

Pastors

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (2021)

*Excerpts Selected by Bob Evely
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Any teaching ministry today is carried out NOT by a special “gift,” but by dedication to the written Word of God and the grant of faith by God. (19)

Once the nation Israel was judicially set aside at the end of the Book of Acts (becoming “*Lo Ammi*” – Hosea 1:9), and the Word of God was *completed* (Colossians 1:25) with the revelation of the *Secret Administration* (Ephesians 3:9), the many local *ecclesias* gave way to the singular *Ecclesia*, the One Body (Ephesians 2:16, 4:4; Colossians 3:15). Now instead of having many “heads” (“elders” and “bishops”) exercising the ascension gifts in many *ecclesias*, today we have only One *Ecclesia*, with only One Head – Christ Jesus. All supernatural gifts and human authority have ceased, with One Body now being self-edifying (self-building) in love.

“We should be making all grow into Him, Who is the Head – Christ, out of Whom the entire Body, being articulated together and united through every assimilation of the supply, in accord with the operation in measure of each one’s part, is making for the growth of the Body, for the upbuilding of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:15-16)

That Christ is the “Head” of the “One Body” is a truth reserved exclusively for the Secret Administration and is found only in the epistles of Ephesians (1:22; 5:23) and Colossians (1:18; 2:19). Today we have no Head but Christ; no other leaders, no other supervisors, no other elders, no other officers, no other authorities. Thus we are exhorted by Paul to,

*“Let no one be arbitrating against you, who wants, in humility and the ritual of the messengers, to parade what he has seen, feignedly, puffed up by his fleshly mind, and **not holding the Head**, out of Whom the entire body, being supplied and united through the assimilation and ligaments, is growing in the growth of God.”* (Colossians 2:18-19)

To repeat – during the Acts Administration there were many *ecclesias*, in the plural – “all the *ecclesias*” (Romans 16:4, 16; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 14:33; 2 Corinthians 8:18, 11:28), while today in the Secret Administration there is but one single *ecclesia*, in the singular – “the *Ecclesia* which is His Body” (Ephesians 2:22-23).

The individual *ecclesias* were what we would appropriately call “synagogues.” S. Van Mierlo (1888-1962) reminds us in his “The Development of Christendom” that

“The church, or, better, the “Christian synagogue” of Jerusalem could be considered as the first nucleus of the assembly that the Lord had promised to build (Matthew 16:18). The Christian synagogues were naturally organized more or less on the same pattern as the Jewish ones. We know from the New Testament that each assembly had its “elders” (*presbuteros*) and one “bishop” (*episkopos*) chosen from among the elders and corresponding probably to the *archisynagogos* (“ruler of the synagogue – e.g. Mark 5:36). All these functions had thus been known by Israel for a long time (see e.g. Exodus 3:16, 18; 12:21; Deuteronomy 1:15; 1 Chronicles 23:4). Similarly, the “presbytery” of 1 Timothy 4:14 was a council of elders which was already in existence in the organization of the synagogue (Luke 22:66; Acts 22:5).”

The Ascension Gifts (21)

The Ascension Gifts of “*apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherd-teachers*” were not merely capable men who simply held a “position” among believers. Rather, in the absence of the completed Scriptures, they were *divinely enabled* men, ordained by God to function with *divine authority*.

They were directly "set under God" as "superior authorities," "magistrates," "servants" and "ministers of God" (Romans 13:1-4). Like Timothy, their "gift" was miraculously given "through prophecy, with laying on of the hands of the *presbuterion*" (1 Timothy 4:14; cf. 1:18; 2 Timothy 1:6), by all rites and authority in complete harmony with the Jewish economy.

Notably, *presbuterion* was used only two other times, both in reference to the Jewish Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66; Acts 22:5). E. W. Bullinger defined *presbuterion* as an assembly of aged men, council of elders, senate – spoken of the Jewish Sanhedrin.

While certainly such gifted men of divine authority were seen functioning throughout the course of the Acts Administration, no such men whatsoever operate today during the Secret Administration.

The Ascension Gifts are plainly presented as a complete unit, and there is nothing whatsoever in the context of Ephesians 4 that would even suggest that these gifts can be parceled apart. This set of gifts were given at a specific time in the past, and they lasted together as a set UNTIL their defined goal was accomplished.

As we have seen this set of gifts were plainly given "when He ascended on high (Ephesians 4:8) and they remain a collective unit "until ..." (Ephesians 4:13) the conditions of which were plainly met by the revelation of the Secret Administration. This perfecting was anticipated by Paul – "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Corinthians 13:10) and was positionally accomplished with the completion of the Word of God (Colossians 1:25).

The Ascension Gifts had to do with the Body's *childhood* phase.

The Secret Administration (23)

The Secret Administration has no "offices", no "deacons", no "apostles", no "prophets", nor "evangelists", and no "shepherd teachers". Paul revealed that all has been accomplished beforehand by Christ, so we are now "complete in Him."

"Yet now, in Christ Jesus, you, who once are far off, are become near by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, Who makes both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His flesh), nullifying the law of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; and should be reconciling both in one body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it." (Ephesians 2:13-17)

All things emphasized in the past by the Barrier Wall have been removed. We now live under an administration where there is:

- No water baptism
- No physical circumcision
- No divinely recognized nations
- No observance of days
- No dietary restrictions
- No religious feasts or suppers
- No signs or wonders
- No miraculous healing
- No casting out of demons
- No snake handling
- No raising of the dead
- No tongues
- No visions
- No Mosaic law observed
- No vows

- No animal sacrifices
- No ordinances
- No altars
- No manmade temple
- No priesthood
- No confession of sins
- No prophecies being fulfilled
- No selling of personal possessions to have things in common
- No neglecting of the family
- No apostles
- No prophets
- No bishops
- No pastors
- No offices
- No miraculous gifts
- No local assemblies

All of these were characteristic of God's past dealing with Israel, and most will represent His future work in the restoration of Israel. All of these were true when the Barrier Wall was present, "but now" (Ephesians 2:13), in the absence of the wall, we are "complete in Him." There is nothing that needs to be added.

The "One Body" is just that: ONE Body. No one can "make" it be the "One Body" – it already is the "One Body." (Ephesians 4:4-6)

We each, in due course, grow toward maturity – not through "gifts" given to men at Christ's ascension, but through the Completed Word revealed through Paul and the granting of faith to believe it. This is that which is perfect, that which puts away that which was incomplete; the "instalment" of which is "discarded" (1 Corinthians 13:10).

Romans 13 (31)

The following comes from an Appendix in the book, written by Tom Ballinger.

In Romans 13 the "powers that be", the "higher powers", the "rulers", and the "ministers of God" all have reference to the select men of God who were chosen to be rulers over the Acts period churches. The One Body of the Secret Administration has no flesh and blood rulers.

To the Jew first (52)

The following comes from an Appendix in the book, written by Otis Sellers.

In Romans 1:16 it is stated that the gospel is "to the Jew first." That is not true now. In Ephesians 3:6-7 we find that the Gentile is a joint-partaker of the gospel. The Jew no longer has *any* advantage, and there is *no* profit in circumcision.

Note: You can purchase this book at StudyShelf.com / Authors / Pilkington

Notes by Bob Evely