

## Part 2: Congregation, Church or Body?

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It's sunny, it's Saturday, and it's springtime when the thoughts of the pre-teen neighborhood kids turn to cricket. Most of the usual rag tag assemblies have made their way to the local vacant lot for the first day of the cricket season. Drawing closer to this jabbering group of

young stars, we discover that they've just completed the choosing up of sides.

The captain of one of the teams is engaged in a furious confrontation with his teammates over what position each will play. It appears unanimous; all team members including the team captain want to bat. Suddenly, the voice of one small lad rises above the rest and with one declaration the matter is settled. What was it he said you wonder? Above the din of the other voices he screamed, "My bat, my ball, I bat." And with that the matter was ended.

Are we fulfilling the **great commission** as set out by Yahushua or are we trying to keep alive a **dead building** used twice a week?

Today's church faces a similar problem. **It would seem that most assemblies have decided that authority to establish church government, make rules, set policy and determine requirements for membership belongs to them. Many even go as far as to determine the very requirements necessary to be saved as though salvation is something to be voted on.** They feel they can attach their own list of parameters apart from YHWH's word. They also believe it's within their power to deny salvation by denying church membership to anyone who fails to obey their rules.

Salvation comes as a result of Yahushua's completed work on the stake; a work which could not be shared with any other. He, through His sinless blood is able to wash from the soul of mankind the sin which separates man from YHWH. **He and He alone.**

The Lord, through His word has revealed His exclusive position as head and sole authority of His church

*Colossians 1:18 (KJV):* 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

What can we, as members of it do, especially if we have been chosen by Him to be His delegated authorities? If we have been delegated then we must represent Him; not ourselves. If we represent Him, then we must carry out His plan; the **original plan**. He has placed in our hands to follow. We cannot add anything to this **original plan** nor can we take anything from it without betraying the trust of the one we represent. Like the young ballplayer who cried, "My bat, my ball, I pitch," we must listen to our Lord's voice as He lifts it above the objections of the crowd to say "**My blood, my resurrection, my church, I make the rules!**" Have you been searching for the first century church, that warm, simple, loving church family that gathered about the Lord's Table ?

*Matthew 15:8-9 (KJV):* 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

The Word of YHWH was given as a plan, a spiritual blueprint for the building of YHWH's kingdom on earth. The Bible is not only YHWH's blueprint but details all of the builder's specifications. Was YHWH, through His son and the apostles, building the church for Himself or for those who would become the material that form its structure? Was the structure of the church to be built of physical things such as gold, silver, precious gems, wood, hay or stubble or was it to be built of spiritual material? What form would it take? Would it follow the contour of its foundation or could it exceed its foundation? Would its corner stone set the lines and limits of the structure or would another rule apply? We need to ask ourselves one all important question; **whose church is it?**

To arrive at the proper conclusion we must go back to the blueprint and specifications found only in YHWH's Word.

One thing is clear from Yahushua's teaching; it must be built on a rock, not sand. Sand is always shifting. It must be built on firm unchanging ground, immovable and strong. The parable of the house built upon the rock makes this abundantly clear (*Matthew 7:24 – 27*).

- Who is the rock upon which the church is built? (*1 Corinthians. 10:4 Ro 9:33*)
- Who is unchanging, steady and sure? (*Hebrews. 13:8*)
- Who is the chief corner stone? (*Ephesians. 2:20*)
- Who is the foundation? (Ephesians. 2:20)
- Whose church is it? (Ephesians. 5:27)
- Is it a physical or spiritual house? (I Peter. 2:5)
- Can we build upon any foundations we choose?

*1 Corinthians 3:11-13 (KJV):* *11* For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. *12* Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; *13* Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If we, who call ourselves Believers-Christians (those who obey and follow Messiah) attempt to modify, redesign or reduce any part of the Yahushua's church we make ourselves equal with Him. The church is a purchased possession bought and paid for with the sinless blood of Messiah.

*Acts 20:28 (KJV):* *28* Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

He and He alone has the authority of ownership; authority to add, subtract or keep in place that which He has established. He has declared that the blueprint given in His Word will not change.

*Matthew. 24:35 (KJV):* Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

He paid for the church with his own blood; we didn't and couldn't because we don't have the right blood type: **sinless!** He declares that no man can lay any other foundation for the church than the one He has already established. If we change the frame or form that He through the apostles gave it by adding our own rules and regulations, we compromise His **original plan**.

We say that we are qualified to further define YHWH's Word; that YHWH didn't finish His Word because man's clarification is necessary. We must not presume to

take upon ourselves the task of correcting YHWH. We can add nothing to traditions, doctrines, or the gospel of Yahushua our Messiah.

*II Thessalonians. 1:7-8 (KJV):* 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

*II Thessalonians. 2:15 (KJV):* Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

*II Thessalonians. 3:6 (KJV):* Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

*II John 1:9 (KJV):* Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

*I Timothy. 4:16 (KJV):* Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

*I Peter. 4:17 (KJV):* For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

*Galatians. 1:8 (KJV):* But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

**Those who would push aside the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit), the teacher and guide to all truth (*John 16:13-14*), have been a thorn in the side of the church from the beginning. (*Galatians. 2:11-16*)** They always want to add or clarify or change something. They claim to be working on behalf of YHWH but always create division within the church body with their so-called Spirit led insights. They feel that it's their ministry to tell us what YHWH means.

If this is so then why is the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) given to all in the family of YHWH instead of just these special few? It would seem if we had them to

advise us we wouldn't need the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit). Certainly no one should exchange the revelation of YHWH's Spirit for the dribble or babble of men.

Like the Pharisees who came before them, they seek to elevate themselves by enslaving others; by taking away the liberty which is ours in Yahushua (*Galatians 3:1-5, 5:1*). These modern day Pharisees, like their predecessors, add heavy burdens to the shoulders of YHWH's flock; burdens too heavy to be carried (*Matthew 23:4-7*). But the yoke Messiah intended for us is easy and the burden light (*Matthew 11:29-30*).

**We must not allow ourselves to be deceived into thinking that YHWH needs our help to define, refine or interpret anything.** No matter how well intentioned such leaders may be such teaching is counter productive to the work of YHWH and only produces strife and division in the church. If you don't believe this, just look around.

In days past, during the period known as the Dark Ages or Middle Ages the church underwent great change through reform. This reform or reformation produced two great movements toward truth and were largely guided by the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit).

The first began with Martin Luther in Germany who defied the institution called the Church of Rome. The Church of Rome thought it had the power to act in authority above the Word of YHWH. It sought to, and did impose its self-righteous man made doctrines on YHWH's people and called all failures to obey these man made rules sin.

*Matthew 15:8-9 (KJV):* <sup>8</sup> This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. <sup>9</sup> But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Leaving the Church of Rome in peril of their lives, Martin Luther and those with him determined to elevate the Word of YHWH to its rightful position as YHWH's governing authority and example for the Church. These courageous reformers, Luther, Tyndale, Wycliffe and others too numerous to mention, poured their lives

into the reformation and succeeded in elevating YHWH's Word to its proper position within the Church but not before they paid a heavy price in martyr's blood.

Though they elevated the Word of YHWH they continued many of the lofty customs and traditions they had grown up with in the confines of the Roman Church. They adopted from Rome the use of large elaborate buildings with spires on top (steeple). These buildings contained altars: pedestals which raised its appointed leaders above the congregation. It divided the congregation from its leadership. Leaders now sat above the congregation and were called clergy. Though no such practice took place in Scripture the traditions of pew, steeple, altar, stained glass and clergy continue to this very day.

So accepted did these traditions become that even the building became known as the Church. People began to believe that the building was the house of YHWH and called it so. No thought was given to Scripture on this matter or it would have been clearly seen that each of YHWH's people is His house. They would have known that YHWH does not dwell in temples made with hands (*Hebrews. 3:6; I Corinthians. 3:16*). **Yes, the apostles met in the temple or synagogues on occasion, but never gave a thought to building one; usually there was trouble when they visited synagogue anyway.**

*Acts 7:48-49 (KJV):* <sup>48</sup> Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, <sup>49</sup> Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

If the Reformers had read the admonishment given in the second chapter of the book of Revelation to the Church of Ephesus, especially verses four and five, they might have avoided this apostasy.

*Revelation 2:4-5 (KJV):* <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Perhaps they might have even found their way back to the simple loving church of the Apostles.

*Acts 2:46 (KJV):* And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

*Acts 8:3 (KJV):* As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

*Acts 20:20 (KJV):* And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,

*Romans. 16:3-5 (KJV):*<sup>3</sup> Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:<sup>4</sup> Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.<sup>5</sup> Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

*1 Corinthians. 16:19 (KJV):* The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

*Colossians. 4:15 (KJV):* Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

*Phile. 1:2 (KJV):* And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:

When did the meeting place for YHWH's church move from the loving simplicity of a house to a building or temple or cathedral? Who authorized such a move?

### **When did Messiah order church buildings built?**

*1 Kings 8:27 (KJV):* But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

*Mal. 3:6 (KJV):* For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed

If YHWH doesn't change then He didn't authorize this move; so who did? Whose church is it?

While the Protestant Reformation was growing in intensity, another group had also felt the oppressive hand of Rome. They too had grown tired of obeying its non-biblical dictates so they separated, seeking to return to the truth of YHWH's word and the simple church life of the first century.

This second movement became known as Anabaptist because they required those who had been baptized in the Church of Rome to now be baptized again. They believed that baptism was a matter of choice and one had to become a believer before they could make this choice. The term for this became known as "believer's baptism" and those who practiced it became known as Anabaptists, meaning baptized twice.

Their rejection of infant baptism made them hated enemies of the Roman Church and of many Protestant Churches which continued the pagan practice of infant baptism. So hated were these peaceful, non-violent Anabaptists that they were pursued from both fronts, hunted down, and executed all across Northern Europe for a period in excess of two hundred years.

The Protestant reformation continued to grow and divide under a variety of leaders and also continued to practice the customs of the Roman Church with one exception: it now taught the Word of YHWH to its members allowing all who could read access to the sacred texts.

The Anabaptists also made the Scriptures available to their people but had returned in large part to meeting in homes and enjoying the simple worship of the first century. These shared what they had and though severely persecuted, they were rich in understanding of the Word and the fellowship of Messiah.

There was however, one small crack in their beliefs that went unnoticed until it eventually led to the complete breakdown of this promising work of YHWH. As hard as it may be to believe, these beautiful followers of our Lord began to do the same thing that the Church of Rome had done to them: the same thing that



caused them to separate in the beginning. **They began to place the church and its mortal leaders above the Word of YHWH.** They began to make rules and regulations not found in YHWH's Word.

They justified these additions by saying that these things were not forbidden in the Word and would help to define it. Do you think YHWH needs our help? Like the Roman Church before them, they sought to legislate eating, drinking and especially dress and appearance. Their attitude was, "If we don't define the dress code than how far will the people go?" They failed to see that the final interpretation of such things must be left to the conscience and the ultimate revealer of truth: the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit).

*John 16:13-14 (KJV):* <sup>13</sup> Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. <sup>14</sup> He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

*Matthew. 15:8-9 (KJV):* <sup>8</sup> This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. <sup>9</sup> But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Dictating not only the style of the garments worn but the color in many cases. This led of course to an increase in opinion which led to the usual division and ultimately to the breakdown of the solid and simple structure it once had.

*Matthew. 23:4-5; 25-28 (KJV):* <sup>4</sup> For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. <sup>5</sup> But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries,

<sup>25</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. <sup>26</sup> Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. <sup>27</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all

uncleanness. <sup>28</sup> Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

*1 Samuel 16:7 (KJV):* But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

### **So what is the Church?**

- The Church is a holy priesthood. (*1 Peter. 2:5*)
- The Church is a spiritual house built as living stones. (*1 Peter. 2:5*)
- The Church is the Body of Yahushua. (*Ephesians. 1:22-23*)
- The Church is the Bride. (*Ephesians. 5:22-23*)
- The Church is YHWH's building. (*1 Corinthians. 3:9*)
- The Church is the household of YHWH. (*Ephesians. 2:19*)
- The Church is a flock. (*1 Peter. 5:2*)
- The Church is the temple of YHWH. (*1 Corinthians. 3:16*)
- The Church is the people of YHWH. (*1 Peter. 2:10*)
- The Church is the Lamb's wife. (*Revelation. 19:7*)

This is not a complete list; the church is so much more.

To determine once and for all whose church it is, we must answer the following:

- If we are a holy priest hood then who is the high priest?
- If we are living stones than on what foundation do we sit?
- If we are the body of Yahushua then who is our head?
- If we are the bride then who is the bridegroom?
- If we are a building then who is the chief cornerstone?
- If we are a household then who is the Father?
- If we are a flock then who is our shepherd?
- If we are the temple what Elohim do we serve?
- If we are the people of YHWH then to whom do we belong?
- If we are the Lamb's wife then who is the Lamb?

**The answer to all the previous questions is the same; Yahushua our Messiah.**

Now that we've determined whose church it is we must now realize that as His Church:

- We can have no other doctrine than His. (*Matthew 15:9*)
- No other traditions than those established in His Word. (*II Thessalonians. 2:15, 3:6; Colossians. 2:8, 14, 20, 22*)
- No other gospel than His. (*Galatians. 1:8-10*)
- No other foundation than what He has already built and revealed in His Word. (*Ephesians. 2:20; I Corinthians. 3:11-13*)

The Church is and always will be a living organism like the cell of the physical body. Just as every healthy cell must have a genetic program to determine its place in the body and a nucleus to allow for growth, so every cell in the body of Messiah, the local fellowship, must have as its nucleus, Messiah, and a place in His body that we're guided to by the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit). (*I Corinthians. 3:6, 7; John 16:13*)

**Before you decide to challenge the strength of your own faith by taking a step toward becoming a practicing member of the first century church you should first understand a few things. Any move you make in YHWH's direction is a move away from Satan.**

**If you think this move will go unnoticed, you're deceiving yourself.** If you think those who protest will be those who knowingly serve the world or Satan, then you're in for a great surprise. You will be surprised to learn that those who oppose you most will be those of your own family. **Yes, you can expect opposition from both your church family and your natural family.**

*Matthew. 10:34-37 (KJV):*<sup>34</sup> Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup> For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. <sup>36</sup> And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. <sup>37</sup> He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Many of these will encourage you not to leave your present church or Fellowship. They will admit that some changes are necessary but will suggest that you stay and help bring about these changes.

**Brethren, if this were possible we'd still be under the authority of the Church of Rome.**

How can we support or correct a system that we have no real voice in. If we protest we will be seen as a trouble maker and nothing will change. We could spend all our lives trying to turn our local assembly back to the truth and after that, the denomination and never accomplish a thing but to waste the only life YHWH gave us.

*2 Corinthians. 6:16-17 (KJV):* <sup>16</sup> And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

<sup>17</sup> Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

How often have we heard the phrase "go to church"? If it's not a building then you can't go to it; you must be part of it. Believers-Christians are part of Yahushua's body the church. I can't go to the human race once or twice a week and I can't go to church once or twice a week. I am either part of the body of Yahushua or I'm not; I am either part of the human race or I'm not. The church is not a material structure but rather a spiritual house.

**Neither Yahushua nor the apostles ever intended to use resources meant to take care of the family of YHWH, on elaborate temples or cathedrals or for that matter even simple buildings. Not one cent was ever spent in the entire New Testament to build any structure, church building or seminary.**

**We hear the cries of the needy saying, "Why doesn't YHWH provide for us? Doesn't YHWH care? Can YHWH truly exist and not help us?"**

**If we were to sell every church building built in the name of Yahushua at fair market value, only the interest on the amount returned would feed all the hungry on this planet now and until the day of Yahushua's return.**

One poor American missionary felt the call of YHWH to go to Mexico and there to attend to the physical and spiritual needs of the Mexican people in Juarez, just across the border from El Paso. In El Paso there could be found many beautiful church buildings that lay just on the other side of the Rio Grande; a literal stones throw away.

An aerial view of El Paso with all its high church steeples would make El Paso appear like a spike bed. The missionary failed to understand how so many could go hungry so close to these so called houses of worship. The missionary was so troubled over this, that he found it affected his sleep, causing him to rest uneasily.

One night as he slept he dreamed. He dreamed that he was standing in front of a large gray stone church building with a bell tower that rose high above the street below. All the stones of this structure were huge but varied greatly in size. Some stones were smaller than others, some were greater in size and still others even greater. In his dream the missionary saw a ladder extending from the street and reaching to the bell tower.

At the top of the ladder, dressed in sandals and robe stood Yahushua. He was writing something on each of the various stones which made up the structure. The missionary called to Him and asked what He was writing. Yahushua looked down at him with tears in His eyes and explained that each stone in the wall was different in size and therefore different in value. Some stones were worth ten dollars, others twelve, still others twenty, etc.

Then He explained that on each stone He was writing the name of a child that died for the want of the cost of the stone which bore the child's name. In other words, if the stone cost ten dollars the child whose name appeared on it died for the want of ten dollars. If the stone cost twenty then the child whose name was

inscribed on it died for the lack of twenty dollars etc.

When the missionary awoke he couldn't forget his dream and it changed him forever.

### **How dare we invest YHWH's money in buildings? How dare we ignore His explicit directions?**

*1 Corinthians. 3:11-13 (KJV):* <sup>11</sup> For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; <sup>13</sup> Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

*Matthew. 25:31-46 (KJV):* <sup>31</sup> When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: <sup>32</sup> And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: <sup>33</sup> And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: <sup>36</sup> Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. <sup>37</sup> Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? <sup>38</sup> When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? <sup>39</sup> Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? <sup>40</sup> And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. <sup>41</sup> Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: <sup>42</sup> For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. <sup>44</sup> Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? <sup>45</sup> Then shall he answer them, saying,

Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. <sup>46</sup> And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

*Acts 7:48-49 (KJV):* <sup>48</sup> Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, <sup>49</sup> Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

Unfortunately many feel that they have invested to much money, time and education in doing it wrong to now turn and walk away to do it right. It's easier to justify or ignore conscience provoking material like this. After all, what ever will they do with all these buildings? It's to late now to change, isn't it? Or is it? It all depends on how serious their love and commitment is to Yahushua and His Word.

As a part of the church you must live and walk in the true faith of YHWH. **Church is a way of life not a place to visit** (*1 John 1:7*). To take a step toward early church worship is to invoke Satan's anger like nothing else. Against this church he can't win (*Matthew 16:18*). But if he can keep you from becoming part of the true church he can keep you spiritually impotent for a lifetime.

The church began with Peter's first sermon just as Yahushua said it would (*Matthew 16:18*) and though the enemy has tried to destroy it, it still stands (*Acts 2:38-42*). There will be those who seek to hold you back; those from your family, your church and those among your friends. They will accuse you of heresy, of joining a cult, of abandoning your friends and family. It will get plenty rough before it gets better. Your choice to live by YHWH's Word will reveal enemies and persecution from sources you never dreamed of.

*2 Timothy. 3:12 (KJV):* Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Hold on, don't let go, don't give up! Remember, YHWH understands and will reward you for your faithfulness if you continue steadfast in the faith (*1 Corinthians. 15:58; Philippians. 3:13, 14*).

Some will say that YHWH only makes His will known to you through family or clergy but this is not so. No man in any page of YHWH's Word was called through another. While it is true that YHWH does speak to us through others, His call to step out and serve always comes to the one called, even if they're only children at the time (*I Samuel 3:4-10*). The final decision rests with you; follow YHWH or follow man.

Just remember to count the cost before you begin, for unless you're willing to put aside all that you have you can not be his disciple (*Luke 14:33*). Count the cost. You will be required to walk your path of separation daily (*Luke 9:23*). Count the cost. If they have hated Him they will also hate you (*John 15:18-20*). Count the cost. Count the cost first so that you will be able to finish what you have started (*Luke 14:28*). YHWH will be with you; He will sustain you; you can do all things through Him (*Philippians 4:13*). Do not try to reason out YHWH's call: just follow.

*Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV):* <sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. <sup>6</sup> In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

**Once you start back; once you seek to do the first work, you will discover your first love.**

*Revelation 2:4-5 (KJV):* <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Once you have counted the cost and started back to the true Church of Yahushua there can be no turning back.

*Luke 9:62 (KJV):* And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

**Think of the words to that old familiar chorus:**

**"I have decided to follow Jesus".**

**"I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back."**

**"The world behind me the cross before me, no turning back".**

**"Tho' none go with me still I will follow, no turning back".**



**“Will you decide now to follow Jesus; no turning back, no turning back?”**

**I HAVE DECIDED! I PRAY THAT YOU DO TO.**

**There are many ways to support the Body of Messiah.  
Where there is a need, there is a deed to be done in love.  
Support Israel,  
support outreach ministries,  
you can even support us!**