

# “Why Have Organized Religion?”

## The 1st Century Church Model

“Religion does three things quite effectively:  
Divides people; Controls people, Deludes  
people.”

-Carlespie Mary Alice McKinney

“Within the Godhead we discover mutual  
love, mutual fellowship, mutual dependence,  
mutual honor, mutual submission, mutual  
dwelling, and authentic community. In the  
Godhead, there exists an eternal,  
complementary, and reciprocal interchange of  
divine life, divine love, and divine fellowship.  
There is an absence of command-style  
leadership. There is an absence of passive  
spectatorship. There is an absence of one-  
upmanship. And there is an absence of  
religious rituals and programs.”

-Herb Montgomery

“Within the early church we discover mutual  
love, mutual fellowship, mutual dependence,  
mutual honor, mutual submission, mutual  
dwelling, and authentic community. In the  
early church, there existed an eternal  
[originating within the Godhead of which  
they were simply conduits], complementary,  
and reciprocal interchange of divine life,  
divine love, and divine fellowship. There was  
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There was an absence of hierarchical  
structures. There was an absence of passive  
spectatorship. There was an absence of one-  
upmanship. And there was an absence of  
religious rituals and programs.”

Wherever the Kingdom is genuinely lived,  
the unmasking and disarming of the Powers  
takes place. And wherever genuine Ekklesia  
is accurately practiced through open  
participatory gatherings, the church  
demonstrates to other realms that Jesus Christ  
– God’s manifold wisdom (see 1 Corinthians  
1:23-24)—is alive enough to lead a fallen  
race who used to belong to God’s enemy.

Ruler of this world, and the Kingdoms of this  
world

**Matthew 20:25,26** – Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it OVER THEM, and their high officials exercise authority OVER THEM. NOT SO WITH YOU. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.”

**Matthew 23:8-12** – “But you are NOT to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one Master and YOU ARE ALL BROTHERS (sisters) [equal]. And do NOT call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have ONE FATHER, and he is in heaven. NOR are you to be called ‘teacher,’ for you have ONE TEACHER, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

**John 17:20-26** – My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one...”

**1 Corinthians 14:26** – What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, EACH OF YOU has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

### *Hierarchical Structures/Passive Spectatorship?*

**Romans 15:14** – I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent TO INSTRUCT ONE ANOTHER.

**Colossians 3:16** – Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you TEACH AND ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

### *1st Century Model*

**Ephesians 3:10** – To the intent that now unto the PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS in heavenly places might be known BY THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God.

**Genesis 1:26** – Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness...”

**2 Peter 1:3-7** – His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our KNOWLEDGE OF HIM. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and

“If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” John 14:9

## The One Another

### How do you define Church?

Building/Place of Worship

Community of Believers

*Egalitarian*

How did 1<sup>st</sup> Century Followers of Jesus meet to worship?

Churches are ALIVE and ACTIVE!

### IVP New Testament Background:

The “Father’s house” would be the temple... The “Dwelling places” (NASB, NRSV) probably refer to “rooms” (cf. NIV, TEV) in the new temple, where only undefiled ministers would have a place (Ezek. 44:9-16; cf. 48:11). In this context, John probably means not the Second Coming but Christ’s return after the resurrection to bestow the Spirit (John 14:16-18).

to goodness, knowledge; self-control; perseverance; godliness; mutual affection; love.

**1 Peter 2:4-5** – As you come to him, the LIVING STONE—rejected by human beings but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like LIVING STONES, are being built into A SPIRITUAL HOUSE to be a HOLY PRIESTHOOD, offering SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 2:19** – Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of HIS HOUSE, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him THE WHOLE BUILDING is joined together and rises to become A HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become A DWELLING IN WHICH GOD LIVES by his Spirit.

**Romans 16:5** – Greet also the church that meets AT THEIR HOUSE.

**1 Corinthians 16:19** – The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets AT THEIR HOUSE.

**Colossians 4:15** – Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church IN HER HOUSE.

**Romans 12:1** – Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as A LIVING SACRIFICE, holy and pleasing to God—this is true worship.

**1 Peter 2:9** – But you are a chosen people, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

**John 14:1-4** – Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house [Temple] there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place FOR YOUR? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again [resurrection] and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.”

**Luke 2:49** – “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”

**John 2:16** – To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!”

**John 14:18-20** – I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

“If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” John 14:9

## Paul Confirms Egalitarian Unity

### Leadership in NT Churches:

**Ephesians 5:23** – Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

**Colossians 1:18** – And he is the head of the body, the church.

**Matthew 27:51** – At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

**Mark 15:38** – The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

**Luke 23:45** – ... And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

**Galatians 1:1** – Paul, an apostle... to THE CHURCHES in Galatia.

**1 Thessalonians 1:1** – Paul, Silas and Timothy, to THE CHURCH of the Thessalonians.

**2 Thessalonians 1:1** - Paul, Silas and Timothy, to THE CHURCH of the Thessalonians.

**1 Corinthians 1:1-2** – Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus... to THE CHURCH of God in Corinth.

**2 Corinthians 1:1** – Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus... and Timothy our brother, to THE CHURCH of God in Corinth.

**Colossians 1:1-2** – Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to god’s HOLY PEOPLE in Colossae.

**Romans 1:1-7** – Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God... to ALL in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people.

**Ephesians 1:1** – Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to God’s HOLY PEOPLE in Ephesus.

**Philippians 1:1** – Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to ALL God’s holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together WITH THE OVERSEERS AND DEACONS.

**1 Peter 5:1-4** – To the ELDERS among you, I appeal as a FELLOW ELDER and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be SHEPHERDS [pastors/elders] of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; NOT LORDING IT OVER THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU, but being EXAMPLES to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

**Ephesians 4:11-16** – The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers, to EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY, for building up the body of Christ ... But speaking the truth [to one another] in love, we must grow up in every way into Him who is THE HEAD, INTO CHRIST, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together BY EVERY LIGAMENT WITH WHICH IT IS EQUIPPED, as EACH PART IS WORKING PROPERLY, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.

**Hebrews 10:19-25** – Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by A NEW AND LIVING WAY opened for us through the curtain [into His presence], that is, HIS BODY, and since we have a great priest over the HOUSE OF GOD, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith... Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may SPUR ONE ANOTHER on toward love and good deeds, NOT GIVING UP ON MEETING TOGETHER, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging ONE ANOTHER—and all the more as you see the day approaching.

“If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” John 14:9