

Should We Pray to GOD or Only to Christ?

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Do we have access to the Father, on only to Christ? What does it mean to ask "in the name of Jesus Christ"?

GOD'S Church has been accused of error in addressing prayers to God the Father. Two supposed former members of God's Church have set out to "speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:30).

Rejecting the truth, after it was patiently pointed out to them, this couple now is going farther and farther into error. They have begun sending typed or mimeographed accusations and doctrinal arguments to such brethren as they may know, attempting to discredit God's Church. We now must "mark them" as God commands, that all may "AVOID THEM" (Rom. 16:17-18).

Accusing God's Church

One such 8-page tirade against The Church of God is captioned: "THE RADIO CHURCH OF GOD IS THE CHURCH OF LAODICEA." No accusation could be more false. In it this dissenter states falsely: "The work that the Radio Church of God is doing IS NOT THE PREACHING OF THE GOOD NEWS TO THE WORLD." To say that God's Church is not preaching the true GOSPEL to the world is a point-blank LIE! Many other false accusations and misrepresentations, and reflections against the Church, were made.

However, the main contention is the accusation that God's Church is in error in obeying Christ's instruction regarding prayer. This couple says it is wrong to address prayers, as Jesus taught, to the Father, in Jesus' name. Their basic argument is that to ask "IN JESUS' NAME" means to ASK JESUS HIMSELF!

As this misguided man himself wrote: "It revolves around the question of what is meant by Jesus' instruction to ask in His name ... I became convinced that Jesus meant a different manner of prayer than what is usually used. He was ascending into heaven, to be our high priest at the right hand of God the Father. Therefore, we are to come directly to Him with our requests. The words 'Ask in my name' are not a blanket power of attorney, but have a different meaning entirely."

The Scriptural teaching about TO WHOM our prayers should be addressed is so plain that a few Scriptures very plainly set forth the TRUTH. Ten thousand pages of arguments cannot countermand, disannul, or explain away these plain basic Scriptures.

Shall We Obey Christ?

The Church of God OBEYS the HEAD of this Church, who is Jesus Christ. What did He teach and

command?

One of His disciples said to Jesus. "Lord, teach us to pray."

"And He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done ..." (Luke 11:1-2).

NOTICE! Jesus, teaching His disciples, instructed "When ye pray, say, OUR FATHER which art in heaven." This false accuser says we are WRONG if we obey that instruction. IF JESUS CHRIST be your Saviour; Lord and Master, and High Priest, FOLLOW HIM! If this dissenter be your lord and master, then follow him.

Notice again, from Matthew's version of the "sermon on the mount."

"But when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, PRAY TO THY FATHER which is in secret: and THY FATHER which seeth in secret shall REWARD THEE openly." (Matthew 6:5-6).

NOTICE! "When thou prayest ... PRAY TO THY FATHER." This is a command. This is the teaching of the Head of our Church. Will we listen to Christ, and obey Him, or listen to misguided and self-willed dissenters bent on accusing, discrediting, dividing God's Church, and drawing a personal following after themselves?

Notice, further, there is promise of THE ANSWER, when we address THE FATHER in prayer: "... and thy FATHER SHALL REWARD THEE ..."

In verse 8 Jesus adds, further: "for your FATHER knoweth what things ye have need of, BEFORE YE ASK HIM." It is God the FATHER who knows what we have asked HIM -- not asked of Christ!

Next, Jesus instructed us HOW TO PRAY:

"After this manner therefore pray ye: OUR FATHER which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. THY Kingdom come. THY will be done ..." etc. (Verses 9-10).

If you can tear that teaching of Jesus out of the Bible, you might as well throw your Bible away! Yet this dissenter says we must NOT obey that teaching! He says that was all CHANGED, after the crucifixion and resurrection! If it was, the next step is to say the Sabbath was changed, and everything Jesus taught!

This dissenter has ARGUMENTS! Long, voluminous ARGUMENTS. But this is a plain and simple THUS SAITH THE LORD! Can ARGUMENTS, or twisting and misapplying other Scriptures, knock THESE Scriptures in the head? Can you call Jesus a false teacher, and yet claim to honor Him?

Did Christ CHANGE It?

This man asks why are no prayers recorded AFTER the four Gospels that are addressed to THE FATHER? The true answer, of course, is that there were! Yet, he argues, "The simple explanation is that Jesus Christ AUTHORIZED A CHANGE in the manner of prayer He had taught, just before He was crucified. John 16:24: 'HITHERTO YE HAVE ASKED NOTHING IN MY NAME: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' His name was not given for men to call upon until His ministry was completed. When this was finished, He instructed us to ask in His name and FROM THIS TIME, THERE ARE NO RECORDED PRAYERS THAT BEGIN with the words, 'Our Father.'"

That is the crux of his argument! It is based on his assumption that to ask "in Jesus name" does NOT mean what God's Church teaches -- that is, by His authority -- by His permission -- but to ask Jesus Himself direct.

Now let us look at the Scripture he quotes, and understand it IN ITS CONTEXT. He has put into this Scripture an exact opposite meaning from its plain and simple meaning, WHEN WE READ IT ALL. He quoted only the PART of it he could twist and misapply! What WAS Jesus saying?

Read it ALL:

Jesus was telling His disciples, the night of His last Passover, just before He was seized to be crucified:

"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 ... Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth ... A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go unto the Father but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day YE SHALL ASK ME NOTHING. Verily, verily, I say unto you, WHATSOEVER YE SHALL ASK THE FATHER IN MY NAME, HE will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:7,13,20,22-24.)

NOTICE IT! Jesus' disciples had been with Him almost day and night for three and a half years. During that time they had asked HIM, direct, many things. Was that asking "in His name?" He said that up until then they had asked NOTHING IN HIS NAME. But you can find countless Scriptures recording instances when they asked HIM, DIRECT, many things.

Asking Jesus DIRECT

Notice just a few examples of how, prior to this time, Jesus disciples had asked HIM, direct, many things:

"And HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must come first? And Jesus answered and said unto them ..." (Mat. 17:10.) But this was not asking IN HIS NAME, because later, Jesus said: "Hitherto ye have asked no thing in my name" (John 16:24). So when "His disciples ASKED HIM," they were not asking "in His name."

"And when He was entered into the house from the people, HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM ..." (Mark 7:17). ASKING "in His name" did not mean asking HIM direct here, because they DID ASK HIM, but they had not, as yet, asked "in His name!"

"And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here ..." (Mark 9:5). Peter addressed Christ direct -- but speaking to Him direct was NOT SPEAKING IN HIS NAME!

"And when He was come into the house, HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM privately," (Mark 9:28). But they did not ask "in His name."

"And in the house HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM AGAIN ..." (Mark 10:10). Asking HIM direct was not "asking in His name."

"Peter and James and John and Andrew ASKED HIM PRIVATELY ..." (Mark 13:3). But they did not ask "in His name."

Asking HIM, then -- praying to, or speaking to HIM, is NOT "asking IN HIS NAME!" For plainly, Jesus said in John 16:24, that all these many times they had asked things of HIM, direct, in person, was NOT asking "IN HIS NAME!" "Hitherto," He said, "ye have asked nothing in MY NAME."

Now Jesus had, previously, instructed them to address their prayers to THE FATHER, as I have shown above. But He had NOT, previously, instructed them to ask IN HIS NAME, or by HIS AUTHORITY, or as having power of attorney to ask FOR Him, in His place. But now He did authorize them to ask IN HIS NAME.

And of WHOM did He instruct them to ask IN HIS NAME?

"Whatsoever ye shall ask THE FATHER IN MY NAME, HE will give it you," instructed Jesus (Verse 23).

WHY DID THIS DISSENTER QUOTE ONLY VERSE 24, AND PUT AN OPPOSITE MEANING INTO IT, AND OMIT VERSE 23, WHICH PLACES A MEANING ON VERSE 24 EXACTLY OPPOSITE TO THIS MAN'S ARGUMENT?

Did he not know verse 23 was there? Did he omit it purposely?

In this Scripture -- Jesus' parting Message to His disciples before His crucifixion, HE DID NOT

CHANGE His previous command to pray to THE FATHER. He REPEATED IT!

But NOW He gave them authority to ask IN HIS NAME. There is POWER in the name of Christ! His name carries AUTHORITY. He assured them that when they prayed to THE FATHER, by this AUTHORITY of HIS NAME, the Father would give them what they asked!

Notice further! Did Jesus say here, "Do not pray any longer to THE FATHER -- but from now on pray only to ME direct? No!! Just the opposite! He said -- NOTE IT -- "in that day" -- after His resurrection -- after He has gone from them, and to the Father's throne in heaven -- "ye shall ask ME NOTHING!"

Until then, they had asked Him many things continually. But now -- in OUR DAY TODAY -- He said to ask HIM NOTHING, but to ask THE FATHER, IN HIS NAME!

The words IN HIS NAME do not tell US WHOM to ask. They tell us How to ask -- that is, by Christ's authority. Jesus told WHO to ask. He commanded "ASK THE FATHER!"

Christ's Command to US

This accuser states, falsely: "Jesus Christ AUTHORIZED A CHANGE in the manner of prayer He had taught, just before He was crucified."

He quoted -- or rather MISquoted -- John 16:24. It is shown above, so plainly a little child can see, that Jesus did not authorize any change but rather confirmed what He had taught, now merely adding authority to ask IN HIS NAME.

EVERYTHING Jesus taught and commanded His disciples is a teaching and command for us today!

AFTER His resurrection, just before ascending to heaven, Jesus' first spoken COMMAND was: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in(to) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: TEACHING THEM to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I have commanded you." (Mat. 28:19-20).

Jesus had taught and commanded THEM TO PRAY TO THE FATHER. He had authorized them to address the FATHER IN HIS NAME. Now, just before parting from them in person, He commanded them to go into all the world -- teaching those whom they baptized to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER He had commanded them. He had commanded them to address their prayers to THE FATHER. So now they were to teach ALL CONVERTS, likewise, to pray TO GOD THE FATHER.

Meaning of "in Jesus' Name"

This man argues that the words "IN JESUS' NAME" -- or, as Christ Himself instructed us, in praying to the Father, to do it "IN MY NAME" -- does not mean by His authority -- by His instruction or permission -- but, rather, he argues that to ask "IN JESUS' NAME" is TO ASK JESUS HIMSELF

DIRECTLY.

Now let us look at a few Scriptures and see how ridiculous this contention is.

Notice Jeremiah 14:14: "Then the LORD said unto me, the prophets prophesy lies in my name: ..." If "IN MY NAME" means "ask ME," then these false prophets were prophesying LIES DIRECT TO THE LORD! Were these false prophets preaching their lies TO THE ETERNAL, trying to mislead and deceive HIM? How foolish! He says, same verse: "... they prophesy UNTO YOU a false vision." They were addressing, NOT the Eternal, but the PEOPLE. But HOW? "IN CHRIST'S NAME" for He is the "LORD" spoken of in this verse. Of course they CLAIMED TO PREACH BY HIS AUTHORITY, but they were lying. He had not sent them. The very fact that the context shows The ETERNAL (Christ) had not sent them, and that they were LYING when they claimed to be speaking "IN HIS NAME" shows definitely and positively and finally that they CLAIMED to speak by HIS AUTHORITY -- only they were lying. "IN MY NAME," here, then, means "BY MY AUTHORITY!" Consider the 23rd chapter of Jeremiah. It pronounces woes on the false preachers. It

is a PROPHECY for OUR DAY, NOW! The Eternal tells us, verse 16, not to listen to the preachers who flatter their congregations, to inflate their congregations' vanity, speaking THEIR OWN ideas, but NOT the Word of the Eternal. Yet they CLAIMED to be representing Christ.

"They say ... The Eternal hath said ..."-- that is, that they are sent BY Christ, as His representative, with His words, and therefore BY HIS AUTHORITY. But God says (verse 16): "... they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Eternal." They were lying about representing Christ -- speaking FOR Him -- by His authority.

"I have NOT sent these prophets," (preachers), says Christ (Verse 21). Yet they CLAIMED to speak BY HIS AUTHORITY: "I have heard what the prophets said," says the Eternal (verse 25), "that prophesy LIES IN MY NAME."

Here again, "IN MY NAME" means "as my authorized representative," or "by my authority." If it means, as this deceived couple argue, "prophesy to or address ME direct," then you read into it the ridiculously foolish meaning of these false preachers preaching lies TO CHRIST DIRECT -- but NOT to the people!

Notice Jeremiah 26:9: "Why hast thou prophesied IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, saying ..." Jeremiah was not prophesying TO THE LORD DIRECT. He was not speaking to CHRIST. Christ (The Eternal) had spoken TO HIM, and Jeremiah had spoken Christ's words, as CHRIST AUTHORIZED, TO THE PEOPLE! Here, so plainly all can see, "IN THE NAME OF the LORD" means by the LORD'S authority -- by His permission -- by His command. It does not mean TO the LORD. Jeremiah spoke TO the people. Need we go further?

Jeremiah continued to warn these people: "... for of a truth THE LORD HATH SENT me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken TO US IN THE NAME OF THE

LORD OUR GOD." (Verses 15-16.)

Jeremiah did not speak TO the Eternal -- he spoke TO the people. But the Eternal sent him. The Eternal authorized him to address his speech to the people, and speaking by this authority is plainly designated as speaking to them "IN THE NAME OF THE LORD." Speaking "in His name" is NOT speaking TO Christ -- but BY HIS AUTHORITY!

Remember the disciples had addressed many questions to Jesus direct. Yet He said, "Hitherto have ye asked NOTHING IN MY NAME." (John 16:24.) Hitherto they had asked HIM, direct, on their OWN initiative -- NOT by Jesus' direction or authority -- but by their own. But, after He left them and ascended to heaven, "ye shall ask ME nothing ... Whatsoever ye shall ask THE FATHER IN MY NAME, HE will give it you." (Verse 23.) He was here and now AUTHORIZING them to ask IN HIS NAME, but commanding them TO address their prayer to THE FATHER.

Nothing could be plainer.

Apostles Prayed to the FATHER

Now just one or two points more, and we shall have an END to these nonsensical and perverted arguments against Christ's commands. This man says, as quoted above, that no prayers were addressed to the Father after the Four Gospels -- that is, as recorded in the Book of Acts, and other Books of the New testament following. He even had the audacity to quote Acts 4:24, 29, and say they were praying to Jesus, and NOT to the Father!

Peter and John had been put in prison overnight, and threatened. "And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that they lifted up their voice to GOD with one accord and said, Lord, thou art GOD ..." (Acts 4:23-24).

Now TO WHOM were they praying? This dissenter says that "God" sometimes means Christ -- which is true but apparently does not know that the word "Lord" also sometimes refers to THE FATHER, as it does here!

Let's read on. It becomes very PLAIN as TO WHOM they are praying:

"For of a truth against THY HOLY CHILD JESUS, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles ..." etc. (Verse 27).

Jesus is called the holy CHILD of the One to whom they were praying. Jesus was the child of GOD THE FATHER. SO they were praying to the FATHER, whom, they said, "THOU hast anointed." They were praying to the One who had anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit. The FATHER anointed Jesus (Mat. 3:17; Mark 1:10-11). Therefore they were addressing this prayer TO THE FATHER!

Now notice verses 29-30. The prayer continues: "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants ... that signs and wonders may be done BY THE NAME OF THY HOLY

CHILD JESUS."

Again, they were addressing their prayer to THE FATHER of Jesus. They were NOT asking that signs and wonders might be done TO Jesus direct -- but that they might be done "BY THE NAME" of God's Son, Jesus -- BY HIS AUTHORITY!

Quoting Acts 4:24 this man admits: "Portions of this prayer appear to be spoken to the Father." Then why contradict himself, saying: "Why are there no prayers recorded after the Gospels ... with any indication that the prayer is being addressed to the Father?"

Isn't it absurd that a man with a college education, as this man claims to have, would claim that Jesus CHANGED, when He says He has never changed, and that Christ did away with His own teachings and commands, just before His death -- and that he would argue that "in Jesus name" means TO Jesus; and that no prayers were addressed to the FATHER, after the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John?

Jesus thanked God that these truths are revealed unto BABES, and hidden from the wise and prudent. A college education IN THIS WORLD'S COLLEGES can be a very great HANDICAP, rather than a help. Still, ANYONE can understand the TRUTH whose heart is willing!

Access to the Father

This man would deny God's own children access to their heavenly FATHER. But what IS the very WAY of God, by which we are converted? Our SINS have cut us off from God (Isa. 59:1-2). Sin is the transgression of the LAW. There is ONE Lawgiver -- God the FATHER (Jas. 4:12). Sin cuts us off from the FATHER. When we repent of sin, our repentance is toward God the FATHER (Acts 20:21). But saving FAITH is toward Christ (same verse). When we repent, and receive Christ as Lord and MASTER, and are baptized as the symbol of our FAITH toward Christ, then what happens? The blood of Christ RECONCILES US to the FATHER (Rom. 5:10).

And, once reconciled to the FATHER, He puts HIS SPIRIT into us, BEGETTING us as HIS BEGOTTEN CHILDREN. We are not begotten by CHRIST to become sons of Christ. Jesus is our elder Brother -- the first-born of many BRETHREN. To be reconciled to the Father for transgression of HIS Law is to have ACCESS direct to HIM.

Now notice: "For through HIM (Christ) we both (Jew and Gentile) HAVE ACCESS by one Spirit UNTO THE FATHER." (Eph. 2:18).

Christ has purchased for us and given us direct access to the Father! He has AUTHORIZED us to go direct to the Father in PRAYER. Notice again: "... according to the eternal purpose which He (the Father) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness AND ACCESS with confidence by the faith of Him our Lord Jesus Christ ... that He would grant you, according to the riches of His Glory, to be strengthened ..." (Eph. 3:11-16). The Apostle Paul bowed his knees (both knees) in prayer direct to THE FATHER!

Why did this man say no prayers were addressed to the Father after the Four Gospels?

COL. 1:3: We give thanks to God and the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, PRAYING always for you." WHY does this man deny this Scripture?

EPH. 5:20: "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the FATHER IN THE NAME OF our Lord Jesus Christ." Praying TO the FATHER. Yet by authority from Christ, who gives us access to the Father.

In 51-52 A.D. Paul and Timothy gave thanks to God the Father (I Thes. 1:1-2).

We are to call on God the FATHER (I Peter 1:17).

COL. 1:12-13: "Giving thanks unto the FATHER ... who hath ... delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."

If we have the Holy Spirit, "we cry (pray) Abba, FATHER" (Rom. 8:15) as Jesus prayed (Mark 14:36).

Our High Priest

Finally, what about Christ as our High Priest?

WHY is Jesus Christ, the living HEAD of our Church, now appearing before God the Father, at God's right hand? He is there to make intercession for us.

"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto GOD by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25). Yes, Jesus Christ is able to save those WHO COME TO GOD THE FATHER -- and we have been given access to come to the Father IN PRAYER -- BY Christ. We cannot approach the Father by our own merits. We have none. Christ is the door -- the way. One does not go TO a door and STOP. He goes on THROUGH the door. Christ gives us access to GOD. And He INTERCEDES with God FOR US.

This intercession of our blessed HIGH PRIEST DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE PRAY TO CHRIST AND THAT HE THEN CARRIES OUR REQUEST TO THE FATHER.

Notice Scriptural proof of this: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for WE KNOW NOT what we should pray for as we ought: but THE SPIRIT ITSELF MAKETH INTERCESSION for us example of Christians praying TO the Holy Spirit. Here is a plain example of Christians NOT KNOWING WHAT TO PRAY FOR -- but God's Holy Spirit intercedes for them. They do not pray TO the Spirit, and then the Spirit transmit their request to God; but rather, the Spirit ITSELF moves upon God for that which they did NOT ask, since they did not know WHAT to ask!

In like manner, we have access direct to the Father, to pray direct to Him by CHRIST'S PERMISSION. Christ, our High Priest at the Father's side, ALSO petitions the Father for us --

offering HIS SACRIFICE in lieu of our unworthiness.

Elijah made intercession to God AGAINST Israel (Rom. 11:2). This was not acting as a go-between to transmit THEIR Prayers to God. Paul taught that we HUMANS should make intercession for ALL MEN (I Tim. 2:1).

Our FELLOWSHIP

Many of our brethren HUNGER for the FELLOWSHIP of other brethren. They long to be able to TALK WITH others of like mind and the same Spirit.

But OUR FELLOWSHIP is first of all "with the FATHER, and with the Son Jesus Christ." (I John 1:3).

HOW do we have FELLOWSHIP? By meeting with -- conversing with!

When we PRAY to the Father, and/or to Christ, we are speaking to them. When we read and study the Bible, they are talking to us. The Bible is the Word of GOD. Although Jesus is the WORD -- the direct author of the Bible -- yet He spoke only as the FATHER commanded Him. So the Bible is the WORD to US from both the FATHER and the SON.

When Jesus Christ, our Saviour, High Priest and Lord, reconciles us to the FATHER -- gives us direct access to the Father, we have the great HONOR, paid for by Christ's very life which He gave, to speak directly to the Father.

But our fellowship is also with Jesus Christ, God's divine SON. Christ is now on the Father's throne with Him, at His right hand as our High priest. We have fellowship with Jesus Christ ALSO.

WE DO, WE MAY, WE SHOULD, ALSO PRAY TO JESUS CHRIST! YET THE teaching and examples of the Bible place overwhelming main emphasis on praying to the Father.

God's Church does not forbid any to pray to Christ. It is not so much a matter of to WHICH Person we are to pray. We do not condemn this couple for praying to Christ. Rather, they condemn God's Church for praying to the Father. But we DO SAY that ONE WHO HAS NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER BY PRAYER IS CUT OFF FROM GOD!

Our accuser quoted Scriptures to show that the apostles (Acts 1:24-25) prayed direct to Jesus to show them, by lot, which of HIS DISCIPLES who had followed with them in Jesus' personal ministry He had chosen to take Judas' place. Of course! And so should God's ministers of today, under the same circumstances! Jesus had taught these candidates PERSONALLY. God gave Him this ministry personally. Jesus is GOD -- and the FATHER is God. Jesus is worthy of our worship -- and that of angels! But the FATHER is the HEAD even of Jesus!

This dissenting couple accuse God's Church of by-passing, and insulting JESUS. We do neither -- we OBEY HIM, and honor Him in so doing. It is rather THEY who are by-passing and ignoring THE

FATHER. We are to WORSHIP GOD, as well as Christ. They quote Acts 7:59-60, where Stephen called out to Jesus Christ. God's Church knows that, and always has taught it!

This couple falsely accuse God's Church of putting them out for no more than "calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." That is a deliberate falsehood and effort to discredit God's Church and draw a following after themselves. We TEACH all

members to "CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST." Since all members do, how absurd would it be to put two supposed members out for doing what we teach should be done?

They were put out for the wrong spirit they allowed to possess them, and for false doctrines, and for having disfellowshipped themselves from THE FATHER, thereby cutting themselves off from God, His fellowship, and ours.

II THES. 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us."

Here, by AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST is a command for all members of God's Church to WITHDRAW FROM this couple who walk thus disorderly, and not after GOD'S true tradition they did receive from us. These Scriptures have been gone into with this couple personally, in long sessions, and they rejected them and set out to mislead God's people and discredit God's Church.

"If there came any unto you, and bring not this doctrine (of Christ and His Church) receive him not into your house." (II John 10).

Let us realize that this is not a harsh or unkind command. It is God's punishment of them, and His mercy and protection for His Church. God punishes every son whom He loves. To be CUT OFF FROM GOD is the most severe curse that can come to any person or people. To condone such a crime and make light of it by remaining in the friendship and fellowship of those who commit it is to 1) HARM AND INJURE THEM, by encouraging them to be deceived into thinking they do right; and 2) to cut ourselves off from God -- for whoever even bids them God speed is PARTAKER of their evil deeds. If we truly LOVE these people, and also LOVE GOD, we will do as God says.

A Grave DANGER!

This totally unscriptural doctrine, based on erroneous human reason, promulgated by this couple is a satanic doctrine of great DANGER!

What is the essence of all pagan doctrines? How did Satan deceive the world with heathen doctrines? The ancient pagans KNEW there was one SUPREME GOD and FATHER over ALL. But, like this misguided couple, they reasoned that HE WAS UNAPPROACHABLE! He was totally INACCESSIBLE! They had to approach only a go-between -- a lesser god. Satan represented his demons as demi-gods, to whom people should address their prayers. THAT IS THE WAY THE IDEA OF THE MANY GODS of the pagans originated. The Roman Catholics make Mary such an

intermediary. THEY PRAY TO HER! Also to dead "saints."

To turn Jesus Christ into such a demigod IS HERESY, and AN INSULT to Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ paid THE SUPREME PENALTY for us -- WHY? To purchase for us ACCESS DIRECT TO GOD the Supreme FATHER over all! To DENY that access is to DENY the very blood of Jesus Christ! Far from honoring Christ, this erring couple, in the smug conceit of their own supposed intellectual human reasoning, are DENYING Him -- disobeying Him -- insulting Him!

Jesus Christ, who is very GOD, is also our ELDER BROTHER! He made it possible for us to have access to the Father so that we might be begotten by the FATHER. We are not begotten by our elder BROTHER. A brother does not beget and sire brothers! We are begotten by our FATHER into HIS FAMILY.

My sons and daughters have always had a FAMILY RELATIONSHIP with, and full access to, ME. All of us who are God's begotten children have ACCESS to GOD THE FATHER. And, we also have access to our Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, and to our still human but begotten brothers and sisters! It is a WONDERFUL family relationship!

Yes, PRAISE GOD for it! We have access direct to the FATHER -- and also to Jesus Christ! Many times DAILY we may go into intimate COMMUNION with BOTH God and Christ -- our FATHER and our BROTHER! Our GOD and our SAVIOUR! HOW WONDERFUL to really come to KNOW the great supreme GOD! How grateful to Jesus we should be for making this blessed privilege possible! The MOST JOYOUS thing in life is to have this COMMUNION -- this close and intimate FELLOWSHIP with BOTH the FATHER and Christ the SON!

God's Church certainly does not forbid members to commune with and pray to Christ Jesus -- but neither must we leave UNDONE the communion and fellowship with and prayers to THE FATHER, who is the HEAD of Christ, and of all that is!