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Commentary — From the Margins  
Following a Man

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Twice within a week I have received correspondence that said a variation of (a direct quote), “I refuse to accept any mans [sic] word because I did that when I was a part of "The Radio Church" as while [sic] as W.W.C.G.. I will NOT do that ever again!” Yet if this person does not follow a man, this person will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven.

Read the following citations:

I urge you, then, be imitators of me. (1 Cor 4:16)  
Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. (1 Cor 11:1)  
Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. (Phil 3:17)  
And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. (1 Thess 1:6–7)

Did brethren follow Paul who says of himself, “According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it” (1 Cor 3:10–11)? Or did they leave Paul, saying some variation of, “I refuse to accept any man’s word”?

You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. (2 Tim 1:15)  
For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. (Phil 3:18)

Was Paul not a man? Was Paul Christ, in himself as an individual the representation of Christ? Or was that by saying disciples were the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) Paul offended spiritual infants who thought they were mature Christians, well able to discern spiritual matters for themselves and righteous in themselves? For Paul write his epistles to spiritual infants:

But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human? (1 Cor 3:1–4 emphasis added)

Is there not strife and jealousy among disciples today? Do disciples not behave the way the saints at Corinth behaved? And are not disciples today equally as immature as were the saints at Corinth? Are not saints today barely able to suckle the paps of Scripture, and

unable to assign to assign spiritual significance to Paul chastising the saints at Corinth for saying, I follow Paul, while commanding them to follow him?

Understand, Paul's epistles—all of them—are spiritual milk. In his epistles, Paul introduces the concepts that will grow to become the meat of the word of God, but the epistles themselves are no more than the first course of stones laid of a building that grows vertically through knowledge, with this knowledge being like meat on bones which are the pillars of the temple of God.

Do not allegedly mature disciples dispute over inconsequential issues such as whether the month begins with the dark of the moon or with the first observed crescent? Or whether the crescent must be sighted at earthly Jerusalem or whether the crescent can be sighted anywhere in the world? Are these disciples not behaving as spiritual infants, if they are spiritual at all? Perhaps that is the better question: do these disciples who refuse to follow a man, any man, even Christ Jesus, have within them spiritual life, or are they like "Christians" who openly practice sinning and are, in reality, the children of the devil (1 John 3:4–10)?

Those disciples who refuse to follow a man and who justify their refusal on some variation of their own maturity are not ready to walk uprightly before God for they are still on spiritual milk; they still nurse Scripture as if epistles were teats, clinging to verses—or worse, to history books and archaeological journals—as if they were nipples, suckling words to which they have assigned their own meanings, not realizing they are blind, deaf, dumb and soon to be dead because they will not follow a man but insist upon going it alone as a human babe contending with demons that treat them as wind-up toys, sending them off in this direction or that direction, spinning their wheels or spinning in circles all to the amusement of demons who still do not believe that the Most High could possibly give salvation to any of them.

Those disciples who say that they will not follow a man also will not follow Christ Jesus. Most of those disciples who refuse to follow anyone have been harmed by a ministry that might have been sincere, but a ministry of hypocrisy and greed, a ministry that used fear to extort good behavior and unthinking obedience from infants sons of God, little realizing that this ministry was condemning the entire generation to the lake of fire; for the disciple who will not follow a man is a rebel! And this person will never enter the kingdom of heaven for this person has conditioned him or herself to resist authority, to resist instruction, and to resist hearing the voice the Christ Jesus, who will use a man or two men to bring Israel into covenant. The person who will not follow a man is now out of covenant with God and will not return to being in covenant with God, for being in covenant will require the person to follow a man as that man follows Paul who follows Christ Jesus, also a man.

The Sabbatarian disciple who will not follow a man who follows Paul, the one whom God entrusted to lay the foundation for the temple, will perish physically during the first 1260 days of the Tribulation, for the Father will deliver this disciple to the Adversary for the destruction of the flesh ... simply put, the patience of the Father and the Son have worn thin

with disciples as the patience of the Lord [YHWH] had worn thin with Israel on Sinai (Ex chap 32) and with Israel in the wilderness (Num chaps 11, 14, 16). But since those who need to hear will not follow a man they will not hear but will feel justified in their own righteousness, in their own spiritual maturity, in their own perceived relationship with the Father and the Son that they will scoff or mock the only instruction they really need to hear. What good does it do to receive a righteous person if the disciple receives this righteous person not as a righteous person but as a pauper needing help? Does this disciple expect to receive this righteous person's reward for receiving the righteous person as a pauper? Receiving the righteous person's reward is available to everyone who receives this righteous person because of whom the righteous person is, but it is not available to anyone who doesn't acknowledge that this righteous person is a righteous person.

The same holds for a prophet: the person who receives or who supports a prophet because the person is a prophet will receive the prophet's reward—and if the person acknowledges that this person is a prophet, will the person not follow the prophet? How can anyone receive a prophet or receive a righteous person and not follow the prophet or the righteous person? And if following a prophet, does the person not follow a man?

There have been many Sabbatarian disciples who were seriously harmed by Herbert Armstrong and his Radio Church of God, and later, his Worldwide Church of God. As the cited correspondent said, I refuse to accept any mans word because I did that when I was a part of "The Radio Church" as while as W.W.C.G. Compare this with what Korah said to Moses, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" (Num 16:3)

Korah and his friends refused to accept Moses' words. After all, did not the Lord say that Israel was to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:6)? Was not Korah merely exercising his democratic rights? Why should Israel follow a man, especially Moses who had faults, one of which was the Ethiopian woman? Didn't everyone of Israel have the right to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong, for wasn't the entire nation holy before God?

The Passover is only days away. This is the time of year when disciples will be examining themselves—and what are they going to see, a rebel who will not follow a man, any man, especially Christ Jesus who was obedient to death? Or will they see someone who is teachable, who will follow a man that imitates Paul as Paul imitated Christ Jesus? Odds are that they will see a spiritual infant playing pretend with God, all dressed up in pseudo spiritual understanding, pouring invisible tea into empty cups, imagining that they please God by not following a man when it is only by following a man that they can learn those things of God needful for their salvation—for it isn't the many words of Scripture that they need to know, but the attitude of obedience that comes from following a man in a chain of authority that stretches from the Father to Christ Jesus to the apostles to those sent by God to preach. Thus, it will be those who are not today Sabbatarian disciples that will enter the kingdom as the firstfruits of God. Herbert Armstrong, perhaps inadvertently, killed off an

entire generation of infant sons of God through his Nicolaitan use of authority, and now there isn't much anyone can do but watch much of that generation of infant sons of God finish choking to death on their avowed refusal to follow a man, any man.

Those disciples that need to repent won't hear a word of what has been written, and those who do hear are not the ones who need to hear ... it is the disciple who openly says, I will not follow a man, who needs to hear what has been written; for the disciple who silently will prove all things must necessarily follow a man when all things have been proven. Why necessarily? Because "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17). If the word of Christ, if the voice of Christ Jesus is heard in the words of the man, then the disciple who remains alive will follow the man as the disciple would follow Christ Jesus, whereas the disciple who will follow no man will not hear Christ's voice for the open declaration to follow no man includes Jesus, who was a man. And this is the state of Sabbatarians everywhere, both Sabbatarian Christians as well as Judaism.

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