

# The Order of God's House



— By —

ELDER J. M. BULLARD

Booneville, Mississippi

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**PRICE 10c**







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## P R E F A C E

This perhaps should be an explanation as to why I am offering a pamphlet bearing this caption.

I trust that my only motive is to seek out the ordered path that the Church should travel in, and to sight some errors of its procedures. The Church of Jesus Christ has the greatest mission of any other organization on earth.

Christ gave her the orders, the laws, the commands, to carry out that mission.

The mission of the Church was not to populate heaven; not to prepare the alien hearts of men for the glory world; not to bring about a spiritual birth; but its mission was, and is, to prepare the Lord's people for service in the kingdom here in the world.

It is to do this in perfect harmony with the teachings of God's inspired Word that orders her in the way of righteousness.

When she observes the laws of her Master, she is a bright and shining light. There is no light in the world today like this glorious light. But if that light which is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Hence, the need to study the order of God's house that we may walk as children of light.

Booneville, Miss.

J. M. BULLARD.



## INTRODUCTION

In making an introduction, it is necessary to call attention to at least some of the contents that are to follow. This subject is a broad one indeed, and can be treated upon from many phases.

The title itself gives scope for a long needed discussion. When I speak of God's house, I mean God's Church—His Organic Kingdom, which was established here in the world, and which has ever continued to function somewhere ever since its establishment. I shall not speak of this Church as embracing all of the redeemed family of God, but only comparatively few of them.

There are strict requirements and qualifications for entering into the Lord's house, and there are strict requirements to stay there. My main objective in writing this little pamphlet is to try to show why the Church today is in the state of coldness and indifference that it is.

There is a reason why the Church is in a state of confusion and perplexity. Is that the way our Master intended for it to be? Did He design that she should have her seasons of refreshing showers, and enjoy the felt-presence of the Lord for a while, and then become cold, careless and hard-hearted? Some have spoken of her in this way. I had a good Old Baptist preacher to tell me that the cold, lifeless state of the Church was just as needful as the winters—that God gave the winter that we may more fully appreciate the spring; that He gives us the dark, gloomy weather that we may more fully enjoy the sunshine.

But is the Church governed by these same immutable laws? I think not. She is under commands to



her Lawgiver, and can obey or disobey those commands. She can walk in order or in disorder. I do not say she has a right to walk in disorder, but sometimes we have power to do things that we don't have a right to do.

I maintain that a church can, and does, engage in disorderly things, but without a right to do so. No sovereign has a right to do wrong. So we shall try as best we can to discuss what the Church has a right to do, and some things she does not have a right to do.

I am mindful that I am a poor, fallible man, and doubtless will make many mistakes, but I trust it's the love I have for the kingdom of my Master that has prompted me in writing this little book.

Submitted in love,

Booneville, Miss.

J. M. BULLARD.



# The Order of God's House

God's House should be an orderly house. It has orders to abide by, and laws to govern its activities. Those who occupy it are authorized to keep it in order. Notice! **Keep it so.** It was given as an orderly Church. Now YOU keep it that way. But how are we to know what is an orderly house?

Sometimes there are so many ready to give orders, and declare order and disorder, that many poor little children of God become so confused that they do not know where they are, nor what to do. If they decide to abide by the order of some one, very soon another instructs them that that procedure is wrong and that they are in disorder. Hence, they change their course and follow this instructor. But, alas, another soon points out that that way is wrong, and any one following that way is in disorder and will soon be cut off, "unless you adopt MY WAY."

Lord, have mercy upon such vain instructors! No man, or set of men, on earth today has a right to give one law to govern the Church of God. The giving of orders was never in the hands of men since the days of the apostles. The laws that are to govern the activity of the Church in every age were given, and no place can ever be found to change them in the least. God saw her in every age, under every condition, and supplied her with everything that she will ever need. But God did not supply her with the blind guides afore mentioned. They have supplied themselves for no man who has the cause of our Master at heart, has a desire to be a "boss" in the



kingdom, or to give orders for its operation. God did, and does, supply teachers and various instructors in the kingdom. But they are to instruct IN the WORD—not out of it.

I don't think much of an instructor for a church, unless he speaks in the language of the apostles. When we do that, we speak the mind of the Spirit, because they were inspired to write when they were giving the orders to the Church. Too often some of us forget that human tradition and custom are not inspiration. Human custom can be practiced for hundreds of years and be wrong. But any practice that is in keeping with the inspired Word of God, can never be wrong, though it might be against some custom. So let's forget custom; forget men as law-givers; forget selfish zeal, and look to the blessed old Book for our guide; abide by her sacred orders, and you can not go wrong. Study the commands that it gives you, and always be satisfied to take it in preference to orders given by men, regardless of how pious they may be.

God has given, as I have stated, everything that she needs, and no more. You can as safely bring in some new thing as you can leave off some required thing. Now, let's use the measuring line a little. One of the first orders given to those who occupy a place in the Church is:

"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together."

Another: "Let brotherly love continue."

Again: "See that you love one another with a pure heart fervently."



Again: "Be kindly affectioned one toward another."

Again: "Let each of you lay by him in store on the first day of the week, as the Lord has prospered him."

Now, there are a few of the things that are positively ordered. Is it all right to neglect such orders, and disregard the authority of the Holy Spirit to give these orders? I ask, can we afford to overlook such binding commands, and then at the sign of the first thing that enters the church without authority, begin to howl "disorder?" What's wrong? If it's wrong to bring in new things (and it certainly is), is it not equally wrong to leave off some of the required things?

It looks like a quarrel between the kettle and the pot, as to which is black.

I have in mind just at this time a preacher, the pastor of a church where not over twenty percent of the membership attend the services, and not over twenty percent of them ever give a dime for the expenses of the church, and some at variance with one another; yet, this church answers in PEACE and ORDER at each conference. But along comes a preacher full of zeal for the cause—preaching all the time—laboring to instruct the Lord's poor, tempest tossed children in their duties toward the Master. But before this preacher fills his appointment, it is known, by some strange instinct (perhaps suspicion) that somewhere down the line he has been thrown in company, and has preached with, with a preacher who affiliates with secret orders. So this preacher begins to cry LONG and LOUD to warn his flock to flee from such disorder. Well, fine! Now, why



not begin to warn them to flee from the ungodly disorder of "neglect" in their own assembly? God pity! May we at least be consistent! It is a serious thing to bring strange gods into the Church! It is also a serious thing to leave off required things!

I know that the principles of truth were given to the Church, and they belong there now. In making a rude comparison of the Church and our natural homes, we may have all kinds of nice, useful and valuable things in our home, and use them as we should, we will have a comfortable, happy place in which to dwell; but unless we exert some effort to keep the house **cleaned up** and things placed where they belong, and keep them where they will serve their usefulness, we better not have them. They are in the way, and we will likely stumble over some of the things and get hurt. Well, suppose I have a neighbor whose home is as described above, and I go over and order the occupants to get that house set in order right now, or I'll never neighbor with them again, would I not be assuming too much? Would it not be more fitting for me to point out how beautiful that home would be if certain pieces of furniture were arranged differently? How amazingly it is to see how rudely we sometimes treat a brother! God is the one who said for us to keep our house in order. We are amenable to Him. How needful it is for His children to study His Word; study His laws, and abide by them, regardless of tradition or custom.

In studying the way some Old Baptists behave in the Church reminds me of what I observe in some homes. Sometimes parents will leave their children



and go away from home for a while. They leave their laws and order to govern them in their absence. But sometimes there is a big, over-grown boy who assumes the job of "bossing" until the parents return. This big boy is always very smart. He gives orders and demands obedience. He is usually uncompromising and harsh. The younger children must act in strict obedience to what he commands. This is often contrary to the parental law that they are duty-bound to obey. But for fear of the torture and abuse of the big brother, they yield to do what he says. Therefore, when the parents return they find the family disturbed—things out of order, and their laws disregarded. Do not some of us preachers resemble this big boy? Do we not too often give the Lord's family our own orders instead of the orders of our Master? Will our kind Master not look with disfavor upon such procedure? Won't we have to face Him in shame when we must give account for our stewardship?

Instead of this big boy abusing and exercising such authority over the family, he should have been a kind protection for them. The ministry was given as a kind of protection for the Church; at least, they are watchmen, to warn of approaching dangers. But, too often in this age of the Church, there is sometimes more danger in the watchman than there is in the enemy he is watching. So there is little protection in such a case as that. I mention this without reference to any individual. It is a dangerous ravine into which any of us might fall, and a watchman must necessarily be closer to the enemy than the ones for whom he is watching, because he



is to see it first, and either subdue it, or warn the flock of its approach. Then they are either to flee or fight, depending upon which is necessary. Sometimes it's better to flee than to fight; and always so, unless you have a brave and true leader.

God's house is to ever be protected by the providence and power of God, and will stand forever (Dan. 2:44). There has never been any danger in the respect of destroying it; but that which pertains to its usefulness here, is in the hands of those who occupy it. The orders that are to govern it have never been altered or changed. However, men have at different times made alterations and additions, but the laws that God gave her remain the same. They can not be changed without serious injury to those affected. Christ, when He went away, solemnly gave some practices to be engaged in until He comes back. He was leaving a great possession, and it is His yet. If it is not functioning just as He authorized it, it is not because of His failure to instruct her; because He did not leave her here in this cold, unfriendly world with no knowledge of how to behave. But He tells us how we OUGHT to behave ourselves. Read 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 2:3; Psalms 101:2.

Now I wish to call attention to some things that must be heeded, and it is a "neglect," rather than a bringing in of something "new."

Notice: "Unto the Church at Ephesus, write: I know thy labor and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil, and thou hast tried them who say they are apostles and are not, and have



found them liars, and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, for thou hast left thy first love," etc.—Rev. 2:2, 3, 4.

What was the matter? Left her first love! Neglect! What was the denunciation? "Remember from whence thou art fallen, repent, and do thy first works," etc.—Rev. 2:5.

Another thing required:

"To the Church which is at Sardis write: I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead. Be watchful to strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God."—Rev. 3:1, 2.

Here we see a church is to be engaged in working if it is looked upon as an orderly church. How diligent we should be to be engaged in the works which He commands! Why is it that a church can drag on, and die, and no one will ever utter a word? But when a church gets too smart, and drags in some new or unscriptural practice, everybody is ready to howl "DISORDER!" Well, some might want to ask me what I think of the new measures and new practices in the Church.

**I am bitterly opposed to every unscriptural practice. I have no patience with it, and I am just as severely opposed to the unscriptural neglect of doing what is required.**

I had just as soon see one die running after the devil as to see him sit down in the fire the devil had made. I can't see any difference. There is no difference. Anything not authorized in the scrip-



tures is dangerously wrong to practice. Anything that is authorized in the scriptures is equally dangerously wrong to leave off. This is my main objective in writing on this subject. I have seen churches that would tolerate covetousness, drunkenness, lying, negligence in church attendance, or almost any other ungodly practice; but they want the preachers to abuse Sunday schools, Bible classes, and any other new thing, but don't say anything about US—we're all right (??). Well, what about that? Are you in favor of Sunday schools, etc.? NO! NO!! NO!!! strongly emphasized, and here's my reason: It is unscriptural, and I oppose the other things mentioned for the same reason. Sometimes we find a church that wants the preacher to "land on" a salaried ministry, and "give it down the country," when that church is not even paying its pastor's expenses to go and preach for them. "Well," you ask, "are you in favor of paying the preacher a salary?" No, because it is unscriptural to do so; and it is equally unscriptural for you to neglect to support your ministry as the Bible directs. One is just as guilty as the other. Both are wrong, because they fail to go by the directions or order of the New Testament. God loves an orderly house; and in order for us as His children to please Him, we must abide by the order which He has given. No man has any authority to change the order of God's house. Why should we want to indulge in something that He forbids? Why should we want to leave off something that He has commanded? How can we claim to be in order and do either?



If we leave off doing what our Master has commanded, how can we condemn those who bring in things unauthorized? Lord, pity! and give us courage to continue on a little longer in the Master's kingdom. May we have courage to fight, and strength to win in every fight for the right. May we love one another. May we pray for one another, and ever regard the Old Church as being more precious to our hearts than all the things of this ungodly world.

May each and every one who reads this, even after I am silenced by death, be moved to a stronger desire to abide by the plain commands of the Word of God, and be satisfied with it just as He gave it; not trying to go farther, nor stop this side of doing what He has ordered. May we ever be mindful of our responsibility, and our mutual interest in His kingdom.—the greatest organization in this world. Let each and every one be glad to withdraw from all who walk disorderly. That is what our Lord said about it. We must forget persons and personalities and abide alone by what our Master has said for us to do, and not to do. Why should we desire to walk along with some one, and at the same time know that Jesus Christ would not walk with him? There are some things that He refused to countenance when He was here. He tells His Church to do as He did. And as we journey along here amidst the wickedness of this world, and in the environment of worldly mindedness, we must continue to seek for the good old way and walk therein. Refrain from modernism at the first sight. Be careful about letting new things take root, and be equally careful to do as your Lord commands. Follow Christ in everything!



Live in peace. Strive for peace, and all the demons of hell can not keep your light from shining.

How the Old Church would flourish if we would all abide in the commands of our Law-giver! We would have an orderly home in which to live, and it would surely be an inviting place for the poor, tired pilgrims who are tired and homeless, out in a cold, friendless world.

May the light of our beloved Zion send her beams of light to such as are of a pure heart, and may they be guided to a place of refuge from the storms and perils of this life. May this dear home be a home free from men's designs and orders, and one which is governed by love. May we by patient and untiring efforts help with the affairs and duties and responsibilities of our home, and always be willing to be children and realize that each occupant is an equality. There is no need for a "boss," but so much need for cooperation.

May the grace of our Lord sustain each of you, is my prayer.

Submitted in love for the kingdom of God.

—J. M. BULLARD.



## APOLOGY

I feel that I should offer some apology at the close of this pamphlet.

I confess that the work is very lightly touched, and realize that I shall be sorely criticised. I know the arrangement is imperfect. There are perhaps many grammatical errors, but I did not have literary excellency in mind. I am willing for the reader to criticise anywhere that criticism is due. But I beg you, kind reader, to consider the contents and measure it by the Word of God.

I realize further that we have so many able writers who could have given the reader a much better idea on the subject. But "what I have written I have written." I shall be responsible for it.

May I have an interest in your prayers?

—J. M. B.







