and in the other it has been strongly resisted.

Mat. 24:21 reveals the culmination of rejecting God's government and the devastating consequences it will have on humanity. This event is nearly upon mankind now! Christ says: *For then...[referring to a series of events to occur before Christ gets to this point in His narrative] there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be...[notice how bad the consequences will be] (vs 22) and unless those days were shortened no flesh would be saved...[Moffatt translation says "saved alive." The consequences for rejecting God's government are going to threaten the very existence of mankind] But for the elect's sake...[speaking of a very small number of physical human beings in God's Church, obeying what He says] those days will be shortened.* This prophecy shows the climatic impact rejecting God's government will soon have on this earth.

Ex.19:3 God tried again to establish to His government through the ancient Israelites. The Israelites having already crossed through the Red Sea, are now at Mount Sinai, getting ready to receive the Ten Commandments. *Moses went up to God, and the Eternal called to him from the mountain saying, thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel. (vs 4) You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagle's wings, and brought you to myself. (vs 5) Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice...[do what I command you to do] and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people: for all the earth is mine. (vs 6) And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.* Notice God's purpose for the children of Israel was for them to become a kingdom of priests.

Before going any further, it is important to know the 4 components of a kingdom.

**First:** a kingdom must have a king.

**Second:** a kingdom must have people who are ruled over by the king.

**Third:** a kingdom must have a territory or space of land over which the king rules.

**Fourth:** a kingdom must have a set of laws which define how the kingdom is to be governed.

In the case of Israel, the king was God. The people consisted of the 12 tribes of Israel. The territory was the land of Canaan, the Promised Land to which God was taking the Israelites. The laws to govern this kingdom were the Ten Commandments, which the children of Israel received from God on Mt. Sinai.

Through the ancient Israelites, God again tried to re-establish His government on the earth. Israel was to be a living example of God's Way of Life to other nations around them. They were to teach these nations about the Creator God and the benefits of obedience to Him. Within the nation of Israel, God assigned human leaders.

Ex. 3:9 Moses was the top human leader in the nation of Israel. God established him in that position *Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to me: and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. (vs 10) Come now therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.* It was God's intent for Moses to bring the children into the Promised Land. However, Moses failed to do so because of his own disobedience, causing God to use Joshua to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land instead.

Lev. 10:8 Accompanying the civil leadership of Israel was to be a religious leadership established through Aaron the high priest. Notice what the responsibilities of the priesthood were. *Then the Eternal spoke to Aaron saying (vs 9) Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. (vs 10) That you may distinguish between holy and unholy, between unclean and clean. [Alcohol affects a person's judgment. God does not want His servants using alcohol while doing His work] (vs 11) That you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Eternal has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.*

Ex. 18:21 The priests were also judges within Israel. The responsibility for handling 2 to 3 million people took a toll on Moses. Moses father-in-law suggested Moses select qualified individuals to help him govern Israel. These qualifications dealt with the character of the individuals Moses needed to select. Moses father-in-law gave the following qualifications of leadership. *Moreover, you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God...[respect God] men of truth, hating covetousness...[a big problem with people in power who seek to take care of themselves first, instead of taking care of those they're supposed to govern. These types of leaders want to personally benefit from the labor and hard work of others. To maintain power the wealth of others is taken and distributed out to those who will keep them in power. The leadership in ancient Israel was to have men who hated covetousness, hated it] And place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.*

Ex. 18:22 speaks to the responsibility these men would have as rulers over the people. *And let them judge the people at all times: then it will be that every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they themselves shall judge: so it will be easier for you, for they will bear the burden with you.* These leaders were to share the responsibility of governing with Moses. If you have leaders who are able-bodied and able-minded, that respect God and love His law, find lying unacceptable and hate covetousness - then a nation's leadership will be strong. This kind of government is able to properly judge any situation that arises between people.

Ex. 19:7 In looking at God's proposal to become His example nation, notice what the Israelites said. *So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the Eternal commanded him. (vs 8) All the people answered together and said, all that the Eternal has spoken, we will do...*[Israel gives Moses their decision to do what God commands] *Moses brought back the words of the people to the Eternal.* Unfortunately, the Israelites were unable to keep their word. Without God's Spirit, Israel was unable to keep its promise, which had a disastrous outcome.

2 Kings 17:6 *In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah, by the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes...*[Israel was carried from Samaria, located in the northern part of the modern state of Israel today, to ancient Assyria, in the northern parts of Iraq and Iran. ] (vs 7) *For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Eternal their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and they had feared...[respected] other gods...[no respect for the God who brought them out of Egypt] (vs 8) And had walked in the statutes of the nations...[would not obey God's law] whom the Eternal had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel which they had made...(vs 13) Yet the Eternal testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and all the seers saying, turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers in which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. (vs 14) Nevertheless, they would not hear, but stiffened their necks like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the Eternal their God. (vs 15) And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he had made with their fathers, and his testimonies, which he had testified against them...*[Israel worshipped idols, becoming idolaters, like the nations all around them] *concerning whom the Eternal had charged them that they should not do like them.*

The Israelites having been taken away by the Assyrians, began to migrate northward as Judah was being carried to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar. Judah was to remain in captivity for 70 years before returning to Jerusalem. God's work through the prophet Daniel occurred during this 70-year period of captivity. Daniel



recognized the Jews captivity was coming to an end and was concerned about the future of his people. In Dan. 9:4, Daniel addresses the reasons why his people went into captivity. *And I prayed to the Eternal my God, and made confession and said, O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant and mercy with those who love them, and with those who keep his commandments...[To have favor with God, one must keep God's commandments] (vs 5) We have sinned, and committed iniquity. We have done wickedly, and rebelled, even by departing from your precepts and your judgments. (vs 6) Neither have we heeded your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, and our princes, to our fathers, and to all the people of the land.* Daniel shows the whole nation from top to bottom was responsible for their own destruction and captivity.

Dan. 9:7 *O Lord, righteousness belongs to you, but to us shame of face, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those near and those far-off in the countries to which you have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against you. (vs 10) We have not obeyed the voice of the Eternal our God to walk in his laws which he set before us by his servants the prophets. (vs 11) Yes, all Israel has transgressed your law, and has departed so as not to obey your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses the servant of God, have been poured out on us because we have sinned against him.*

Daniel clearly lays out Israel's rejection of God's government. When Israel and Judah rejected God's government, they corrupted it with the ways of this world. Though the Jews returned under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah and did a great amount of work in re-establishing the Jewish nation after its captivity; consider what the nation descended into by the time Christ came to the earth. It was again corrupted. No longer were Jewish leaders righteous men. No longer did Jewish leaders have the character Moses father-in-law said to look for. When Jesus Christ came to this earth, another opportunity to establish God's government on the earth was made possible.

Mark 1:14 marks the beginning of Christ's ministry. *Now after John was put in prison Jesus came to Galilee preaching...[proclaiming] the gospel of the kingdom of God...[Christ's message was about God's government] (vs 15) and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe in the gospel.* Christ brought a message about the Kingdom of God. God's Kingdom is to be governed by the government of God. In founding God's Church, Jesus Christ created a spiritual entity in which God's government could operate.

Matt.16:18 This is something that Christ was going to do. Here He is telling Peter this is what's going to happen. *And I also say to you that you are Peter...[Which refers to a small rock or a small stone] And on this rock...[A much larger stone, referring to Christ himself] I will build my church and the gates of Hades...[Or the*

grave] *shall not prevail*...[be victorious] *against it*. Christ was going to establish His Church, His called-out ones; and this was going to begin with Peter. That establishment would be on Christ Himself. Christ's Church, or the Church of God as we know it, would never physically die out. What was the purpose of the Church of God?

1 Pet. 2:9 You will notice something already covered in this study, specifically in Exodus 19. Referring to the Church, Peter writes: *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation*...[That's exactly what God wanted for ancient Israel, but these verses don't apply to ancient Israel. They apply to the Church of God, His own special people] *that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light*...[That's what happens when a person first is called out of the world into God's Church] (vs 10) *Who were once not a people; but are now the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*. What was the difference between the Old Testament Church, the congregation of Israel, and the New Testament Church, the Church of God? They had much of the same knowledge. They had much of the same teaching and instruction. The major difference is that one had the Holy Spirit, and the other didn't.

John 14:16 Christ said: *I will pray the Father, and he will give you another helper, that it may abide with you forever*. (vs 17) *The Spirit of truth which the world cannot receive, because it neither sees it, nor knows it, but you know it; for it dwells with you*...[Which was in Jesus Christ. That's what that means] *and will be in you*. Which was explained in the Restored Truth Bible Study #7 as it occurred in Acts 2, when God established His Church.

Luke 24:49 Christ gives a specific instruction here speaking about the Holy Spirit. Christ tells His disciples: *Behold, I send the promise of my father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem*...[Or wait in Jerusalem] *until you are endued with power from on high*. Until you receive God's Spirit stay in Jerusalem. That's what is covered in Acts 2.

Acts 2:1 *When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place*. (vs 2) *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind; and it filled the whole house where they were sitting*. (vs 3) *Then there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire. One sat upon each of them* (vs 4) *and they were filled with Holy Spirit*...[Or they were filled with the power from on high] *and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance*. This is one of the miraculous things that occurred to these people receiving the Holy Spirit at this time. They were able to speak and understand different foreign languages which they had been unable to speak and understand, prior to receiving God's Spirit.

Matt.16:18 Notice again what Christ says here in establishing the Church of God. *I also say to you that you are Peter*...[You are the small stone.] *on this rock*...[A much larger stone, referring to himself, Christ says:] *I will*

*build my church...*[I am going to begin with you, Peter, and the foundation of this church is going to be on me] *and the gates of the grave shall not prevail against it.* Christ here established Peter as the first human leader of God's Church. And this is not speaking of the Catholic Church.

Time does allow a detailed study into the authority of Peter. The following chapters provide seven specific incidents in Acts where Peter exercised his authority in responding to various situations, which came up in God's Church shortly after it was established:

Acts 2 - delivers the first sermon in God's Church on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 4 - addresses the Jewish leadership after he and John are arrested.

Acts 5 - deals with Annanias and Sapphira who lied concerning the sale of a piece of property, and the amount of money received from the sale.

Acts 8 - deals with Simon the sorcerer.

Acts 10 - brings the first Gentile converts into God's Church.

Acts 11 - answers concerns from Jewish converts about Gentile converts recently baptized.

Acts 15 - addresses questions concerning physical circumcision.

John 21:15 It is Peter who Christ addresses in regard to taking care of the Church. Christ has already been crucified. He has already been resurrected. He is giving the disciples some final instructions before He ascends back into the heavens to be with God the Father. *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these? He said to him yes, Lord; you know that I love you...*[Christ says to Peter] *feed my lambs...*[Or provide pasture to my young ones] (vs 16) *Christ said to Peter again a second time, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me? And he said to him, yes, Lord; you know that I love you...*[Christ says to Peter a second time:] *tend my sheep...*[Which simply means supervise my more mature sheep] (vs 17) *A third time Christ says to Peter, Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me? Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time...*[He was getting tired of being asked this question, or this series of questions] *do you love me? And he said to him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him feed my sheep.* Or pasture my mature ones. Right here, Christ is emphasizing to Peter the responsibility of God's ministry toward the brethren of God's Church.

Eph. 4:11 Paul is very clear about the responsibilities of the ministry. *And he himself gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers...*[There are various responsibilities within God's ministry. A pastor is not a prophet. A prophet is not an evangelist. An evangelist is not a pastor. Pastors may not be teachers per se with those responsibilities; but they all have overall the same purpose. All these positions Paul mentions in verse 11-] (vs 12) *Are for the equipping of the saints, for a work of ministry,*

*for edifying the body of Christ...*[Or building up the church, which is the body of Christ. Paul says for how long] (vs 13) *Till we all come in the unity of the faith...*[When will that happen? At the seventh trumpet] *And of the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man...*[Which is not going to happen until God's Church is resurrected or changed at the sound of the seventh trumpet] *to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.* Right there is what the ministry has a responsibility for doing with the membership of God's Church. There are different offices, different responsibilities within God's ministry to do that.

1 Cor.12:28 Notice what Paul says here. This time he gives a hierarchy to these offices or these responsibilities. Go to verse 12 first. Understand that the body is the Church.

1 Cor. 12:12 *For as the body is one, and has many members...*[Referring to the human body] *but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body so also is Christ.* God's Church is also the body of Christ. The Church is made up of many members, but is one body, just as the human body has many different parts; it is still one body.

1 Cor. 12:28 *And God has appointed these in the Church...*[God has appointed] *first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.* All these things are for the purpose of serving God's Church. There is a hierarchy that Paul establishes here. It is not the purpose of this study to get into the details of this hierarchy. It is covered here to show that it exists within God's Church and the purpose for its existence.

1 Peter 5:1 In this passage of scripture Peter puts all these offices together, because all these positions in the ministry, everyone, also refer to elders in God's Church. *The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder...*[Here is the leader of God's Church, ordained by Jesus Christ, put into that position by Christ saying that he is a fellow elder] *a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed...*[To these elders Peter says, shepherd the flock of God. Tend and guide the flock of God. That's what the word shepherd means] (vs 2) *Feed the flock which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion, but willingly; not for dishonest gain, but eagerly.* (vs 3) *Nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock...*[Examples in living God's way of life] *and when the chief shepherd...*[Jesus Christ] *appears...*[When he returns] *you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.* This is the mindset every minister of God should have toward his responsibilities, regardless of the office, regardless of the position in the hierarchy which God has established. It is the purpose for why God has established His government within the Church, for the service, teaching, and benefit of the brethren. God's government is going to be established on this earth very soon.

Matt. 24:14 Christ says: *And this gospel of the kingdom...*[This gospel of the kingdom of God that he proclaimed] *will be proclaimed [again] in all the world as a witness to all nations and then the end will come.*

Why use the word “again?” Christ proclaimed it in the first century. It had to stop being proclaimed, and at some point in the future, it had to be proclaimed again. Those familiar with M24S understand Christ’s gospel message has been proclaimed. Restored Truth Bible Study #7 explained how the gospel message had been restored back to the Church of God, a message which had been lost because of spiritual compromise and corruption. God's Kingdom, which will be governed by God’s government, is about ready to be established on this earth soon, because Christ’s prophecy in Matthew 24:14 has been fulfilled.

Zech.14:1 This is how it will take place. Remember, this is toward the end of the Day of the Lord, a short period of time which follows 3½ years of great tribulation. *Behold, the Day of the Lord is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. (vs 2) For I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem, the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished; half the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (vs 3) Then the Eternal will go forth, and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. (vs 4) And in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which faces Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two. (vs 13) It shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the Eternal will be among them...* [Referring to the nations who come to fight against Christ] *Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, and raise his hand against his neighbor’s hand...*[When all that's over with, and the nations are defeated and God's kingdom is established] (vs 16) *And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came up against Jerusalem...*[Those who survived great tribulation and the Day of the Lord] *shall go up from year-to-year to worship the King, the Eternal of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.* This is a brief description of how God's Kingdom will be established, and how God’s government will be set up on the earth.

Zech. 8:1 Notice how the Kingdom will be ruled. *Again the word of the Eternal of hosts came saying (vs 2) Thus says the Eternal of hosts; I am zealous for Zion with great zeal, with great fervor I am zealous for her. (vs 3) Thus says the Eternal: I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth...*[That’s not a title the city of Jerusalem can claim today] *the mountain of the Eternal of hosts...*[The Holy Mountain referring to God's kingdom and God's government. Mountain is biblical symbolism for a government or a kingdom] (vs 4) *Thus says the Eternal of hosts; old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. (vs 5) The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets...*[People can't do that in Jerusalem today because no one knows know when some crazed individual(s) will detonate a homicide vest, attack with a knife or open fire on innocent people] (vs 6) *Thus says the Eternal of hosts; if it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this*

*people in these days, will it also be marvelous in my eyes says the Eternal of hosts? (vs 7) Thus says the Eternal of hosts; behold, I will save my people from the land of the East and bring them up from the land of the West. (vs 8) And I will bring them back, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: they shall be my people and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.* God's government is going to be a government established in Jerusalem, which will be its capital city. That government will be a government of truth and righteousness. Truth is of no value in human governments today.

The government of God is a hierarchical government with God the Father as the top authority within His government. Under Him is Jesus Christ His Son, and soon, under Christ, will be 144,000 firstfruits, who we can read about in the first part of Revelation 14. The 144,000 firstfruits will become the kingdom of priests, who, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, will administer God's government on the earth. This government will rule the very same kingdom Christ proclaimed about during His time as a human being here on this earth.

It is the responsibility of each member in God's Church to hold fast to God's restored truths and continue growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Faithfulness in these two activities will ensure you a position as a firstfruit in God's ruling family.

To close out this study look at what God's government is not by looking at some passages out of the catechism of the Catholic Church. This is where most of traditional Christianity's doctrines are founded:

Section 834:

Speaking of the Catholic Church and how it is governed it says: "Particular churches are fully Catholic through their communion with one of them, the Church of Rome, which presides in chair. For with this church, by reason of its preeminence, the whole church, that is the faithful everywhere, must necessarily be in accord. Indeed from the Incarnate's words descent to us, all Christian churches everywhere (*That's referring to the Catholic Churches*) have held, and hold, the great church that is here at Rome, to be their only basis and foundation, since according to the Savior's promise, the gates of hell have never prevailed against her."

Section 669 says:

"As Lord, Christ is also head of the church, which is his body, taken up to heaven and glorified, after he had thus fully accomplished his mission. Christ dwells on earth in his Church. The redemption (*Pay attention to this*) the redemption is the source of authority that Christ, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, exercises over the church. The kingdom of Christ is already present in mystery on earth, the seed and the beginning of the kingdom."

Section 816:

“The sole Church of Christ is that which our Savior, after his resurrection, entrusted to Peter's pastoral care, commissioning him and other apostles, to extend it and rule it. This church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter, and by the bishops in communion with him. The Second Vatican Council's decree on ecumenism explains: For it is through Christ's Catholic Church alone, which is the universal help toward salvation that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained. (*You have to be in the Catholic Church to receive salvation*) It was to the apostolic college alone (*No apostolic is college mentioned anywhere in the Bible.*) of which Peter is the head, that we believe that our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the new covenant, in order to establish on earth the one body of Christ, and to which all those should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the people of God.”

And finally –

Section 882 in reference to the top leadership position of the Catholic Church:

“The Pope, Bishop of Rome, and Peter's successor is the perpetual and visual source, and foundation of the unity, both of the bishops, and of the whole company of the faithful. For the Roman Pontiff by reason of his office as the Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire church, has full supreme and universal power over the whole church, of which power he can exercise unhindered.”

It must be understood the Catholic Church is not the church Christ established, and popes are the not successors of Peter. Jesus Christ, from the inception of God's Church, has been its eternal living head. Therefore, the government of the Catholic Church is not the government of God. This shows how Satan is able to corrupt God's truth. It's important to understand God's government is for the service and benefit of God's people. It is not a tyrannical form of government designed to serve the needs of those responsible for administering it “unhindered.”

Acts 20:28 Paul specifically spells out that the responsibility of the ministry is to shepherd the Church of God. In Titus 1:4-9 Paul lists the qualities God's ministers should have. Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12-16 that God's ministers are to live God's way of life, while teaching others to do the same, and in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 during times of great adversity God's ministers are to remain faithful in teaching God's truth. But this not what happened in God's Church following the death of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

From the Pastor Generals Report dated June 21, 1994 Pastor General, Joseph W Tkach Sr. wrote the following:

“In my last letter in the PGR I pointed out that ministers cannot simply be silent about the church's new doctrines. All ministers believe and are able to state with conviction that we are the Church of God, that Christ is the head of the church, and that Christ wants us to stay in the Church. When we state these kinds of things to our congregations, we show that we are not afraid of what is happening in the Church. Instead we show that we have confidence in Christ's ability to lead those He has chosen. To remain silent in reality is to trumpet your disagreement, and consequently to foster division.”

That's not what the Bible says. A minister is to remain faithful in teaching God's truth, especially, in the midst of adverse times.

In a letter to a US field minister dated March 29, 1994 Mr. Tkach wrote the following:

“There cannot be room in the Church, nor can there be room in the ministry, for ministers who won't and cannot teach the doctrines of the Church.”

This is true, but only if the doctrine is true doctrine. If those doctrines are false, there is no room in an organization for a true minister of God. Therefore, the true minister needs to exit.

This last quote comes from a sermon given by Gerald Waterhouse at the Feast of Tabernacles in 1994:

“You should follow the current decisions, the current practices of the Church that Mr. Tkach is responsible for authorizing. If they're wrong, Christ knows it perfectly. If they're right, he still backs up the decision regardless of whether it is right or wrong. (*Do you believe that? Do you believe Christ backs up a wrong decision that is doctrinally incorrect?*) First of all I'm going to play a tape, just an excerpt out of it, out of the last sermon Mr. Armstrong gave at the Feast of Trumpets, October 19, 1985 where he knew another pastor general would follow.”

The clip played by Mr. Armstrong states the following:

“Your faith must not be in me. It must be in Jesus Christ. He is the head of the Church. I am not. And if I were not here, it would be another who would become pastor general, and you will



remain united; and you will remain one; and your eternity depends on that, every one of you. Don't you get it?"

"Okay (*Mr. Waterhouse continues:*) you can turn that off. I wanted to give you that excerpt so you could hear Mr. Armstrong's voice in the last sermon he gave saying there would be another pastor general. You had better follow that pastor general; and in fact, he said we must remain united, and your eternity depends on it, and don't you forget it. The one through whom he backs up a decision is first, the apostle, and then those who remain loyal. If they will not support that, they are not with it. They have to learn to be unified, to be of one mind, to be of one purpose so that we have no division within the Church."

Unity in God's Church does not depend on following man teaching false doctrine, rather God's Church is told in 1 Thes. 5:21 *Prove all things and hold fast that which is good.*

1 John 4:1 says, *Test the spirits.*

So, ask yourself this question: am I under the true government of God, or a bastardized form of it? To close out this bible study here is an excerpt from Mr. Armstrong's sermon 'Mission of the Philadelphia Church Era' dated December 17, 1983. Mr. Armstrong said:

"The government of God has been restored to the Church, and the government has been placed in the Church. You read in Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12, Christ is head of the church, and under Christ in the administration of the government are an apostle or apostles, then evangelists, then pastors, then all are called elders, all ministers all the way up and clear down to the lowest. So then there are teachers and elders, both speaking elders and preaching elders, deacons and deaconesses, and the Church is restored in that form of government. The Sardis Era even didn't have the right form of government. The purpose of God, that we can be born into the kingdom of God, and the family of God, and become God, that knowledge has been restored to the Church."

It is essential in this Laodicean era to hang on to these restored truths with both hands, and have both legs wrapped around it, because much of the knowledge of God's government and the knowledge of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is quickly fading from God's Church. Fortunately, Jesus Christ will return soon, and the reality of these restored truths will be established on this earth.