

Calvin, the Presbyterian denomination came into existence shortly thereafter. The Methodist denomination later sprang from the Church in England. The door was open. Other denominations began to emerge, such as the Congregational Church in 1608, the Baptist in 1611. Many of the founders of these denominations later objected to the fruits of their labors, but their tracks could not be retraced.

John Calvin actually taught that baptism was **not** rightly performed in sprinkling or pouring, as well as did John Wesley and Martin Luther. Calvin and Wesley also believed the Lord's Supper should be weekly. Both believed that "Christian" was the only name the disciples were to wear, and that singing should be **without** the accompaniment of instrumental music.¹ These men are not our authorities, but they agree because the New Testament speaks so plainly on these matters that churches of Christ advocate today.

The Church Restored

After these denominations came to America, they brought the divided spirit of religion with them. Many preachers around 1790 and afterward, agreed that the **only** way back to the true church was **not** through a reformation of Rome or any other religious group, but to a return to the teachings of the New Testament—the original **seed** of the kingdom. Just as the true date palm can be brought back through its **seed** that has been

found, so can the church be restored. We cannot reform the American palm and make **it** like the original date palm of Palestine. Neither could reformers reform Rome or the denominations that arose out of protesting the destructive work of the apostate church. **Only** by going to the seed could the original church be restored.

No date palm is like the original date palm of Israel. No fruit is quite like that of Israel. Remember the 12 spies that found a cluster of grapes in Palestine that was so large it took two men to carry it? Even today, the "barren" soil of Palestine brings forth some of the best fruit on earth with the proper watering. Then, there is no church like that which began in Jerusalem around A.D. 33.

The Bible is said to be *imperishable* seed. Peter said we are "born again, **not** of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. 1:23). When Jesus gave the parable of the kingdom in Luke 8, He stated that the **seed** of that kingdom was the "word of God" (Luke 8:10-11). Jesus also stated that heaven and earth will pass away, but His **Word** will "not pass away" (Mat.

24:35) and "the scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). He **also** said that in the last day we are going to be **judged** by what He has stated in His Word (John 12:48). The dead are pictured as being judged by that Word in Revelation 20:12.

Now, if "corruptible seed" (such as the date palm of the first century), can be preserved, planted, and bring forth "after its kind" (Gen. 1:11) **even after 2000 years, why** is it difficult to believe that the "incorruptible seed" of the Word of God is **still** powerful today? One can be born again of that incorruptible seed (1 Pet. 1:23). As that seed (the Spirit's Word) is planted into the good hearts of men and women, it leads them through repentance and the waters of baptism where one is baptized **into** Christ to become God's child. This is that birth of the Spirit and the water described by Jesus in John 3:3-7.

We appeal to the world today to return with us to that precious seed, and allow God's kingdom to thrive even today.

Endnote

¹Statements by these men and others can be found in the tract *They All Agree*, by Clyde P. Findlay, or by going to the Internet, at www.bible.ca/H-music.htm, in the article What Early Christians Believed about Using Instrumental Music."

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