

Is The Church Unhinged From Its Roots

Christianity has been described as a religion where its disciples do not live as its leader and founder did.

Is it true that we as believers do not live our Christian walk as Yeshua (Jesus) and the apostles did?

Scripture documents the life of Christ and His apostles and it can be very revealing.

Let's explore the scriptures to see if we live as our Master and the apostles did.

Along the way, let's compare today's church with the early church to see how we measure up.

Today's Church

Since our Lord and Saviour walked the earth over two thousand years ago Christianity has morphed into a religion that neither He nor His apostles would recognise today.

Churches with large buildings and paid leaders would be a foreign concept to Christ and the apostles.

Under the old Levitical system priests made sacrifices and offerings to cover their own sin, the sins of the people, and the sins of the nation. Tithes were collected to keep the priesthood in service as they had no other inheritance.

Now that Christ has made a once for all sacrifice that has negated the need for a priesthood to atone for our sins, it raises the question "why do we still need the tithe when no one is needed to bring atonement for our sins.?" Why do we elect Priests or one man, eg Pastors over us when believers themselves are now a royal priesthood with direct access to the throne room.

Early Church

The early church had a very different structure. Elders were being appointed in the assemblies and they met in homes.

Acts 14:2 When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

The books of 1 Corinthians and Colossians both speak of the church meeting in homes.

The church that met in Priscilla and Aquila's home is mentioned in 1Corinthians 16.

1Co 16:19 *The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.*

The church in the home of Nympha is recorded in Col 4.

Col 4:15 *Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house*

Special Offerings

We also see special offering taken up to meet needs.

Acts 11:29 *And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.*

What would our churches be like today if the assemblies met in homes, open spaces or rented buildings?

Leaders were elders who went out to work and overheads were low.

Every believer knew and operated in his or her spiritual gifts.

What resources would this release to meet needs when they arose?

Would there be a need for tithing sermons when finances are tight?

We need to ask ourselves the question "have we turned the Spiritual gifts into paid ministry positions.?"

Leaders Not being a burden

Paul speaks of not being a burden to the congregations in 11Thes 3:8

'did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labour and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to anyone of you;'

How did Christ and the Apostles live? So far we have considered church structures and buildings, but what about the way Christ and His apostles lived out their lives.

Is It Food

Peter makes an interesting statement after he is shown the sheet vision in Acts 10:14

Act 10:14 *But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean."*

Whilst Peter comes to understand that the vision is about Gentiles being brought into the faith/assemblies for the first time he states that he has never eaten unclean food.

If Peter is observing the food instructions over a decade after Jesus death, why does the main body of Christ not observe them today?

Again, we do not live as the apostle Peter did.

The food laws were never intended to be something burdensome, but are Yahweh God's instructions as to what is food and what is not food. He does not consider scavenging, swarming or wallowing things to be food. He knows what is best for us, but will we trust His wisdom and His judgement.

Old Testament In The New Testament

The early church did not have the new testament scriptures as they were still being lived out and recorded over time. The new testament scriptures are primarily quotes from the old testament.

Roger Nicole in 'The Expositor's Bible' quotes Eugen Huehn as saying there could be up to 4,105 Old Testament passages reminiscent of Old Testament scriptures.

The apostles are recorded as using 695 old testament scriptures.

If the old testament was so important to Yeshua (Jesus) and the apostles why are we as the church so anxious to rid ourselves of the instructions of Torah and other old testament writings?

If we unhinge the New Testament from its Old Testament roots then there is confusion in the churches contributing to much error and misunderstanding about the scriptures. The erroneous doctrine that maintains that the church is not under law, (instruction) but under grace has well and truly unhinged our faith from its foundations. More on this later.

Is It Law Or Instruction

If Torah is instruction, then it is instruction that is done away with, to bring us in under grace. This is contrary to 11Tim 3:16 *All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness:*

Wikipedia defines Torah as teaching, doctrine or instruction.

We find that Noah knew all about the clean and unclean animals in Gen 7:8
This means food laws predated Sinai and the giving of Torah.

If the law is done away with, why is Peter observing the Torah food laws?

Paul taking a Nazarite vow is also a matter that needs explanation from our
not under law brothers. (see Acts 18:18 & Num 6:2-18)

Ten Commandments Or Nine

Many churches teach the validity of the ten commandments, and yet these
commands are part of the law they teach is done away with.

The inconvenient fourth commandment (Sabbath) is too much of a disruption
to the entrenched Sunday Sabbath.

Does man have the authority to delete commandments?

Could that be a form of editing God?

Researching how the Sabbath that God sanctified at creation was changed by
man is extremely enlightening.

Choose Your Sabbath Day

It is taught that Sabbath can be any day of the week.

Did God make a mistake in Gen 2:3 when He sanctified (set apart) the
seventh day Sabbath?

Gen 2:3 *Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because in it He
rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

How does God de-sanctify something He has sanctified?

Can man change God's set apart times?

There is also a teaching that every day is a Sabbath. Sabbath is a day of rest,
if every day is a Sabbath rest then it is impossible to work. Scriptural principles
teach man works to eat.

11Thes 3:10 *For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order:
if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat either.*

It is time to become good Bereans and search the scriptures to see if these
things are so. (Acts 17:11)

Sabbath for the Jews

Peters sheet vision when gentiles came to faith and began to come into the
church is estimated to have taken place 10 years after Christ's death. History

shows the seventh day Sabbath was kept by the early church for 200 years after the Saviour died.

History also records groups that have faithfully kept Sabbath in every century since early church times. Remnant Of God have an excellent article on their website recording these groups.

<https://www.remnantofgod.org/sabhist.htm>

Non Jewish believers then observed the seventh day Sabbath for 190 years before changes began to be made. Remember too it was set apart at creation, it is not something new.

That's is why the command says "remember the Sabbath day." Something cannot be remembered that has not preexisted.

The belief that the seventh day Sabbath is for the Jews who did not even exist when it was sanctified at creation needs closer examination remembering gentiles who had become believers observed it for 190 years after Christ's death.

Until we look at the historic truth about the changed Sabbath we remain under our church's beliefs and practices and most churches remain indifferent to God's fourth commandment, the sanctified Sabbath day. Bring it up and you may be shown the door.

This is the reason many join Hebraic Roots or Messianic congregations as they want to keep His commandments. They have delved into the truth and the history and made the appropriate changes.

If it is seen as legalism to obey the fourth command then so be it.

It is better to please the Father than please man.

Remaining Torah Instructions

When it comes to the law we know from scripture that the Levitical priesthood and its service was no longer necessary because of Christ's once for all sacrifice. (Heb 7:27)

We no longer need a human priest to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, the sins of the people and the nation.

.....who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sin, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did

once for all when He offered up Himself. Heb 7:27

But what about the remaining instructions of Torah which include the ten commandments. If it is ok for most churches to keep the ten commands minus the fourth (Saturday Sabbath) what about the other commands?

613 commands are found in Torah. 221 of these apply to the Temple. 74 may not apply. Estimations are that most Christians keep 201 and a minority of Christians keep 275. That equates to Christians keeping between 66-85% of the Torah. Do those who espouse not keeping the law understand they could be keeping 66%+ of the Law they don't have to keep. (figures quoted from Andrew Gabriel Roth)

But You Can't Keep All The Torah

For those who say you cannot keep all the remaining Torah, scripture tells us John the Baptist parents Zachariah and Elizabeth kept the law blamelessly. Luke 1:6 *They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.*

It is also calculated that there are 1050 individual instructions in the new Testament. No doubt if the 300 odd remaining instructions of Torah were kept it would fulfil the 1050 instructions in the new covenant.

Hebraic Context For A Jewish Messiah & Apostles

11 Timothy 2 tells us to accurately handle the word of truth.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

(11 Tim 2:15)

Accurately handling the word of truth can be a painful process. Looking at scripture from a Hebraic perspective rather than putting it through a 21st century western filter requires some relearning and letting go of long held inaccurate views of scripture.

Many of our forefathers have taught doctrine that upon closer examination do not always fit with the text when it is put into context. Scripture needs to be put into its setting and Hebraic context for an accurate understanding.

Paul being quoted as doing away with the Law when Yeshua/Jesus says 'not one jot or tittle of the Law will pass away until all things are accomplished' is a classic example of teaching where what is believed Paul is saying contradicts Yeshua who is the Living Word.

Mat 5:18 *"For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

Understanding the difference between God's Law and the Oral Law (man's added instructions) helps get the scripture into its Hebraic setting. It is oral law that does not have to be kept, not God's instructions (commandments)

John 14:15 *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

What Has Been Lost? What Is Being Restored?

Today's church has lost many of the practices and beliefs of the early church, including the power it walked in. What is it then that is being restored back in our day?

Is it a new understanding of Sabbath?

Is it an understanding of what Father God considers to be food?

Is it an understanding of what the early church assembly looked like and how it functioned?

Is it an understanding of how an assembly would function with elders and deacons as leaders?

Is it an understanding of the assembly functioning with all the believers knowing and exercising their spiritual gifts?

Is it an understanding of what the early church buildings looked like?

Is it a fresh revelation of His Word to re-centre it into its Hebraic setting?

Will We Excommunicate Peter & Paul

If Peter and Paul came to our church today many of us would be quick to correct them for observing the dietary food laws, keeping the Torah and the seventh day Sabbath. Paul taking a Nazarite vow and going up to Passover (Acts 18:20-21) after Messiah's death would also be problematic.

Are we so far removed from the early church faith that as disciples we do not live as our Saviour and the Apostles lived.

When Messiah returns and the Torah goes forth from Jerusalem will we be shouting,

NO LORD, NO LORD, NO LAW, NO LAW, WE WANT THE LAWLESS GOSPEL, NOT YOUR INSTRUCTIONS.

Mic 4:2 *Many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may*

teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Let us open our hearts to the moves of His Spirit, as we need fresh Manna every day.

Yesterday's Manna goes off.

As we continue to seek Him and His word in order to know how He would have us live in our day as His witnesses, let's become disciples who are obedient to His Word and open to all that He is restoring in our day.