

THUS ARE WE ORGANIZED

Why are we as we are, and how did it
happen

IT DID NOT HAPPEN AS HAPPENSTANCE

- Christian connection
 - Very influential in the independence of the US from England
 - Brought spirit of independence to the Millerite movement
- Methodist
- Other congregational churches
 - Fiercely anti-organizations

SUSPICIOUS OF “ORGANIZATION”

- Afraid of “Kingly power”
- Concern of becoming Popish
- Afraid of becoming Babylon
- Rejection of domination by others
 - Must preserve “freedom in Christ”

DESIGNING A SYSTEM

- No concentration of authority
 - Not in one person
 - Not in organizational levels
 - Not in group of persons
 - Avoiding oppression, and losing “Freedom in Christ”
- Total accountability at all times
- Avoiding Anarchy
 - Every body doing what seems right in their own eyes

CREATION OF CONFERENCES AND UNIONS

- Conferences were the basis for the organization
 - Organized by states (1861/1863)
 - 3,500 members
 - One institution
 - 8 Conferences
 - 30 Ministers
 - Had limited authority
- General Conference unifying and identifying organization

TO FACILITATE MISSION

- Decentralize mission endeavors
 - Not every person is reached the same way with the Gospel
 - The message is one, but the methods may vary from place to place
- Employees
 - Responding to the local organization
 - Represent the world Church

TO EMPOWER THE CHURCH EVERYWHERE

- Major assets of the Church
 - Members
 - Finances
 - Both are responsibilities of the smaller organizations
 - Local church accepts, nurtures, ministers to, and preserves members
 - Local Field is the Store House
 - » All Church funds for higher organizations are distributed according to established policies, by the Local Field

TO DE-CENTRALIZE THE CHURCH

- For the development of leaders
 - Leaders “grow” into greater responsibilities
- Protection of properties
 - Not one centralize property holder
 - Every organization, Conference, Union, GC/Division
 - Should be owner of their own properties
- For legal protection of the Church
 - Every organization should have their own legal/
local organization
 - GC/Division must approve all corporations

TO IMPROVE AND FACILITATE DECISION MAKING

- Based on extensive consultations
- Local organizations must feel empowered to decide on matters affecting them in their territory
- Cannot have practices, nor make policies contrary to policies of larger organizations

TO PREVENT DICTATORSHIP OF THE HIGHER ORGANIZATIONS (1)

- “It has been a necessity to organize union conferences, that the General Conference shall not exercise dictation over all the separate conferences. The power vested in the Conference is not to be centered in one man.
- In the work of God no kingly authority is to be exercised by any human being, or by two or three...
- The Lord calls for wise men to preside over His work and to be faithful shepherds of His flock.—Manuscript 26, 1903 April 3, 1903 Re: Christian Leadership 26.3}

TO PREVENT DICTATORSHIP OF THE HIGHER ORGANIZATIONS (2)

- Larger organizations function, by representations, on granted authority of smaller organizations
- Committee membership
 - Local church—Only members of that church
 - Local Field—Mostly workers and lay members of that field
 - Union—Mostly representatives of Local Fields
 - Division—Mostly representatives from the unions
 - General Conference—Mostly representatives from the Divisions and Union presidents
 - All committees are populated by representatives of smaller organizations

SMALLER ORGANIZATIONS EXIST AND FUNCTION ON DELEGATED AUTHORITY OF LARGER ORGANIZATIONS

- No organization is self generated
- Larger organization always authorizes existence of smaller organizations
 - In representation (delegated) by the larger organizations
 - Thus smaller organizations become part of the world church

INSTITUTIONS AND THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

- Institutions are:
 - To support the mission of the church
 - Influence
 - Finances
 - Leadership
 - To project the church to the larger community
 - By associating with an institution, the community should know the church better
- Institutions follow mostly a business model of administration

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY AND AUTHORITY

- “It has been a necessity to organize union conferences, that the General Conference shall not exercise dictation over all the separate conferences.
- The power vested in the Conference is not to be centered in one man, or two men, or six men; there is to be a council of men over the separate divisions. The showing by the past leadership of the conference is not after God’s order. There has been a work done of a character that has not been approved of God. The result we have before us in the ruins where once stood that large printing plant, [The Review and Herald Office in Battle Creek] with its expensive facilities.... { ChL 26.1}
- In the work of God no kingly authority is to be exercised by any human being, or by two or three. The representatives of the Conference, as it has been carried with authority for the last twenty years, shall be no longer justified in saying, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we.” The men in positions of trust have not been carrying the work wisely. { ChL 26.2}
- The Lord calls for wise men to preside over His work and to be faithful shepherds of His flock.—Manuscript 26, 1903 (April 3, 1903 Re: The Work of the General Conference). { ChL 26.3}