

The Judean Pattern

The best way to determine the authenticity of the church today is to compare it with the church in Acts 2 and 4. The way the church was then is the only way it can be now, as Paul himself wrote in 1 Ths 2:14, referring to “the Judean Pattern.” The church Paul patterned his churches after were called “the Way,” taking after Gen 18:19, as Abraham’s seed did as Abraham did (Jn 8:39), and the only way the way could be the way is the way it was when it was “the Way” in Paul’s and the other apostles’ day. And the only way the church can be now is the way it was then. There cannot be any variance, any disagreement between the two parts of the same whole — no divergence between the first century and the last century.

Mk 9:12 — If we can rightly define the word *restoration*,¹ we will see that there can be no variant form, as also no variant form of the same word *believe* between Jn 3:16 and Acts 2:44, no deviation from the original and standard form (Jn 13:34-35; 17:21-23). It is the same yesterday, today, and forever. 1 John is the litmus test (1 Jn 3:14,16,23; 5:12-13), or will we allow for compromise between the first century and the last century? I say “last century” because of Mt 21:43 and 24:14 and Isa 49:6.

1 Jn 2:27 is a matter of fact, as Eph 2:19-21, or else apostasy sets in hard and fast. Apostasy is the going away from the apostolic teachings, such as Paul in 1 Ths 2:14. The same Judean pattern applies today as it did in his day. 1 Jn 2:27 was the only way anyone who was sealed with the Spirit (Eph 1:13-14) could have confidence upon the Master’s return (1 Jn 2:27-29), and those who do not practice righteousness are not born of God.

¹ restoration — *n.*, the action of returning something to a former owner, place, or condition; the process of repairing or renovating a building, work of art, vehicle, etc., so as to restore it to its original condition; the reinstatement of a previous practice, right, custom, or situation.

So what does it mean to *practice righteousness*? It is to keep the way of Yahweh (Gen 18:19). It means to abide in Him, and the only way to abide in Him was to adhere to the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42; 1 Jn 1:3; 2:27). Those who went out from the apostles were apostate. 1 Jn 2:19 — All who were loyal to the anointing were of the "us." But in the second century how many stayed under their wings, even after the apostles died off? Straying from the practices of the apostles, no one could practice righteousness. The first churches during the first century stayed under their wings and clung to the oral teaching and traditions of the apostles (2 Ths 2:15; 3:6). Both the one who strayed from the apostles' traditions and those who did not obey the command in 2 Ths 3:6 became apostate.

When the apostles were accessible, the leaders could write or consult them when a question arose, just as the sheep would seek the counsel of their local leaders.

The way one can determine an authentic disciple is to compare him with those who follow His teaching, who can confess that he is where He is (1 Jn 4:2-3; Jn 12:26), where He is incarnate in the witness (edah) of His kingdom to come, where He is served there (Jn 14:18). The authenticity of the ones who are regarded as His disciples is that they are those who have obeyed His gospel as in Jn 12:25, and serve Him where He is incarnate. Only "there" in Jn 12:26 can they confess 1 Jn 4:2-3.

True disciples must be able to discern the spirits of those who come to them who are not able to truly confess this — that they are sent out from such a place where He is incarnate. There are enemies from without and enemies from within. To receive one with the same identical spirit as he himself has (1 Jn 4:1), a discerning spiritual disciple must detect and discern the spirits (2 Cor 11:4,13-15; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Pet 3:16), whether he is from God, sent out from where His Spirit lives in the lives of true disciples in a *place* where it is as 1 Cor 1:2,10 (1 Ths 1:8; 1 Tim 2:8; 2 Cor 2:14; Rev 2:5; Mal 1:11; Dt 12:5).

Place — a locality where the lampstand gives light to those in darkness around them, which is Love, Love, Love, Love (Eph 6:24; Rev 2:5; Jn 13:35; 17:23). There is no dissension between any members of the Body in that place or town (1 Pet 2:9-12; Phil 2:14-16).