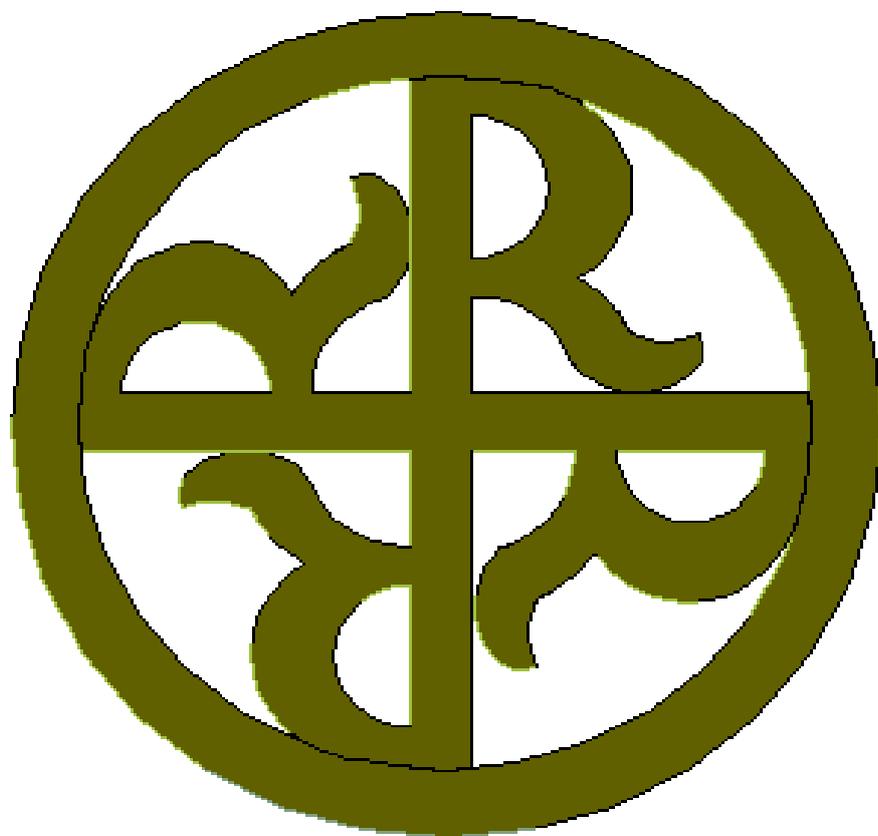


**TEXT BOOK FOR APOSTOLIC  
CHRISTIANS**



**THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH  
(APOSTLE UNITY)**

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## **PART ONE**

### **1. GOD, HIS CREATION AND HIS REVELATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

#### **1.1 What is God?**

God is an internal, perfect, spiritual triune being; God is the Creator of all visible and invisible creations.

#### **1.2 Which particular qualities of God can be observed by us?**

God is love; He is almighty, omniscient (all-knowing), loving, sincere, faithful, trustworthy, holy and merciful.

#### **1.3 How is God perceived?**

God is perceived in His works and revelations, as God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

#### **1.4 What did God do in the beginning?**

In the beginning God created heaven and earth.  
Gen. 1

#### **1.5 What does the visible creation consist of?**

The sun, the solar system, the earth, the plants, and all living creatures.

#### **1.6 How is the invisible acknowledged?**

The invisible is all that which cannot be observed with the natural senses.

#### **1.7 What is the basis of our faith in God?**

On the presence of His creation, the birth, life, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of one's own spiritual experience of the redemption of Jesus Christ.

**1.8 What is our perception when we observe God's creation?**

His almightiness, and His wonderful wisdom as seen in His creation.

**1.9 Which are the most precious creations of God?**

The angels and mankind, after His own image.  
(Read Psalm 8:5-6, Heb. 2:6-9)

**1.10 What is an angel?**

Angels are ministering Spirits, created for service to God and humans. (Read Heb. 1:13-14)

**1.11 Are angels visible?**

In certain instances. They possess the ability to make themselves visible to humans. As a rule, however, they are invisible.

**1.12 What is man, as referred to in the Bible?**

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."  
Psalm 8:5

**1.13 How was the first human created?**

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. 2:7

**1.14 For what reason did God create man?**

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Gen. 1:26

**1.15 What was man's first instruction?**

Man had to give a name to all the living creatures on earth. Gen. 2:19-20

**1.16 What were the names of the first beings created after God's image, and where did they live?**

The first people created to God's image were Adam and Eve, and they lived in Paradise.

**1.17 Did the first beings remain in Paradise?**

No, they transgressed the law and were expelled from Paradise.

**1.18 What was God's first command to man?**

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:16-17

**1.19 Who seduced man to disobedience?**

Satan, who appeared to Eve in the form of a wealthy prince as sly as a serpent.

**1.20 Who is the devil?**

Revelations 12:9 – "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." See also John 8:44. Remember that he was also once an angel.

**1.21 When did the threatened death occur to man?**

The spiritual death occurred immediately after the fall of man. This became apparent by fear and disquietness, and the bodily death followed later.

**1.22 Did consequences arise for the first human descendants?**

Yes: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12

**1.23 What did God do to save man from spiritual death?**

He made a promise that a Redeemer will appear.

**1.24 Did Adam and Eve have any children?**

Yes. Except for the well known Cain, Abel and Seth of which the bible tells us, they had many other sons and daughters. Gen. 5:4

**1.25 What do we know about Cain and Abel?**

They made offerings to God. Cain offered the fruit of the ground and Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock. Gen. 4:3-4

**1.26 How did God receive the offerings of the two brothers?**

"And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." Gen. 4:4-5 This teaches us to offer only the best of everything to God, both spiritually and naturally.

**1.27 What did Cain do when he saw that God would not accept his offerings?**

"And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell...and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Gen. 4:5-8

**1.28 What do we know about the descendants of Adam and Eve?**

They had many descendants, but they sinned more and more, and only a few lived a God-fearing life.

**1.29 Were there people who lived a God-fearing life in that time?**

Yes. There were, for instance, Enoch and Noah.

**1.30 What do we know about Enoch?**

"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Gen. 5:24 Enoch's fear of God is shown to us in Gen. 5:22, where we learn that he walked with God for three hundred years.

**1.31 What do we know about Noah?**

He found mercy in the eyes of God, and God commanded him to build an ark. The ark saved Noah, his family and a multitude of animals from the flood.

**1.32 Why did God send the Great Flood?**

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart." Gen. 6:5-6. God repented His creation of man and decided to destroy man with the earth. Gen. 6:11-13.

**1.33 What do we learn from the lives of Enoch and Noah?**

That we could expect blessing upon a good life, and that a sinful life leads to destruction and doom.

**1.34 What is the significance of the ark in our lives today?**

It is a symbol of the work of Christ as Redeemer in the New Testament.

**1.35 What were the names of the sons of Noah?**

Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**1.36 Which descendant of Noah is described by the Bible as being exceptionally God fearing and blessed?**

Abraham, the ninth after Shem.

**1.37 What does the Bible teach us about Abraham's devotion?**

He believed God and was obedient. On God's command he left the house of his father; as well as his friends and land of birth. Everywhere he went he professed his faith in God; in both offerings and obedience.

**1.38 In what way was Abraham compensated for his dedication?**

God rewarded him with great wealth, promises and revelations. God changed his name to Abraham, which means "father of many people".

**1.39 In what particular way did Abraham prove his faith?**

Through his willingness to offer his son Isaac to God.  
Gen. 22

**1.40 Which virtues of Abraham are known to us?**

His peacefulness.	Gen. 13:8
His unselfishness.	Gen. 13:9
His gift of offering.	Gen. 14:18-20
His compassion.	Gen. 18:16-33

**1.41 After the death of Abraham, who was the person who shared in the natural and Godly blessings?**

His son Isaac, who like his father, lived a holy life.  
Gen. 26:2-5

**1.42 How many sons did Isaac beget?**

Two. Esau and Jacob

**1.43 Who was blessed as firstborn?**

Esau was the firstborn, but sold his birthright to Jacob. Gen. 25:29-34 Jacob was then blessed as the firstborn.

**1.44 How many sons did Jacob have, and what were their names?**

Twelve: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Is'sachar, Zeb'ulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph, Benjamin.

**1.45 What do we know about the sons of Jacob?**

They sold their brother Joseph to the Midianites merchantmen, because they were jealous of their father's love towards him, also because he had such strange dreams.

**1.46 What became of Joseph after being sold to the merchantmen?**

The merchantmen sold him in Egypt. He then went to the palace of Pharaoh where he was subjected to many temptations.

**1.47 Did Joseph resist these temptations?**

Yes. Because of his holy attitude he said the following: "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Gen. 39:9

**1.48 How was Joseph's fear of God compensated?**

King Pharaoh had two dreams which Joseph then interpreted correctly. He was then released from jail, and made ruler over Egypt. Gen. 40 and 41.

**1.49 How was Joseph reunited with his father and brothers?**

Famine came to Canaan. The brothers of Joseph came to Egypt to buy corn. They recognized Joseph, and were told to fetch Joseph's father and brothers to Egypt.

**1.50 What became of the descendants of Joseph and Jacob in Egypt?**

They multiplied and became a great nation; but later under the empire of the kings of Egypt, they experienced much suffering. (Ex. 1)

**1.51 How did God rescue His people from this oppression?**

God sent Moses as a leader to them. He led the people through great miracles over the desert to Canaan.

**1.52 Of Whom was Moses a descendant?**

Moses was an Israelite from the house of Levi. (Ex. 2,3,4)

**1.53 Why were the descendants of Jacob called "Israelites"?**

God gave this name to Jacob the night Jacob was wrestling with Him. After God blessed Jacob, He said to him that his descendants would be called "Israel."

**1.54 What does the name "Israel" mean?**

"Israel" means to have power in God and man.

**1.55 Were the Israelites always obedient to their leaders?**

No. They frequently murmured and complained against Moses and God. Ex. 15:24; 17:3.

**1.56 What important event occurred during Israel's journey through the desert?**

On the mount Sinai God gave the Ten Commandments to the people through Moses. Ex. 20

**1.57 Name the ten Commandments.**

1.57.1 Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me.

1.57.2 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

1.57.3 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

1.57.4 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, not thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, not thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

- 1.57.5 Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- 1.57.6 Thou shalt not kill.
- 1.57.7 Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- 1.57.8 Thou shalt not steal.
- 1.57.9 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
- 1.57.10 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

**1.58 Are the ten Commandments also binding on us and for all time?**

Yes. Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but, to fulfil." Mat. 5:17. As sealed member of the body of Christ, we do not live under the law, but under His two commandments. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Mat. 22:37-40

**1.59 By what other name is the ten Commandments also known?**

The Law of Moses. (Read II Cor. 3)

**1.60 Who was the successor to Moses?**

Joshua. He led the Israelites into the Promised Land amidst great trials and temptations.

**1.61 Who governed the Israelites upon the death of Joshua?**

Judges, Kings and Prophets.

**1.62 Who were the most well known judges?**

Gideon, Samson, Eli and Samuel.

**1.63 Who are the most important Kings mentioned in the Bible?**

Saul, David and his son Solomon.

**1.64 What do we know about King Saul?**

He was a great man in the eyes of the Lord. Because he rejected the word of the Lord, he was also rejected from being king. I Sam. 15:22-23.

**1.65 What is King David well known for?**

He killed Goliath while he was still a young shepherd. I Sam. 17:49-51. He was also a master at playing the harp and author of most of the Psalms that were written.

**1.66 What does the Bible teach us about King Solomon?**

He had great wisdom. He also built the temple of God in Jerusalem.

**1.67 Who were the most important prophets of the Old Covenant?**

Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Elishah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

**1.68 Which special promise did God make through the prophets?**

The promise of the Redeemer and Messiah that was to be born.

**1.69 Who was the last prophet of the Old Covenant?**

The prophet Malachi. He lived about 400 years before the birth of Christ, predicted the coming of Jesus and John the Baptist. Mal. 3:1

**1.70 Who was the last prophet of the New Testament?**

John the Baptist was indeed the last biblical prophet although he performed his prophetic work in the time of the New Testament. Luke 16:16; Matt. 21:26; Mark. 11:32.

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## **PART TWO**

### **2. JESUS CHRIST AND HIS MISSION**

#### **2.1 THE LIFE OF JESUS TILL THE TIME OF HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCE**

##### **2.1.1 Who spoke about Jesus before His public appearance?**

John the Baptist who prophesied about Jesus, and who also told the people to convert themselves.

##### **2.1.2 Where in the Bible do we find the prophesy about John?**

In Malachi 3:1 it is written: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." See also Luke 1:1-25.

##### **2.1.3 What did the doctrine and deeds of John the Baptist consist of?**

- In the wilderness of Judea John preached and said: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 3:1-2.
- Whilst baptizing, John saw Jesus and said: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John 1:29.
- When asked whether he was the Christ or not, John answered and said: "I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Luke 3:16.

##### **2.1.4 What was the attitude of the people towards John the Baptist?**

The people saw him as a prophet, and many were baptized. Luke 3:1-18.

### **2.1.5 How did the Pharisees and Scribes act toward John the Baptist?**

Only a few believed him. After a while John was put in prison and was beheaded. Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29.

### **2.1.6 Who is Jesus Christ?**

Jesus is the Son of the Living God. Jesus is both Man and God. He is our King, the King of kings. He is our Redeemer. John. 1:1-3 and 14-18; John 4:9; Rom. 8:3 & 29; I Cor. 3:23; Col. 1:15-18; I Tim. 3:16.

### **2.1.7 Who confirmed that Jesus is indeed the Son of God?**

- a) **His Heavenly Father** – at the time Jesus was baptized. Matt. 3:17 & 17:5
- b) **Jesus Himself** – Matt. 26:63-64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69; John 4:25-26, 5:17-21, 6:35-38, 7:28, 8:12-59, 9:35-37, 10:9-38, 11:25-27.
- c) **John the Baptist** – John 1:29-36, 3:26-36.
- d) **Apostles and disciples of Jesus** – Matt. 14:33, 16:16; John 1:50, 4:39-42, 6:69, 11:27, 20:28, 20:31; Rom. 1:1-7; Acts 9:20.
- e) **The centurion and those who were with him, watching Jesus** – Matt. 27:54; Mark 15:39.
- f) **The devils that He cast out** – Matt. 8:29; Mark 3:11, 5:7; Luke 4:41, 8:28.
- g) **The angel who came to Mary** – Luke 1:35.
- h) **Nathanael** who said to Jesus: "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God." John 1:49.
- i) **Martha**, the sister of Lazarus – John 11:27

### **2.1.8 How was Jesus, Son of God, revealed in the flesh?**

He was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem. Luke 2:1-20; Matt. 1:25, 13:55, 3:1; Gal. 4:4.

**2.1.9 Which verse from the Old Testament reveals the place of birth of Jesus?**

Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Eph'ratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel."

**2.1.10 Who was the first to hear the news about the birth of Jesus?**

The shepherds abiding in the field. Luke 2:8-14. Wise men from the East were led to Bethlehem by a star. Matt. 2:1-12. Herod received the message from the shepherds and wise men from the East.

**2.1.11 What was the attitude of Herod about the birth of Jesus?**

Herod became scared; because of His superstitious nature, he thought he would be taken from his throne. He then ordered every child, from two years old and under, to be killed. Matt. 2:16

**2.1.12 Why was the child Jesus not killed in the killings Herod ordered?**

An angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream and said: "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." Matt. 2:13.

**2.1.13 How long did Joseph and Mary stay in Egypt?**

Till the death of Herod. They then went to Nazareth in Galilee. Matt. 2:19-23.

**2.1.14 What do we know about the childhood of Jesus?**

He visited the temple. Luke 2:41-49. Although not much of it was written, He worked in His Father's vineyard. He loved His parents and was obedient. Luke 2:51. "...And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Luke 2:52 & 40.

**2.1.15 What preceded the preaching of Jesus?**

- a) Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist. At this ceremony, God revealed His love and complacency in Jesus, saying: "Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mark 1:11
- b) At the time of His baptism, the Holy Spirit of God descended upon Jesus like a dove. God then identified with Jesus when He said: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3:17; Luke 9:35
- c) The aforementioned was the confirmation of the capability of Jesus in His appointment to the role of mediator between God and man.
- d) Upon the baptism of Jesus followed the temptation in the desert which was to prove the meaning and importance of baptism. Adam succumbed to temptation in favourable circumstances. Upon His baptism with water and the Holy Spirit of God, Jesus on the other hand, stayed steadfast during the most demanding circumstances.

**2.1.16 Was it necessary that Jesus be baptised?**

Jesus answered this question by saying unto John the Baptist: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Matt. 3:15

**2.1.17 What happened during the baptism of Jesus?**

“The heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him.” Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32.

**2.1.18 Did Jesus undergo the spiritual baptism, that is, the Holy Sealing?**

In Matthew 12:18, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, we are told: “Behold My servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased: I will put My Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgement to the Gentiles.”

During the transfiguration of Jesus on the mount, God confirmed this when He spoke from the cloud, saying: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.” Matt. 17:5; Mark 9:7.

John the Baptism testified that God said unto him:

“Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God.” John 1:33-34.

Jesus Himself said in John 3:5 “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.”

From the above mentioned, we see that Jesus did in fact undergo the spiritual baptism and was sealed by God the Father Himself. John 6:27

**2.1.19 Where did Jesus go after He was baptised?**

“Then was Jesus led up to the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.” Matt. 4:1

**2.1.20 Did Jesus succumb to the temptation by the Devil?**

No! "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Matt. 4:10

**2.2 THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS**

**2.2.1 When did Jesus begin with His preaching in public?**

"Now, when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4:12 & 17

**2.2.2 What was the first evangelical task Jesus performed on earth?**

He called His Apostles and started teaching them. Matt. 4:18-22; 10:1-42

**2.2.3 What were the names of the first twelve Apostles?**

Simon, who is called Peter; and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him." Matt. 10:1-4

**2.2.4 Which is the greatest and most renowned sermon of Jesus?**

The Sermon on the mount. Matt. 5, 6 & 7

**2.2.5 What was the effect of this sermon on the recipients?**

The people were astonished at His doctrine. Matt. 7:28

**2.2.6 What was the main point in the doctrine of Jesus Christ?**

The preaching of His Christendom as a joyous message which includes the grace of God for mankind. Also the revelation of the Kingdom of God, God's plan for salvation, the identifying of false doctrines and the disloyalty to the worshipping of God, the confirmation that He is the Son of God and the promised Saviour.

Jesus confronted the crowds with His demands in order to reveal to them that He would be in their refuge and shelter.

**2.2.7 Which characteristics did Jesus show in His works?**

All of the best characteristics. He performed many miracles, and ministered the love of God to the people. Matt. 4:23-24, 8 & 9; John 11:38-44

**2.2.8 How was Jesus able to do all the miracles He performed?**

He was in complete unison with God the Father.  
"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18; John 11:40-42

### **2.2.9 What was the result of the public actions of Jesus?**

There was growing support for Jesus amongst the people. He was accepted as a messenger from God, as a teacher and benefactor. His Apostles and followers acknowledged Him as the promised Messiah and the Son of God.

### **2.2.10 What was the attitude of the Pharisees and Scribes towards Jesus?**

They called Him a mocker, a blasphemer, a slanderer and an agitator of the people. They were jealous and envious of His work and success and hated Him for His teaching. For this reason they threatened His life.

### **2.2.11 What is the deep-set meaning of the miracles Jesus performed?**

- a) The signs and miracles were done to prove His power to the people in order to strengthen their faith. John 4:48
- b) The miracles of healing served to portray His spiritual work in order that the people could understand it better. Matt. 8:17 "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."
- c) The casting out of the devils was proof of His victory over Satan. Matt. 8:29; Mark 3:11, 5:7; Luke 4:41, 8:28. (From the quotations it can be seen that the devils also recognised Jesus as the Son of God!).

## **2.3 THE SUFFERING OF CHRIST AND HIS DEATH**

### **2.3.1 When did the suffering of Christ begin?**

When He was betrayed on the Mount of Olives. Luke 22:47-54

### **2.3.2 What did the Apostles do during the suffering of Jesus?**

- a) Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Luke 22:3-6; John 13:27
- b) All the Apostles forsook Him and fled. Matt. 26:56
- c) Peter denied that he was with Jesus, and then remembered the words of Jesus which said unto him: "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly." Matt. 26:69-75; Mark 14:29-31
- d) And Simon said: "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death." Matt. 26:31-35; Luke 22:31-33

### **2.3.3 What happened to Jesus after He was taken prisoner?**

He was taken to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Because Jesus confessed that He is the Son of God, He was condemned to death. Jesus was then taken to Pilate, the Roman Governor, for judgement.

### **2.3.4 What did the Governor do in regard to the charge brought against Jesus?**

He tried Jesus and found Him to be not guilty. In spite of this the chief priests forced him to sentence Jesus to be crucified. Pilate did not want to offend the Jews and therefore he did what the chiefs said, and sentenced Jesus to death.

### **2.3.5 What did Jesus Have to endure before His crucifixion?**

Jesus was smote, mocked and had a crown of thorns put on His head.

### **2.3.6 How did Jesus behave upon the humiliation He underwent?**

He withstood all the humiliation, accusations and bad treatment. He rarely defended Himself, and then only with holy dignity and great wisdom.

### **2.3.7 What was the climax of His suffering?**

His crucifixion on Golgotha.

### **2.3.8 What is the significance of the suffering and death of Jesus?**

The fulfilment of God's mercy to deliver man from his sins. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ dies for us."

Rom. 5:8 He overcame the hell and the power of death. In doing that, He created a bridge for the reconciliation of man to God. Rom. 5:12-18

His sacrifice thus brought perfect redemption to man. He prevailed hell and removed the power of death.

## **2.4 JESUS IN THE REALM OF DEATH**

### **2.4.1 What happened to the body of Christ?**

Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate, and begged for the body of Jesus. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb. Matt. 27:57-60; John 19:38-42

#### **2.4.2 What did Jesus do after His death on the cross?**

He went to preach unto the spirits in prison. (realm of death). I Pet. 3:19 He thus loosed the pains of death, and prevailed the hell.

#### **2.4.3 Of what value is the preaching of Jesus to the deceased?**

God wants to save everybody. (Not everybody wants to be saved though.) See also I Pet. 3:19-21; I Tim. 2:4. For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. I Pet. 4:6. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord to both the dead and the living." Rom. 14:9

### **2.5 THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, AND HIS INFLUENCE ON EARTH UNTIL HIS ASCENSION**

#### **2.5.1 Did Jesus stay in the realm of death?**

No. Jesus rose from death on the third day. "Whom God hath raised up (on the third day), having loosed the pains of death." Acts 2:24; 31.

#### **2.5.2 What was the result of the resurrection of Jesus?**

Resurrection meant victory over death. Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ. "O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Cor. 15:55-57

### **2.5.3 How is the resurrection of Jesus beneficial to us?**

By the resurrection, death was conquered. "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. 1:18. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." I Cor. 15:22  
"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power." Rev. 20:6

### **2.5.4 How did Jesus reveal Himself after the resurrection?**

He appeared to Mary Magdalene as a gardener. (This reminds us of the virtue of being humble.)  
John 20:14-16. Then Jesus appeared to His disciples.  
"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." John 20:21-23

### **2.5.5 When did the ascension occur?**

After 40 days Jesus led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9

### **2.5.6 How do we calculate this 40-day period?**

The following is a synopsis of the meaning of Passover. It is to be trusted that this synopsis would serve to provide towards a better understanding of the festive days during Passover.

a) **Passover**

At the outset it should be noted that these festive days should not be regarded as just another holiday. These festive days should much rather be spent in the presence and unity of our brothers and sisters in Christ. We should also take care to attend the services held in His honour on these days. (Acts 20:16; I Cor. 16:8)

Passover was instituted in the days of Moses and particularly the day before he led the Israelites from Egypt. We know how the people, as part of Passover, had to paint the blood of a lamb on the doorposts of their houses so that the angel of death would then pass these houses and their lives be saved. Moses also received instructions from God to honour the Passover in a festive way in God's honour for ever. As an eternity has not as yet passed, we should thus honour this commandment. (Ex. 12:14)

In Mark we are told of the way Jesus upheld the Passover. His disciples asked Him where He wanted to partake of the Passover. At this Passover the Holy Communion was instituted. Mark 14:22-24. In Luke 22:15 we read the following: "And He said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

Although we are not part of the Jewish nation in the flesh, we are part of the spiritual Israelites as the lamb died for us also. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast,

not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." I Cor. 5:7-8. Read also Lev. 23:12.

The word Passover is derived from the Hebrew word "passach" which means "to pass by" or "to stand over", thus "to spare". The Passover is the feast of the sparing passing by of the Lord: "and when I see the blood, I will pass over you..." Ex. 12:13 This is a token that they would be saved from the tenth plague brought upon Egypt by the Lord, the death of all the first born, through the blood of the lamb (the Passover- or paschal lamb) which had to be slaughtered the previous night. The feast of Passover also shows the haste with which they left Egypt. (Deut. 16:3); and thus to the exodus itself. The Passover was also an offering, always superseded by a meal of offering. Also read John 1:29 & 36.

The feast was held for seven days from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> "Nisan" (the seventh Jewish calendar month) which corresponds with March and April of our calendars. As the beginning of the Jewish month was determined by the state of the moon, it is possible that there could be a 30-day difference in the actual beginning of a new month. It is for this reason that our Passover differs from year to year. The commemoration of the birth of Christ is then determined by the date of the "Passach" which means "to pass over" Ex. 12:13)

b) **Pentecost**

As we know, the crucifixion of Jesus took place on a Friday. He arose three days later and therefore we talk about Passover or Resurrection Sunday. After this He spent 40 days with His Apostles when He taught them. Luke describes these occasions to Theophilus in Acts 1:1-3. After these 40 days we celebrate our Ascension day.

The word "Pentecost" is derived from the Greek word "pentekoste" which means "fiftieth". The Pentecost or the "feast of the weeks" was the second big annual event of the year. It fell on the fiftieth day after a sickle was first put to the uncut grain, that is the sixteenth day from "Nisan". This day was counted from the second day of the Pentecost, this is the day that the first sacrifice of the grain harvest was brought in. This feast was celebrated seven weeks after the Pentecost. Deut. 16:9

From the above it can thus be concluded that all these days are in close relationship with one another. Pentecost was a feast of unleavened bread and well borne lambs (or their blood), a time of expectation by which we as Apostolic Christians are blessed by the Holy Spirit. In other words: that which the Jewish people were waiting for, was given to us because they would not accept Christ.

In Acts we are told how the Apostle Paul tried to be in time for the Pentecost in Jerusalem. (Acts 20:16) Also read I Cor. 16:8.

Let us then keep these days that were instituted by our Lord and Saviour in the same manner in which He and His Apostles kept it.

c) **Conclusion**

From Good Friday (Passover) the Pentecost or the Holy Communion or the Communion before that, it is three days to Resurrection Sunday. From resurrection it is 40 days to Ascension (Acts 1:2) and from Good Friday it is 50 days to Pentecost which is also known as the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Thus:

Good Friday + 3 days	=	Resurrection
Resurrection + 40 days	=	Ascension
Resurrection + 50 days	=	Pentecost

Author: J.P. Erasmus

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2.5.7 **What promise was made to the Apostles at the time of the Ascension?**

“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11

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## **PART THREE**

### **3. THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE APOSTOLIC MISSION, PREPARATION AND ACTIVITIES**

#### **3.1 What is the Holy Spirit?**

The Holy Spirit is a form of collective power which emanates from God and His Son, it has a wonderful impression on and in people.

#### **3.2 What are the promises about the gift and mission of the Holy Spirit?**

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of Me.” John 15:26

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” John 16:7

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

#### **3.3 How were these promises fulfilled?**

“Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” John 20:21-23

"And when the day of the Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:1-4

**3.4 What office was put first in His church by Jesus; as the first but also the least?**

The office of Apostle. I Cor. 12:28 and Luke 11:49

**3.5 What does the word "Apostle" mean?**

It means ambassador, messenger (Greek: sent forth) and minister. The Apostle is a representative of Christ in His community.

**3.6 What were the instructions of Jesus to His Apostles?**

Jesus said: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and, lo, I am with you always; even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18.

**3.7 What duty and power did the Apostles obtain together with their office?**

Jesus said unto them: "whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." John 20:23

"Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 18:18. See also Matt. 10

**3.8 Was the mission and activities of the Apostles provided only for a definite period of time?**

No. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:11-13; Matt. 28:18-20

**3.9 Where in the Bible do we find that additional Apostles were appointed by Christ, after His resurrection?**

In other words, Apostles which were not eye-witnesses to the preachings and life on earth of Christ. (That is to say; Apostles which did not know Him in the flesh.)

Adversaries of the Apostolic faith believe that only those people which knew Christ in the flesh could be ordained Apostles. They also believe that the mission of the Apostles was fulfilled. The question arises: what about the activities of the Apostles Paul and Barnabas as explained in Acts 14:14. If there is any validity in the view of the adversaries as mentioned above, it is obvious that there is a definite lack in the mission of Christ on earth today. Again the question arises, why would Jesus institute the office of Apostle for only a short time. John 20:23. From this it can surely be deduced that the office of Apostle was not a single election/appointment of the Apostles which were ordained after the resurrection of Jesus. These Apostles were Paul, Barnabas and James, the brother of Jesus.

**3.10 Did Jesus ever state that only the disciples which were eye witnesses to His life on earth, could be ordained as Apostles?**

The answer is no, He never said this. On the contrary, in Matt. 28:20, Jesus said: end of the world. Amen. James, the brother of the Lord, was also ordained after the first twelve Apostles. Gal. 1:19

The book of Acts deals exclusively with the activities of the Apostles, that which they did after His ascension and also that which they are still doing today.

**3.11 What are the powers with which Jesus endowed His Apostles for the fulfilment of their duties?**

With the Holy and Graceful, acts of the sacraments, which are:

The Holy Baptism;  
The Holy Communion, and  
The Holy Sealing.

**3.12 What is the expectation of Jesus regarding the disposition amongst Apostles?**

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34

**3.13 In which ways is the love of Jesus typified?**

In great patience with all; in honest frankness to all; in untiring service to all; and in complete sacrifice to all.

**3.14 When did the Apostles of Jesus begin their public activities?**

Ten days after the ascension in Jerusalem. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:4 "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them." Acts 2:14

**3.15 What success did the Apostles have in the beginning?**

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them three thousand souls. Acts 2:41 (Not baptism by immersion.)

**3.16 What were the ensuing developments of the Apostolic Christians?**

"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47; Acts 4:32

**3.17 What was the attitude of the scribes and High Priests towards to growing Christian community?**

They became indignant, because the Apostles taught the people and preached the doctrine of Resurrection they repeatedly became aggressive. Acts 4:1-3 (as they still do today).

**3.18 How was the growing multitude and the believers of the community provided with service ?**

The Apostles chose suitable men as co-workers and put them in charge of office. They also wrote letters,

which are particularly contained in the Holy Scriptures. They undertook long and dangerous journeys to visit distant places in order to attend to their communities.

**3.19 How were these co-workers and officers inaugurated?**

They were set before the Apostles and "...when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Acts 6:6; II Tim. 1:6

**3.20 Such co-Apostles were the following:**

Matthias, Acts 1:23-26 Barnabas, Acts 13:1-4; 14:14; Galatians 2:8-9 Paul, Acts 14:14 Andronicus and Junia, Romans 16:7 Epaphroditus, Philippians 2:25 Ananias, Acts 9:10-17 Timothy and Silvanus, 1 Thess. 1:1 James, brother of Jesus, Gal. 1:19 Jude, see Epistle of Jude. (Up to the year 1913, the translation in the Bible called for "Apostle" and not "Envoy")

**3.21 In what manner did the Apostles arrange their most important affairs?**

They held meetings and gathered with the disciples. Acts 1:13-26

**3.22 What are the duties of an Apostle?**

His first and foremost duty is To honour and love above all things: God the Creator and His Son Jesus Christ. To dedicate and to devote himself totally to Christ. II Cor. 5:20

To place and regard himself as a subordinate of Christ, and to hold himself as such.

To preach of Christ and to proclaim His gospel. This is done by preaching His word, (Acts 6:4), and the ministering of the New Testament. II Cor. 3:6 This ministry is performed by ministering the three sacraments.

To bring the people of God closer to Christ in the ministry of reconciliation. II Cor. 5:18 This ministry is in accord with the office of the Apostle as being the office of reconciliation.

To teach the flock of God to love and respect above all existence; God the Father and Jesus Christ.

To baptise or to have ordained ministries within the Holy Apostolic Church baptise believers **with** water. John 3:5

To forgive sins in the Name of Jesus Christ. John 20:23 This power is explained to us in Eph. 3:2 "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward."

To grant grace and pardon to seekers.

To serve the Holy Communion, or to have it served.

To transfer (carry over) the Holy Spirit at Sealing ceremonies. Acts 19:1-6; Eph. 1:13; Acts 8:17; John 3:5; II Cor. 3:6-8

To care for the communities in arranging and regulating appointments to Office. Acts 6; I Cor. 12.

To gather and hold together the members and communities in preparing them for eternal life. I Thess. 4 & 5

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## **PART FOUR**

### **4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES UP TO THE PRESENT**

#### **4.1 How did the spreading of the gospel take place in the ancient Christian times?**

The first elected twelve Apostles acted mainly by the laws. Apostles which were appointed later, undertook missionary work among the heathen. Through persecution by Christians of the time, many Apostles were killed.

#### **4.2 Which Apostle served the longest time?**

It seems that it was the Apostle John as there is no indication in scripture that he died an unnatural death.

#### **4.3 What is Apostle John well known for?**

On the Island Patmos the Lord made revelations to him regarding future developments of the Christian Church and on the instruction of the Lord, he wrote them down. See the book Revelation in the Bible.

#### **4.4 What important events occurred in the Biblical times directly after the Christian calendar began?**

It was a time when Christians were persecuted under Roman emperors; as well as the documenting of the Bible as we know it today.

**4.5 When and where did these persecutions end?**

At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the Emperor Constantine the Great confessed the Christian doctrine; he declared freedom of all religions in his domain.

**4.6 What developments occurred in the time after the Emperor Constantine?**

Men of faith and wisdom acted as church Fathers. In addition convents and monks came into existence. In particular the spiritual ministry managed to elevate the Pope in status to a world power.

**4.7 Was this development advantageous for the evangelism of Christ?**

History states just the opposite. Whilst Popes and princes were engaged in armed battles for power, the Christendom was secondary consideration.

**4.8 What were the consequences of the spiritual domination and of the internal split in the Catholic Church?**

The Islam doctrine expanded to countries in Asia, although in European countries Christianity grew.

**4.9 How did God care for the honest and grace-seeking people during the Renaissance?**

God chose men of faith, witnesses of truth within the church, for instance Savonarola of Italy, John Wycliff of England, Johannes Hus of Bohemia and Waldenser, Albigenser, and many others.

#### **4.10 Which important event occurred on the spiritual scene?**

The Reformation, through which, amongst others, Luther and Malanchton in Germany, Zwingly and Calvin in Switzerland and France, Cramer, Fox and Knox in England secured their fame and success.

All denominations of faith owe their existence to this reformation, the Apostolic Mission as well. No single denomination could claim that they alone came into existence because of, or as a result of the reformation. It is also important to note that the reformation is still going on – even today.

#### **4.11 What was the crux (nucleus) of the reformation?**

There was disagreement amongst the Pope and his followers. It was mainly a struggle for the faith, but it did result in bloody wars, especially the 30 years war (1618-1648) which destroyed large parts of Europe.

#### **4.12 What was the result of the reformation?**

In many countries the misuse of spiritual power came to an end and for people seeking the truth and light, freedom of thought and the right to develop their faith was granted.

#### **4.13 Which even was of importance at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century?**

Numerous faithful Christians recognised the prophecies of Jesus and large prayer meetings were held to plead for the promised call of the Holy Spirit.

**4.14 Did God grant this Pledge?**

Yes. As with the beginning of the Church of Christ, God allowed the spiritual gifts to be reawakened in the form of new Apostle status.

**4.15 When and where did the re-establishment of the Apostle office occur?**

The first prophecy occurred around the year 1830 and at the occasion of a prayer meeting in Albury, Scotland, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1832, the first Apostle, John Carlyle, was inaugurated.

**4.16 How many Apostles were inaugurated in England during this time and in what year?**

Twelve Apostles were inaugurated during 1832-1835.

**4.17 How and where did these Apostles fulfil their duties?**

In confidence of God's support, they fulfilled their Apostolic duties, and travelled to various parts of the world to establish communities according to the example of the ancient church.

**4.18 What were the names of these newly established communities?**

The communities established by the English Apostles were called "Catholic-Apostolic" or Irvingites – members of the Catholic and Apostolic church. Irving – minister of Church of Scotland 1834 on whose principles it was founded.

**4.19 What is the meaning of the term "Catholic"?**

It means "all-embracing, universal interest, whole body of Christians".

**4.20 What is the history of these newly established communities?**

The culminating point of the Catholic Apostolic community was in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1840-1860). Thereafter, however, it deteriorated.

**4.21 Why is the idea that no successor to the Apostle office is necessary, a misconception?**

Because the activities of Apostles in community with Christ is necessary till the advent (return) of Jesus Christ.

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## **PART FIVE**

### **5. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH (APOSTLE UNITY) IN ITS PRESENT FORM**

#### **5.1 COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATORS**

##### **5.1.1 How is the Church administrated?**

The church is administrated by an Administrator and Council consisting of the Bishops and 5 additional members who serve on the council for a period of 2 years.

The Administrator, in collaboration with the Council, decides upon the acquisition, sale and renovation of the immovable assets of the church. No single person can thus sell, or buy any assets for or from the church.

The Administrator and Council's responsibilities and duties are contained in a Constitution. Assets of the Church are thus not the property of, or controlled by, any individual. There can be no misunderstanding or mention of an individual who can or may rule the Church as a Director.

##### **5.1.2 How is the berth of office (office bearers) assembled?**

The first and foremost aim with the different berths of office is to equip the children of God for their service to God. To this end every Apostolic member needs wisdom from above. This wisdom is aptly described in James 3:17; "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of

righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

### **5.1.3 What is the origin of the titles of our office bearers?**

The duties of office bearers is set out and explained in scripture. This is also the reason why our church has the office bearers that we know today, and also by the names we know them by today. It is because these are the names by which they are described in scripture. Our church regards the duties of its office bearers with very high accord, and this is confirmed in I Timothy 6:1 where we read: “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed.” (“masters” in this context does not signify that we should regard them in the same way as we would regard the Lord Jesus.)

- a) In I Tim. 6:1-21 we find general admonition and instructions regarding the attitude and conduct of servants of our Lord. It is of the utmost importance that every Apostolic brother and sister study this chapter of the Bible thoroughly. Further on in this writing, reference is made of only those verses which indicates direction to office bearers as well as to members of the community.
  - i) v.3 Stay truthful to the word of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - ii) v.4 Do not be arrogant, avoid controversial questions and disputes – it leads to envy, strife and evil surmising.

- iii) v.5 This verse refers to the perverse disputing of men of corrupt minds, who suppose that gain is godliness. From such people one should withdraw thyself, says the Apostle Paul.
  - iv) v.8 Be content with our food and clothing.
  - iv) v.14 Keep the commandment without spot, unrebukable.
  - v) v.17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches. Verse 18 and 19 aptly explains to us what riches we should strive for.
- a) In I Romans 12 we are instructed in regard to the devotion, submission and faithfulness in the use of His gifts, that we should show towards God. Study this chapter with specific reference to the following verses:
- i) v.1 "...that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God..."
  - ii) v.2 Be not conformed to this world.
  - iii) v.3 Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
  - iv) v.4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office.
  - v) v.5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. (In these verses we are reminded about the unity of mind and brotherly love.)
  - vi) v.6 We have different gifts according to the grace that is given to us:

- be it prophecy, prophecy according to the proportion of faith
- be it ministry, let us wait on our ministering,
- he that teacheth, on teaching,
- he that exhorteth, exhortation,
- he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity,
- he that ruleth, with diligence,
- he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

- b) Regarding brotherly love, patience and suffering, we are instructed and informed in I Peter 3 & 4. In these chapters further general instructions and guidelines are given to both office bearers and members of the community. Please study these chapters carefully. The most striking parts in these chapters are:
  - i) Chapter 4:7 – “be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.” - verse 9 – “use hospitality one to another without grudging.”
- d) The requirements for SERVANTS are described in I Tim. 3. It is important to note that these requirements are for EVERYONE that calls him- or herself a SERVANT of God. It should be clear then that every man, woman and even children of our community, can be regarded as servants because we ALL want to SERVE the Lord our God. These requirements are thus applicable to ALL of us and not only to some or a few. These requirements are:
  - i) Be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
  - ii) Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

iii) One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;  
iv) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil;  
v) He must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. I Tim. 3:1-7

- e) In Titus 1:7 & 8 we find prerequisites for a bishop. It should be clear that these requirements are also applicable to every one of us. It states that we should be: blameless, not self-willed, holding fast the faithful word as we had been taught, that we may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

#### **5.1.4 What are the offices of the church?**

Apostle; Bishop; Elder (district or community); Evangelist; Priest and Deacons. These offices are described in:

- a) Acts 1:25-26; 4:35-37; 5:18; 14:23; 15:4; 15:23; 16:4; 22:5; 21:8;
- b) Mark 6:39;
- c) Luke 6:13; 1:49; 24:10;
- d) I Cor. 12:28-29; 9:2;
- e) Eph. 3:5;
- f) II Pet. 3:2;
- g) Rev. 18:20; 4:4
- h) Rom 1:5;
- i) Gal. 2:8; Phil. 1:1;
- j) I Tim. 3:1; 5:17
- k) II Tim. 4:5;
- l) Tit. 1:5; 1:7;
- m) James 5:14;
- n) Eph. 4:11.

### **5.1.5 What is a Bishop?**

The word Bishop is derived from the Greek word "episkopos" which could also be translated as Overseer. The Bishop acts as the head of a district. His task is to heed the flock. Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2. He also has to meet certain requirements. I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:7-9.

### **5.1.6 The Elder**

An Elder leads the community as eldest, not necessarily in age, but in experience. He also attends to the sick with the Priest. A District Elder is in charge of more than one community, being called a district.

Even in Egypt, Israel had Elders. Ex 3:16, 18. Elders are also mentioned in the journey through the desert. Ex. 18:12; 24:1; Lev. 4:15; 9:1; Num. 11:16.

### **5.1.7 The Evangelist**

The name means nothing other than "messenger of good tidings". His primary task is to proclaim the gospel of Christ. II Tim. 4:5.

### **5.1.8 The Priest**

A Priest's task concerns the altar. Num. 18:5 He is also to bring the offerings and bless the children of God. Num. 6:22-27

They are to teach the community the doctrine as is shown in: Lev. 10:11; Deut. 19:17; 33:10; I Chr. 23:4; 26:29; II Chr. 17:7-9; Mal. 2:7. He comforts souls, give advice, and tends the sick and weary. All office bearers from Priests to Bishops may administer the sacraments of:

- a) Holy Communion
- b) Holy Baptism with water

### **5.1.9 The Deacon**

The word Deacon is derived from the Greek word "diakonos" which means servant. The deacon's primary task is to tend to the poor. Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:88.

According to scripture the Deacon has to meet certain requirements. These requirements can be found in I Tim. 3, but the most important ones are:

- a) v.8 Be grave, not double-tongued, not given too much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre.
- b) v.9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
- c) v.10 Must first be proved.
- d) v.12 The husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

It is important to note that the office of Deacon is compared to that of the Bishop. We can thus say, and it should be practised, that the offices in between are to meet the same requirements. It is also important that communities regard the office bearers are the ladder of Jacob, brought about for the support and assistance of the children of God on their journey to heaven.

## **5.2 THE SACRAMENTS**

### **5.2.1 What is a sacrament?**

- a) A sacrament is a Holy, visible sign and seal instituted by God to guarantee to man his promise of forgiveness of sin and also to better man's understanding thereof, to strengthen man's faith

- and to keep it in tact. Thus, it is an act of mercy.
- b) It is also an act of religion of the church which is a sign of faith in the work of redemption, Christ and mercy, which is proved by participation.
  - c) Our Church keeps three sacraments, namely:
    - i) The Holy Baptism
    - ii) The Holy Communion
    - iii) The Holy Sealing

“For there are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” I John 5:7

Some Church denominations acknowledge only two sacraments, namely the Baptism and the Communion. The Roman Catholic Church acknowledges seven sacraments.

## **5.3 THE HOLY BAPTISM**

### **5.3.1 What is the Holy Baptism?**

It is part of the regeneration. John 3:4-5 The promise of a good conscience towards God. I Peter 3:21 The way of Salvation. Mark 16:16

### **5.3.2 Who can participate in the Holy Baptism?**

Jesus said to His Apostles: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of The Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”. Matt. 28:19 Thus – there is no man excluded from this act of Grace.

### **5.3.3 What are the preconditions for partaking in the Holy Baptism?**

The preconditions are the belief and faith in the Trinity of God and the desire for salvation. "He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved." St. Mark 16:16

### **5.3.4 What does a person vow by accepting the Holy Baptism?**

Such a person promises to consecrate his life to God and to renounce all ungodly essence, the world, the sin and the devil.

### **5.3.5 Why are children also baptised?**

Because they are also subjected to the Grace of God contained in the act of Baptism, in the same way as the adults. Jesus said: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God." "And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." Mark 10:14 and 16

The Church proclaims and believes in the **baptism with water**, because this is the baptism instituted and preached by Jesus Christ. Baptism is a Holy Sacrament which serves as a sign of the cleansing of hereditary sin. The amount of water used during the baptism ceremony is irrelevant as it is only a sign or symbol. The important point about the baptism is the symbolic cleansing of hereditary sin as it is done in the name of Jesus Christ. The water being used should be seen as spiritual, not natural water. The water in this instance is an external (natural) symbol which performs an internal (spiritual) task. The following texts in Scripture shows why, according to

Jesus Himself; children should be baptised. It also shows that the water at the ceremony is only a symbol and not the nucleus of the baptism. According to Luke 2:21-24 the Lord Jesus was baptised at His birth and was circumcised on the eighth day. According to Mark, Jesus was then baptised in the Jordan where John the Baptist baptised because that was the only running waters in those days. Mark 1:9 The Lord Jesus had to undergo this baptism because John was sent to fulfil the task of baptising Christ.

From Luke 7:18-28 it is clear that John himself did not believe the Lord Jesus' mission and did not follow Him. John sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask Him if there was another to be expected after Him. John the Baptist declares that his baptism was unique and meant for Jesus: "I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Matt. 3:11

Baptism is thus the cleansing with spiritual water to cleanse the inner-self and is confirmed with a visual symbol. In Luke 12:50 our Lord Jesus makes it clear that this is a spiritual matter: "But I have a baptism to be baptised with: and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Another proof of the baptism as an inner matter is reflected in Apostle Paul's view regarding baptism, namely that which the ordinary Christian does not understand, is that the baptism with the Holy Ghost is far more important than the baptism with water. Apostle Paul was one of God's Greatest servants on earth and should the baptism by immersion be regarded as being as important as

some of the churches interpret it, it would be difficult to understand Paul's words in I Cor. 1:14-16: "I thank God that I baptised none of you, but Crispus and Gai'us; lest any should say that I had baptised in mine own name. And I baptised also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptised any other."

### **5.3.6 How is it possible that small children can already enter the Bond of Grace through Baptism?**

This is possible through the will and faith of parents who possess the right and duty for the care of their children. If there are no parents alive or through circumstances such can never be present, persons can be deputed to take over the rights and duties.

### **5.3.7 What duties do parents have to fulfil?**

They have a duty to educate children in the Faith and to teach them, or to have them taught that they will become conscious of the Bond of Baptism.

## **5.4 THE HOLY COMMUNION**

### **5.4.1 What is the Holy Communion?**

It is the offering and the partaking in the merit of Jesus' sacrifice of His body and blood, by presenting wine and unsalted bread. It is a symbolic meal with Jesus and His Apostles.

#### **5.4.2 When and with what words did Jesus present the Holy Communion?**

During the night when Jesus was betrayed by Judas, He introduced the Holy Communion. "And He took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying: This is My body which is given for you: do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying: This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you". Luke 22:19-20

#### **5.4.3 What further texts in the Bible also refer to the introduction of the Holy Communion?**

Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24: and in particular I Cor. 11:23-25.

#### **5.4.4 Who prepares the Holy Communion?**

The consecration of the Holy Communion is done by the Priestly Administration.

#### **5.4.5 What is the meaning of consecrations or dedication?**

The Holy Communion was introduced by Christ during the night in which He was betrayed. Because Christ instituted the Holy Communion at the Easter meal, just before His death, it takes the character of the new dispensation. The ceremonial law was abolished, and the Holy Communion had to stay (see also I Cor. 11:26). The Holy Communion is in connection with the bond or testament by Christ and Apostle Paul. That is the sign and seal thereto. John 6:48-58 gives more detail of bread which descended from heaven, the bread that is Christ Himself and the drinking of His blood.

Seeing that Christ was present in the flesh when He spoke this, likewise at the introduction of the Holy Communion, these words could not be taken to have

a physical meaning. They should rather be interpreted as a figure of speech.

The blessing of the Holy Communion takes place then to plead from God that the wine and bread should possess the same power and merciful blessing as the bread and wine used by Him the night He instituted the Communion. This blessing would have no meaning if the individual who is partaking thereof, is not truly reminded through the ceremony of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. The ceremony of the Holy Communion should also remind the partaker thereof about the redeeming power of the gospel of Christ.

#### **5.4.6 What is the pre-condition of the Holy Communion?**

It is a hearty desire for grace and the forgiving of sins. This desire should be followed by a confession of those sins for which forgiveness is sought. It is accompanied with true repentance and prayer to God.

#### **5.4.7 How can we partake in the forgiving of sins?**

Through a repentant, penitent and grace-seeking heart and faithful acceptance of God's messenger's words about the forgiveness of sin.

#### **5.4.8 What is true repentance?**

It is honest regret and deep sorrow for the thoughts, words and acts unjustly done against God and man.

#### **5.4.9 What is an unworthy partaking of the Holy Communion?**

When we take part in the Holy Communion without true repentance and penance and without the honest intention of improving oneself.

#### **5.4.10 What are the effects of a worthy acceptance of the Holy Communion?**

Such effects are manifested in a Heavenly bliss, a deep peace in the soul, and an intimate community with Christ.

### **5.5 THE HOLY SEALING**

#### **5.5.1 Introduction**

The use of a signet-ring to prove ownership or copyright to a letter, document or other personal property, was common use even amongst the people in the time of Jesus. This is proven through the words in I Kings 21:8 where it is written: "So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city..."

It has the same meaning to the Lord Jesus. When He speaks of sealing us with the Holy Spirit, He wants to claim us as His property by putting His mark of ownership on us. He wants to confirm that every sealed soul received the promise of kingship; that they became members of His Father's household; that it should be proof to us and assure us of His assistance, as confirmation that we will partake in every promise that He made as regards His children and those that accept His gospel. Yes, Jesus MARKS us in this way upon the forehead to show that we are part of the bride of Christ.

In II Cor. 1:22 it is written that: "who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." In another version it is written as follows:

- a) "Set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."
- b) Eph. 4:30 "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
- c) II Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are His," and "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness."
- d) Rom. 8:15 "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of son-ship. And by Him we cry, (Abba), Father."  
Also read the following: John 6:27; Rom. 8:14, 16.

In Ephesians 1:13 we read the following: "In whom you also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

The following texts are in accord with the aforementioned text:

- a) Rom. 10:14 "How, then, shall they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"
- b) Rom. 10:15 "And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"
- c) Deut. 29:12 "You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day and sealing with an oath."
- d) Isaiah 29:11 "For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say to him, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I can't; it is sealed".

From these texts it can be concluded that "sealing" has a deeper meaning for the children of God.

The Holy Sealing is one of the Sacraments. It should not be confused with the Holy Baptism with water, for this is the Baptism with Spirit and with Fire.

### **5.5.2 What is the Holy Sealing?**

The Holy Sealing is the consecration of the Holy Spirit and the Crown of all Godly acts.

- a) In addition it is the Baptism of Spirit and Fire.  
Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8 and Acts 1:5.  
Anointment in God. II Cor. 1:21-22.
- b) Manifestation of the Spirit. John 3:5-6
- c) Fellow citizenship of the household of God.  
Eph. 2:12-22

d) Earnestness of the Spirit. II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14

**5.5.3 Why is the Sealing also called the Holy Anointing?**

Because we are anointed to the Priesthood of the Lord through the Holy Spirit.

**5.5.4 What is understood from the term "rebirth in the Spirit"?**

It means the acceptance of new life from Jesus: thus becoming God's children and a new creature in Christ.

**5.5.5 What will redeem the citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem?**

It will grant us the right of a place in the Kingdom of God.

**5.5.6 Why is receiving of the Holy Spirit the way to our Redemption?**

By receiving the Holy Spirit, we also receive the mark of the Lamb of God by which He confirms that we are indeed children and household members in the Kingdom of God.

**5.5.7 How does the sacramental act of the Holy Sealing occur?**

In comparison with the water at the baptism and the bread and wine of the Holy Communion, the Apostle is using the external sign of laying hands on the person. Through the spoken word, the Holy Spirit is then transmitted.

**5.5.8 How did the Christians in the ancient Churches receive the Holy Spirit?**

The Apostles laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:14-17, 9:17, 19:6; II Tim. 1:6.

**5.5.9 Were there exceptions from the laying on of hands for receiving the Holy Spirit?**

Yes. In the presence of the Apostle Peter. On Cornelius, the centurion, and his household was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 10:44-45

**5.5.10 Why did God make these exceptions?**

This was done to teach the Apostle Peter that heathens could also receive the Holy Spirit.

**5.5.11 Who, apart from the recipient, must be present at the receiving of the Holy Spirit?**

An Apostle of Jesus Christ. II Cor. 3:6-8 In Acts 10:44 it is stated; "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." (In this instance they were baptised **after** they had received the Holy Ghost.)

**5.5.12 Who can receive the Holy Spirit?**

All the baptised and faithful souls which have the hearty desire to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Note that it must be "baptised" souls, which means that Jesus Christ should be accepted in all honesty.

**5.5.13 In what way is the Holy Spirit revealed to us?**

In many ways, namely: As the Spirit of Comfort; consolation; truth; wisdom; understanding; intelligence; judgement; counsel; strength; as the Spirit of knowledge and respect towards the Lord in

virtue of Love and the culture; as a Spirit of grace manifestation of prayer, as the Spirit of concord and union in obedience and glory. Isaiah 11:2; Zechariah 12:10; John 15:26; I Cor. 13; Eph 1:17; II Tim 1:7; I Peter 4:14.

**5.5.14 What fruitful results do those who are willing to receive the Holy Spirit obtain?**

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, meekness temperance, goodness, faith gentleness, chastity, (Gal. 5:22) Righteousness, truth (Eph. 5:9) Faithfulness, humility, obedience, self-sacrifice, compassion and mercy, including all virtues. It is important to understand that these characteristics must be translated into DEEDS, that the recipient must crucify his or her will to the will of God before we have a claim to the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

**5.5.15 What is the greatest misdeed and the greatest sin that cannot be forgiven?**

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. It cannot be forgiven, either in this or the future world. Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:28-29; Luke 12:10

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## **PART SIX**

### **6. SYNOPSIS OF THE EARLY APOSTOLIC CHURCH, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH UNTIL 1991**

- 6.1** In the year 1862, through Geyer, a founder member of the Hersteld Apostoliese Kerk, the Elder Rosochasky of Konningsberg was ordained as Apostle and Bishop Schwartz of Hamburg and his congregation willingly served under Apostle Rosochasky.
- 6.2** Apostle Rosochasky was however not recognised as an Apostle by the English Apostles and requested Byber and the bishop Schwartz through the chief Bishop Rothe, to oppose the inauguration of Apostle Rosochasky. Geyer and Schwartz were however convinced that the inauguration of the Apostle Rosochasky was an order from God. Schwartz's answer to Rothe was: "We will not declare this inauguration as being from the devil, because we will not blaspheme against the Holy Spirit!"
- 6.3** The English Apostle Woodhouse did not like this conscientious decision of the two brothers, and without further ado stripped them of their commission. The two brothers, however, continued to work and fulfil their respective commissions. Schwartz remained in the office of Bishop under the community of "Honderd Getroues". He was convinced that Apostle Woodhouse did not act in a true Godly spirit and that he was only opposing a human error by the Apostle.

- 6.4** In the year 1863 the communities of Bishop Schwartz divorced themselves from the other communities in England, the so called "Ou Orde", and accepted the name "Apostolic Mission". In the same year the Priest Preuss was inaugurated as Apostle. He was stationed in Hamburg and was responsible for northern and central Germany. Also in the same year the Bishop Schwartz was transferred to Pruis as an Apostle. He was later called to Holland where he did missionary duty and settled himself permanently.
- 6.5** Because of the immovability of the Apostles in England, the death of the Apostles which were originally ordained, as well as the fact that they believed their commissions were meant to be single, no further Apostles could be inaugurated after the death of Apostle Woodhouse in 1901. With this the work of the Catholic Apostolic communities came to an end.
- 6.6** The name "Apostolic Mission" of the "New Order" was later changed to "Apostolic Community" and still later to "Die Hersteld Apostoliese Gemeenskap". The Lord then gave more Apostles to the community although the growth of the community to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was not great. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Apostolic Community expanded to different countries, the membership increased, as did the number of Apostles. In 1897, with the birth of the New Apostolic Church, Apostle Krebs was inaugurated as leader. With his death in 1905, Apostle Niehaus took over from him and in 1930 the Apostle J.G. Bishoff became Chief Apostle.

- 6.7** This development of the Apostolic Community was only on the surface. Beautiful churches were built and the Apostolic Community became rich and gained a good reputation worldwide. However, serious errors were made and many misconceptions were proclaimed. The Chief Apostle Bischoff of Frankfurt professed to be the only ambassador of God and that he alone had the authority to preach the gospel. The other Apostles were supposed to be his assistants. However, in John 15:5 we read: "I am the vine, ye are the branches...". Bischoff professed himself to be the vine and the other Apostles to be the branches. Without consulting the other Apostles, Bischoff, when he was 81-years of age in 1951, made the shocking statement that he would not die, that Jesus would come back to earth to fetch His bride in his lifetime.
- 6.8** He further requested all the other Apostles and the administration brothers to preach his message to the different congregations. This message became a doctrine. In his sermons and publications, which he produced himself, Bischoff persisted that anyone desiring any part of the first resurrection, must believe his message as without him, nobody, dead or alive, could be partakers of the first resurrection. He even went as far as to proclaim that people would not be able to enter heaven without him. Later he started to proclaim that anybody who did not believe his message, would not be able to go to heaven.
- 6.9** In word and in writing all members were advised not to follow any administration brother who did not believe or did not preach Bischoff's message.

- 6.10** Many Apostles, administrators, brothers and members were gravely embarrassed. A few of them approached Bischoff with their predicament. They warned him about the consequences if he should die and the message proved to be false. They told him that they could not preach his message as it was in contradiction with the Holy Scripture! They referred to Mark 13:32 "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." The result of this was that Bischoff discharged some of them from their duties, excluded them from the New Apostolic Administration, and banned them from church grounds in the year 1954.
- 6.11** Deeply under the impression that they should obey God and not a human being, that they should be Faithful to the doctrine of Christ and their duties, these Apostles committed themselves to other members of an "Apostolic unity of community."
- 6.12** The way was now cleared and in the year 1956 the Apostolic Unity of Apostolic communities was founded. This took place, firstly in conjunction with the community in Australia under the auspices of Apostle Niemeyer founded in the year 1911. The new community amalgamated with the Apostolic Church in Düsseldorf. Another Apostolic community in Saxon-Thuringa, founded under the leadership of Apostles Bruckner and Ecke in 1921, also joined the community in Düsseldorf.
- 6.13** Free of misconceptions and human inhibitions and aspirations this new community offered ideal circumstances for brotherly understanding. Through the mutual efforts of all concerned they were able to

build a community which, both internally and externally, satisfied and adhered to the doctrine of Christ.

**6.14** The Apostles who were now inaugurated, were previously Apostles of the New Apostolic Church, who had been inaugurated by Bischoff. They were

Apostles:

- Peter Kuhlen West Germany 1935
- Ernst Guttinger Switzerland 1923
- Max Ecke East Germany 1911
- Max Muller East Germany
- Otto Guttinger Switzerland 1941
- Gerrit Kamphuis Nederland 1948
- Siegfried Dehmel Rynland 1948
- Philippus Erasmus Johannesburg 1952
- Daniel Carel Smuts  
Malan Cape Town 1949
- Ernst Hendrik  
Dunkman Duisberg, Rynland 1953
- H.J. Smit Holland
- Erwin Osterman (not on photo)

**6.15** These Apostles should thus be remembered as the Apostles of the reformation of the twentieth century.

**6.16** On the sixth of July 1960, the Chief Apostle Bischoff died. On the tenth of July 1960, a circular was read in the congregations of the New Apostolic Church in which the Apostles of the church persisted that the promise of God was fulfilled, that Bischoff was not wrong, but that Jesus changed His mind. Instead of repentance, and rectifying the mistake of Bischoff, the Apostles of the New Apostolic Church continued in their false preachings and the newly appointed Chief Apostle, Walter Schmidt, from the beginning of his

term of office, was negative about the Apostles that were banned by Bishoff. This situation completely prevented a reconciliation with the New Apostolic Church because negative human attitudes and falseness were not yet removed from the church. Bishoff also made a written statement that he would be the last Chief Apostle. Numerous Chief Apostles have since been inaugurated.

**6.17** The Apostles of "The Apostolic Church (Apostle Unity)", in conjunction with the brothers and sisters, made all possible efforts to provide an avenue for all truth seeking people. Many people admitted that "The Apostolic Church (Apostle Unity)" is, according to the true doctrine of Christ, the only church to enter into the future with.

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## **PART SEVEN**

### **7. CONFIRMATION**

#### **7.1 What is the confirmation?**

It is a solemn, personal alliance with God after the Baptism and the Sealing have been conducted.

#### **7.2. Why is the personal alliance with God renewed?**

In order that young Christians, for whom the alliances were made in their childhood, now reaching the right age, can adopt the obligations for themselves.

#### **7.3 What are the pre-requisites to be confirmed?**

The primary consideration is that the candidate to be confirmed is conversant with the Apostle Doctrine and the importance of the Holy alliance.

#### **7.4 What is further necessary for the confirmation?**

It is the faith and belief in the existence of God and blessings of the Holy Sacraments; But above all, the candidate is required to be conscious of the fact that he enters a state of self-responsibility towards the triune God that grants him the grace alliance.

#### **7.5 What is the basic Vow of Confirmation?**

To renounce the devil and all his word; to devote myself to Thee, triune God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in faith, obedience and honest intention to be faithful to the end: Amen.

## **CREED OF FAITH**

### **7.6 What is the Apostolic Creed of Faith?**

#### **7.6.1 FIRST ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe in God the Almighty Father, the maker of Heaven and earth, and of all visible and invisible things. In one Jesus Christ the only begotten son of God, born out of the Father before all centuries, God out of God, light out of light, true God out of true God, born and not made after the same image as the Father by whom everything was made, who on behalf of the people, and our salvation, descended from Heaven and became flesh through the Holy Spirit out of the Virgin Mary, and who was crucified for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried and who resurrected on the third day according to scripture and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, and will return again in glory to judge the quick and the dead, whose Kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Ghost who is Lord and Life which comes from the Father and Son, are glorified and spoken through the prophets. I believe in one Holy Apostolic Church, and confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead and everlasting life hereafter. Amen.

#### **7.6.2 SECOND ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe that Jesus rules His congregation through Apostles and that He has sent His Apostles and still will do so similarly as the Father has sent Him. His Apostles will in His Name and in His order preach and baptize with the Spirit all people on earth.

**7.6.3 THIRD ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe that all administrations in the congregation of Christ are arranged and ordained by living Apostles.

**7.6.4 FOURTH ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe that the Holy Baptism with water is part of the re-birth and that the recipient acquires the participation to receive the Holy Spirit; that it is also the Alliance of a good consciousness with God.

**7.6.5 FIFTH ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe that the Holy Communion is introduced by Jesus Christ as symbol of His sacrifice, of His Passion and Death; that the worthy partaking of it, guarantees the live communion with Christ and that it is celebrated with unleavened bread and wine being consecrated by an Administration Priest.

**7.6.6 SIXTH ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe that those who believe and are baptised must be sealed with the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of a living Apostle and thereby be numbered among the first-born and so reveal the Spiritual Gift received through the Holy Sealing.

**7.6.7 SEVENTH ARTICLE OF FAITH**

I believe that the Lord Jesus will return again as surely as He ascended into Heaven and with His return in glory both the living and the dead of the firstborn who hoped for His return will be transformed to be united with Him and will reign with Him as Kings and Priests in His Kingdom of peace; I believe that Jesus Christ with His Holy ones will return for the Last Judgment at the end of time when those who are still alive, while still in the body, together with the dead, will be judged according to their works, be it good or evil. See Thes. 4:15-17; Rev. 20:6; Rev. 20:12-14.

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## PART EIGHT

### 8. **THE APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANS**

#### 8.1 **What is the proper attitude of an Apostolic Christian?**

The Apostolic Christian shall be the first-fruits unto God.  
Rev. 14:4. His mind shall be in Christ Jesus. Phil. 2:5

#### 8.2 **Who is the first of God's own people?**

The most perfect to God is Jesus.

#### 8.3 **In what particular way is Jesus an example to us?**

Because He was meek and lowly in heart. Matthew  
11:29; Phil. 2:8. He was keen to learn. Luke 2:46

#### 8.4 **What do we understand by saying "God's own People"?**

We mean such persons who have received the Holy Spirit and are fully aware of the perceived Grace and thus endeavour to acquire a renewed nature through the power of the Holy spirit.

#### 8.5 **What are the essential requirements in cultivating the faith in the life of an Apostolic Christian?**

- Regular attendance of Church services, living in intimate prayers and a Godly way of living.

#### 8.6 **Why does the Apostolic Christian like to attend the Church services regularly?**

Because he hungers for the Word of God that is presented by the Apostles and by his Administrators.

#### 8.7 **What do we understand by the word of prayer?**

Praying is a dialogue between our Soul and God.

**8.8 Why can and should we pray to God?**

This is to show gratitude to God; to worship and to pay homage for all blessings. Furthermore, it is to commune with God our Lord with full confidence in all our various desires and requests in all our situations in life. We should pray with love for others, pray for intercession towards all servants of God and His people.

**8.9 When should we pray?**

At the beginning and end of each day. Before every meal a short prayer should be said to give thanks and to plead for blessings. We should pray at any appropriate time when our Soul so desires.

**8.10 What is the particular prayer that Jesus taught His Disciples, called?**

It is called "Our Father".

**8.11 How does it go?**

See Matthew 6:9-13

"Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory, for ever. Amen."

**8.12 What requisites are expected from an Apostolic Christian?**

He shall prove his faith with deeds, as bearer of the Holy Spirit; He shall respect and love his administration brothers and sisters. Show patience for the weaknesses of his fellow man and to honour God and His Church at all times.

**8.13 What are our obligations towards the Church?**

- a) To be faithful at all times;
- b) To respect the Name of the Church;
- c) To respect the Officers of the Church;
- d) To be a loyal member of the Church. I do desire and God drawing me and giving me the desire to be an Administration brother. In this case I shall discuss my future with my Priest who shall then take the matter further;
- e) To bring offerings to the Lord, and by so doing, also support and ensure the growth of my Church. How much shall I offer? Learn and read Malachi 3:7-10;
- f) To defend my Faith at all times;
- g) To remember at all times, wherever I may go, or where I am, that I belong to the bride elect of God, and accordingly shall behave myself.

**8.14 According to the Holy Scriptures what can we expect in the future and for eternity?**

The reappearance of the Christ; the resurrection; the transformation of God's own people; the erection of the Kingdom of Christ on earth or the reign of a thousand years of peace; the resurrection of all men for the final judgment; the eternal Kingdom of Glory.

**8.15 What is the definition of the 4R-emblem?**

RIGHT, ROYAL, RIGHTEOUS, RICH.

We are RIGHT according to the Holy Writ.

We are ROYAL, as the Bride to have membership with Christ the King of kings.

We become RIGHTEOUS in the partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ.

We are RICH in the Promise Christ gave to His Apostles and all who through the Apostle Word believe on Him.

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## **PART NINE**

### **9. THE BIBLE OR THE HOLY SCRIPTURE**

#### **9.1 What does the word "Bible" mean?**

It means the Book of Books.

#### **9.2 Why is the Bible also called the Holy Scripture?**

Because it contains the most important deeds like no other book that has ever been written, thus it is a Holy particular sublime and elevated Book.

#### **9.3 Have all the Scriptures, contained in the Bible, been written in ancient times by those men?**

No. But we believe that through God's providence all that has been collected, preserved and written, is essential for the Salvation of our Soul. II Tim. 3:16

#### **9.4 Of ancient times, are all words and deeds of God and Jesus indexed in the Bible?**

No.

#### **9.5 Of what significance is the Bible to us?**

It is a clear testimony of the words and deeds of God and Jesus. It contains God's plan for our salvation. It is subject to God's promise for our Hope.

#### **9.6 What did Jesus say regarding the Scriptures of the Old Testament?**

"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."  
John 5:39

**9.7 Did Jesus also leave Scriptures behind?**

No. His efficacy on earth is mainly contained in the four Evangelisms and after His Ascension the significant Revelation for the future of His Church is laid down by the Apostle John.

**9.8 What conditions are useful in the reading of the Bible?**

An open mind and a desiring heart for God's enlightenment.

**9.9 Can all people understand the Bible?**

No. Because God's secrets are great and many. Through man's self-complacency concerning God's and Biblican truths, many splits have resulted in the Christian world. Matt. 22:29, John 20:9.

**9.10 Why can mainly the Apostles and their Administration Brothers interpret the Bible?**

Because they are Ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10; I Cor. 4:1 and II Cor. 3

**9.11 Where and when shall the Bible be read?**

- a) At the sermons in Church.
- b) In the family, the father or his deputy shall read daily a text at the occasion of the morning and evening prayer.
- c) As often as the occasion is suitable for an individual in good and bad days.

**9.12 In what two main parts is the Bible divided?**

Into the Books of the Old- and the New Testament.

**9.13 Of what divisions, numbers and sequences do the Books of the Old Testament consist?**

- a) 17 Historical Books;

- b) 5 Text Books;
- c) 17 Prophetic Books;
- d) 14 Apocrypha Books.

**9.13.1 The 17 Historical Books are:**

5 Books of Moses; Book of Joshua; Book of Judges;  
Book of Ruth; 2 Books of Chronicles; Book of Ezra;  
Book of Nehemiah; Book of Esther.

**9.13.2 The 5 Text Books are:**

Book of Job; book of Psalms; The Son of Solomon;  
The Proverbs; Ecclesiastes.

**9.13.3 The 17 Prophetic Books are:**

Isaiah; Jeremiah; Lamentations of Jeremiah; Ezekiel;  
Daniel; Hosea; Joel; Amos; Obadiah; Jonah; Micah;  
Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah;  
Malachi.

**9.13.4 The 15 Apocrypha Books are:**

- a) Esdras (first)
- b) Esdras (second)
- c) Tobit
- d) Judith
- e) Esther
- f) The Wisdom of Solomon
- g) Ecclesiasticus
- h) Baruch
- i) A letter of Jeremiah
- j) The songs of the tree
- k) Daniel and Susanna
- l) Daniel, Bel and the snake
- m) The prayer of Manasseh
- n) Maccabees (first)
- o) Maccabees (second)

**9.14 Of what divisions, numbers and sequences do the Books of the New Testament consist?**

**9.14.1** Five (5) Historical Books, the four (4) Gospels and the Book of Acts;

**9.14.2** Twenty one (21) Epistles (letters of the Apostles);

**9.14.3** One (1) Prophetic Book (the book of Revelation);

**9.14.4** The 5 Historical Books are:  
The Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and the Acts of the Apostles.

**9.14.5** The 21 Text Books are:

- One letter of Apostle Paul to the Romans;
- Two letters of Apostle Paul to the Corinthians;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to the Galatians;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to the Ephesians;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to the Philippians;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to the Colossians;
- Two letters of Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians;
- Two letters of Apostle Paul to Timothy;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to Titus;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to Philemon;
- One letter of Apostle Paul to the Hebrews;
- One letter from James;
- Two letters from Peter;
- Three letters from John;
- One letter from Jude.

**9.14.6** The 1 Prophetic Book is:  
The Revelation of John.

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## **ADDENDUM I**

### **1. WHO IS OUR MEDIATOR?**

On Christmas day a mediator was born for man. Who is He, what is His secret, and how do we become part of it? These are questions we ask ourselves before we consider the birth, the life, and the resurrection, of Jesus Christ. For the true Apostolic the knowledge of how to recognise the voice of the Lord, should no longer be a secret. He or she should know the way as well as how to explain it to others. The purpose of this article is to serve as inducement to everyone reading it, to again, think about and consider the great power of God through His Son Jesus Christ, in order to relive it for him or herself.

#### **1.1 The life of Jesus cannot be summarised.**

To give a detailed explanation of the life of Jesus Christ as it is related to us in the legends and events in the Bible, is not possible. We can, at best, give only a general summary about the events of His life on earth. Jesus Christ is both the Son of God AND the Son of mankind, the miracle of all miracles. From this arises much more for those who want to see and understand.

#### **1.2 His birth was predicted in the Old Testament.**

The birth of the Messiah was predicted in the Old Testament in Is. 7:14; and Micah 5:2. Other predictions that are more clear are given shortly before His birth in Matt. 1:20-21; Luke 1:31.

#### **1.3 His birth.**

He was received from the Holy Spirit, born through the Virgin Mary, is called the Son of God, and because He Himself was without sin, He can deliver us from all sin.

#### **1.4 He is not an ordinary child.**

From the birth of the child Jesus the peculiar nature of His work, came forth. The following is only a few of the clues that point to it:

- a) He had to be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. This was made possible by God who brought it about that the emperor August commanded a census at that exact time – also in the fact that the region, at the time, was not under the management or rule of the Romans, but under Herod's management.
- b) The birth of Jesus in the flesh was announced by angels praising God.
- c) With the introduction in the temple Simon sang in His honour.
- d) The tribute that the men from the East brought Him.

It is clear from all this that it was no ordinary child that was born, but that the Son of God adopted a human physique. Human physique in the sense that He was subjected to the same circumstances and temptations as mankind. He could not decide for Himself what to do for then He would go directly against the will of God. Furthermore He had the same feelings as an ordinary human being, exposed to the elements and suffering cold, hunger, thirst, became tired, and had all other human emotions – He was, according to the Holy Scripture, in the full sense of the word a human being.

### **1.5 He did not praise His birthright – was not haughty!**

It is noticeable that Jesus never called on His wonderful birth. Any person today would have used it to prove to others that he is somebody special with special knowledge and power, someone who deserved special privileges. Presently, we want to be important and be considered as one of the so-called prominent people – just think what good reference it would have been to be able to speak of a birth such as the birth of Jesus; but the Lord Jesus did not do it.

The Apostles also did not speak much about His birth. This can only be because Jesus glorifies His Resurrection whereby He overcame the biggest fear of all people – death!

## **2. HIS RESURRECTION IN HIS MESSAGE**

Following His Resurrection is the preaching of His birth in the flesh. Only when the glory of His Resurrection in the faith is accepted, can the wonder of His birth be preached, or be understood. Only then could the importance of His birth be recognised. It becomes important because it is the beginning of the life which Jesus led as an example for us to inherit the Kingdom of God.

## **3. WHAT WAS HIS CHILDHOOD LIKE?**

About the childhood of Jesus we know very little. Only the story of the 12-year old boy in the temple is told to us in Luke 2:41-51, whereby it is revealed to us that even in His childhood, He was indeed the true Messiah, the Son of God and also the Son of man. This part of Luke is of further significance, as it proves to us that Jesus had a normal human development from child to

adult. It also shows that even children in a fairly early stage of life can, through perseverance and courage, decide to serve the Lord in truth and in spirit! This is all the more important for Apostolic children, as it proves beyond a doubt that children can make the correct choice, and then stick with it.

#### **4. THE BEGINNING OF HIS WORK OF SALVATION**

The baptism of Jesus in the river Jordan and His temptation in the desert takes place before any of His public appearances. He had to be baptised to fulfil all righteousness (Matt. 3:15), **as He had to be human also in this.** (Heb. 4:15) The reason for this being that the Holy Baptism has a far greater value than just the upholding of tradition. To be baptised because it's the tradition has no meaning! It is the start of much greater and more important matters in the spiritual life of any true Apostolic.

Only one of the reasons for this being that Baptism is one of the three Holy Sacraments and should be treated as such.

#### **5. HIS BAPTISM AND SEALING**

At the baptism ceremony of Jesus, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him through the dove which came and sat upon His shoulder. By this deed God Himself sealed Jesus with the words: "This is My Son in Whom I am well pleased." This was the sanctioning and qualifying of Jesus for His great work as Mediator by God the Father Himself. The voice of God the Father again spoke to the Apostles on the mount when Jesus was glorified saying: "This is My Son in Whom I am well pleased, **hear ye Him!**" Hereby the Word of God the Father was finally given in the flesh and God gave Jesus the supreme

power to carry His will to mankind. Jesus thus became the delegate from God to carry God's message, He became the Mediator through which mankind would in future have to go to come to God!!! This happening also serves as an example of the way in which the Holy Spirit would later be carried over to people by the Apostles. Also note that there are two very important facts in the sealing of Jesus. The first being that it is a DEED. The second is the WORDS of God that goes with the DEED.

### 5.1 The power of the Holy Baptism

Following His Baptism, Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert. This temptation was to prove the real meaning and importance of baptism – Adam, under favourable circumstances in Paradise gave in to temptation. Jesus, on the other hand, in the most gruelling of circumstances, stayed true to the will of God. The important words here are **baptism** and **sealing**. Baptism leaves us saturated and filled with the promise of God that we would become heirs to His Kingdom **IF WE WANT TO**. By the Sealing we are qualified and marked as the property of God. By **submitting our minds and desires to that of God we are confirmed in His Name** – yes, it is confirmed that we would henceforth be children of the living God.

Unfortunately it has the disadvantage that Satan would now be able to recognise us so much easier. This should however not present too much of a problem to the real and honest child of God, for Jesus in His sermon on the mount gave us the promise that we could come to Him with ANY problem, irrespective of the size thereof.

## **6. JESUS – TEMPTED BY SATAN**

God, as the merciful and righteous Father, must have had some sort of compensation in mind for Jesus, when His work on earth was finished. When satan tried to tempt Jesus, he was attempting to foreclose on, or grab, this compensation which Jesus could only gain by suffering, pain, and death, and Jesus denied satan. He carried the full burden of the temptation, and was victorious over satan. Hereby Jesus showed us that the Kingdom of God, our heritage, must be EARNED. We must prove that we are WORTHY of it, through our steadfastness and faith in the mercy and righteousness of God our Father, no matter what the circumstances are!

## **7. THE CONDUCT OF JESUS COULD BE DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS**

The conduct and actions of Jesus on earth could be divided into two parts, namely that amongst the people in general, and that amongst His Apostles.

### **7.1 The first part**

During the first part Jesus taught people in Galilee and Judea. Jesus performed many miracles and actions which was to prove His power and convince people to believe in Him. (John 4:48)

The miracles of healing enhanced the image of His Spiritual work, and were performed to better people's understanding thereof. (Matt. 8:17)

The casting out of demons beared witness of His victory over satan.

In His preaching Jesus never preached about Himself, He always preached and confessed the Kingdom of God, His Father. He re-established God's kingship and dominion, which was trampled down by the people and taught everyone that there was gospel in the Kingdom. That is to say that **He was bringing life to anyone and everyone who accepted the preaching.**

The most phenomenal aspect of this first part of His work, was the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon, Jesus stated the tremendous demands for reaching the Kingdom of God. He also wanted to show and assure those listening to Him, **that they could take refuge with Him at any time, with any kind of problem.**

This part of Jesus' work was characterised by the fact that He spoke to the people in parables. He used these parables because people did not understand the normal preachings. He also pictured the development of the Kingdom of the heavens.

Even today, people are still using parables. It also has to be stated that we do this with totally different intentions. We are not always talking straightforwardly and honestly to each other. We use all sorts of examples (parables), in order not to be open to too much criticising, judging and wrath from our neighbour. Just think how often we hear the phrases: "...you understood me wrong...; I did not mean it like that...; this is a misunderstanding...". To us it is a way of disguising our shortcomings whereas with Jesus it was a way to get people to understand properly, by using people and situations in His parables, to which the people could relate.

### **7.1.1 The people saw Jesus the man, they did not notice the Spiritual being**

At first glance **it appeared** that the work of Jesus was very successful. Crowds of people followed Him. Still, even in those days, the traditional leaders strongly opposed Jesus because they could not bear the thought that **He might take the place they always occupied in the community**. This resistance from the leaders, is revealed in the opposing views they had about Jesus' preaching about the Sabbath day, through which He opposed the views of the Pharisees and pointed out the true spiritual meaning of the Commandment of God in the way He practiced it. The parable of the good Samaritan is a good example of this.

### **7.1.2 They did not BELIEVE Him**

It was soon evident that **the crowds did not accept Jesus in good faith**. We could say that they did not believe Him! They came to Him to eat, to heal their sick, to hear His pleasant words, but NOT to submit themselves to Him in faith. This led to the crisis. When the people say that Jesus **would not be the King they wanted Him to be**, a Ruler that would free them from the Romans, or grant them their immediate wishes, they turned away from Him and eventually turned against Him. Once again mankind proved that the immediate, the material things that could be seen, the tangible, were more important to them. The question: "What is in it for me, what can I gain by this?", was as paramount then as it is today!

Is this not so very typical of our behaviour sometimes? Don't we desire things the way we want them to be? When we can't have it our way, don't we retaliate by speaking out against somebody in church or even by not attending church anymore? We should be careful as this is the way we are siding against Jesus in our time.

We also choose not to follow Him in faith, we also do not really believe in Him, especially when we choose to follow our own ways rather than to trust in God and His will with our lives. Can it even be that we are more interested by what we can gain materially rather than spiritually?

## **7.2 The second part**

Following the first part, Jesus withdrew into the circle of His Apostles. **Right from the start He chose twelve Apostles to bare witness of His work on earth**, who could carry on with His work. After it became evident that the people did not accept Jesus, He concentrated on the teaching of His Apostles. Up till now Jesus had not revealed that He was in fact the Messiah, the Son of God. The people would not have been able to understand it. This of course changed when He was amongst the Apostles and Jesus even elicited a confession when He asked Peter: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" On behalf of all the Apostles, Peter then recognised Him as the Son of the living God. (Matt. 16:13-20) This confession led to the founding of the church of the new covenant. On the **CONFESSING** Peter built His church, a church which would be separated from the unfaithful Jews – the true Christian Church. The important lesson that we have to learn from this is that we have to CONFESS the glory, the mercy and the mediatorship of Jesus Christ. **We MUST be able to SEE Him in the servants AND neighbours which surrounds us in His Church.**

### **7.2.1 Preparation of the Apostles**

Jesus prepared the Apostles for their task, and His crucifixion in various ways. Even though He did appear and worked in front of larger crowds during this time, God's plan for salvation really came to pass when Jesus went to Jerusalem for the last time to be crucified. Even

though He knew that He was going to be killed, Jesus still stayed true to His Father's will, and performed even greater wonders.

### **7.2.2 Lazarus awakened – still the people did not understand!**

Close to Jerusalem Jesus awakened Lazarus. This was the last straw to the Jewish leaders. That which they were planning for a long time, they would now do. Jesus had to die! Again the people failed to understand that Jesus, by awakening Lazarus, proved that He possessed power over life and death! Unfortunately the people then, as people today, only saw the immediate, the material! Was it that their goals, like ours today, were set on the wrong things?

## **8. JESUS IN JERUSALEM**

Jesus was received like a king in Jerusalem. People **cheered Him as they thought that He would now rescue them in the way they dreamt about.** This was of course further humiliation for the Jewish leaders. It appears however, that they understood the real meaning for the jubilation of the people. They still feared the people, but they were willing to take their chances. They gladly accepted the offer from Judas, one from the group staying with Jesus, to deliver Jesus in their hands. Does this not happen as easily in the times we are living in today?

### **8.1 Last appearances**

Further public appearances and works by Jesus followed, especially the cleansing of the temple. Many people must have seen these appearances, but the Sanhedrin (Jewish council of the people) went ahead, and was not perturbed by anything. In a number of parables, Jesus depicted the ungodliness of the rulers, and the unfaithfulness of Israel. He also reprimanded the

Pharisees and Scribes in public. Eventually Jesus left the temple, and spoke to the Apostles about the end of the Jewish people, and the end of all things.

## **8.2 Judas left Him**

Judas' attitude now became all the more clear. When Jesus celebrated Easter with His disciples, Judas left the room and did not come back into the circle.

## **8.3 In Gethsemane**

From the room where they celebrated Easter, Jesus departed to Gethsemane where He proved His submission to the will of His Father, even in the sufferings and His death. In the garden of Gethsemane He was arrested and brought before the Jewish Council after which He was condemned to be crucified when He confessed to Caiaphas that He is indeed the Son of the living God.

## **9. HIS CRUCIFIXION – JESUS BRANDED AS A LAWBREAKER!**

Jesus was crucified together with two robbers and was thus branded as a lawbreaker. Nailed to the cross, Jesus spoke as many as seven times, and it is by the words that He spoke that we can get a glimpse of the pain and suffering He underwent:

- We know that He was forsaken by God for a while! That He thus carried the full scornful abuse of hell;
- He still found the love to ask God to forgive those who nailed Him to the cross;
- He spoke to one of the robbers who were crucified with Him;
- He spoke to Mary;
- He then gave His spirit to God in the true sense of the word. This has even greater meaning – His

death was an action, something that truly happened!

## 10. HIS RESURRECTION

After three days Jesus arose from the grave. For His disciples it must have been difficult to believe that their Master really came back to life. Remember that they were human beings like us – what would we have believed? How many times are we just as dismayed when things are not happening the way we want them to happen? When He appeared to them in person and started to teach them, they bowed down in faith. Never again would they doubt the wonderful fact of His resurrection!

## 11. HIS FINAL LABOUR ON EARTH

Jesus stayed on earth for another forty days. His enemies did not see Him again, **only those who belonged to Him saw Him during this period.** He appeared to them and communicated with them in order that they would know that He truly arose, but not only that, also that He was truly human again, the same person that suffered on the cross (John 20:20, Acts 1:3) "Afterward He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country." (Mark 16:14) He also reprimanded their disbelief (Acts 1:3) Then He ascended to heaven, the angels declared: "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

**12. HIS VICTORY AS RELATED IN SCRIPTURE**

In scripture, but especially in the letters of the Apostles, Jesus is often mentioned and written about. In short: the meaning of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the most important fact emanating from this is the **glad and reviving message that Jesus allows those who belongs to Him to share in His glory!** The greatness and glory of His victory is related to us – even to this day!

**13. HIS RESURRECTION IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HIS BIRTH**

That which remains for us to do is to individually make a commitment to Christ, to admit His resurrection, and to glorify and thank Him for that! Without this commitment and admission, the birth of Christ can have no spiritual meaning to us!

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## **ADDENDUM II**

### **1. THE APOSTOLIC CHILD AND HIS PARENTS**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Apostolic children treat their parents in a different way than children who are not apostolic, do. The reason for this should be obvious. The apostolic child gave his heart to the Lord, and because of this, he lives up to the Lord's expectations of him. Apostolic children who have not been confirmed yet, realize that their parents still carry the vow of baptism, and that they should therefore be considerate and obedient to their parents' wishes. This article is aimed at those children, and other young people, to whom their commitment to the Lord is a task to be taken seriously. Other children should also try to take the time to read through this article, to see how wonderful life as a child of the Lord can be. Please remember that being a child of God does not prohibit you from having fun and a full, happy life. It only means that we should live and have our fun in a responsible and adult manner.

#### **1.2 A promise**

We would like to make you a promise. If you are prepared to read this article, if you are further prepared to do that which is expected of a child of the Lord, you WILL have and experience, a wonderful and fruitful relationship with your parents. The fact that so many children are experiencing a stressful relationship with their parents, is a fact that need not be repeated. For many of them it is an enormous problem, which they do not know how to handle or solve. Fortunately the Bible contains definite and precise guidelines about the relationship between children and their parents. These guidelines are also the crux of this article.

### **1.3 An irrefutable fact**

The two most important people in a child's life, undoubtedly, are his or her parents. Teachers play a very important part in their lives, as do friends, family, and the administration brothers of the Church in rearing and preparing them for adulthood and a responsible life. Not one of these however, has the significance and is as important as the influence and love of their parents. For this reason, it is of the utmost importance that the relationship between parents and their children should be a healthy and open one. If anything should go wrong here, it could be quite disastrous.

It is of great importance that children should understand that the part parents have to fulfil, does not diminish when they get to be sixteen or seventeen years of age, or get to the stage where they are leaving school. Experienced and responsible adults can testify that even ten or fifteen years after they left school, their parents still played an integral and important part in their lives. This article thus carries a message for those children that feel they do not understand their parents, or that their parents do not understand them. This is of course also relevant to more mature young people.

### **1.4 God's special plan**

God is Almighty. If He so wished, He could place everybody on this earth as an adult, that is to say if He only wished to create adults. As ready-made adults He could have them live on earth like He did with Adam and Eve. In His infinite wisdom He decided differently. He decided to create parents, and have them care for the children that He would grant them. They are not only to rear their children naturally, but also spiritually, to adulthood. This is what we call the task of upbringing. By this upbringing the children are to be formed into the

people that would eventually be responsible and exemplary adults in their communities.

Human beings have to be taught everything he or she knows in life. A child's life is formed by his parents, the administration brothers of the Church, and the friends that he chooses. Our personality and character are formed mainly by our parents. This does place an enormous responsibility on their shoulders. It does, however, also mean responsibility for the child. Why? The answer is simple. If God decided that parents should rear their children, it may also be presumed that He meant for children to appreciate and respect the education of their parents and be obedient to them. If the children do not accept this, they are also opposing God's will with them. Please remember, the human being that you are, you became by the education of your parents.

### **1.5 The process of learning for children**

If one should throw a toddler a ball, it would not be easy for him to catch. To teach a toddler to catch a ball properly and without difficulty, takes quite some time. It is only at seven or eight years of age that a child has undergone enough practice to do it with relative ease.

To catch a ball with ease, it is necessary to practice. It takes even longer and even more experience to catch a ball that has been thrown over a long distance. This is an elementary action that everyone of us learned. The point is, **if it takes so long to learn to catch a ball**, it would take even longer to learn and practise the things and experiences of adulthood. To grow from an inexperienced toddler to an experienced and responsible adult, it is necessary that we have the leading of experienced and practised adults. For this reason God gave every child two parents. Before parents were given

children, they also had to practice and learn the facts relevant to adulthood. With the experience and lessons they have learned, God meant for them to now teach and guide their children. It is for this reason also that God demands that children be obedient to their parents in Ephesians 6:1-3 where it is written:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

You, the reader of this article, are maybe fourteen or fifteen years of age, maybe younger or older. What you should understand is that it will take you twenty or thirty years to possess the experience and knowledge about life that your parents have now. When you then become twenty or thirty, your parents have had the benefit of learning and practising the aspects of life even better. Thus, they will always be more experienced and practised than their children. It must be for this reason that scripture tells us: "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee and despise not thy mother when she is old." (Proverbs 23:22)

Job once said: "With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding." (Job 12:12)

From what we have discussed and seen thus far, I believe that you can clearly see and understand the logic of God's command to children. When we are told in the fifth commandment to "honour thy father and mother", it also means that we should respect them as the main and most important ADVISORS in our lives. They were meant and created to lead and guide us. You always listen to their advice again and again!

## **1.6 Education and sin**

The education of children is undoubtedly one of the most difficult tasks ever given to a human being. The reason for this being that it has to do with forming a child's whole life for his future. It should be obvious to you that this is no easy task!

The task of education is difficult and very important. It is difficult because we are all born in sin. The corrupted nature of man becomes so much more evident when we look at a toddler; when he or she gets to the stage where they want to do everything by themselves. David stated in Psalm 51:5 "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Parents thus have the unenviable task of rearing "sinful" little people to "good" adults. Children can make this difficult task even more difficult for their parents, or they can make it easier. If the child's attitude is one of stubbornness and resistance, the education task can become a very unpleasant one. If, on the other hand, the children are obedient to the will of God, if they honour their parents and are obedient to them, the education task is a most pleasant and enjoyable one.

## **1.7 Why chastising is necessary?**

It is sometimes necessary to chastise children. If parents should be aware that their children do something wrong and they should just leave them to carry on regardless, it would be a great injustice to the children. Unfortunately many parents do just that! Elai, the high priest in the time of Samuel, did the same. He allowed his two sons, Hofni and Phineas, to do as they pleased. When they sinned, he did not discipline them. As a result of this they became characterless rascals.

They did not honour God and had no respect for their neighbours. God regarded Elai's irresponsibility in regard to his two sons very seriously and he chastised Elai harshly when both sons as well as their father died in one day. Parents that do not chastise their children when it is necessary, are without love for them. In fact, scripture puts it very strongly in Proverbs 13:24 "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Chastising is love, and it has only one purpose, namely to guide the child to correct ways. God gives parents very precise guidelines as regards chastising their children. Responsible parents who love their children will chastise them when necessary. Somebody once said: "Chastising is not something you do TO your child, it is something you do FOR your child."

It is of great importance that children will not regard chastising as retaliation. If, for instance, a father warned his two sons not to throw stones while playing, and the one should hurt the other by throwing a stone at him, it would be retaliation if the father should throw another stone at the culprit. If, however, he should chastise the son that threw the stone, he is actually teaching him not to do it again. Chastising is meant to change and prevent that which is done wrongfully and wilfully against a neighbour. It can also be likened to pruning a tree to produce healthy fruit and to grow and develop properly. It is also true that if a child is left to himself and his own ways, he becomes a rascal like Hofni and Phineas. He becomes a threat to himself and his fellow human beings.

The child who, when his parents chastise him, will give way to their education and submit to their guidance, is doing well for himself.

Proverbs says about this: "Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge; but he that hateth reproof is brutish." (Proverbs 12:1)

"A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke." (Proverbs 13:1)

"A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent." (Proverbs 15:5)

## **1.8 Growing to adulthood**

In the life of every boy or girl there probably comes a time when he or she feels that they would gladly swop their mother or father for someone else. They feel that they would just like to get rid of them! The fact is that tension and conflict occurs in every normal household. There are different reasons for this. It may well be that if you understand the reasons, it might help you to get a clear perspective and insight of the situation. Let us look at a few of these reasons.

As a child grows up, so his or her own capabilities and skills develop. We all know the stage where children want to do everything themselves. As a child we all came to the stage where we felt that we were old enough to decide for ourselves about the things that affect our lives. Because of a lack of experience it does happen however that things go wrong, because the child wants to do too much too fast, or that which they are not yet prepared for. Parents, with more experience and knowledge of a variety of such situations, know there are risks and even dangers that the child is not yet aware of. Of course they would then oppose the child in such a situation! This is often the main reason for conflict and tension for the child who is not allowed to follow his or her own ways.

It is also true that many an adult at some or other stage in their lives revolted against the advice and instruction of their parents. So many a time we hear these same people tell us about those situations and we even laugh about it. This is very unfortunate. When we consider that it is the same "old" people from which our adages originated after many years of experience and sometimes even suffering, we would realise that if we are to listen more closely and attentively, we may learn something! Remember that through experience, e.g. actually going through something, we can always learn a lesson!!

Adults have long since experienced the things and situations their children are only now coming to. Of course children may be of the opinion that it is only part of life to argue with your parents about what is best in their lives. They might even think that their parents are keeping them from enjoying their lives, or that their parents are old fashioned. The fact is that a child that thinks this way, is not at all grown up enough to make any kind of decision for himself! Any "adult" would after all realise that even a small mistake or error of judgement may have far reaching consequences. Is it not a fact that it is exactly the unpleasant and offensive situations that all of us would like to avoid? Is it not the reason for so much of the unpleasantness we experience, that we are too selfrighteous and inconsiderate? Of course you realise that this question could very easily be put to any person, not only children.

### **1.9 Father and mother also make mistakes**

Actually, I am very hesitant to write about this subject, but I also believe that it would provide certain necessary explanations about the relationship you have with your parents. Remember that nobody is perfect! It does

sometimes happen that parents in their effort and genuine need to give only the best to their children, will be overprotective. It may happen that they want to prescribe too much or too often, that they feel that their children would not behave in a correct and proper manner on their own. Against this kind of mistake even the Bible warns us emphatically. In Ephesians 6:4 the Apostle Paul says: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

You as the child should always remember that it might be the love your parents have for you that might cause them to be over protective as far as you are concerned. On the other hand you must be very careful not to come to the wrong conclusion, namely that your parents do not trust you. Be sure not to give them reason to be concerned about you. It is because they had the opportunity to learn from life itself, the fact that they made painful mistakes, that might be driving them to try and protect you from doing the same. Instead of being in conflict with them, feeling that they would not allow you to do what you want, try to see things from their point of view, and you would realise that they are wishing you only the best.

You should always remember that it is because they have more experience and insight in life, that it allows them to be correct about things nine times out of ten. For this reason it is also the best philosophy to trust your parent's insight and leadership. King Solomon says it in a beautiful manner in Proverbs 6:20-23: "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them around thy neck. When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakes, it shall talk with

thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.”

### **1.10 Insubordination of children**

A third reason for conflict and tension between children and their parents is caused by the children simply being disobedient. This disobedience could vary between just being stubborn, and outright insubordination to the parents. Remember that the Bible teaches us that being disobedient to our parents is one of the sins that would eventually typify the last days. II Timothy 3:2.

The apostolic child should never allow himself to be indifferent as far as disobedience to his parents is concerned. This commandment is just as important as the sixth commandment commanding us not to take a life, or seventh commandment that teaches us that you may not commit adultery. It becomes even clearer if we consider the commandment of the Lord God in the Old Testament when he ORDERED the people to stone those disobedient sons that would not listen to their parents!!!! Deuteronomy 21:18-21.

The childhood of the Lord Jesus should be taken as an example by all children and especially apostolic children, when they wrote about Him in Luke 2:51 saying that he was subordinate to His parents.

### **1.11 What pleases our parents?**

There are parents to whom it is the most important thing in life that their children should perform well.

Unfortunately such parents are not only overly ambitious, but selfish as well. To me, who is also a parent, King Solomon really wonderfully voiced the wishes of all apostolic parents with what he said in Proverbs 23:15-16: “My son, if thine heart be wise, my

heart shall rejoice, even mine. Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things." To the apostolic parent nothing should be more important than to raise his or her child in the ways and teaching of our Lord Jesus. Of course every parent would be ecstatic if their child should perform well. It should however NEVER become the main objective in life. In verses 24 and 25 of Proverbs chapter 23 King Solomon says: "The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice."

### **1.12 Practical hints**

Following that which we say in the above, I would like to give you a few hints on which you can build and maintain a better and more stimulating relationship with your parents. REMEMBER THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING IS HIMSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN HAPPINESS!! The way in which you live in your house and in particular, the way you treat your parents, would determine the relationship you would have with them.

#### **1.12.1 Live their trust in a worthy fashion**

I am not making a bad grammatical error. I am only trying to put something across. So many children like to brag about what they would do for their parents someday. But talking would bring you no closer to a better understanding or a more meaningful relationship with you parents. Don't TALK about it, DO IT!! Also remember that the best way to win your parent's trust is never to give them any reason to doubt you. Think for instance about a son who is trusted to occasionally use his father's car and brings it back damaged, such a son must expect that the father would be reluctant the next time he wants to borrow the car. As a child shows that he or she can be trusted to behave and live responsibly,

his or her parents would come to treat them in a like fashion. It is for this reason that I say you must LIVE their trust in a worthy way.

### **1.12.2 Do your share and obey orders**

For any household to function smoothly and effectively, it is a prerequisite that every member thereof should do his or her share. To execute the chores given to you in a conscientious and willing way is very important. This includes the everyday chores like keeping your room tidy, or feeding the animals. The inclination with which it is done determines your own happiness as well as that of your family members. To go around the house with a sour face and in a fighting mood not only ruins your own happiness but that of the members of your family as well.

### **1.12.3 Honour your parents**

The key commandment from the Lord to the Apostolic child is to honour and respect his parents. This assumes that you would treat them respectfully and considerately, while also admitting that they were put in your life by the Lord to teach you and guide you. In Ephesians 6:1-2 the practical implications of this are shown, namely that you must be OBEDIENT to your parents. This of course means that the child should exercise his or her own will, while favouring and respecting that of the parents.

### **1.12.4 Respect the rules of your house**

There are two ways in which rules can be considered. The first is to regard it as troublesome, restrictive obstacles which are keeping you at bay. There is however another way of regarding them, and that is to see them as PROTECTIVE GUIDELINES for your own benefit. Remember that although it is very easy to decide about anything, it is not so much the decision as

the consequences of the decision that should be borne in mind. In other words, deciding about something is not the problem, it is the consequences that becomes the problem. An example might help to explain this: as a child I had two rabbits which were held in a cage. We also had two dogs which sometimes really wanted to get to the hares and they walked around the cage in their efforts to get to the hares. The hares were quite safe though as the dogs could never get through the wires which protected them. One day the hares accidentally got out of the cage and of course that was the end of them. Rules can be likened to the wire of the cage. It is not meant to restrict us or prohibit us, it is meant to PROTECT us. This is especially true about the fifth commandment which states that children must be obedient to their parents.

#### **1.12.5 And if I am 21 years of age?**

If you were so blessed as to reach the age of twenty one, the above question is applicable to you. In our society it is accepted that when a child reaches the age of twenty one, he or she are also responsible enough to make decisions independently from their parents. Up to this age for instance, parents must still give consent for the child to be married. When a child does reach the age of twenty one, it is hoped that he or she is in fact responsible enough to make decisions independently from their parents. This is necessary as parents cannot be held responsible indefinitely for the actions of their children.

The fact that the child has come of age does not mean that he or she no longer needs to respect their parents. It also does not mean that he or she should not make use of the vast experience gained by their parents. The opinion and knowledge of the parents about difficult situations will always be sought by children who live their

lives in a responsible and adult fashion. If children are wise they would ensure that they do not do anything about which their parents are in doubt. This is especially true of the choice of the one you wish to marry. Listen to what King Solomon says in Proverbs 23:22; and 30:17: "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

#### **1.12.6 What if my parent's view differs from mine?**

Suppose that parents do not live according to the will of God. This can be the cause of much conflict between parents and children. Where the views of the child differs from the views of the parents, it could be asked what is the child expected to do? The first and most important rule remains that the child should, through all of this, treat his parents with the utmost respect. Should the parents however want the child to do something which is against the will of God, the child is called upon to be obedient to the will of God rather than that of his parents. See Acts 5:29. In this instance there is a VERY IMPORTANT WARNING to the child. Be very careful when deciding that your parents are not children of God! The fact that their view is different from yours in certain instances does not necessarily mean that they are not children of God. Be patient with their mistakes in the same way that you expect them to be patient and understanding of yours. We should not be too hasty to judge as this is NOT what the TRUE child of God would do.

#### **1.12.7 A bouquet for Mom and Dad**

As someone who has children himself, I would like to tell you that there are few things as important and wonderful to a parent as the spontaneous gratitude of

one's child. That little note which arrives at home after the holiday, the small gift with the few words of appreciation on the birthday card, the small bouquet somewhere along the way, those are the things which makes everything worthwhile to parents, in fact it makes their lives a song!!

**1.12.8 In conclusion**

May the Good Lord grant that everyone of you who reads this article, may receive the blessing of wisdom and sound judgement to be children of whom your parents can be proud of, even more so – children of whom the Lord Jesus could be proud of.

Best of luck and the blessing of God on your way and life ahead.

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