

DIVINE ORDER TEACHING

#23

GOD'S SCHOOL OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT

By Sam Fife



The Highest Purpose for Man

To be content with food and raiment,
the necessities of life

To be in a place free from the influence of
Babylon and free to exercise and grow in God

To find your place in the Kingdom of God
which is coming on the Earth

GOD'S SCHOOL OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT Miami 1974 - Elder's Teaching

This is a teaching I have felt led of the Lord to give during the last several months on just about every body farm that I've been to and many of the local bodies that I've been to, only to elders. It is a teaching that simply draws together all of the principles of God's Divine Order for the Body of Christ that have been brought forth not just from myself or my own ministry but all the ministry during the past several years in the move of God --the principles of God's divine order in God's divine government, and this teaching simply draws them together into one comprehensive teaching on God's divine order so that all of the ministry can begin to see a pattern of God's divine order government for the Body of Christ and have guidelines to follow so that we can come into a greater oneness and ability to move as one--as God's Divine Government.

Now the scriptural basis or foundation for this teaching is, of course, the scripture in Hebrews 7:21, which says "Christ is God's priest forever after the order of Melchisedec," for that's the scripture that has to do with the divine order of God that God is bringing forth in His people in His body, which will be the governmental order under which the Spirit of God shall govern His body and the world during the millennium which is soon to come.

The first thing that we want to say is that we must realize what God is doing with us in this move of God. He is bringing forth a divine order government to govern the world, after the order of Melchisedec. We're not building a church, we're not playing church, we're not a bunch of preachers that are looking for a ministry, this is not an evangelistic move of God, it's not a full gospel move of God, it's not a healing move of God, it's the move of God in which God is bringing forth a many-membered manchild to govern the world, through whom Christ will govern the world during the millennium that is to come. Therefore, we are in

God's school of Divine Government, and God is training us as one many-membered man, teaching us, training us, preparing us to be the government through whom the Spirit of Christ will govern the world. The way that He is teaching and training us is by letting us practice on one another, by teaching us to govern one another and to be governed by one another after the order of Melchisedec, which is a theocratic spirit government order.

Most of you have heard us teach again and again the definition of that term "order" that is used when the Bible says "Christ is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." An order is simply a system of government or a governmental system. Thus, we say that here in the U.S. we're governed by what is called the democratic order of government, in Canada they have a parliamentary governmental order or system of government, England has a monarchical governmental order, and so we have illustration after illustration of what a governmental order is.

Since the order, or the system of government by which we are to govern the world is a new governmental order, since there is no precedent, no example of this governmental system that has ever been seen or heard of before in the world, and therefore no precedent or example to go by of times past: the principles of this governmental order has to be revealed by revelation from heaven, line upon line, precept upon precept.

Now I'd like to establish in your hearts the authority of this governmental order. You see, every system of government that has ever been brought forth in this world before was brought forth and established by the principles of that government being brought forth out of the belly of whatever ministry that was used to establish that system of government in the earth by revelation and by inspiration, whether it was from the negative spirit of the devil or the positive spirit of God.

Long ago when the devil through Nimrod brought forth and established in the world organized government, he did it

by the spirit of revelation and inspiration and through Nimrod the devil brought forth and established in the world all the principles of organizational government that Babylon is ruled by today. Two hundred years ago, or a little more, when the Democratic order of government by which the U.S. is governed was brought into being in the earth, the way it was brought into being was the laws upon which that government was established were brought forth by inspiration and revelation out of the belly of the ministers that God called to bring forth and establish that government in the world. Some men named George Washington, Patrick Henry, Benjamin Franklin and the fathers of our country who attended our country's first constitutional convention, where the spirit of revelation brought out of their belly the principles of the Constitution upon which the government of the U.S. is based.

Therefore, don't ever question the right of the five fold plural spirit ministry to be the source of divine order government for the body of Christ.

We are now in an hour when because all the governments of this world that have ever been brought forth have turned themselves over to the spirit of the anti-Christ and are going to submit themselves to becoming a part of that one world beast, therefore God has called out a people to bring forth and manifest in this world a new governmental order, a theocratic spirit governmental order by which the world will be governed after God judges all the other governmental systems of this world and removes them from off the face of the earth. We are that people that God has called and anointed to bring forth out of their bellies through the spirit of revelation the principles of that governmental order, preach them to a people so they begin to catch the vision and gain all understanding of that governmental order and establish it in their midst, just the way the government of the U.S. was established. It didn't happen in a day. It took many many years for it to be finally ratified by all the states. That is the way the principles of any governmental order

come into being, by revelation and inspiration out of the belly of whatever ministry that's called to establish that order in the world, whether it be a negative governmental order or a positive governmental order.

Now that governmental order, at this point, is a five fold spirit ministry governmental order consisting of apostles, prophets, evangelists, elders or pastors (those two terms are synonymous) and teachers. The spirit has called forth those spirit ministries not only to reveal that governmental order in the earth but to establish it in God's people and through God's people in the earth. Let's cut out all the fooling around, all the ballyhoo, all the questioning, all the arguing, for to anybody who's been in this move of God any time, it is very clear that God has called out a five fold plural spirit anointed ministry to bring forth out of their bellies and establish in the people of God a new governmental order. That ministry, according to I Corinthians 12, consists of first apostles, then prophets, and after that teachers which consist of a three-fold teaching ministry of elders, evangelists, and teachers.

Now this is not five ministries, but it is the ministry of one spirit of God through five channels. Not all channels are the same. Any fleshly foolishness about everybody in the move of God being the same is a bunch of foolishness. There is one spirit who ministers through all, that's true, but all five of these ministries are not on the same level of union with that Spirit and that's why I Corinthians says God hath set some in the church first apostles, then prophets, and after that the three-fold teacher ministries. Therefore, I want you to understand that they are the government of God. We're not playing church, we're not trying to build another church on the corner. The thing that God is doing in us is far greater, far more consequential than anything that's ever been done in this world before. We ought to get serious about it, we ought to mature, we ought to cut out all the foolishness, get all our doubts out of our mind, deal humbly and gently with all God's children who challenge our authority in the

Spirit but don't put up with any foolishness. This is a mighty and a serious and an eternally consequential thing that God is doing.

This teaching consists of drawing together the principles of God's Divine order government that God has brought forth over the past several years into one comprehensive teaching. These principles deal with elders relationship to elders, God's divine order for elders disagreeing with elders and being one another's check and balance and confirmations, elders' relationship to body member, body members' relationship to elders, elders' relationship to apostolic ministries, body members relationship to elders and apostolic ministries, God's divine order for elders disagreeing with apostolic ministries and the whole ascending and descending scale of God's divine order for us dealing with one another in our various ministries, whatever they may be. Of course, the first principle that should be taught is that God wants you to deal with your brother in the Spirit of Christ.

This is a theocratic spirit government and these principles only apply when you're in the Spirit and when you're not in the Spirit they don't apply to you at all- you forfeit your right to even participate in this divine government if you are not in the Spirit of Christ when you participate. If you're in your flesh, if you're irritated, aggravated, upset , emotionally disturbed, all of which is flesh- you ought to just sit down and let somebody else govern the Body of Christ. This is a theocratic spirit government founded upon not laws, as the government of the U.S., but upon eternal spiritual principles and the first principle is that you must be in the Spirit of Christ in the divine order that God has established for us dealing with one another as God's government. It's a plural government -- that's nothing new, the democratic government of the U.S. is it plural government, but the difference between us and it is that their government is based upon laws and our government is based upon eternal spiritual principles.

They are governed by a constitution, but we don't have any constitution for we're governed by a living spirit. Their government is founded upon a constitution, but our government is founded upon a living spirit, the Spirit of God.

The next principle that we need to learn and understand is what God wants is not a group of elders (and when I use the term elder now I'm including apostles, because in the spiritual sense apostles are part of the elders too: Peter, I think it was, wrote to the elders and said I, Peter who am also an elder) who are always agreeing with one another on every issue, especially in elder's meetings, and thereby becoming a bunch of "yes men" for one another. What he wants is a group of elders to be His government that can disagree with one another, but in the right spirit, the humble sweet gracious Spirit of Christ and in the divine order that God has established for disagreeing with one another and thereby be one another's perfect check and balance. You would be amazed if you realized that about 90 percent of the elders in the move of God across the country don't know that.

They think it's completely the other way. They think that what God wants is a bunch of elders that agree with one another all the time and if there's any disagreement, particularly in an elders' meeting, then that's division, and there's division in the camp and that the Kingdom's falling apart. I'll say it again, that's exactly contrary to what God wants. He doesn't want elders that agree with one another all the time on every issue, but a group of elders who can come together and disagree with one another in the right spirit, the spirit of Christ, and such a spirit of love that your brother feels your love even when you're disagreeing with him, and therefore is not offended, and you should reach the point where though you have disagreed with him, and take your stand, you would rather he be right, if he can prove to you that he's right, thereby being one another's check and balance. That doesn't mean that some day God doesn't want us to agree all the time on all issues. He does, for His word says His watchmen shall see eye to eye when He brings

again the captivity of Zion, but that day is not now. They can't be yet and therefore the instrument by which He wants to bring us to that day is an eldership that can disagree with one another in the Spirit of Christ and in that Divine Order God has for disagreeing with one another, and thereby be used to check one another, to purge one another, so that He can bring forth that perfect ministry, a perfect government who do see eye to eye on all things.

Therefore, here is the next principle for you-disagreement on issues is not division in spirit. I can disagree with you on issues all day long and dig in my heels and take my stand against you on issues all day long and never be divided from you in my spirit, if I stay in the spirit of Christ when I do it. And even if you get divided from me in your spirit and resent the fact that I disagree with you on the issue and get upset, uptight, just plain down right mad with me, bitter, I still don't have to be divided from you in my spirit. The old saying "It takes two to tango" is absolutely true. You can get divided from me in your spirit but if I stay in the Spirit of Christ, a spirit of love toward you and don't get divided from you in my spirit, then we're not tangoing. That's your key principle you want to bind on your eyes for frontlets, mount it on your door post that you see it coming in and going out--disagreement over issues is not division in the spirit. Therefore I can love brother so and so and stand and say I disagree with you on this issue and this is my reason and so forth and still be perfectly one with you in spirit. I can disagree with you on every issue and still never lose my oneness with you in spirit if I simply understand and have a clear revelation that disagreement on issues is not division in spirit. Teach God's people that, then when they go around seeing their elders disagreeing on issues they won't go around thinking their elders are divided and there's division in the camp.

There are principles of God's divine order necessary for you to understand before you accomplish this. The first one is that the only way that you can disagree with your brother

on issues and not get divided from him in spirit is that you recognize his right to his conviction even though he may be wrong. If you don't have that vision and that revelation then you can't stay one in spirit with him and still disagree with him on the issue. Every elder in this move of God should come to the point where he recognizes his brother's right before God to his conviction even though he may be wrong.

The second one that is necessary is to recognize that he is sincere in his conviction even though he may be wrong. When I was a young Baptist preacher I couldn't see that at all. Anybody who didn't see it the way I did, I was absolutely sure they just didn't love the Lord the way I did, and they weren't all sincere as I was. Besides, they were probably stupid if they didn't see it the way I did.

God had to show me how wrong I could be dozens of times and let me go through a lot of experiences before I recognized that before God every man has his right to his conviction even though he's wrong and that a person could be wrong and just as sincere in their love for Jesus, and just as sincere in their conviction as I am. The reason this can be so is that not only are there two sides to every question, I've found there are at least half a dozen sides to every question, and it all depends on what side you're standing on whether you're seeing it aright or not.

I'm sure we've all heard the story about the three blind men that were taken to the zoo to see the elephant and see what an elephant was like. One of them approached the elephant and began to feel up his leg and said "I know what an elephant is like, he's like a telephone pole". Another one began to feel around his belly and he said, "You're wrong, an elephant's not like that, he's like a barrel." The other one began to feel its trunk and he said "You're both a bunch of nuts, he's like a snake." Now all three were right, but all three were seeing the elephant from different sides. When we understand this we will all lose some of our dogmatism, become more humble, recognize our fallibility more, and above all, recognize our brother's right to his conviction, and

that he can be sincere in it even though he's sincerely wrong. These two areas must be in order to be divided from your brother on issues, and yet not be divided from him in spirit.

What God wants is elders who can disagree with one another, be one another's check and balance in the right spirit, and in the divine order that God has given us to disagree with one another. If you leave those last two out, you're out of order. You can be right on the issue, but wrong in your spirit, and you're out of order.

On the other hand, that doesn't mean that just because you've heard a revelation that what God wants is elders who can disagree with one another, that that means that you have a special calling to disagree all the time and that you're more spiritual than anybody else because you're the one who's always disagreeing with your brother, neither that we should disagree just to fulfill the revelation or disagree just to be disagreeable which brings us to the next principle.

This principle, which we should really get settled on, is that we should never disagree with our brother ministry unless we feel sure in our heart that we have wisdom from the Lord and a good reason for disagreeing with him, from the Spirit of God. If we don't, then we should simply be quiet, speak not a word, and if he's wrong, let someone else be used of the Spirit of God to be his check and balance. Above all we should never do what one brother did once in an elders' meeting: one elder had presented what he felt was wisdom of God on the issue and this brother spoke up and said "I disagree with that." When the other brother gently asked him to tell him the reason why, he said "I don't have to give a good reason, I just don't witness to it." Well, that might be all right for him, but it's not all right for me. If you disagree with me on what I feel is the wisdom of God that I heard from the Spirit, you better be ready to give me a reason or we're going to have a spiritual confrontation because the principle is that we shouldn't speak unless we believe we have wisdom from God, and I'm sure you try to keep that principle as I do, and therefore, when I do speak and present

what I feel is wisdom from God, I'm not interested in what you feel because I know there are several sources feelings can come from. I'm only interested in the scriptural reason you can give for disagreeing with me. Or perhaps if you know some facts about the issue that I don't know, or if perhaps you're standing on another side of the issue where you can see another side of it that I can't see from where I'm standing that shows you right and me wrong and of course then I'm perfectly willing to listen.

Therefore, if we are going to dare to get in the way of God and disagree with any wisdom our brother elder has brought forth which he feels is the voice of God speaking, then we should be prepared to give a good reason for doing so, either something he doesn't know on the issue scripturally or facts about the issue, or just what we know that we're standing on from another side and can see from another side and therefore be a good check and balance.

The next principle is when we disagree with a fellow elder or apostle, there is a divine order for our presenting our disagreement to one another. The first principle in that divine order is that when elders come together to seek the wisdom of God for God's people, and the issue is brought forth, whoever feels they have wisdom from God on the issue should speak and present it. If not, they shouldn't speak at all.

Let me just digress here for a moment and deal with a very important point, and, solve what may be a very important problem if you ever get on an endtime body farm. I was at an endtime body farm where the problem was that there were about 24 elders on that farm and they'd come together in an elders' meeting and each one wanted to give his opinion, so it took about four hours to deal with each issue and the elders' meeting was lasting all night long. Finally, the elders all got so sleepy they all had to go home, and nothing could be settled, simply because every elder would start giving his opinion. The solution to that problem is keep quiet unless you know, as much as Your heart

understands, that you have wisdom from God, and if that is taught everywhere, that will solve that problem. And if you don't know if you have wisdom from God, for God's sake, don't give your opinion. Don't muddy up the water or anything else, just sit quiet and wait and see who does.

That's the first step. Whoever has what they feel is wisdom from God on the issue should speak and then if there's someone who disagrees with him in the Spirit of Christ, present to him the reasons why you disagree and present them clearly, as precisely as you can, back them up with all the evidence that you can and then if you feel it'll help and you can come up with a good illustration to make it a little clearer, then illustrate it. When you've finished that, then give your brother time for a rebuttal. If you still haven't convinced him that your view is right and his is not the correct wisdom of the Lord and he says "Well brother, I can't receive this, I still feel I have the right wisdom, then give him time to make his rebuttal, and then when he's done that if either one of you says one more word beyond that, you've gotten into to an argumentative spirit and you're no longer moving in God's divine order, You're arguing.

You see, you should have presented all you've got the first time. If that can't convince him then there's no use for you to say any more. Therefore, after he has presented his rebuttal, you've given all you've got to convince him the first time and you have no more to say, Amen. If you say anything beyond that you're just repeating yourself and that's argument. That's not government, that's not divine order. Take your time. He should listen, everybody should listen humbly and shouldn't interrupt one another. That's how I tell if someone's in a demon spirit. After I've listened to them, hearing everything they've wanted to say, when I start talking, if they interrupt me after I start talking I know they're in a demon spirit because that's what spirits do. They don't want to ever give you a chance to get your say out. The Spirit of God, after he's said all He has to say, isn't going to speak again.

So, there are just three parts to the divine order:

(1) Let your brother present his view,

(2) Present your disagreement,

(3) Give him his time for his rebuttal, and then if you haven't convinced him, don't say another word, either party.

Then it's time to go the next step higher in God's divine order with the question. It doesn't have to be left in confusion, God has another step up in God's divine order.

That step is that if the issue has been brought forth and there is disagreement among two elders or two segments of elders and the one has presented his disagreement, and the other his rebuttal, and still the question isn't resolved, they can't convince one another, the next step is for the elders to call God's apostolic ministry in on the issue, and to present the issue to the apostolic ministry who are supposed to have a higher wisdom than elders. If they don't, they shouldn't be apostolic ministry-shouldn't be considered apostle ministry. In having the issue presented to them, they may see some sides of the issue that the elders don't see, and by presenting the issue to them can bring the elders together and make them one in the issue, and solve the matter. When the apostolic ministry presents their wisdom and the issue is still unresolved, the elders still aren't convinced, they're still divided, maybe one segment is standing with the apostle ministry, and the other segment still says I don't receive it, the next step up in God's divine order is to take the issue to Jesus, the head, through the prophet ministry. Get two or three good solid seeing prophets, and we've got them in this move of God, never any further away than the telephone and if there's time, a letter written, to inquire of the Lord to speak in visions as He always does to see whether he confirms the one side or the other side on the issue. Whichever one He confirms the Head has spoken and then everybody's responsible to submit and in the right spirit and in a spirit of oneness, everyone can be one over what the Head says. If they can't they forfeit their right to participate in this divine government.

There is one point here that is necessary to make and that is if the issue is a pressing issue and needs a decision right now and there is no time to contact the apostle ministry (and the way God's got them running across the world today sometimes it does take a little time, even with the telephone, just to track them down), then it is valid for the elders to bypass the apostolic ministry and go straight to the head asking the prophets to ask the Lord for a word from God to see if He confirms one side of the elders or the other segment. Now, since this is valid under this circumstance, one might ask the question "Well, why don't we get smart and save time and bypass the apostolic ministry all the time?" The reason this is not in God's divine order is that the purpose of God ultimately is not to bring forth a body of elders in government that has to go to the head all the time, but on the lower levels apostles ministries, elders ministries and so forth can solve the matter through good spirit led judgment and wisdom. If not the elders, then the apostles ministry. The prophet ministry is a crutch that God has provided for us for a period of time until we have come to that growth in the Spirit and wisdom where one day the prophet ministry of confirmations can be done away with and when the apostolic ministry speaks as the wisdom of God it'll be the wisdom of God. And then some day all the elders will come to the point where all the apostolic ministry can be done away with and the question can be settled through the spirit led wisdom of what were elders, but have just become sons of God. Then some day the elders ministry can be done away with and every body member will have a walk in the Spirit that can settle the issue through the spirit-led wisdom. So you see, if you bypass the apostolic ministry all the time, it wouldn't be fulfilling the purpose that God has and that's why it's not God's order to do so, except in necessary circumstances.

Now that's God's divine order for elders disagreeing with elders and thereby being one another's check and balance. The qualifying principle that you must always keep inserted

here is that it must be done in the right spirit, in the spirit of Christ, in love, with no emotionalism and no overcharging of the air. There's the case of the young elder who was mad with the fellow he was disagreeing with ever since he opened his mouth and the other guy hadn't even decided whether he was going to receive it or not. He was all upset and his attitude was all fighty and he didn't know his brother might have received what he was saying if he finally gets it said. But out of his insecurity he's gotten all emotional about it. He's quite sure his brother's going to disagree with him before he starts and he's on the defence. Don't you ever doubt it beloved, anytime, in any disagreement with our brother ministry, we are emotionally disturbed, upset, the air is charged in anyway whatsoever, it's our own immaturity and insecurity showing up. When you are secure in your stand in Christ, in your walk in the spirit, confident in it and in your conviction, you can calmly quietly present your disagreement with your brother elder and especially if you recognize deep down inside you that you just might be wrong after all, no matter how the evidence looks as though you've got it. Therefore, if you are depending upon your brother's disagreement and your brethren's disagreement to be your check and balance, then you won't ever get upset. The air won't ever be emotionally charged, you'll simply quietly calmly say, "Dear brother, I disagree with you on the issue and here's the reason why- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5," and you'll calmly, quietly wait to see how he receives it and if he says, "I disagree with you and here's why," then you'll say "Well, then, let's take the next step in God's divine order,"

I passed over one little point that should be inserted here, when there's disagreement between two elders, before going to an apostolic ministry, if there's time, it is perfectly valid to say, "Let's table this and pray on it for a week, come back together again and see if we can come to oneness without even going to the apostolic ministry. If everybody goes off really open to the Lord saying, "If I'm wrong, show me,"

then it's possible when you come together the next time to come to oneness upon it.

The next thing that I'd like to point out in this category of elders disagreeing with elders is that if we're right on the issue and if we do have the true wisdom on the issue of the Lord then we don't have to go around during that week or any time politicking, talking about it outside the elders meeting trying to line up a clique on our side so that when we come together again the vote will be on our side, like we used to do in the old order, like they still do in the old order and like everyone of us has done in the old order. You see, in this move of God it's a futile waste of time, because if you line up a vote and a clique on your side when you come back in the elders meeting you'll just be wasting your time because there isn't any voting in this move of God; in this move of God the majority rules is not the rule. That's only in the democratic order of the U.S. The majority does not rule in this move of God. You come into an elders meeting and you've 25 elders and 24 of them all agree that it ought to be this way and one feels that it ought to be the other way, then he has the right to request that the matter be taken to the apostolic ministry and if the apostle ministry and all 24 elders agree that it ought to be the other way and he still doesn't witness to it he has the right to request that the matter be taken to the head Jesus through the prophet ministry and therefore, you see, it's no use lining up a clique in this move of God because there isn't any voting in this order. I've seen some places where there's a great need for this teaching because some of the elders still think that the majority rules. And if all the majority agree and one little old elder disagrees, he's scared to death to disagree, afraid he'll be thought a fool or something.

But, of course, we all know that old Elijah on Mount Carmel had the majority against him. Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal against him, but God vindicated him in the end. And that's the point. The one thing the Spirit of God burned in my soul when he first brought me into this move

of God is that if you're only one and there's 400 against you, if you do have the true wisdom of the Lord you don't have to politic, you don't have to line up a clique, you just have to state your conviction and stand on it - in the end God will vindicate you. If we all really believe that, if we all really learn that, you'll find a great peace suddenly descending upon this move of God, because a thing called politicking will be done away with forever. There's still some of it that goes on in this move of God because everybody doesn't know this. It hasn't been taught too much that the majority doesn't rule. Of course, this divine order that I'm teaching today hasn't been fully established yet, in this move of God. Can you see the beauty of order? Can you see that when it is fully established and when it is accepted by every ministry in this move of God and when they all have committed themselves to it there will never be any room for a spirit of division to come in and divide up elders. The order just doesn't leave any room for it. No opening whatever for any spirit of division to come in and divide up the ministry in this move of God. The only thing that leaves room for evil spirits of division to cause division after having this revelation is the human factor, that is if some one person decides they're not going to walk in the order, they're not going to submit to it, they're going to try to push their own view through, bypassing the order, bypassing going onto the next step, and we have a little bit of that sometimes.

Somebody asked me a question one time, "What do you do in an elders meeting when a brother starts trying to ram his view down everybody else's throat and he gets out of the spirit and he gets to hollering, he gets his temper up and he gets emotional; how do you deal with it?" The way to deal with it is for everybody else to get very quiet, so quiet and in the spirit themselves that before very long the brother will look around and he himself can see what a fool he's been. And it will be evident even to him that he's out of the spirit without anybody saying a word and he'll get back in and then

you can move on in the Spirit of God and in God's divine order.

Therefore, these are the principles in God's divine order for elders settling every issue in the body of Christ and in the move of God. Just one more point, not only inside elders meetings but outside elders meetings. If you have an issue with your brother, I don't mean a personal issue, I mean an issue over the work of God, your personal issues settle with him personally, because elders meetings aren't courthouse trials to settle your personal issues with your brother. They are forums of issues of how elders should take God's body on to perfection, and how they should do the work of God. But if you feel on an end time farm that you ought to plant beans on this piece of ground instead of potatoes and your brother elder feels you ought to plant potatoes- an issue comes up outside the elders meeting and you can't convince your brother elder, then it's very valid to request an elder's meeting, and bring the issue before the whole of the elders and then take the ascending scale of God's divine order for settling it. So you see, this order works either inside or outside the elders meeting if we will all get a true vision and revelation on it and walk in it.

In interpreting visions, if there is a disagreement, the elders should meet together and seek together the interpretation of the vision. If they can't agree on the interpretation, then they must ascend up the scale again and take it before the apostolic ministry to get the interpretation and. Of Course, the apostolic ministry in that area of interpreting the visions settles the matter, because, of course, you can't go and seek more visions to see if God confirms the interpretation of the visions of the apostolic visions. However, if you personally don't receive the interpretation of one apostolic ministry, you do have the right to go to two or three other apostolic ministries if you so desire. The right of appeal is always a part of God's divine order.

The next category is God's divine order for body members disagreeing with elders. The first principle we need to learn

here is that we do not teach blind submission in the move of God. We teach submission, but we do not teach blind submission. Blind submission is a teaching that a member of the Body of Christ is responsible to submit to an elder or an apostle just because they are an elder or an apostle whether their spirit witnesses that they're moving in the Spirit or not. That's the doctrine of blind submission and this we do not teach. And again you'd be amazed to discover how many elders in the move of God across this country think we do. I was amazed at how I discovered many think that we do, and I have been quoted as teaching blind submission even though many have heard me preach again and again and again as elders were set in that this doesn't give you any official authority and that no one is responsible to submit to any ministry in the move of God unless their spirit witnesses that that ministry is moving in the Spirit of Christ.

I was amazed to discover once, in a certain body house situation down in Miami where a group of people had been living in a body house for a couple of years, that an elder there had been teaching blind submission and teaching the people that I was teaching blind submission and sincerely believed it. The people for two years had been submitting to it and there was such a beautiful order in that body house all the time. The only thing is the poor people's shoulders were getting lower and lower. The way I discovered that this elder was teaching that brother Sam says, "You've got to submit, you need to submit," was that I was out to dinner one time with that elder. Something came up and she told about how this body member tried to tell her that we didn't teach blind submission in the move of God, and she said, "And I let them know we do." Then I said, "Well, you had better go back and let them know we don't." The principle that she was teaching them was that you should submit every time to any elder whether he's right or wrong because it'll do a good work in you, it'll work the cross in you. And of course that's true, it'll work the cross in you all right. And it's true that in small matters that aren't of serious consequence, we should

submit right or wrong. But that's not only true of elders, that's true of any one of our brethren in small matters that aren't of serious consequence, and it'll do a good work in us to prevent strife, if it's going to be a matter of strife.

But in serious matters, God's people can get hurt that way. They can get killed spiritually that way. And, of course, they were also teaching that if you submit, you're not responsible if that elder is wrong and the elder is not responsible but in the end the apostle ministry is responsible. That's the doctrine that the Catholic church teaches; submit to the priest and the priest isn't responsible and it goes up the ladder and the Pope is the only one who's responsible, he's the one who gets all the trouble if things go wrong.

I said to that person, "I don't want that responsibility, and if you see the wisdom in that, then you won't want to teach blind submission either." We teach that you're only responsible to submit if the Spirit of Christ witnesses to you that that elder or apostle is moving in the Spirit of Christ, and you're not submitting to them, you're submitting to Christ. But, as Brother Buddy Cobb so clearly teaches, we're not responsible to submit in the sense of obeying what they say but we are responsible to keep a submissive attitude. Whether we think they are wrong or not, whether we witness to what they've asked us to do or not, we're not responsible to do what they say, but we are responsible to keep a submissive attitude. As Brother Buddy so widely teaches, submission is not an act, it is an attitude. Obedience is an act. Submission is an attitude. Any body member is free to disagree at any time, with any direction, and counsel, any revelation that an elder or an apostle or anyone gives them, if they don't witness to it in their own spirit as long as they do it in the Spirit of Christ and in the divine order that God has for body members disagreeing with their ministry. And that divine order is this: if a body member disagrees with an elder's counsel, wisdom, revelation, guidance, the first step in God's divine order for him disagreeing is that he has the divine right to go to whoever he feels to be a more mature

elder in that local body, if he feels there is one, and counsel with him on the issue and see what wisdom he gives. It's his right to choose the one whom he feels is the more mature elder. Then if he does not witness to the counsel that elder gives him, he has the right, if he chooses, to come before the whole eldership and seek counsel. If he doesn't witness to that, then he has the right to go to an apostolic ministry to seek counsel and wisdom on the issue, and if he doesn't witness to what the apostolic ministry gives him, then he has the divine right to ask that the whole matter be taken to Jesus, the Head through the prophets to see if God confirms through the prophets what has been given through the elders. I have seen elders immature enough to bitterly resent it if a body member did this, if he didn't witness to their wisdom and went over their heads to an apostolic ministry. Don't anybody get bitter about anybody going over your head in this move of God. In the world, they do it, the secular world, the business world they get bitterly resentful about it. But we teach in this move of God that everybody has somebody over his head. Amen. Everybody has a covering. That's why the right of appeal right up to Jesus, the Head, is the absolute right of every member of the body of Christ. Therefore, elders should not resent it if any body member doesn't witness to their counsel and feels to go to the next higher step of order. Apostle ministry should not resent it if a body member or elder disagrees with him in God's divine order and asks that the matter be taken to the Head for confirmation through the prophets, because our purpose in the end is to get the word from the Lord, the true word from the Lord, and that's what everybody should want.

Now the next question that comes when this is realized is "If a body member does disagree with an elder's counsel to him and comes to another elder in that same local body and presents the issue and the other elder feels the first elder gave him the wrong counsel and has to tell him so, how does the second elder do this without feeling he's coming against his fellow elder or that he's hurting the ministry of his fellow

elder in the eyes of the body member. At the very first, at the beginning of this move of God, God gave us his divine order for doing this. If I'm an elder, the second elder, and a body member comes to me and says, "Brother so and so gave me this counsel and I can't witness to it in my spirit and I'd like to present the issue to you for confirmation or to see if it's wrong," God's order for doing it is to say to that body member, "I can't witness that this is the true wisdom of God, or I can't witness that this revelation is the true wisdom of God and if you don't receive it either, let's pray for brother so and so, that God'll give him a little deeper wisdom in this area but at the same time, let's submit to and receive everything that he ministers to us that is the leadership of the spirit." In doing this, you have been faithful to that body member and have been faithful to your fellow elder. Simply tell him that I can't receive it either, therefore, let's you and I pray for him in this area that God'll give him a little higher wisdom, but at the same time don't get the idea that everything he ministers is wrong. Let's receive and submit to everything he ministers to us that is the true leadership from the spirit. In doing so you've been faithful to the body member and at the same time you've lifted up the ministry of your fellow elder, not torn it down. I was teaching this in a certain place and one elder said, "I just can't see that, I can't understand that. It seems to me that if you don't take a stand with your fellow elder no matter what, you're tearing down the ministry and the elder in the sight of the body."

And I said, "No brother, if you do take a stand with him and he's wrong, you're tearing down the ministry in the eyes of the body. Because it only takes the body members about three times of this to get the revelation that their ministry is a clique that's going to stand with one another whether they're right or wrong and therefore minister death to the body. Then you've destroyed the body's confidence in their eldership." Do you see what I mean?

Therefore, when you do this you're not tearing it down, when your body gets the revelation that their ministry has an

order by which they are going to be faithful to them, and that they are not a clique, brother, you're going to have them putting confidence in their ministry, and nothing needs to be torn down.

The next question is, "Should you then turn and say 'Let's go to the other elder? You should not do this unless you know that you know the Spirit is leading you to do it. He may be dealing with a young elder that just can't take it before that body member and just cause a breach and division and so forth. You're far better, to leave it unless you know that you know that the spirit is leading you to do it.

The next question is "After you have dealt with the body member should you then go to the other elder and straighten him out and show him where his wisdom was wrong?" And once again, it's all in the leadership of the Spirit, only if you know that you know that the spirit is leading you and that your brother could receive it from you and that it wouldn't cause a breach. If not, you should leave it alone. The body member has been delivered, he's not under bondage, he doesn't get death, he's had life ministered to him, no harm has been done and you wait until the day perhaps the Lord shows you that your brother elder could receive it.

Sometimes the first elder the body member has gone to is a mature elder and not liking what they have heard from that one, they have chosen to go to a less mature elder, to get a word that is more conducive to what they want to hear. In that case, you have obviously got a body member that is out of the Spirit or he would have received the counsel of the first elder and you probably have what we call an elder hopper. And whatever he gets he deserves it. And if he gets death ministered to him (I'm perfectly serious), God will say he deserves it, and if he gets death ministered to him after a while he'll learn not to do this. The fact is you have elder hoppers that don't want to hear the real truth, and they'll go from one elder to another, but this doesn't deny that this is God's absolute truth. God's principle of order and truth is beautiful and perfect just the same.

This same order applies if an elder doesn't witness to an apostolic ministry's counsel, he has the divine right to go to what he feels is a more mature apostolic ministry and there are apostles, the Bible reveals this. The difference between Peter and Paul as apostles was not quite the difference between day and night, but almost. He has the divine right to go to an apostolic ministry if he doesn't witness to his counsel, he has the right to request that the matter be taken again to the head through the prophets for the first appeal and the final word and when that word comes forth, everyone is responsible to submit.

Once again, you can see the beauty of God's perfect order, that if all God's ministry and all God's body would receive this order and commit themselves to it there would be no room for any spirit of division to cause division in the body of Christ on any level.

And, of course, for all of us who are the ministry, our responsibility is to recognize the plurality of Christ. It is our only protection. The total wisdom of Christ is in a many-membered corporate ministry. The total wisdom of Christ is never going to be in any one ministry. There are questions of wisdom, pertaining to life, that it is not possible for any one ministry, especially brother Sam, to have all the answers. Simply because God will not allow it, otherwise God would not be a corporate being. He would have instilled His fullness in a Peter, as the Catholic Church teaches. God will not allow it, it is not possible, it is absolutely impossible, and that's why we need the plurality of the ministry to be our covering. Your scripture for this is the fact that when Jesus at the communion supper in the upper room broke the bread which is the whole Body of truth concerning Him, He didn't give any one of the 12 apostles the whole loaf. Otherwise he would have said, "I'm the head of the church," as the Catholic Church says of Peter, but he gave each one a piece of the bread, which is a type of all the spiritual bread, so that in the end they would all have to come and submit themselves to one another to receive the piece of bread that

the other had before anybody's ever going to have the full bread of God that will take us all to eternal life.

One last question concerning how to recognize apostolic ministry: In reply to your question, no true apostolic ministry will tell you who is apostolic ministry. No true apostolic ministry will ever tell you they are an apostolic ministry and claim the name, they'll walk in what God's called them and let the Spirit show you what they are, just as Jesus didn't come into the world telling everyone He was the Messiah. He said to Peter and others, "Who do you say that I am?" and when they got the revelation He said "Praise the Lord."

And anyone who ever comes telling you they are an apostolic ministry then they are a false apostle or at least a very immature exalted one. There might be some like that around. Any other ministry, prophetic or whatever, anyone that runs around trying to claim the name, they've just been taken by a spirit of exaltation. The best thing I can do for you is tell you the qualifications for recognizing an apostolic ministry and then everyone can judge for themselves.

There are several qualifications revealed in the scripture for an apostolic ministry, but the greatest sign by which you can recognize an apostolic ministry is that he is one who births new works. If one is manifestly, though simply doing it, has the wisdom, the patience, the love, the faith, the courage (believe me it takes all those things) the maturity to draw a group of people together in any one of the feasts and births them into a body of people, a local body that holds and finally stands, that's all the sign anyone needs to have that that person has an apostolic ministry. It could have been in the first feast level, the salvation truth or the second feast level or the third feast level that we're now on. That's your great sign.

On the other hand, it's not pre-requisite that one is not an apostolic ministry unless they've birthed new works. There were apostolic ministries in the scripture that had an instructor's ministry and not a foundation-laying ministry. And that's a sure sign.

The qualifications: the first qualification for an apostolic ministry is he must be supernaturally called by Jesus, given his message by Jesus and supported by Jesus, which means he must live by faith, no set salary dealt by some organization or something.

The second qualification is he must have ministered in the other four ministries, else he couldn't be used to call out and train the other four ministries; of course any apostle who births a new work has to minister the other four ministries until he brings it into being, he has to evangelize them in that message, elderize them, prophetize them and everything else, until the other four ministries are brought forth.

The third qualification is he must be willing to go anywhere, anytime, to fulfill the ministry God has given him. He's a "sent one." The word in the original language in the scripture means "sent one." Apostle means, special messenger.

The fourth qualification is he must be willing to have no certain dwelling place, he's always on the go, it's his calling, his ministry, he never can settle down. The Apostle Paul said, "We, the apostles, have no certain dwelling, place."

The fifth qualification is that he must be willing to be the off scouring of the earth, he must be willing to take all the blame for everything. Paul said "I think that God has set forth us, the apostles, last to be a spectacle unto the world" (I Cor. 4:9-13) When you're called to preach truth to people that they're already established in, nobody will ever hate you very much, but when you're called to bring forth that next message (and that's what apostolic ministry's calling is, to establish new truth in the earth) then you always get it in the neck from the established.

Those are the five main qualifications, so each one must just take those and discern for themselves what the Spirit says. These are God's eternal principles that we at last have come to see in this move of God. If the old order ministry in the church today ever sees it, they'll come join us or better yet, they'll let us come join them because we don't require

anybody to join us. But when all of us see it, the division will be done away with forever.

When this order is fully understood and at last established and walked in by all God's people, division will be done away with forever. It is absolutely perfect. The only room for imperfection is the human factor, when a body member, an elder or an apostle just wants his way and refuses to submit the question to the next step until finally it gets to the Head, and we have seen some of that. But it doesn't leave room for error or division if we walk in it. Amen