

RETURN TO BEING THE CHURCH

“Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?” (Matt. 15:3)

When the Lord Jesus walked the earth, His chief opposition came from the two leading religious parties of the day: the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees added to the sacred Scriptures. The error of the Sadducees moved in the opposite direction. They subtracted whole segments of Scripture.

History is repeating it self today. Contemporary Christianity has fallen into the errors of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

First, contemporary Christianity is guilty of the error of the Pharisees. That is, it has added a raft of humanly devised traditions that have suppressed the living breathing, functional had ship of Jesus Christ in His church. Second, in the tradition of the Sadducees, the great bulk of first century practices have been removed from the Christian landscape.

The church in the first century was an organic entity. It was a living, breathing organism that expressed itself far differently from the institutional church today. And that expression revealed Jesus Christ on this planet through His every-member functioning body. The practices of the first century church were the natural and spontaneous expression of the divine life indwelt in the early Christians. And those practices were solidly grounded in the timeless principles and teachings of the New Testament. By contrast, a great number of practices in many contemporary churches are in conflict with those biblical principles and teachings.

Deconstructing the Institutional Church

There is a way to deconstruct the institutional hierarchy and other biblical “environmental” problems that are so common in Christian churches today. While some churches have decent teachings, more often than not their environment is debilitating to the point where Christians cannot properly carry out what they have learned. Deconstructing the institutional church can be accomplished by a congregation if most Christians there are set on following the truth. Everyone first needs to realize that the current way most churches are run today is based on an assumption of things nowhere to be found in the Bible. Secondly the leadership must create a model that more closely resembles the first century church. Finally, everyone must be willing to step out of their ‘comfort zone’, from the way we have always *done* church and except the truth that we *are* the church.