

The Authority of the Sunday School? Is it from Heaven or Men?

The Authority of the Sunday School

As I attempt to put in writing this study, I realize the importance of the subject matter and the utmost need to be led by the Word of God. I need to look to the "Perfect Law of Liberty" realizing only the truth of God's word matters in this or any other subject. Please read this with the understanding that I am not intending to express my views and that I desire to encourage study and acceptance of the truths as recorded in God's Holy words. If my presentation of this seems harsh to you, I sincerely apologize for my only desire is to cause everyone to give God the Glory and Praise due his magnificent name.

The Church of Christ has always stood on the principle of speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent. In other words have a "Thus saith the Lord" for all we do and not to go beyond and add our thought where the Bible does not instruct us in matters that seem good to us. I will admit that through human eyes the Sunday School looks good, but we must let the Lord give us direction in everything.. Of course the same might be said of Instruments of music, sprinkling, or many other things that we would agree we cannot follow what seems good or looks good to man, but rather follow what the Lord instructs.

We first need to establish an understanding as to whether it matters by whose authority we practice whatever we practice. The scriptures plainly teach the importance of authority as far as spiritual matters are concerned. We find that God is the author of peace.

I Corinthians 14:33: For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Hebrews:5:8-9: Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;
9: And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

Hebrews:12:1-2: Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2: Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus taught as one having authority.

Matthew 7:28-29; And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Matthew 21:23-27; And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the

people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24: And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25: The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26: But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

27: And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

We find that Jesus definitely has all authority but answered these in this manner because they were simply trying to entrap him. Certainly all should be aware of the fact that all Jesus did was by the authority given him of the Father. Not only all that he taught, but all that he did was with the authority of God. This authority is shown as he demonstrated it over unclean spirits who had no choice but to obey him.

Mark 1:22-28; And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23: And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24: Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25: And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26: And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27: And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28: And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

Jesus has authority to execute Judgement.

John 5:25-29; Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26: For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

28: Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29: And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Jesus is to reign until he has overcome all enemies and then lay down all power and authority at the Father's feet.

I Corinthians 15:24-28; Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25: For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26: The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

27: For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

28: And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Jesus after his resurrection states his power as he gave his commission unto his Apostles.

Matthew 28:18-20; And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20: 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.

Since Jesus possessed all power then there is no more power or authority to be obtained. These scriptures should establish the necessity of our looking to him for authority in all spiritual matters. Let us examine all practices to see where the authority for them lies. The importance of this is magnified when we realize that the Lord pronounces a curse on any that will add to or subtract from the commandments of God Almighty.

Revelation 22:18-19; For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Deuteronomy 12:32: What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

Remember Jesus tells us that not those that just call on his name but those that obey him will be saved.

Matthew 7:21-23; Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22: Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23: And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

These scriptures should suffice to establish the need for us to examine the Sunday School issue and all other spiritual matters to see by whose authority they exist, since our eternal salvation is determined by

our acceptance or rejection of God's authority and commandments. We encourage a sincere examination of the scriptures and facts, some of which we will point out to determine the correct answer to this important question.

First, we need to establish when Jesus' kingdom came into existence. Jesus told of his kingdom, stating that some of those hearing him at that time would not die until the kingdom came with power.

Mark 9:11; And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

This shows that the kingdom was near at hand. He further told his Apostles to go into Jerusalem and remain there until they be endued with power from on high and that from Jerusalem the Gospel should begin to be preached.

Luke 24:46-49; And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48: And ye are witnesses of these things.

49: And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

On the day of Pentecost the Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost and they began preaching repentance and baptism for the remission of sins. Those that gladly received the word were obedient to the Gospel and were added to the Church. (kingdom of God) These fulfill the prophesies of Isaiah.

Acts 2:1-4; And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2: And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3: And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4: And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:37-38; Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

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

Isaiah 2:2-3; And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be

established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3: And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

The Lord's church was then established in the city of Jerusalem on the day of pentecost, A.D. 33. Jesus, by establishing his Church, gave us the way to everlasting life through his shed blood, contingent upon our obedience to him. We are encouraged throughout the Bible to accept the words of God without changing his ordinances. Jesus also tells us that we must continue in his word in order to be his disciple for the Truth will make us free.

John 8:31-32; Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

We also find that all has been given to us that pertains to life and Godliness and all that is needed to make us perfect. (not sinless but having the perfect way)

II Timothy 3:16-17; All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

II Peter 1:3-4; According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

We find numerous examples throughout the Old Testament of God's judgement upon those who did not obey him exactly as he commanded. This should behoove us to search the scriptures to see that all practices be in accordance to the will of God. Man has consistently tried to add his ideas to replace the will of God. We should not follow any creed of man. For if a creed contains more, less, or anything different than God's plan, it is wrong. Paul wrote to Timothy instructing him to study, rightly dividing the word of Truth. Any teaching or practice that cannot be traced to the Apostolic order of worship should be rejected. Let us refrain from accepting such.

We need to accept truth, Peter says "all things" have been given to us that pertain to Life and Godliness. When the statement says all things that means nothing has been left out, nothing should be changed and surely nothing else is to be added or is to be forthcoming. The Mormons claim Joseph Smith has given us additional truths, then Peter would be wrong, if Joseph Smith is right. But I will trust the inspired writer and Apostle Peter when he said, All things and understand that that statement is all inclusive.

II Timothy 2:15; Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

From the Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 18, page 1104, we find the Sunday School idea originated in England by Robert Raikes in the 1780's. The purpose of this school originally was to give instruction in reading and the church catechism. This was not the beginning of the class system of teaching in the Church of Christ, but only the early existence of the Sunday School. This practice was not added to the Lord's Church until the nineteenth century. The Church of our Lord endured for approximately 1850 years without the class system of teaching, and carried on with the apostolic method of teaching. We find no example of such teaching in the early Church rather we find the congregation assembled for worship and edification without an hint of dividing into classes. This alone should be sufficient to show any one that this in an addition to God's Divine Institution.

Not only is the class system an addition to the Apostolic practice, but it makes it impossible for the elders to fulfill their duties of feeding and overseeing the flock. The elder, or bishop is to be a shepherd, overseer, one who watches over the congregation. This cannot be totally fulfilled if they have a class method of teaching. How can they know what is being taught in each of the different classes?

I Peter 5:1-4; The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3: Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4: And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Not only are the elders unable to know what is being taught, but they authorize women, whom God has commanded to keep silent and not to teach, to teach in the classes.

I Corinthians 14:34-35; Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

35: And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

I Timothy 2:11-12; Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12: But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

Some say the elders can give women permission to teach in classes and thereby she be not usurping authority over the man. If this were possible why cannot they give her permission to speak before the assembly and still not be "usurping Authority over the Man"? By whose authority do the elders give such permission to the women, when God has commanded them not to teach but to keep silent? Not only are they transgressing God's law by breaking up into the different classes, but they are breaking his commandment by authorizing women to teach. Surely one can see the class system can only be a deviation from the perfect will of God.

Some inject the idea that to be in violation of I Timothy 2:11-12; that a woman has to do both teach a man and usurp authority over a man before this applies. I beg to differ with that argument because it says not to teach nor to usurp authority. But for argument sake, lets say that is a viable argument. How can she do either and still be in silence as commanded.

In other places, the Lord has outlined the duty of christian women in being keepers at home, guiding the house, and the older women teaching the younger women to be good, obedient wives. NO where in the Bible do we get any hint of a woman teaching except in a private manner, as in the case of Aquila and his wife Priscilla and in the case of Philip's four daughters, which in no way gives an example of their teaching publicly. The Bible simply states that they did prophesy and does not give an example of class system with women teachers as some would claim.

Titus 2:3-5; The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4: That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5: To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Acts 18:24-26; And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25: This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26: And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Acts 21:8-9; And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

9: And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

As we look to the Hebrew writer, we find some very interesting thoughts concerning the Church. We find the law of Moses was a shadow of things to come. This temporal law is very symbolic of the perfect way Christ has provided for us under the Christian dispensation. And in the eighth chapter of Hebrews, we are told the Church is the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched. They were commanded to "make all things according to the pattern shewed to them in the mount." The old law was a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ and has parallels with the spiritual law of Christ. Under this law, God gave specific instruction in the teaching of his word. We will notice they were to teach in the assembly and in the home, likewise, we are to teach today.

The church is referred to as the tabernacle which the Lord has pitched. There is a great parallel between the tabernacle under the old law and the Church which Jesus established. The tabernacle and the old law having a shadow of things to come. A shadow of something will be the same but a different size, etc. The tabernacle has many items that are symbolic of the law of Christ. I have an interesting study on the tabernacle that I'd be glad to share with anyone who would contact me for a copy.

Since the tabernacle and the old law are somewhat symbolic of the new, we can therefore take some thought as to how that was structured. Which was done by the parents teaching and in the assembly of all the people.

Hebrews 10:1; For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Hebrews 8:1-5; Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2: A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

3: For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.

4: For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

5: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

Deuteronomy 31:10-13; And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

11: When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

12: Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law:

13: And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

Nehemiah 8:1-3; And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

2: And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

3: And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

Joshua 8:34-35; And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35: There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

We find in the above passages that they gathered the people together with the children that had not known anything and taught them the law of God before the entire assembly. Those who have studied the Old Testament laws will readily agree, it was a very complex and difficult law. They had to give various sacrifices for different sins, had periods of cleansing, and many difficult things to understand.

However, even with such a complex law, they were commanded to read all the law before the entire congregation. This affirms teaching before a congregation as in Corinthians rather than dividing into classes.

I Corinthians 14:31-33; Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30: If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31: For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32: And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33: For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

It seems ironic that men today do not believe the children can learn in the assembly of the Church. The Israelites were told the doctrine would be as rain drops. Rain falls in the forest and the trees, bushes, shrubs, and even the tender grass can get it's capacity. Likewise, the young and old can each grasp that which they are capable of learning when the gospel is preached in their midst.

Deuteronomy 32:1-2; Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

2: My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

Next, the people were commanded to teach their own children the Law. This duty falls today, likewise, upon the shoulders of those of us who are fathers. Let us not shirk our duty to teach the Unsearchable Riches Of Christ unto our own children, leaving this responsibility to others.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

5: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6: And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

7: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8: And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9: And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Psalms 78:5-8; For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

6: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

7: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

8: And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

We see the Fathers were to teach their own children of the commandments of God, this was and is a very grave responsibility for a father.

Ephesians 6:4; And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We can no more set up a class system of teaching to fulfill our duty as could those under the old law. I cannot have someone else teach my children for me any more that I can have someone else be baptized for me or visit the sick for me or do any other duty for me. We have God's plan and examples set out for us to follow, let us do so. Is one cannot prove the authority of God for having a class system of teaching, I would encourage one to forsake such a practice and return to the Apostolic order of faith and practice and worship. we must prove all things and realize anything which God has not planted shall be rooted up.

I Thessalonians 5:21; Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Matthew 15:13; But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

God and Christ not having authorized such will surely uproot them. If we advocate such and worship with such our hope will surely be uprooted. Not only is the class system a perversion of the Gospel of Christ, but it has divided the Church of our Lord, the Church our Lord gave his precious blood obtaining for us the hope of life eternal. Jesus prayed that we might all be one but we have been divided by the addition of this practice. No one can deny the fact that bringing such a practice into the Church has caused the division any more that they can deny the fact that bringing music into the Church has caused division. In view of the fact this practice is an addition to God's law, we admonish all brethren associated with such to come out from among them and be ye separate.

My grandfather and his generation have verified the fact that there were no Churches Of Christ which had Sunday School during their youth. They could remember when the Church of Christ began to be divided over the class issue. The Church of Christ has had Sunday Schools introduced sometime during the late 1800's or early 1900's.

II Corinthians 6:14-18; Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15: And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16: And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

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

18: And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Consider, if the class system is a better way to teach God's law, then man has exalted himself above the creator of man. We would then find that man is wiser than God, if man after some 1850 years improved upon the perfect will of God. If man feels incapable of teaching his own children, this is caused by no fault of God, but rather of man himself. We are told that the weakness of God is far superior to the wisdom of Men. Why must man continue in outward rebellion to the commandments of the only true and living God? The prophet of old stated "How long refuse you to keep my commandments?"

In working out our own salvation, we need to realize the importance of our obeying God without questioning or challenging his authority in giving us divine articles. We, so much of the time, are as Naaman who expected some great thing from the prophet of God and was reluctant to dip seven times in the river of Jordan. We need to be as David who said he loved the law of God/

Psalms 119:97; O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Jesus testified that man would depart from the faith, giving heed to the doctrines and commandments of men. Let us lay aside the practices that have only man's authorization, and seek after him according to truth. Most will readily agree from whom the class system originated, Robert Raikes, so is it's authority from God? NO From Man? YES>

Matthew 15:8-9; Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,
8: This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.
9: But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Mark 7:6-9; He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.
7: Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.
8: For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.
9: And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

I Timothy 4:1; Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Many human arguments are given in support of the class system, let us examine a few briefly. We also quote from the class brethren's own publication which contradicts what they often claim concerning Sunday School.

1. Some profess that classes are not an addition to the Church!

Quotes from the 20th Century Christian

October 1967 Issue

Published by class brethren

(I will be glad to furnish a copy of this publication to any who desire one)

Page 5 "The Sunday School Idea and the American Restoration movement"

The idea of a Sunday School apparently originated with Robert Taides, an Englishman, in 1780. In 1786, three years after Great Britain declared the thirteen colonies to be an independent nation, the first Sunday school was started on this side of the Atlantic."

2. The also admit that the Sunday School was not needed earlier!

Page 6: "The Sunday School idea got off to a belated start within the American Restoration movement. In the first years the effort to restore New Testament Christianity was nurtured exclusively by evangelistic preaching. No need for a Sunday School was felt."

3. Some contend Sunday School to be separate from Church.

Page 6: "Like Campbell, Barton W. Stone also first opposed, then later approved the Sunday School. It was his ultimate judgement that the school was a legitimate work of the Church not an "Outside Institution"

Surely Sunday Schools are not an outside institution but a perversion. They are supported, encouraged, and supposedly directed by the Church. It is absurd any would try to hide behind such an excuse, as not being part of the Church, yet divide churches and the brotherhood over a practice which they admit is not essential to say the least.

4. They acknowledge the fact that responsibility of teaching is passed to Sunday School! While for years have denied that fact.

Page 29: "Sunday School can't do it alone."

"In the first place, we have largely shifted the responsibility of religious instruction to the Sunday School."

Thus man shifts his responsibility of teaching his children to others.

5. Many will deny that the Sunday School idea came from denominations. However notice the language of their writings on page 45:

"Churches of Christ borrowed from denominational neighbors the Sunday School idea when it was hale and hearty.

In view of the fact that this practice is a transgression of God's law, we would encourage and admonish all brethren associated with such to come out from them and be separate. Again read II Corinthians 6:14-18;

Romans 14:23; And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Romans 10:17; So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Galatians 1:6-9; I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

7: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

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

9: As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

In the above three passages we find that whatever is not of faith is sin and that faith can be obtained by hearing the word of God. This tells us that anything that we cannot trace back to the New Testament scriptures is sin since it comes not by the word of the Lord. The Apostle Paul when writing to the Church at Galatia tells them to count any accursed who would teach anything different than that they had received of the Apostles. We certainly should heed the same warning today and accept no teaching that does not come from the word of God.

By example in the New Testament we see the Church coming together to an assembly.

Ac:4:31: And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness

Ac:20:7: And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

1Co:14:23: If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

1Co:14:31: For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

In the above passages we see examples of the Church coming together, assembling, the whole Church come together, and all learning and being comforted. When the early Church worshipped it was in one place with all the congregation hearing what was being taught as shown by Corinth's example.

Nowhere do we read of any that came together and then divided or where any were called to divided groups. We have example of the Church assembling but do not have examples of the Church dividing for anything.

Since the class system of teaching cannot be traced to the New Testament teachings but rather had its earliest existence some 1750 years later, we should reject the same and maintain the gospel as recorded in God's Holy Word.

This study is not intended to be complete in giving every scripture and example that would indicate that any addition to the word of God is unacceptable to God, but rather given to begin and provoke further study.

I hope we can also readily see that man's argument that Sunday School is not an assembly of the Church is null and void in light of the scriptures. For either way you consider the class system of teaching it is a change from God's way for his people to be taught. First by the parent and secondly in the assembly just as was required in the Old Testament for the Children of Israel we find the same commandments for us in the Christian Dispensation.

So it matters not whether it be considered a part of Church or a separate institution all together, or a part of the assembly or not, it still is an addition to the word of God. Most who have the Class System of teaching will readily admit that it is not essential, is not commanded, and say it is a better way of teaching, (in the eyes of men). So the Church of our Lord has been riddled with division over something the ones that support it say is non-essential, thereby causing strife and division in the Body of Christ.

Please Consider Prayerfully!