



*september*

1974

*Banner  
of  
Love*

SPECIAL SECTION

LEADERSHIP



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## LEADERSHIP

### THE CHURCH

( A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST APOSTOLIC )

There are many reasons for the decline of leadership potential in the church. Denominal churches, and even those of the true faith are being altered over questions of morals and doctrine. These disruptions can be nothing but a trick of Satan. Other leaders are corrupted by lust and greed. If it is black and white and a man has normal courage and security, he'll say No. It's in the grey areas where the Christian will most likely fail. The Church of Jesus Christ needs men who will stand for the "faith".

From the time of the "latter day" outpouring of the Holy Ghost, there has emerged many ideal examples of leadership. I would like to briefly mention some of these latter day leaders and give a brief history of our organization\*, "The Church of Jesus Christ, Apostolic".

The Bible gives us an account of the first Holy Ghost outpouring in Acts 2. This same Holy Ghost experience continued until the 2nd century and the formation of the Roman Catholic Church. During the "Dark Ages" the "true church" went underground due to persecution by the Apostate Catholic church. Then came the period known as the Reformation and finally, in 1901, the Holy Ghost fell in the same manner as it did in the upper room --i.e. with evidence of other tongues.

The place was in a small Bible school founded by Charles F. Parnum in Topeka, Kansas. The Holy Ghost began to spread throughout Kansas and there was a significant revival in Galena, Kansas. From Galena it spread on to Houston, Texas and from there to

W. J. Seymour, a colored minister, in Los Angeles. His church was known as the Azusa Street Mission. From there the movement spread on to Ohio, New York, the Northwest, Texas, Arkansas, and Chicago.

During this early period there were many independent churches and missions. Soon there was a need for some type of organization. The "Church of God", "Pentecostal Holiness", "Assemblies of God", and other organizations were founded.

In 1913 there was a camp meeting in Los Angeles and a strange thing took place. A popular minister, R. E. McAlister, was in the pulpit and began to preach on the subject of baptism. He pointed out the fact that the early church baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ not using the titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This began the revival of the "oneness message". Pioneers in this movement include G. T. Haywood, Frank Ewart, E. N. Bell, H. A. Goss and W. T. Witherspoon. In 1916, the "Assemblies of God" rejected the "oneness message" choosing rather to remain in their Catholic tradition.

During one of the early Texas revivals, Bro. B. F. Hawthorne was saved. The following section relates the life and ministry of Bro. Hawthorne and his founding of the \* "Church of Jesus Christ".



Bishop and Sister  
B. F. Hawthorne



Bishop M.K. Lawson



Bishop G. Calvin Brown



BISHOP R. L.  
HANCOCK



BISH. C. LAWSON



Bishop Irvin J. Knieriem

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR MINISTRY AND THIS CHURCH

Our ministry began in our early years. In the year 1915-1916 was a great turning point of our lives. God met with us and talked with us as he did the prophets and men of old. From early days of my life, I had revered God. I grew up with the fear of God always before me, yet I traveled the road with the wrong crowd. In my teen years I met a girl at a young age and she too was stranger than any girl I had met. We both feared God. In 1910 we were married. For a few years we led a very seclusive life. One day we heard of a strange kind of religion or doctrine preached in the old school house where we had gone to school. We went as did the whole country to see what it was about. There we found God, for the "Word of God" was preached and the POWER of the most high over shadowed that old school house. We were saved according to Acts 2:38-39. That was the first revival ever preached in Texas that anyone ever heard of that preached repentance and baptism (Emersion) in the "Name of Jesus, for remission of Sins." The revival ended in a few short weeks and the two ministers left as they came but left a few like us really saved. The few of us built a small tabernacle by the side of the only road leading into the village. God began to bless us, with no minister I was elected to hold or be in charge of the prayer meetings (we called them then), but God met with us and for two years we lived for God and preached this message as we read it from the holy Bible. One wonderful night as we knelt and prayed before going to bed - God visited us in a supernatural way. He talked with us as he talked with the men of old. He called us into the Gospel and told us what to preach. We left our native home - Texas into places we had never thought of seeing or scarcely heard of, only as we read them in History books. For six years we had preached this gospel of the Kingdom to every town and hamlet from Texas to the Northern states. Thousands of people heard this strange gospel as it was called then. Many were convinced it was the same gospel that was taught in the times of the Apostles. Hundreds received the same experience as on the

day of Pentecost. We were called Postolic people. Until 1918 we never heard of an organization among these Holy Ghost Spirit filled, baptised, Jesus Name people. This gospel we preached had swept the Eastern part of this country like a fire sweeps a dry and parched land - everywhere we left, we left people filled with the Holy Spirit of God, and most always there was a preacher or Minister that had received this experience from out of some denomination, and God mightly worked in those days by saving and healing the people who called upon him. Everywhere we stopped, multitudes of people heard the WORD and gladly recieved it. In 1919 we came back to Indianapolis, Indiana. There we found a host of people, some from all over the world, out of every kindred and nation, yellow, white and black, Jews, Arabs and many other nationalities. For nearly one whole year we stayed there - my the Glory of God did come upon us there and the wonderful revelations of the ages were given at that mission. As usual people can't be contented with God as the children of Isreal did, in wanting a King like other nations. We had seen other churches with their Iron Clad Organizations and rules and orders. We began to want to copy after them. There the old Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, and soon duded P.A.W., was born. Then began the great confusion and discontentment among the breathern, among the peoples that were called by his name. God called us out to be a seperate people, a peculiar people as in 1 Peter 2:9-10 but none could be satisfied with the great things God had done in those days. So we left Indiana. As God spoke to us, we moved. He sent us to a small town in Tennessee, and on May 1, 1920, God gave us a revival that shall always be remembered by the peoples of Tennessee. They came from afar to that meeting - an estimated five thousand people had stood on that hillside listening to Gods' word as it poured forth of the anointing of God. No man could never have accomplished such a work as was wrought at that place except God ordered and ruled it. In four months time five hundred people had been baptised in Jesus Name and filled with Gods' Holy Spirit. The rich, the poor, the high man, and the low man. At one

night, two high sheriffs from different counties and a county judge, a leading Methodist minister, and a Baptist minister was at the altar before God, along with a host of other denominations. The work grew and grew but "WE" decided to leave. We boxed all our baggage, clothes and all, shipped them to Louisiana and left in our car. We got no farther than Chattanooga, Tennessee, went upon a mountain to pray. There God spoke to us to go back to Benton. He had a work there to be done. We went back and had to send for our things to be sent back by express. Well the work had not begun - a greater revival than ever had taken place. For eleven years we called Benton our home, many came up from that meeting that God honored and sent them into the fields of labor. A good many have gone on to meet their maker. We built a large tabernacle and the work spread till there was a church in every town for 100 miles around - a good work that's lasting good today. Among the ministers who were saved and had missions in the towns and villages around us began to want it organized. At that time there had been dozens of organized churches from Jesus Name missions sprung up, trying to find a name to call this church. We saw in the Bible (Matthew 16:18, 19) where it had been named long ago by the founder. Jesus said it and we believed it. So in 1928 we organized the first "Church of Jesus Christ." and the peoples who had accepted Jesus Christ as our one True God flowed into this church which was his name

Having never settled down in one place to long - I felt the great need of evangelizing again. This time we toured the different states preaching the same gospel and organizing churches in every place. The ministers of God who preached the "Truth" readily saw it clearly in the Holy Bible - "It is the Church of Jesus Christ."

We came to Florida December 19, 1931 and preached this gospel of the Kingdom from Pensicola to Miami, from East to West of this state. God gave us souls for our labors in every place we went. We built this church house here in Inglis, Florida. It has been a light house to many a soul -

marvelous things have come to pass here - even miracles have taken place, and to me the greatest miracle that a man could ask of God is our seven children along with most of their companions have come to God by repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost, and are members of this church. Also eleven of our fifteen grandchildren has also come to God according to his word (Acts 2:38), I have worked and labored for that which is not seen and as I come to the end of my story here on earth, I can truthfully say with old Paul (11 Timothy 4:7-8): "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the FAITH . . ."

May God help all to KEEP THE FAITH and having done ALL to stand.

Rev. and Mrs. B. F. Hawthorne  
and our Wonderful Family

During Bro. Hawthorne's labors at Benton, Tenn., Bro. Mark K. Lawson was baptized. Bro. Mark Lawson later became the presiding bishop of the \* "Church of Jesus Christ". In 1948, at a convention in Marmet, W. Va., there was a split in the \* "Church of Jesus Christ" and the \*Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ" was formed. Bro. Lawson died in 1959 and was succeeded by G. Calvin Brown of Oxford, Pa. as presiding bishop. Bishop Brown died in Feb. 1972 during the Homosassa, Florida convention. Bro. Irvin Knieriem was elected presiding bishop in the Aug. '72 National Convention and has held the office ever since. Let us not forget that it takes more than a "presiding bishop" to make up the backbone of an organization. Other leaders through the years in this organization have included the

honorable R. L. Hancock, Claude Lawson, A. L. Brown, E. A. Whitt, Erskine Chambers, Tommy Peters, Charles Porter, and the late James DeLong.

Due to the fact that many organizations have split from us and retained the name\* "The Church of Jesus Christ", it was decided by the Bishop Board to add the word "Apostolic" in order that we would not be identified with these other organizations.

We are not a fellowship endeavoring to establish the heritage of our organization \* "The Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic", for we realize the true "church" is not an organization, but a body of believers built upon the foundation laid by the original twelve apostles and abiding by the laws and statutes of God in His Holy inspired Word.