

Dangers of a Large Church

The first thing that I would like to draw the attention of the reader to right at the beginning of this article is this piece of scripture **Matthew 16: 17-18**. **And Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you Simon, son of John, because flesh and blood has not revealed this thing to you, but My Father which is in heaven. And I also say to you** (meaning the other disciples present) **that you are peter** (small `p` because the word means a `little stone`) **and upon this Rock** (capital `R` because Christ is referring to Himself) **I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it`**. Now this is a part of scripture which the Roman catholic church love to use to try to justify their assertion that the apostle Peter had the `primacy` over all the other apostles. **But it is not so!** To clarify, when Jesus states `And I also say to you`, the `you` being referred to here is not just Peter but also the rest of the apostles that were present, and when Jesus goes on to say, `you are peter`, the `peter` referred to should be spelt with a lower case `p` because it is not the name of the apostle Peter that is being mentioned here but it means a `little stone`, (Stones concordance ref. 4074) and the `you` referred to is once again a reference to Jesus` apostles, and when Jesus goes on further to say `and upon this Rock I will build My church`, the word `Rock` should be spelt with a capital `R` because the `Rock` that Jesus is referring to is none other than Himself. And so what does all this leave us with? Well, it leaves us with the `Rock` foundation upon which all the other littles `stones` are *individually* placed in order to build up the church. The key word here is *individually*, for although forming one large, overall structure, it does not mean that that structure, that church, is to be found in any one place and one place only, because if that were to be the case then it would mean that the *biggest* church of God, with the *biggest* congregation would make up *the* end-time church, and this according to the biblical scriptures is most definitely not the case. *In fact, it is just the opposite!*

I wonder how many people reading this article have experienced the comforting and re-assuring embrace of a large, seemingly well organized and disciplined church? For myself I can say that I have not, which I can now see is a blessing, why? Well because I, along with others like myself, am in a position to perhaps recognize and see more clearly the effects on the bretheren who belong to such large, organizational churches as opposed to the little `home` churches comprising of small groups of Christians that all of the true churches of God have now become *or are yet to become*. I know that it is often a struggle for our small church groups to `make ends meet`, to find the money to do the work as we would like to have it done. But we manage, and having to struggle to do so, we find ourselves having to rely more and more upon the grace of our Lord God to help us, and He does, He has never let us down. We have had to have the faith to depend on Him and on Him alone, and not from the income from the donations of large and relatively prosperous congregations. We do not have capacious cool in summer warm in winter air conditioned meeting halls or buildings enjoyed by the larger church congregations. We don`t have the constant, reliable income in tithes and donations also enjoyed by the large congregational, `organized` churches. We don`t experience the complacency inducing, everything is alright with my world attitude brought on by the `my neighbour is my fellow churchgoer` situation that so often arises when most of the area in which a person lives comprises mainly of members of the same large church who all keep an eye on each other for good (or for bad). We don`t have the luxury of being able to `phone around the bretheren if we need a job of work doing. We don`t have access to a large `pool` of church people and elders to

consult if for example we find that we have a possibly life changing decision to make, we have to rely on the Lord God to help us. We do not have the day to day contact with like-minded brethren or the organized weekly social events, day trips, cook-outs, barbeques etc. We don't have the comforting re-assurance of knowing that we don't need to feel forgotten, isolated, lonely or insecure because there is always somebody close at hand for us to call on if we feel that we need them. No, we don't live that kind of life. So, what is wrong with having that kind of life??? What can possibly be wrong with all of those seemingly good things that many of these large church congregations share that I have so far appeared to have put down? Well, at face value nothing. Nothing except for this, it is out of its' time, it is all a bit too soon, it is all a bit too cosy and reassuringly comfortable in its' easy seduction. Throughout the pages of the bible are to be found examples of how the Lord God has constantly removed His chosen people from their 'comfort zones'. We who aspire to be true Christians are not supposed to have made a life for ourselves upon this earth that we are materially satisfied with. True Christian churches are not yet ready to receive this sort of comfort from within themselves while all around them the rest of the world including fellow Christians find the going hard and oftentimes desperate and miserable. And the reasons why we as true, aspiring Christians should not be having a comfortable, self-satisfied life? Well for one, it is hardly character building, what kind of people should we imagine that these large, domineering church organizations are churning out year after year? They may well, for the most part, be respectful and decent, clean and tidy and probably able to cope with whatever small part of the big, wide world that they have been allowed to be exposed to. But outside of their comfort zone, are they able to make unaided decisions of importance and are they able to cope with accepting the responsibility and the blame when any of their decisions go disastrously wrong?, as they most certainly will. But the big question must be, how willing and able are they in their ability to defend the truth of the word of God when all the rest of their fellow church-goers disagree with that truth? Now that really is the big question, for I wonder how many of these Christian people, safe in the cocoon of their big wrap-around churches are in fact simply reluctant cowards when it comes to having to face up to the rest of their church brethren when their conscience has prompted them to confront those brethren with a hitherto unacknowledged or accepted biblical truth that they themselves, deep down, have come to believe in? After all, they have so much materially to put into jeopardy by doing such a thing, they dare not disagree with the church 'party line' or its' doctrines for fear of being laughed at or worse still being dis-fellowshipped resulting in the ruination of their cosy, secure little world. Now I'm not talking about losing just a few good friends here, for the majority it would mean losing their whole way of life. Their work life would become a misery because they would find it impossible to happily co-exist with their workmates most of whom would be members of the same church, (including the boss) their children would probably be singled out at their school if still allowed to attend their school, and their social life would become one of exclusion and snide remarks. Eventually it would result in having to sell up and move out of their church dominated community in which many would have lived for most of their adult lives. Yes folks, there's no hatred to beat a self-righteous hatred, and all because somebody was willing to stand up for the truth of the word of God! Concerning material comforts, I always remember these words of a Bob Dylan song: 'When you got nothing, you got nothing to lose.' But more edifying and of more significance to us are words from biblical scripture, so let's have a read from the book of **Matthew 8: 20**. 'And Jesus says to him, **The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests: but the Son of man has no place to lay His head.**' And now from the book of **Luke 12: 22-31**. 'And Jesus said to His disciples, **Therefore I**

say to you take no thought for your life or for what you shall eat, neither for what clothes you will wear. Because life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens for they neither sow nor reap, they don't have storehouses or barns, but it is God who feeds them: so how much more of worth are you than the fowls? And which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? If you then cannot do this least of things then why are you anxious about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow, they do not work, they do not spin, and yet I tell you that Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. If God then so clothes the grass, which today is in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the fire: how much more do you suppose that He will clothe you, Oh you of little faith. Do not look for what you shall eat or for what you shall drink, and do not be doubtful about such things. For all of these things do the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you have need of these things. You should rather be looking for the kingdom of God and then all of these other things will be given to you.` We can begin to understand how such all-embracing, large, financially secure, care-free church organizations are dangerous in that they produce in an individual not only an insular personality but also a spiritually weak one as well. In all of these large churches if a member does not `tow the official line` of that particular church, if they do not follow it to the letter, then that member understands that their church will let them know in no uncertain terms that they are treading on very unstable and rocky ground indeed. As I have already stated in this article, there is a no more enduring hatred and malice than a self-righteous hatred and malice. It is only comparable, I think, to the enmity which exists between a divorced couple who once so deeply loved and trusted in each other but now that the marriage has broken down, one or both parties has only hatred and contempt in their heart for the other. There can be no going back into that relationship because all earnest love and expectation has been destroyed, and this I suspect is the haunting fear that helps to keep silent those members of these large, organized churches who have begun to see the truth about what their church is really about but dare not utter a word of it to another member or `friend` in case they are reported to an elder or a minister, and they then find themselves in the process of being forcibly separated from *all* of their friends and even their family. What a way to be expected to live your life in Christ! in bondage to, and emotionally and spiritually kept prisoner by the workings of a lie, because deep down, that is what it is! What is it that sets every genuine Christian free? Let's turn to the biblical scriptures to find out, we'll read **John 8: 31-32.** `Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, If you continue in My word, then you are indeed My disciples, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free`. Yes, these large congregational churches are held together by fear and lies, but not *just* lies and lies alone, because that would be too obvious. Satan does not work that way, he is subtle, just one little appropriate lie in amongst a whole bunch of truth can be enough to tip the balance in favour of the lie, and the entire church eventually becoming corrupt. History backs up that fact, because many large and wealthy church organizations that were once perceived to be pursuing the truth have now ceased to exist in their original form having been forsaken by all of their true Christian bretheren, and they now attract only those who want to be spoon-fed and led by the nose, much like any other members of a so-called `christian` church. The power that the lie has, is generated and strengthened by the fear of the member(s) of any given church organization to freely speak of a hitherto unrealized or undiscovered scriptural truth or what any one member might consider to be the truth but dare not voice their opinion about it either in private or in open debate. But as we know, the truth will never fail any test, whereas the lie will always fail and take with it all those who desperately cling to it. It must be understood that just knowing the truth will not set a person free, they have to express it and live it! and it is an

unfortunate fact that many people in the large congregational churches have merely become silent witnesses to the truth, doubting their very motives for being where they are but still `sticking with it` because they imagine that there is no decent alternative. Having doubt about anything and not eventually acting upon it leaves a person double minded, and this is not a state in which a true Christian should allow themselves to be in, let`s read from the book of **James 1: 6-8.** `But let him ask in faith, not doubting. For he that doubts is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that person imagine that He will receive anything (that is anything asked for) from the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all of his ways`. Many congregation members in these large churches may have been suppressing a biblical truth that they have recognized and come to believe in for many years but they are just too frightened to mention it to, or even try to discuss it with a fellow church-goer in case they are reported for `stepping out of line` or for having ideas `contrary to the recognized beliefs of the church`, never mind that it is possibly an otherwise overlooked or undiscovered truth that is at stake here. The truth according to these large churches, would seem to have its` limitations, and that once these are reached then there is no more room for any more of it or if per chance there is, then it has to be `sanctified` by church committee. After all, how dare, in the church`s view, an individual have and refuse to let go of an unrecognized, an unofficial, and an `unsanctified` biblical truth of their own discovery, even though it can be backed up by indisputable scriptural fact! Let`s have a read of some cautionary words spoken by Jesus Christ, **Matthew 15: 14.** `Leave them alone, because they are blind leaders of the blind. Therefore if the blind are leading the blind, then both shall fall into the ditch`. Control, dear reader, it is all about control, (and ultimately cash income!) if any church has control over a person to the extent that these large churches have then that church can be assured of a nice, fat, steady income. Well, as far as I and many other true Christians are concerned, these big church organizations can have their miserable thirty pieces of silver, or even thirty *billion* pieces of silver, in fact they can have all of the silver and all of the gold and all of the precious stones in the world. They can own every piece of `precious` art and every grand palace and all of the thousands of acres of expensive real estate that their hearts desire, yes they can have it all right now and enjoy it for whatever remains of their allotted, miserable three score years and ten. They have their reward. But it will never, never in the whole of eternity be as precious and as life-giving and as honourable as the truth and the acknowledgement by an individual of the truth. Let`s read **Luke 6: 22-23.** `Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man`s sake. You shall rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward shall be great in heaven, because in like manner their fathers so treated the prophets`.

The truth inculcates within a person a noble and an upright and courageous, loving spirit, all the things which are to be found lacking in an individual who has given their very future existence both in this life and the next, over into the hands of a church organization which has become set and stagnant within its` own limitations created by its` own doctrines and limited truth instead of growing year on year with each new revelation given from the very word of God! It is only the Lord God Almighty who has the right to state, quote: `I change not`, (Malachi 3: 6.) and why is this so? It is because He, and only He, has reached the state of utter perfection, any change therefore would only be a negative attribute, a backwards step, whereas we poor, wretched humans are nowhere near perfection, we have plenty of room for improvement and we will not improve without constant, positive change. We should constantly be striving to get closer and closer to righteous perfection and not just try for a while and then decide that that is

enough and then go and sit contentedly in the bosom of a large church congregation and think to ourselves `I have arrived, I am now ready to be spiritually drip-fed by somebody else's limited understanding of the word of God`. Well these people have `arrived`, but they should realise that it is only at a service station on their long journey in this life. Many of us have been there, did what we had to do and then moved on a lot further down life's long road, years ago. These large churches have become like the foolish virgins whose spiritual oil has run out, and so when the dark and dangerous night comes and they have to make ready to flee from the perils that threaten them and they have no `oil` for their lamps they will not be able to organize their escape because they will not be able to see the correct way that they should go. They will look about for comfort and aid from one another within their church but will soon realize that everybody is only concerned for their own and their immediate family's safety because such has become the character of the people who make up these large hierarchical church congregations. They have become so insular in some cases that they do not even travel beyond boundaries set by their churches or listen to world news. As I stated earlier in this article, all of the comfortable and pleasant lifestyles that many of these large church congregations enjoy are all too soon to be experiencing, they are `out of time`. Now I'm not suggesting that all present day Christians should be homeless and dressed in filthy rags whilst suffering the ravages of hunger and disease but equally neither should any of us have settled comfortably and contentedly back on our lees, happy with our lot. Let's have a read of some scriptures, **Zephania 1: 12**. `And it will come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and I will punish the men who have settled on their lees, those that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good and neither will He do evil`. (He won't bother us) and now the words of Jesus Christ in **John 12: 25-26**. `He that loves his life shall lose it, and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. If any man serve Me then let him follow Me, and where I am there also shall My servant be, if any man serve Me, then it is he who my Father will honour`. Now let's read from the book of Hebrews where the apostle Paul is describing what some of the God-fearing saints of past generations had willingly suffered for their faith, **Hebrews 11: 36-38**. `And others had suffered the trial of cruel mockings and whippings and of being chained and thrown into prison. They were stoned, sawn in two, they were tempted, slain with the sword, they wandered about clothed in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented. (Of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts and in the mountains, and sheltered in dens and caves of the earth`. and **Hebrews 12: 11**. `Now suffering for the present seems not to be so joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have undergone it and are fashioned thereby.` And now we'll read **1 Timothy 6: 5-8**. `Perverse contentions of men with corrupt minds and totally lacking of the truth suppose that (material) gain equates to Godliness, from such people withdraw yourself. Godliness with (spiritual) contentment is great gain. We brought nothing (material) into this world when we were born, and it is certain that we will take nothing (material) out of it when we die. Let us be content with the clothes that we have and the food that we eat.` Question; are we in our small `home` churches who in these latter days make up the Christian congregation of the one church of God, are we in any way in a closer relationship with our immediate and surrounding communities than those of the large, inwards looking church congregations? Do we as it were have more `street credibility` meaning a greater ability to interact and to empathise with our fellow citizens but without giving in to or partaking of their pagan and/or `christian` festivals and `holy` days and beliefs? Do we also experience the same effects of bad council or government decisions and the worries and hardships and unemployment that so often follow but without the awful fear of the

end results of such things, meaning that we can offer comfort to those who do? Do we experience the ever present lawlessness and misery suffered by the ordinary person on the street, and do we see the overwhelming despair of those who have not achieved the ambitions that they set out to achieve in this life? You bet we do! We do not have to *rely* on TV news reports and the daily newspapers for our life experiences, we have to live them. When we walk out of *our* front doors we have to walk amongst neighbours and people who maybe pagans, red-hot Roman catholics, atheists, anti-Christ, liars, thieves, drug users/dealers, even prostitutes and pimps, and `sunday keepers` who don't even bother to keep their `holy` day holy, for their churches have invented a `holy` day for themselves and most of their congregations then choose to ignore keeping it! On almost a daily basis we who live in the real world have to cope with the disrespectful, the loutish, the unashamed, the foul mouthed, the greedy, the arrogant, the pornographic, the sneering, the gossiping and the back-stabbing, the pig-ignorant, the unthankful, the lying and the criminal, and all of these people and many other types can all come under the heading of `the Godless`. (capital `G`) We of the small Christian churches of this world have to daily pit our wits against these sorts of people and resist the easy temptations of the flesh whilst at the same time remembering what we were once like (so that we don't become `superior` in our attitude towards others) but are now trying not to be, because we have buried such past behaviour through the washing away of our past sins by becoming baptized Christians. It's not easy, and it was never meant to be so, but it certainly builds our character and gives us a greater understanding of our fellow men out there in the world so cruelly ruled over by Satan the devil. This kind of daily contact and interaction with our fellow men is sadly missing from so many of the large congregational churches of God, there is no longer any testing of their faith because almost all temptation has been removed from them, they just muddle along altogether in one impenetrable `lump`. Let's read **1 Corinthians 5: 9-11**. `I wrote to you in one of my letters not to keep company with those who are fornicators. But I did not mean all the fornicators of this world, or likewise the covetous or extortionists or with idolators, because this would mean that you would have to shut yourselves away from the everyday people of this world. What I meant was that you should not keep company with a brother who is one of these things`. As Paul states in that scripture, by all means keep close company with the bretheren and choose your closest friends from them, but at the same time maintain interaction with everyday life and with everyday people whilst remembering who you have now become. Not many, if any at all small church members will be found walking out and about with a constant `church companion` as some large churches urge their members to do, we have to fend for ourselves and rely on the Lord for protection and guidance, thus allowing our faith, confidence and character to build and become stronger. Many of us in our small `home churches` cannot even get together on a regular basis to keep the Sabbath, we have to rely on the Lord to fellowship with at these times, and this is no bad thing! Some of our bretheren only manage to get together and to see each other once a year at the feast of Tabernacles whilst in some of the remoter parts of the world they cannot even manage to do this. And yet although we are apart we have `the tie that binds us`, our trust and faith in our Lord God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and if we know that if we have these Two dwelling in our hearts then we are never truly alone. In our small churches we are truly free because we do not have any church `minister` or `superior` constantly pulling at our `strings`, we have not allowed ourselves wittingly or unwittingly to become the puppets of a domineering, controlling, power-hungry church organization which rules by fear and mistrust in one another. So how can this be? how have we managed to become that which *we* are, considering that most of us once belonged to a large church? Well it is because we have with the Lord's good

guidance, been able to recognize the direction in which the particular church that we were in at the time, was heading. We finally came to the conclusion that all of the doubts and the misgivings that had been steadily growing within us over the years that we had about our large church were now irreconcilable with our understanding of the scriptures and of how the church should be behaving towards its` members. And we walked away! It`s as simple as that. And in the ensuing years we have grown in spiritual strength, we do not worry about `new` truths that any of our members might bring up, everything is up for discussion and scriptural cross-checking, nobody need be afraid to voice their opinion because we know that the Lord works on and in each and every one of us in a different way but at the same time keeping us together by the fact that He dwells in each and every one of us. We acknowledge the fact that it is only the Lord God Almighty who has the right to be the recipient of our worship, reverence and total obedience, and that if any man posing as a `minister` or a `pastor` or who has some other man-given title bestowed upon himself wants this sort of homage, then he best go and join one of the large congregational churches or one of the mainstream `christian` churches because he will not get or find anything that he desires from our small churches. There is of course a time when all of the `people of God` will be united and live in harmony with each other as one close-knit family, a time when love, law and order will no longer be mere words because they will be an integral, living part of each and every immortal soul because our Lord God Creator, Jesus Christ will be ruling over us. But those people of the large church congregations should be asking themselves, `is that time now?` And if they would ever stop and think and consider the question then they should of course immediately know the answer! They should realise that they should not now be creating for themselves a little safe haven of self-righteous peace and contentment, a place free of the harsh and cruel realities of this Satanically driven, Babylonian-system-manipulated world. By all means there should be places of refuge were the `world weary` can retreat to in order to `recharge` their spiritual `batteries`, but these places should not have become a permanent dwelling place for the self- satisfied, large-church-going `few`. A true Christian cannot hide him or herself away when all around the battle for our brother`s and sister`s souls is raging, none of us should be imagining that we can live happily in our perceived `forever` house in our perceived `forever` community when catastrophe is only the blink of an eye away. Let`s have a read of the words of Jesus Christ in **Matthew 10: 34-39**. `Do not think that I have come to bring peace to this earth, I did not come to bring peace, I came to bring a sword. For I have come to set a man at conflict with his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man`s enemies shall be those of his own family. He that loves his father or his mother more than he loves Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loves his son or his daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that does not take up his cross (be *prepared* to suffer in the same way as the Lord) but still follows after Me is not worthy of Me. He that finds his life (makes a nice, comfy life for himself) shall lose it, whilst he that loses his life (the chance for an easy life upon this earth) for My sake (because he does that which he knows is right in My sight) shall find it`. It is not within anybody`s remit (let alone a practising Christian) to try to establish a `heaven` for themselves and their bretheren upon this earth, this is the Lord`s responsibility to achieve and His alone in the time when He decides it is appropriate. And so the question must be posed and answered; `What is wrong with Christians wanting to be able to live in peace, mutual trust and safety, and for me to decry those who seem to have attained these things for themselves?` Well of course there is nothing wrong with wanting these beautiful things, but to go and `build` them for yourself and your little select band of followers whilst all around suffering and misery rule,

makes a mockery of and betrays true Christian principals and values, and make no mistake, *this does not go unnoticed by the rest of the world, `christian` or otherwise!* They do not see it as a blessing bestowed upon `God`s chosen people` but rather as a `I`m alright Jack` attitude and `hard luck to the rest of you`. Let`s have a scripture or two to think about, **Jeremiah 6: 10-14.** `To whom shall I speak and give warning so that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumsized and they cannot hear, the word of the Lord to them is a reproach and they have no delight in it. Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord, and I am weary of holding it in. I will pour it out on the children abroad and also upon the assembly of young men: for even the husband and the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days. And their houses shall be given over to others along with their fields and their wives: for I will stretch out My hand upon the inhabitants of the land, says the Lord. For from the least of them even to the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness: and from the prophet to the priest every one deals falsely. They have also superficially calmed the fears of My people by proclaiming, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.` And now **Romans 15: 1-3.** `We then who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to strengthen him. For even Jesus Christ did not do things just to please Himself, but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached you, fell on Me`. Let`s consider, there cannot be a large church congregation who all meet in their very nicely appointed and paid for assembly rooms or buildings unless the individuals who make up the congregation of that church have all begun to think and act as one, all `towing the official line` of the church, an official line which has nothing or very little to do with any unadulterated scriptural guidance or law, no, this is mostly man-made church tradition arrived at by twisting and perverting the scriptures to suit their needs. Let`s read **2 Peter 3: 15-16.** `And bear in mind that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given to him has written to you. As also in all of his letters writing in them of these things some of which are hard to understand and which they who are unlearned and unstable, twist and pervert as they also do to the other scriptures resulting in their own destruction`. If any one member of these large church congregations should begin to `dissent` and start to discover new scriptural truths for themselves and then begin to share these truths with other members, well, `anarchy` must surely result. Such organizations cannot afford to have a free thinking `radical` on the loose within their membership and this sort of person has in times past been dealt with very quickly and severely by the church `authorities`. The perceived `dissenter` if not instantly dismissed and dis-fellowshipped from the church, is usually `marked` and their accusers are all too quick and ready to quote this scripture from **Romans 16: 17-18.** `Now I beseech you bretheren, mark those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly, and by goodly words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting`. But what these controlling accusers fail to understand or refuse to acknowledge when they quote this scripture is that far from being a scripture that they should be wielding so freely as a weapon against others, it is a scripture that should be applied to and weided against every one of their hypocritical selves! After all, what Christian business have any of *them* to be dishing out punishments in accordance to their limited understanding of the holy scriptures when it it they who are the ones who are shutting out and denying any newly revealed truths from within those same scriptures. They are like the Jewish priests of old who, when hearing anything that upset their doctrines and man-made laws, immediately tore their clothing, covered their ears and dragged the `offender` off to be stoned to death or crucified. **Matthew 26: 64-66.** `Jesus says to

him, (the high priest) So you have said: Nevertheless I say to you, Hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, He has spoken blasphemy, what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard His blasphemy for yourselves. So what do you think? They (the chief priests and elders) answered and said, He is guilty of death`. Yes, those of authority in the church condemned Jesus Christ for speaking *any`new`* truth from the scriptures that upset their routine or offended them, in His time, and so it should come as no surprise that those in authority in a large church will condemn you and me for speaking any`new` found truth from the scriptures in our time.

Now, regarding large congregational churches, can we suppose that we can find in the scriptures anything that points to large Christian churches existing just before the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, or more importantly to us as Christians, one large end-time church? Well I must say that for my part I could not and I still cannot find anything within the scriptures that indicates that there is to be a large end-time Christian church. I did however find this scripture, let`s have a read of **Luke 12: 32.** *`Do not be afraid, little flock, because it is your Father`s good pleasure to give to you the kingdom`.* Notice that Jesus does *not* say in that scripture anything like *`Do not be afraid large, multitudinous flock`.* Now let`s read more words from Jesus Christ in **verses 51-53.** *`Do you think that I have come to bring peace upon this earth? I tell you that I have not, rather I have come to bring division. Because from hereafter there will be in one house divided, three against two and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law`.* The question must now be asked; *`Why all of this division`?* Is it maybe because some people somewhere within a household or within a church, have actually had the guts to stand up and been willing to argue the truth for the word of God, and not just sit back safe amongst the invisible silence of hundreds of other church congregation members and meekly and unquestioningly drink in the many words of their minister or *`pastor`?* Let`s have a read of a pertinent scripture or two concerning these ministers and their congregations, **John 9: 41.** *`Jesus said to them, If you were blind (genuinely ignorant of the truth having never heard it) then you would have no sin, but now that you have said, *`We see`*, (or we have all of the truth) therefore your sin remains`.* Now we`ll read from **John 12: 42-43.** *`Nevertheless amongst the chief rulers also, many believed on Him (Jesus) but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him (speak of their belief in Him) for fear that they should be expelled from the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than they loved the praise of God`.*

At this point in this article I think that it is time for me to mention the contentious issue that finally drove me to write it. The issue is the one of the denial by most of the true Christian, Sabbath day keeping, holy day observing churches of this world, of the veracity and truth of the Lord God`s holy, lunar calendar. For years now a small number of churches of God scattered across this earth, consisting of small congregations have been keeping (and experiencing the extra inconveniences of keeping), the Lord`s true lunar calendar, the Maranatha Ministry being one of these small churches. **Every professing true Christian should know of and be keeping this calendar because it is the calendar that the Lord God has instructed us to keep and it is the calendar that Jesus Christ observed when He walked upon this earth and also His disciples and the rest of the Jewish population at the time! It is the calendar that Moses observed, and Abraham, Joseph, Isaac and king David, and it is the only calendar which allows the true holy days of the Lord to be correctly observed!** We few true christians who now observe and keep this

appointed holy calendar, have been over the past ten years or so, constantly trying to convince other Sabbath day and holy day keeping Christian churches of the truth of this Lord God ordained calendar as opposed to the man-made calendar that has been so convenient for them to observe and keep over the years. But they will not have it! They have, as many large churches do, stopped their ears to it, they will not hear of it and have dismissed it out of hand without even having to begun to research it, and the hierarchy in these churches just do not want their congregations to know that there is any dispute at all as regards the using of the man-made calendar that they are observing. Well they should all be made aware of what the scriptures have to say about following the traditions of men and of leaving their very salvation in the hands of men, let`s read just two of these scriptures starting with **Jeremiah 17: 5.** Thus says the Lord; Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man, and makes flesh his strength and whose heart departs from the Lord. And now **Philippians 2: 12.** Wherefore my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not only because you are in my presence now but also when I am absent, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

But even so, having said that, I cannot but help having my suspicions that there are those within these large Christian churches (**especially those who rule over them!**) who have indeed researched the truth of the Lord`s lunar calendar and have come to the conclusion that it really is the calendar that they should be adhering to and following but that to do so it would seriously inconvenience them in some way or cause them `unnecessary` trouble either socially or financially. These people, and by association those who `follow` them, should realise that by ignoring the true calendar they have turned their back on the very commands of our Lord God. How can they possibly be keeping the holy days on the correct days? and if they are not doing this, **then they are not keeping the holy days at all!** They just love the convenience of the man-made calendar that they keep because for example they can inform their employers in plenty of time (even years ahead) of the days that they would like to have off, and they can organize their social lives in the same way and book their feast sites without the worry of wondering whether the dates that they require are going to be available for them. Well, I`m going to use some more scriptures to back up what I am writing in this article and one in particular is directed entirely towards the clergy of these churches and their large congregations. Let`s have a read of the words of Jesus Christ in **Matthew 15: 8-9.** These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Because in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. And now to **Galations 1: 10.** For do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? because if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

The congregations of these churches, (large or small) as far as the Lord`s lunar calendar is concerned, should seriously be asking themselves about the validity of the calendar that they have chosen to observe. They know full well that if a person knowingly or in deliberate ignorance chooses to keep a holy day on the wrong day then that person may as well not keep that holy day at all. Are not most, if not all of these Sabbath day keeping people the same people who condemn others, and quite rightly so, for keeping `sunday` instead of the Sabbath day, telling them that they are worshiping the `Lord` on their own man-made day of worship and therefore their worship is futile, and that this futile worship and observance also applies to their pagan festivals such as `easter`, `christmas` and the like? Well, as the old saying goes, `what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander`, because they had better put their own house in order first before they even begin to start criticising others. Let`s read from **Luke 6: 41-42.** And why do you notice the splinter that is in your brother`s eye but cannot perceive the log that is in your

own? This being the case, how then can you say to your brother, Brother, let me remove the splinter that is lodged in your eye, when you do not even notice the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite! first get rid of the log that is in your own eye and then you shall be able to see clearly enough to be able to remove the splinter that is in your brother's eye`.

And now one final scripture for those who have read this article and have become resentful towards me for having written it and towards other brothers and sisters who keep the holy, ordained calendar of our Lord God **Galations 4: 16.** `Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?`. If you think that we who keep the Lord's calendar have `got it wrong`, then I challenge you to prove it!

And so to sum up. If those in their large, Christian, Sabbath day keeping church congregations continue in their ways by ignoring the tugs and the pulls of their own conscience to do that which, deep down they know is the right thing to do, but are too fearful to `go it alone` in case of `reprisals` from within the church and its` members, bear this in mind. *What you do may not ultimately be a `salvation issue`, but do not even begin to think that you are special enough to be counted as one of the Lord's `Firstfruits`, because it takes somebody with `guts` and somebody very special indeed to achieve that accolade.*