

Open Letter to Christian Ministers

by Eric Wilson, February 8, 2007

To ministers of the gospel of Christ, stewards of the mysteries of God:

Brethren, before the ‘assent’ gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher were given (Ephesians 4:7-13), Jesus said to Mary:

“Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God’” - John 20:17, NKJV

Thus Christ’s resurrection reveals who we really are - not defined by any spiritual gift but as Father’s sons. That’s why Jesus relates to us as “*My brethren*” in the Spirit of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:17, 12:13). For the mystery of the church is a family love affair – of a Bridegroom walking His bride (Romans 7:4, Ephesians 5:23-32), having been drawn together by our Heavenly Father (John 6:44-45 & 65, 17:1-2). Therefore real church leadership lovingly oversees (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Hebrews 13:7 & 17 & 24, 1 Timothy 3:1-6) God’s “*household of faith*” (Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 2:9, Hebrews 3:5-6) – with older ones in Christ looking after younger ones (1 Corinthians 4:15, 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Titus 2:3-5), unless, of course, we’re all still babes! (1 Corinthians 3:1, Galatians 4:19) Yet many congregations boasting ‘eldership’ or ‘apostleship’ or ‘bishops’ have adopted childish Aaronic practices in a ‘system of churchianity’ - instead of Christ being all in all (Ephesians 1:22).

Family on the cross

The real church of Jesus Christ – the one which will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17, Matthew 24:30-31, Exodus 19:4) - has never been, and never will be, a system. For even before Jesus’ assent to our Father, He cared for His apostles as His “*little children*” (John 13:33). Then, after the Spirit was given, the apostles carried this same “*little children*” care and affection in their bosom towards the saints (Galatians 4:19-20, 1 John 2:1, 3 John 1:1-4). This is our Father’s love, as John writes:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. - 1 John 3:1-2

Since we are “*children of God*” – that is no analogy or parable but who we actually are – let us no longer relate to each other through fancy titles or positions. For Paul over 80 times refers to his letters’ recipients as “*brethren*”, while drawing attention to his apostleship only 16 times. Even then, never did Paul (or any other apostle) use that term as a title – “Apostle Paul” for example – through which the brethren should formally relate. We know this for sure because Paul’s name is mentioned 131 times in the book of Acts, all without title, without exception. The only preface to Paul’s name was given by Peter: “*our beloved brother Paul*” (2 Peter 3:15) – and that is about family not title or position. Moreover, seven times Paul relates to the saints extra personally, calling them, “*my brethren*” and the Corinthians “*my beloved brethren*”. And Paul’s care was the same for the Galatians, even though they came to the Lord through his service in the Lord only indirectly:

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.” – Galatians 4:19-20

James in his letter never mentions his apostleship, much less lords it over them; instead referring to the scattered Jewish Christians as “brethren” six times, “my brethren” eight times and thrice “my beloved brethren”. Of course it’s only right for His ministers to relate to the saints of God this way, since our brotherhood is bound up in the cross of Christ:

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me." Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. - Hebrews 2:10-15, NKJV

The writer to the Hebrews goes on to reveal Jesus was in all things “like His brethren” (Deuteronomy 17:15, 18:15-19, Acts 3:22) - but by the cross we become like Him, His own “holy brethren” (Hebrews 2:17-3:1) of heaven. Hence at His resurrection, Jesus tells Mary, “go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God'” (John 20:17).

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

Titles and positions versus family

Since we are “holy brethren” in Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:27), it’s not difficult to understand our Lord’s teachings about titles and positions versus brotherly and Fatherly love.

Jesus said:

“I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?” - John 5:41-44

And again:

“But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” - Mat 23:8-12 NKJV

Therefore debates about ‘church structure’ most often mask questions of “*Who is the greatest?*” Although this is sometimes couched in terms of spiritual gifts, ministry positions or good works, “*Who is the greatest?*” is most often the real issue behind church leadership struggles (3 John 1:9-10, Acts 20:30). Therefore Jesus answers us in terms of family (John 21:4-5):

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.. - Matthew 18:1-6

So much for priestly hierarchies or artificial distinctions amongst gentile believers, between ‘ordained’ brethren and so-called ordinary ‘laity’. “*One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.*” (Matthew 23:8) As a rule of thumb, the New Testament collectively refers to Christians as ‘brethren’, ‘children’, ‘beloved’ or ‘sons’ four times more often than calling them ‘church’, ‘assembly’ or ‘body’ - and so should we.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

Aaron’s imitators

The systems of churchianity, though plentiful in the midst of Christ’s holy brethren, are nowhere to be found in Scripture. In fact, it is Aaron and his sons who are authorised to raise their hand to proclaim forgiveness of sin and blessing, after administering the body and blood representing Christ (Leviticus 9:22-23, 13:12-13, Hebrews 19:19-23). On the other hand, we brothers, in and of the Lord, have no further need of sacrifice for sin, since Christ has died once for all (Romans 6:10-11, Hebrews 10:8-10). It is finished – paid in full (John 19:30). That means all we need do James says, is confess our trespasses “*to one another*” and pray “*for one another*” to be healed (James 5:16). And if we confess our sins directly to the Lord Himself (Psalm 32:5), John says “*God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9). So what need can there be for a system of churchianity to declare absolution to us, if we are walking in the Spirit day by day (Galatians 5:16)?

Additionally, all of Jesus’ disciples are empowered by the Spirit to release (forgive) those who sin against us, with such authority in Christ’s name, that not even Father God remembers that particular sin anymore (John 20:22-23, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11, Luke 11:4, 17:3-4, Micah 17:18-19). Therefore it’s plain to see in Christ we have a far better covenant with God than the absolution to Israel offered by Aaron (Hebrews 7:26-8:6), or by any system of churchianity mimicking this law.

The law of Moses also stipulates the sons of Aaron must administer certain symbols of the body and blood of Christ (in their case bulls and goats), while wearing special attire (Exodus 28:2-29:9) – as the systems of churchianity often parade in cheap imitation. Additionally, quite a few church buildings sport an altar standing in a sanctuary for the symbols of body and blood, as is prescribed in the law for Aaron (Leviticus 1:5, Numbers 8:5). And it is the law of Moses for Aaron which specifies these should be officiated at

the altar first to the priests and then for the people (Hebrews 7:27), as is often reflected today in highly ceremonialised communion services. Some systems of churchianity even go so far as to take Aaron's place in burning incense (Leviticus 16:12-13) and sprinkling holy water (Numbers 5:17).

Yet many abandoning such imitations still achieve certain notoriety, seating themselves in the chief seats of their assemblies (Matthew 23:1-12). Teaching God's laws to 'laity' in the manner of a schoolmaster – thus keeping the people under guard from sin and not in faith (Galatians 3:23-25) – is of the sons of Aaron too (Leviticus 10:11). So Paul writes this type of ministry is superseded because "*you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus*" (Galatians 3:26). Yet the majority of churchianity's systems haven't learned to trust or fan the flame of God's "*Abba Father*" Spirit of adoption in the brethren (Romans 8:14-17). Yet the truth is known from error in Christ's anointing upon them – as John explained to his "*little children*" (1John 2:26-28):

*But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.
– 1 John 2:20 NKJV*

Likewise, Aaron's schoolmaster approach has been rejected by the writer to the Hebrews, who quotes Jeremiah:

*"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.
-Hebrews 8:10-11 NKJV*

Nevertheless, many systems of churchianity still presume to work out the will of God for Christ's brethren – weighing up who's in and who's out – like Aaron did with Urim and Thummin (Numbers 27:21, Ezra 2:62-63). But Paul writes that it's the "*brethren*" who "*prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*" by transformation through the renewing of mind (Romans 12:1-2). Unfortunately, there are no short cuts to this – the flesh must be crucified with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24). That's why it was only after the apostles and elders had discussed matters "*with much dispute*" that they could conclude "*It seems good the Holy Spirit and to us*" to confirm that the gentiles are not under Moses' law (Acts 15:1-31). Therefore it's this collective "*we have the mind of Christ*" which discloses the council of God (Matthew 8:17, 1 Corinthians 2:16) - not systems of churchianity fashioned in the likeness of Aaron's ministry under Moses' law. So who did Paul write should determine the will of God concerning all the ministries found in Romans chapter twelve?

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.. - Romans 12:1-2

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

Funny money

Likewise, it is exclusively (as we shall see shortly) the ministry of Aaron and his sons, under pain of the curse of the law (Deuteronomy 28:15-68, Malachi 3:7-9, 4:4) to collect tithes for funding a priesthood and temple (Leviticus 27:30). (Despite this, tithe taxes to the systems of churchianity became law all over Europe, previously enforceable in English courts for more than a thousand years.) Therefore it is law not grace, since Jesus indicated tithing was a less-weighty “*matter of the law*” (Matthew 23:23); that is to say, before the law, Abraham only tithed once, and not of his regular income but the spoils of war (Genesis 14:14-20, Hebrews 7:2). And it’s the law which also prescribes offerings be taken up by Aaron and his sons and brought to the altar in baskets (Deuteronomy 26:4), as has become common practice today under most systems of churchianity.

So without question, the systems of churchianity fund themselves, often in pseudo-emulation of the law of Moses, through the teachings and traditions of men. For even under Moses, a third of the time the people appear to have tithed directly to “*the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow*” and the landless local Levite too (Deuteronomy 14:27-29, 26:12-13) – and not through the temple or priests in Jerusalem. So it seems even Moses is more flexible than many of churchianity’s systems allow. The stewards of the Gospel should really be teaching that new covenant brethren in Christ have been freed from the law (Acts 15:22-31), excepting the royal law to love one other (2 Corinthians 8:8-9, Romans 13:8-10, James 2:8). In fact in love, Christians are completely free (Galatians 5:18) to give as their own heart truly desires - not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7). Does not all we have belong to Him anyway, since we ourselves are His? (Matthew 6:19-34, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20) For the kingdom of God cannot be inherited (Matthew 25:34-40) with only a ten percent commitment (Matthew 13:44-46, Luke 14:28-33).

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? - 1 John 3:16-17, NKJV

Thus the basis of true Christian giving and receiving has nothing to do with the law of churchianity but free giving between the brethren in love. For example, Jesus’ ministry was financed entirely through free giving, especially from prominent women (Luke 8:1-3), supplemented with the odd miracle here and there (Matthew 17:24-27, Mark 14:13-16). Likewise, when sent off by Him, the disciples’ “*wages*” was to eat and drink such things as only the “*sons of peace*” (Luke 10:4-7) would give them. For the worker is worthy of his wages (1 Corinthians 9:3-15). But at one stage, Paul’s money bag (Luke 22:35-36) containing such wages gave out, having already “*stripped*” bare those churches willing to support his mission (2 Corinthians 8:3-5, 11:7-8). But Christ’s family (Luke 8:20-21) came through again, when “*brethren who came from Macedonia supplied*”, as brothers are supposed to do (2 Corinthians 11:9). Paul called such ministry financing “*the matter of giving and receiving*” (Philippians 4:15-18) in “*the grace of God*” (2 Corinthians 8:1-4), not ‘tithes and offerings’ under law. But speaking to the Ephesian elders, whom he also calls “*brethren*” (Acts 20:32), Paul says:

“I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” - Acts 20:33-35

So in Paul's book, the goal of "giving and receiving" between brethren is for equality in love (2 Corinthians 8:13-14), so that none should lack (Ephesians 4:28, Acts 22:44-45); whereby the one who is taught the word should also "share in all good things with him who teaches" (Galatians 6:6-9). However, Paul did organise a temporary weekly collection for distant famine relief (1 Corinthians 16:1-3) – partly to save the embarrassment of the Corinthians forgetting their pledge which had become a year-old (2 Corinthians 8:10-11, 9:2-5) to their "brethren" in Judea. (Acts 11:27-30) For Paul charged there be no more collections once he arrived, and those taken up were not at all for himself (1 Corinthians 16:1-3). Therefore, giving out of love alone for Christ's sake, bears little resemblance to Aaron's work under Moses' law, in taking up regular tithes and offerings. The systems of churchianity have no grounds for saying the Lord requires such of His holy brethren.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

Ministering against the law

Brethren, when Christ was on earth, he didn't occupy himself imitating Aaron, since He realised "the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do". (John 5:19) And so we should follow Him, for if He were here on earth with us now, He would still not work in Aaron's likeness, as the scripture says:

For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." - Hebrews 8:4-5, NJKV

This is because our Lord arose not from the tribe of Levi but from Judah, "of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood" (Hebrews 7:14) says the writer to the Hebrews. For without question, the law expressly forbids Aaron's ministry of sin and death (1 Corinthians 3:7, Hebrews 10:11, 12:18-21) being in any way varied, copied or coveted by others outside his family (Exodus 30:30-33, Leviticus 10:1-7, Numbers 16:35-40, Ezra 2:61-62). This is a "perpetual statute" (Exodus 29:9) which Christ Himself taught is still in effect "until heaven and earth pass away" (Matthew 5:18) - even if the law of Moses is somewhat obsolete (Hebrews 8:13).

Thus Gentile systems of churchianity (not being descendant of Levi) have zero standing before God in themselves, despite Christians gathering under such manmade banners. Nor would any ministry credentials, issued by systems of which Christ Himself cannot be part in respect for Aaron - be of any consequence in the Kingdom of God. So those relegated by such systems to be mere 'lay people', cannot by that discrimination (Revelation 2:6 – the Greek *Nikos* denoting 'victory over' and *laiton* meaning 'laity') be validly disqualified from serving Him in any capacity His Spirit might choose to endow (1 Corinthians 12:13-25, Acts 2:16-18) – is God not God? (Acts 4:13, Numbers 11:25-29) Therefore the apostle Paul wrote to his protégé Timothy, "Diligently show yourself approved to God", without reference to man. (2 Timothy 2:15, 4:1-8). And Jesus intimated it's not by their papers you shall know them, but "by their fruits" (Matthew 7:15-23, John 15:5-8, 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5).

Moreover, if so-called 'righteous Gentiles' want to live in the futility of a system of Aaron-like religious laws (Galatians 3:10), the whole of Moses law must be followed (James

2:10, 2 Chronicles 33:8), not picking and choosing those ceremonies, customs or taxes one likes (Matthew 5:17-19, Deuteronomy 4:2). This is the case no matter how much human comfort churchianity's systems may give, or finances they extract. For God commanded Moses "See that you make **all things** according to the pattern shown you on the mountain," (Exodus 25:40, Hebrews 8:5) but the systems of churchianity can practice no more than a corrupted part of it. According to Paul, that's a disaster, as church history shows:

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. - Galatians 3:10

Brethren, with so much profane fire being offered - "which He had not commanded them" (Leviticus 10:1-2) - it's little wonder why His ministers become so burnt out. Yet the biggest reason why ministers of the gospel ought not to follow Aaron, or any system of churchianity, is this:

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." - John 14:6, NKJV

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ JESUS (Galatians 3:26).

Remembering Jesus

How did we sons of our Father come to invest so much in the systems of churchianity? It seems to have started with a miss-understanding of Jesus' words "this is my body which is broken for you" and "this cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). Wrongly concluding communion forms part of Christ's sacrifice, it seems a zealous early church bishop commanded it be officiated only by priests; since (as the human reasoning goes) by definition offering sacrifices on behalf of the people is priestly work. Such an earthly Christian priesthood could hardly minister pagan rites, so over the course of time, a system of churchianity imposed laws like that of Moses upon the new covenant brethren. The major error in this idea of man is that communion is not a sacrifice but a family "remembrance":

*And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: **this do in remembrance of me.***
- Luke 22:19

Brethren, out of the four gospels, Jesus is only recorded as once commanding communion be shared "in remembrance of Me"- by Luke. Yet in Paul's single letter addressing communion abuse, he writes "in remembrance of Me" twice to be sure - once for the bread and once for the wine:

*"and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this **in remembrance of Me.**" In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, **in remembrance of Me.**" For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. - 1 Cor 11:24-26, NKJV*

So the idea that communion is more than a remembrance to include a mystical continuing sacrifice, which a system of churchianity is required to offer, goes against the clear teachings of scripture. For it is evident that Paul did not say “*For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you continue the Lord’s sacrifice*” but rather, “*you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.*” And how did Paul proclaim the Lord’s death?

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Romans 6:9-11

Thus Paul insists Christ’s sacrifice for sin ended with His resurrection, since He “*dies no more*” and “*the life that He lives, He lives to God*”. It’s all a done deal, with the book of Hebrews stating: “*we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” (Hebrews 10:10). So His body is not offered up to God every communion because it has already been offered “*once for all*”. Therefore communion is a remembrance as the Lord taught, and Paul twice quotes. Hebrews also states “*For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified*” (Hebrews 10:14). That is Christ’s body and blood is “*one offering*”, not many offerings spread over each successive communion in every different congregation, requiring a system of Christian priests to administer. For the scripture says, since this “*one offering*” of Christ “*perfects forever*”, there is no need of any more offerings:

For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another; He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
- Hebrews 9:24-27 NKJV

All our sins - past, present and future - have been “*once at the end of the ages ... put away*”. The writer to the Hebrews then goes on, pointing out any further sacrifice for sin is pointless; if we are in Christ, God has no remembrance of our sins, with the slate wiped clean, since Jesus has already paid the penalty for them all, in full:

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith - Heb 10:16-22a

Jesus said the same thing from the cross in three words:

"It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.
- John 19:30b, NKJV

Therefore, regardless of the views of early church bishops coming after, Christians are required by Scripture to believe the sacrifice of Christ is “once for all” and “forever” since He “dies no more” and “lives to God. This means “as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes”. But the good news is the communion of the Lord is much more than only a remembrance of His sacrifice – this cup is the new covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25):

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. - John 6:53-57

That is to say, the body and blood of Christ is also given for “eternal life”, meaning remembering sacrifice for sin is only the first part of it. Jesus tells us partaking also relates to resurrection, abiding in Him and the life of God Himself - because the Father lives in Him. Let us review the new covenant again and marvel:

*“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.
-Hebrews 8:10-11 NKJV*

And also:

*This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; ...
- Hebrews 10:16-20*

This “Holiest” Paul refers to is the very Presence of Father God (Hebrews 6:19-20), now open to anyone, anytime, who is in the Lord.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

Bread from the Father

Dismantling the system of churchianity in our lives is not a question of making a law not to keep the law, but of recognising Jesus as Lord of all (Mark 2:24-28). For the systems of churchianity also violate the spirit of the law, in obfuscating Christ's own priesthood in us, of which even the law of Moses testifies through the Lord's supper:

For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? - 1 Cor 10:17-18

Thus in the type of communion, all the brethren in the church are priests, not a select few, since Paul says all typically “*eat of the sacrifices*” in remembrance of Him, thus all are “*partakers of the altar*”. Of course only priests were permitted to eat the sin and the trespass offering (Leviticus 6:14-18, 6:26-29, Numbers 18:8-10, Matthew 26:28), so when it comes to communion, typologically speaking, all the brethren must be priests. Since Aaron and sons are thus a shadow of the priesthood of all believers, or more exactly, the priesthood of Christ in His brethren, their ministry testifies against any system of churchianity controlling the Lord’s supper. Moreover, Aaron lays the axe to the system at its sacramental roots, since it is the atonement which consecrates the priests, not the priests which consecrate the atonement (Exodus 29:38-46).

And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy. - Exodus 29:32-33

Likewise John writes (not in the shadow of Aaron but in the revelation of Jesus Christ) of the blood of the Lamb consecrating the priesthood of all believers:

“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” –Revelation 1:5b-6, NKJV

So it’s the sacrifice of Christ which consecrates the priesthood; not the priesthood which consecrates the remembrance of sacrifice in communion. Jesus sums this up in six words: “*You have no life in yourselves*” (John 6:53). Therefore the systems of churchianity have no magical powers to consecrate the communion as many still assert. This is because our essential contribution to the Lord’s Supper, as the Lord commands His brethren, is simply “*do this in remembrance of Me*” (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). This coming to Jesus and believing in Him in communion (John 6:35) allows us to feed on Him (John 6:57) – real spiritual food and real spiritual drink (John 6:53-63, 1 Corinthians 10:2-4). This is why when explaining “*the food which endures to everlasting life*” (John 6:27), Jesus first corrects them:

“Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.” - John 6:32b

So the true bread from heaven does not come through any Moses-person or system of churchianity but is given by Father. (Even Aaron’s priesthood at the typical altar was a family affair – a father and sons thing – Exodus 29:9.) Jesus went on to say it’s Father Himself who brings His children to eat the Bread of Life (John 6:32-37, 6:44-51 & 65):

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. - John 6:35-37

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

The communion of Christ and His brethren

The communion of the Lord has been largely obscured by the systems of churchianity, which calls it a ‘sacrament’ – a name derived from the Greek word for ‘mystery’. But it is in fact best understood as an extension of the Passover– which was a remembrance (Exodus 12:13-14) for the ‘brethren of Israel’ (Deuteronomy 24:7, Nehemiah 5:8, Acts 3:13-19, 7:2-26) instituted *before* Aaron’s priesthood. For our Lord certainly regarded it that way:

And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. –Luke 22:15-19

We have already established previously that if the Passover was a priestly event, Jesus would not have been qualified to administer it (Hebrews 8:4). However there was no problem with Christ doing so under the law as He did for their sakes (Galatians 4:4), since the Passover was celebrated by every Israelite family (Exodus 12:3-4). Furthermore, by God’s command, even the children were involved (Exodus 12:26-27, also see Matthew 18:3-6), as the Jews still practice every year to this day. For they were remembering the blood of the lamb sprinkled for each family on the “*doorposts of the houses where they eat it*” (Exodus 12:7). So Jesus was keen to conduct this memorial service (Exodus 12:14, 12:25-27) with his disciples in a home (Mark 14:13-14), since having the same Father (Luke 11:2), the twelve were more family to Him (excepting Judas Iscariot) than even His mother (Matthew 12:47-50). Therefore this Passover-communion meal speaks everything about “*My brethren*” and nothing about any system of churchianity muscling in to officiate it. Thus Paul’s only rule is that if communion is not eaten together as one (John 17:22-23), it should not be eaten at all (1 Corinthians 11:33-34).

Therefore Jesus served His brethren not an isolated sacrament but a family communion together (1 Corinthians 11:27-33), remembered at the end of the meal (Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22). But notice in Luke’s account how Jesus Himself did not complete the Passover, saying “*I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God*” (Luke 22:15-18); for Jesus would a short time later speak of drinking another cup first:

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. - Matthew 26:38-44

So our Lord never actually completed the Passover with His brethren but held it over until He returns for “*those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb*”

(Revelation 19:7-9, Matthew 22:1-14). This understanding of a Passover extended (for He will eat of it again – Luke 22:16) into the times of the Gentiles in communion with Him, is also present in Paul’s letter of correction to the Corinthians, where he writes:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? - 1 Corinthians 10:16

The “*cup of blessing*” Paul wrote of to the Gentile church is the third cup of the Passover, celebrated as ‘*the cup of blessing*’ by Jews to this day. For centuries many Jews have also finished the Passover with a fourth cup – ‘the cup of praise’. But for brethren in Christ, the two cups the Lord raised in His Passover (Luke 22:17 & 20) are now one, being “*the cup of blessing which we bless*”. For the Passover was instituted prior to the sons of Israel covenanting with God under the law of Moses; He saved them out of Egypt solely on account of His promise to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 2:23-25, Galatians 3:17), meaning the Passover is received through them. So where did Abraham’s “*cup of blessing which we bless*” and “*bread which we break*” come from?

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand...- Gen 14:18-20a

For Moses mentions nothing of wine being drunk in the Passover. Therefore because of God’s first promises to Abraham - “*in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*” (Genesis 12:3, 28:14) - the Gentiles also partake (Galatians 3:8) in the communion (bread and wine) of the Lord, as he reigns as King of Righteousness and King of Peace in their hearts (Hebrews 6:13-7:3). Thus the righteousness and peace we experience when we partake is “*the Presence behind the veil where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*” (Hebrews 6:19-20). That uplifting (Ephesians 2:6) “*God with us*” (Matthew 1:23) Presence is *Yahweh*, the name of the “*God of our fathers*” (being Abraham Isaac and Jacob again) revealed to Moses (Exodus 3:13-14); His name *Yahweh* actually means ‘to be actively present’ – akin to “*I AM WHO I AM*” in the midst of a burning bush on holy ground, which is not consumed (Exodus 3:1-15). Thus we live, because the abiding presence of the living Father lives in Christ (John 6:48-50):

“He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” - John 6:56-57

Is Father’s presence in Christ also with us at other times? Yes indeed: Jesus said, “*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them,*” (Matthew 18:20) and “*I and My Father are one.*” (John 10:30). Yet Father’s real presence must be especially so when Christ’s brethren take the communion of the Lord as one (1 Corinthians 11:27-33, Psalm 133), not as a set style of worship but in spirit and in truth - for Father seeks such as these (John 4:21-24).

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26).

Leading the brethren in Christ

Brethren, since Paul says “*Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us*” (1 Corinthians 5:7) - all in the past tense, ministers of the gospel have no cause to serve a system of churchianity made in Aaron’s image. But what’s the alternative? There is only one – the new covenant in Christ’s blood. It begins with this:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: – Jeremiah 31:31-32

So from the very start, we see the new covenant is not according to the old – it doesn’t work like the law of Moses. Therefore, it’s important for His servants (Romans 1:1, James 1:1, 2 Peter 1:1, Jude 1:1, Revelation 1:1) to repent of the practices of Aaron, or else Paul indicates they won’t be able to minister the true glories of Christ’s work in us (John 14:12-13):

*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?
- 2 Cor 3:5-8, NKJV*

By this we see a fundamental difference between new and old covenant ministry: The old was a program of laws, but the new is Spirit powered (Acts 4:31, 6:10, 8:39-40, 13:8-11) and Spirit led: “*Then the Spirit said to Philip...*”, “*While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him...*”, “*Agabus stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be...*”, “*As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said...*”, “*For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us...*”, “*they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia...*”, “*they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them...*”, “*Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified...*”, “*Paul purposed in the Spirit...to go to Jerusalem*”, “*the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying...*”, “*the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God...*”, “*They told Paul through the Spirit not to go...*” (Acts 8:29, 10:19-20, 11:28-29, 13:2-4, 15:28, 16:6-7, 18:5, 19:21, 20:22-23, 20:28, 21:4 & 11). Thus the new covenant is not of the letter but of the Spirit, which gives life. This is how Christ put it:

*On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- John 7:37-39, NKJV*

This means the new covenant involves a transformation through the renewing of the mind by His Spirit, as the prophet Jeremiah continues:

*But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.
- Jeremiah 31:33*

Now brethren, the phrase “*I will be their God, and they shall be My people*” speaks of the direct leadership of the Holy Spirit of His people, like those twelve examples from Acts previously cited. All this is based on the new covenant of forgiveness, as Jeremiah goes on:

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. - Jeremiah 31:34

But let us take note the word “*LORD*” is capitalised in the phrase “*Know the LORD*”, denoting the word “*Yahweh*” in the original language. Therefore as previously discussed, the passage could well be read this way:

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Active Presence: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Active Presence; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.- Jeremiah 31:34

Thus the new covenant in His blood manifests in the gracious work of God’s Spirit within us, His intimate active presence. It is the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry out “*Abba, Father*”. For at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9) - that wonderful day when He drinks the fruit of the vine with us “*new in the kingdom of God*” (Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25, Luke 22:18) - there will be no need of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to explain the Gospel. What will there be? What Jesus told Mary to tell “*My Brethren*” in the beginning: “*My Father and your Father*” and “*My God and your God*”. And so it is the Spirit Himself, not any system of churchianity, who leads us home:

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. - Romans 8:14-15

Given this direct leadership of the Holy Spirit in every son of God, and of the brethren together, how should apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers relate to His people in this present age? Paul holds this relational balance beautifully:

Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. - 1 Thessalonians 5:26-28

There is so much in this farewell for us to ponder, and also in these words: “*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus*” (Galatians 3:26).

ENDS

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Revision_0.01