

APCI Midwest 2012 New Year's Party

Saturday, December 31 at
4:30pm - Sunday, January 1,
2012 at 2:00am

True Love Apostolic Church
4700 W. 72nd Street
Indianapolis, Indiana

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=136074813161920>

Spring Conference

"Equipped for the Harvest"
Friday, March 9, 2012 at
5:00pm thru Saturday,
March 10, 2012 at 3:00pm

Abundant Life Tabernacle
3015 South Fourth Street
Rockford, IL

** \$10 Registration fee is
requested- but not mandatory.
Offerings will be taken for
those who can give more.

General Conference

When: July 11-14, 2012
Where: Nashville, TN

Hosted by
Mt. Pisgah Fellowship

A Well-Oiled Machine

The right tool for the job.

Let's talk about a hypothetical machine: This machine is designed to perform a specific task. Not only can it do this task very well, but it is so cleverly designed that it does not need external maintenance: each of its components has a role in maintaining the others! Let's look at its design:

One component, which we can compare to the CPU in a computer, oversees the functions of all the other parts. For simplicity, we'll just call this part the **CPU**.

The work of the machine is then divided into two sections. One section contains only five components:

The Initiator: this part identifies new tasks and begins them.

The Communicator: this part conveys information from the power supply to all the other parts.

The Feeder: this part makes sure all the other parts have sufficient energy to operate and that they are in proper working order.

The Booster: this component regularly provides stimulus to all the other parts, prompting them to continue operating.

The Memory: This part is re-

sponsible for making sure that all the other parts know and remember what their function is, and how to carry it out. Without this part, the others don't retain the information well, and easily become diverted from their original function.

While this section of the machine functions together to accomplish the primary purpose of the device, there are countless other tasks that must go on in the background in order to keep things running smoothly. That brings us to

The Servers: The fascinating thing about the Servers is that the machine is capable of adding new ones as the need arises. The Servers function in various capacities, mostly in the background, to deal with various and sundry tasks. These tasks, while not specifically a part of the main function of the overall machine, are vital, and the five components of the first section could not function properly without the Servers, because they would have to devote their own resources to addressing the tasks the Servers would do.

It bears mentioning that this machine was designed by the
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foremost expert in the field. There isn't another person in the world with the expertise to design such a machine, nor anyone who could improve upon its design. Of course, that didn't stop people from trying.

Almost from the start, the Communicator and the Memory were eliminated. The Memory was replaced with a flawed component that delivered mostly incorrect data. The Communicator was eliminated, but not replaced. In time, the Booster was also removed. With the Communicator and Booster gone, the Feeder was given far more power than it was designed to handle. Soon, the flawed memory component was removed, and the Feeder was expected to provide that function as well. The CPU, while still nominally in charge, was made mostly symbolic, and provided little actual guidance. Most of the Servers were removed, and the few who remained were restricted to unnecessary, symbolic tasks. Their original tasks fell to the Feeder. The Initiator continued to function, but since the rest of the machine was no longer functioning as designed, every new task it started became as flawed as the rest of the machine. And of course, with the Feeder carrying so much of the responsibility of the machine, it failed on a regular basis, and had to be replaced, only to burn out again.

For some bizarre, perverse

reason, people seemed to prefer this barely functional version over the original design. That's human nature for you.

This machine is an analogy of the church. The church was designed much like a machine, with specific parts, each having its own function. Each city was meant to have one church. That church was led by one person, the Bishop. Bishop means overseer.

The main function of the church in that city was carried out by the five-fold ministry:

The Apostle – this word means “one who is sent.” The apostle is sent by God to begin a new work in a city where no such work exists. So the apostle starts the church, and when it is established and has a Bishop and elders in place, moves on to start a new church. But undoubtedly, within the newly established church, new apostles are being nurtured up, and will soon go out to begin new works.

The Prophet – This ministry was eliminated very quickly in the second century. Why? Because the prophet hears from God, and when the church is backslidden, the last person they want to hear from is God. But even today in the Apostolic church, people have feared the prophets, and have even discouraged them from speaking. But each church is meant to have a prophetic voice, one or more prophets. God will supply these, but it is up to us to allow them to do

their job.

The Evangelist – An evangelist is a preacher. This function began to be restored to the church in the 17th century, during the revival period. And we do have evangelists in the church today. But their original function has been taken away, and they are relegated to a traveling ministry. While there is nothing wrong with an evangelist traveling to preach in another church, each church is supposed to have at least one evangelist functioning locally.

The Pastor – Pastor means shepherd. In the first century, the church in a city only met together as a group once a week. For Jewish Christians, this was in the Temple or synagogue. For Gentiles, this meant that church buildings were now needed. But during the week, people met in small groups in the home of a pastor. Considering the number that would fit comfortably in a home, groups probably numbered around seven. The function of the pastor was to encourage and minister to the people in his/her group. A pastor can easily minister to that many people. Saints were encouraged to invite visitors, and in such a small setting, it's easier to minister to the needs of a visitor. When the group had doubled in size, it would do what a single-cell organism does: it divided into two. One half would move to another home, with their own pastor. And once a week, all the saints from all the groups would meet together, where they would hear teaching,

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preaching, perhaps prophecy, etc.

The Teacher – This ministry was always a thorn in the side of the church. Human instinct tends to lead people to change and improve things. But some things were designed to be correct from the start, and any attempts to improve them only destroy them. By the end of the first century, the church was no longer heeding the words of the true teachers, but instead, found teachers who would teach what they wanted to hear. So naturally, by the second century, much of the church was backslidden and in false doctrine. Each church is meant to have at least one teacher to ensure that sound doctrine is taught to all. Without this teaching, it is impossible for the church to ever be in one mind and one accord.

Then there are the **Deacons**. The role of the deacon came about because of necessity. There are countless number of things that need to be done in order for a church to run properly, things that have nothing to do with the Word of God. Someone has to answer the phone, type letters, count the money, go to the bank, mow the lawn, paint the building, change a light bulb, clean the restrooms, and the list goes on. If the ministers or the Bishop had to do these things, the work of God could not be done properly. So deacons, which means servers, come into play. While sometimes deacons do go on

to become ministers, as Philip and Stephen did, that is not their true role. In point of fact, anyone who does the above-mentioned tasks is a deacon.

The Roman church seized control of most of the other churches in the early fourth century. They had their own ideas of how to run a church. Since this church was actually an amalgamation of backslidden Christianity and an ancient Babylonian religion, elements of both were incorporated. Babylon offered its concept of the godhead, its holidays, its queen of heaven, its priesthood and more. All were modified to fit the church. The priests of Babylon replaced the functioning of the five fold ministry.

Prophets were eliminated. Anyone who did try to speak for God was likely to be burned as a heretic. Apostles, now called missionaries, often became conquerors, slaughtering native populations who would not convert. Priests took over the role of the evangelists, pastors and teachers. Priests held absolute sway over the congregation, and because of the invention of the confessional, knew every secret of every person in the congregation. Bishops gained great wealth and power, and the Bishop of Rome declared himself the head of the church, the Pope.

The Reformers made changes, but not nearly enough. Some Protestant churches kept the priests, while others restored

ministers. They did not have a Pope, although some named a secular ruler, as head of the church. But one thing they all retained was the power of the pastor. Just as the priest was in complete control of a Catholic church, the pastor had complete control of a Protestant church. There was no five-fold ministry, just one person in charge.

Pentecostal churches adopted the Protestant model of church administration, with little change. Although we might now find prophets, they are still rare. We might find evangelists, but they mostly travel. We might have teachers, but they are relegated to schools or special engagements. The pastor remains in absolute control. But just as our machine could not perform its function properly once its original design was altered, the church of God cannot perform its function properly with its original design altered.

We have been careful to restore the original Apostolic doctrine. When new truth was revealed, we have embraced it, which is why we are called an Affirming church. But we have been slow to restore the original form of church administration. As a result, we have super-pastors, trying to run large churches, and to function as the entire five-fold ministry as well as the bishop. And sometimes, they even try to do the work of the deacons. The end results are burnout and inefficacy of the ministry.


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We labor for years, frustrated that our churches don't grow. But in the first church, growth was huge. It was common for thousands to be saved in a day. Scripture tells us that at first, God added to the church daily such as should be saved. But in time, that addition was replaced by multiplication: the word of God grew and multiplied. So what is different today? Did they have a different Holy Ghost? No! Did they have a different message or doctrine? No! They didn't even have all the modern tools we have today. The only difference is in how their churches were set up. They used the model that God designed, and we are using a model that man designed. Is it any wonder that it isn't working? A flawed machine can only produce limited tasks. A well-designed functional machine can do everything it was intended to do. It is up to us to throw away the traditions of men for the truth of God.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Bogota, Colombia 1st INTERNATIONAL APCI CONFERENCE Feb. 2013. 

From Mexico City: Dec. 1: Evangelism in the Zócalo for World AIDS Day. We are going to have a booth and share Jesus' Love! 

International Missions Director, Bro. Erik Wise, plans to be in Africa in late January... first stop: Dar es Salaam & Arusha, Tanzania. From there, to Zimbabwe to bring an underground church into fellowship. Then, Nairobi, Kenya to plant an openly inclusive APC church and finally, Kampala, Uganda, to minister to our refuge churches. Bro. Wise is also interviewing 8 ministers & 8 churches in Punjab, Pakistan & the surrounding area!!

Now Available!

"Homosexuality and the Bible"
a Video Slide Presentation on CD

This disk contains 7 presentations:

1. Introduction - establishes the fact that the English Bibles contain translation errors.
2. Adam & Eve vs. Adam & Steve?
3. The Sin of Sodom (wasn't what you think!)
4. Leviticus
5. Same-sex Marriage in the Bible
6. Romans 1:26-27
7. 1 Corinthians & 1 Timothy (includes closing credits)

This CD will play on any PC or Mac, many handheld devices, and even some newer DVD players!

Get yours now! Only \$10 plus S&H, with proceeds going to Mt. Pisgah Fellowship in Nashville.

For more information or to order:
<http://www.mpftn.com/Shop.html>

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APCI is an organization of churches, ministers, and ministries which seek, by means of the full gospel of Jesus Christ, to reconcile all people to God. The purposes for which this organization is formed shall be:

- * Glorify God
- * Edify the body of Christ
- * Evangelize the lost
- * Care for the poor, infirm, and outcast
- * Support those in personal, family, & spiritual crisis
- * Provide education
- * Provide the benefits of a strong ministerial alliance
- * Sponsor revivals, camp meetings, & special conferences
- * Plant new churches
- * License and ordain ministers and affiliate churches
- * Provide refuge for those needing healing from spiritual and religious abuse

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<http://myapci.blogspot.com/>

ABOUT.ME (AOL)

<http://about.me/myapci>

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