

The Ball is in Our Court

You've heard the saying, "*If we don't learn from history, we're doomed to repeat it?*" That's for the nations, and they certainly will. And, we have the same warning written for us in 1 Cor 10:11, that we won't do the same things old Israel did (Heb 4:11).

Now all these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1 Cor 10:11)

Obviously, it is talking about us there. It is prophetic. Maybe Paul thought he was bringing about the end of the age, but he came to the point of wondering whether he had labored in vain (Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; Isa 49:4). Evidently, the first church didn't learn from history; and their failures won't do us any good if we don't learn from our history. That is why we have the "black box" (the New Testament).

Of course, it's not just up to *individuals* to bring it about; it is up to a nation. Almost everywhere in the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament, the "you" is plural, written to a nation of people, not just individuals so they can live their individual lives as good people. The New Testament is written to a *nation*.

Absolute or Obsolete?

Also, we know that our Master's word is *absolute*, as He also is the same yesterday as He is today — He never changes. His commandments never change and He never changes. His Word is absolute. But as Christianity progressed, His Word was regarded as obsolete, not absolute. What does *obsolete* mean?

Obsolete: Gone into disuse; neglected; outdated; replaced by something newer or better or more fashionable.

If we're real, then we have got to go back to the original pattern, not to a *hybrid*. A hybrid results from crossing two things of different origin and nature. Constantine created a hybrid religion when he married the church and the state.

We call the original the *first church*. No one calls it the first church except for us. Usually they call it the *early church*, which implies a longer existence than the time

period when the church actually remained on its original foundation. Christians think it continued down through history, even until now. We don't see it that way. The first church ceased to exist as an ongoing body of believers who were just as they were in the beginning, in Acts 2:44 and 4:32, when they were *one heart and soul*, when all who believed shared everything in common.

Acts 4:32 was the initial fulfillment of the very prayer our Master prayed to His Father before He was crucified, that we would be *one heart and soul*, just as He was with His Father. Being this way is going back to the origin. And if we're not this way, then we're not the real Body of Messiah. We're a hybrid. I'm not afraid to say that, because I know we are not a hybrid. We went back to the very roots, the foundation, the origin, and the pattern that was established in the beginning. We have gone back to the *original paradigm*.

Christianity resulted from a paradigm shift — from community life to mere doctrine and assent to creeds as the litmus test of faith, and everyone judged each other based on doctrinal conformity.

Our Master said, *"I want you to love one another as I have loved you, and then the whole world, all men, will know who my disciples are, and who they aren't."*

But Jn 13:35 says how *"all the world will know you are My disciples."* That hasn't happened yet, but when it does, then everyone who sees that witness will be guilty if they don't surrender — when they see that love demonstrated in the twelve tribes of Israel, fulfilling Jn 13:34-35.

Who Will Play Ball?

There is only a certain time allowed on the playing field. The first church had the play and the narration, but their time on the "playing field" ended. Their chance to bear the fruit of the kingdom passed. Christianity has never even been in the ball game. It's a

hybrid; a pagan religion. So then if the first church's time on the playing field is over, then *the ball is in our court*. What does that mean?

David Zerubbabel — We have to get it to the goal.

Right. So the ball is in our court now, in the end of days, when there must be a *restoration*. And we've got to learn from history, we've got to learn from the Word, and we've got to know how they fell, and not fall ourselves. We'll find these things out from our Master's word and the apostles' instructions, and how they didn't follow them. So now the ball is in our court.

We can't explain away our Master's word and still keep the ball. If we explain away our Master's *absolute word and commandments*, we're disqualified. This is what Christians do — *explain it away*, as with, "No one can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions." They explain it away as if it doesn't matter. That is how they became apostate, as we also can become. In the beginning, they sat at the feet of the apostles, and they were *devoted to the apostles' teachings and fellowship* (Acts 2:42). Obviously, there is no *church* outside of that; there is no *Body of Messiah* apart from apostleship.

What does being *apostate* mean? Where does that word come from?

Soreph Gamaliel — Departing from the apostles' teachings.

Exactly, it means departing from the apostle's teaching and fellowship. We may think we have fellowship with John and all the rest of the apostles back then, but wherever we *are*, there are sent ones who are sent to help establish a place, and the disciples in that place have to be in fellowship with those sent ones, too, not just the apostles a long time ago. 1 Jn 2:27 says "*we don't need anybody to teach us,*" which means "anybody" from outside the Community. We have an anointing from the holy one that teaches us all things, through the apostles, prophets, and teachers.

So the saying, “*the ball is in our court*,” means that we are *now* responsible, just as Paul said in 1 Cor 9:24. We simply cannot “play the game” in vain: the runner runs to win; the boxer isn’t just beating the air aimlessly.

My daddy used to sit in the kitchen and read the Scofield Study Bible through and through; he would learn and learn, but there was no way to carry it out. There was absolutely no way of obeying it. He was a good man and he made the neighborhood better. He’d go to work, and come home and trim the hedge, and pick up trash around the house. But that isn’t building the Body any more than anyone else. That is just “beating the air.” We can “beat the air” too, even in the Community. Paul said he might be disqualified as well (1 Cor 9:27), so it’s obvious that we also could be disqualified.

Re-establishing what Paul Established

Acts 26:7 is what Paul helped establish. Paul said “we” in Acts 13:47, speaking of *raising up the twelve tribes*, which is the prophecy of Isa 49:6, for the purpose of Isa 49:8, which of course is exactly what Paul was saying in Acts 26:7, “to this promise our twelve tribes hope to attain *for them* [the Jews] as we serve/worship night and day.” Someone has to fulfill that prophecy so the promise can come to them. *We* have to fulfill it. That is why our Master said,

“I am going to take the kingdom away from you, and give it to a nation who will produce the fruit of it.” (Mt 21:43)

So He took it away from old Israel and gave it to a *nation*, which was the first church. On that basis, Paul said, “*We serve night and day in order to bring about the promise...*” What promise was he speaking of? It is the promise of Gen 15:18, which will be kept by a people keeping Gen 18:19, commanding their children and household after them to keep the way of Yahweh by doing righteousness and justice, so that He can righteously give to Abraham what He promised.

That has to be done by a whole nation. That’s why we’re raising our children as we are, not sending them to public schools. We’re teaching them ourselves, inculcating

into them what they need to understand in order to live this life and bear the fruit of the kingdom, in order that our Father can bring about what He promised. If what He promised Abraham is never fulfilled, then we are living in vain.

What we're doing has never been done before. Israel has never had an enemy-free land, and they never celebrated a year of Jubilee. They always divided and worshiped other gods. Israel never kept themselves from idols (1 Jn 5:21).

These things have been written down for your instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come. (1 Cor 10:11)

“Indeed, Elijah is coming first and restores all things.” (Mk 9:12; Mt 17:11)

Acts 1:6-7 — He knew this would only happen *in the very end of days*, when the original pattern of the Edah would be restored, because he knew the first church would lose it. Therefore, since the first church lost it, it has to be restored to the original pattern. This is what we are living for. Our children have to understand this, so that they know what they're living for. If we don't know what we're living for, we'll fall away. *Restoring all things* has to be our key purpose, to fulfill it for our Father.

Isa 49:6 is *the fruit of the kingdom* (Mt 21:43), which we are to bear for old Israel. If you get tired of hearing this, then you'll never do it. But if we do it, then Mt 24:14 will come about, and that will bring the end of the age. Then our Master can come back to earth, and restore the twelve tribes of natural Israel, and restore the earth (Acts 3:21). But first of all, He's waiting until we put His enemies under His feet (Heb 3:13).

We've got to put the enemies that divide us under His feet, so that they can't divide us anymore. We've got to be one, as the Father and Son are one. That is the fruit of the kingdom, as in Mt 24:14. “This gospel” of the kingdom will be proclaimed everywhere, in every nation, as a witness, and then the end will come, and our Master will return. I've lived my whole life so that we would know this, and do it, and teach it to our children, and understand what we're alive for, and what we've been saved to do.

For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles. In every place, incense shall be offered to My name and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the nations. (Mal 1:11)

Making our Father's Name Great in our Neighborhood

We pray, “Your name be made great” (Mt 6:9), but are we just going to pray? No, we’re going to *do it*; we’re the ones who are going to work it out. Our Father, through His grace, His mercy, and His Spirit, will empower us to make His name great. But we can also bring His name down.

We help our neighbors. We will help in every way we can. We don’t *ignore* people, just as we don’t ignore each other. We don’t ignore our spiritual neighbors, and we don’t ignore our physical neighbors in the secular neighborhood. Loving our neighbors doesn’t mean we go out and mow everyone’s grass. They can do that. But in an emergency, we *run to their help*. And we pick up trash.

Our witness has to be tangible, observable, not mystical as in Christianity. There has to be a visible witness in order for 1 Pet 2:12 to happen — “*as they observe your behavior.*” That means we’ve got to be in a place where the neighbors can observe our behavior and see whether we’re real. We’re not on the side of a mountain somewhere, where they can’t even see us. But we are right there in their neighborhood.

Ben Naby — When I hear what Yônêq said tonight, I feel the same zeal in my heart that I had when I first sat in the Vine House. I want our Father’s name to be great on the earth because I know it’s been maligned! We want His name to be lifted up, and we’re going to lift it up by us giving our whole heart, not being slack, but caring about the things God cares about. That’s how He’ll be lifted up. Then people are going to see it, and say, “It’s exciting what is going on there. What are they doing this week?” That’s the way God’s people are, full of life, going from glory to glory as we keep that zeal and that heart for Him.