



Blackfoot

Church of Christ

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The Original Originals

By Doy Moyer

Let's say there are some original practices of an original group of people. That group of people is known as the "Originals." The Originals put those practices down in writing so that later people will know what the Originals actually believed and practiced. They also warned that getting away from what is written and taught originally would result in being led astray from the intent and blessings brought by following the Originals. If others, then, want to be part of Originality, they would seek to read what the Originals said and strive to practice the same.

Now let's say that a few hundred years pass. The original Originals are long gone, but their practices and beliefs are well documented. All these centuries later people are still calling themselves Originals and claiming they are following the original Originals. However, what these later ones believe and practice have changed significantly from what the Originals documented. They are now justifying evil actions that the first Originals did not practice and would never have endorsed. Yet because these later people are still using the name "The Originals," others who are overtly non-Originals have come to identify "Originality" with the latter group. Consequently, Originality is identified with evils from that point forward. Many then assume that is what Originality was all about from the beginning, even though they are perfectly capable of checking out the documents of the original Originals.

Fast forward a few more centuries. Now there are all kinds of claims to “Originality.” Those who hate Originality charge that Originality is filled with evils, hatred, and divisions. To prove this, they point back a few centuries to those who claimed to be Originals but who practiced what the first Originals would have also considered evil. In other words, to try to prove what Originality is about, they point to pseudo-Originality. Consequently, their argument has nothing to do with the original Originals, but only those who have co-opted the name and practiced what is twisted and evil.

How, then, is anyone to identify true Originality? Everyone would know the obvious answer. They would go back to the first Originals. Going back to a time when people wore the name but practiced the evils that betrayed the name would be an obvious blunder.

You know where this is going. How are we to identify what Christ and the apostles intended to be believed and practiced by Christians? Pointing to the Crusades or early American slavery to demonstrate the “evils of Christianity” is baseless and faulty. This is why we want to look to the originals (i.e., Jesus and His chosen apostles) to see what Christians are really supposed to be (cf. Eph 2:19-21). Christianity as a whole is not defined by progressive steps over time initiated by uninspired men seeking to do their own will. Those who seek to do God’s will and “deny self” are not to be so brazen.

When Paul met with the shepherds from Ephesus, he sternly warned them:

“I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Acts 20:29-32, ESV)

The threat of apostasy was recognized and warned about from the beginning, and the apostles were clear about it. There would be those who “depart from the faith” (1 Tim 4:1-4). Certain people would “creep in unnoticed” and pervert the grace of God (Jude 3-4). False prophets would arise and lead others astray (2 Pet 2). Many deceivers were going “out into the world” (2 John 7). The warnings are there. Christians are to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). If Christianity were meant to be a progressive movement that significantly changed over time, then such warnings are meaningless. Change in teachings and practice would have been welcomed. Yet the warnings were given to avoid such.

If we are going to define what it means to be a Christian, let’s not try to do it by pointing to people and practices well beyond what the documents of the originals teach. Rather, let Christ and His apostles define it for us. Then, the issue is simply whether or not we will conform to Jesus and His expressed will.

“So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’” (John 8:31-32) Freedom from sin is based on Jesus and His word. True disciples will remain therein. Is this our goal today?

Comments by Ross Ward

The opening paragraphs are a bit dizzying to read but the logic is that we should always go back to the beginning, to the source, to the inspired writers for determining what is right, or original. There are many changing currents in the world of religion, we need to be diligent that we are following the originals. Not yesterday’s originals, but the original originals, Jesus and his prophets.

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Empey's traveling to Boise this week
- Paxton is healing from a fractured leg
- Sylvia Ward, Ross's mom is to have stints this Tuesday
- Angie Woodside has had a difficult time recovering from her surgery
- Tammy Woodward is suffering from the effects of cancerous brain tumor.
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) is undergoing cancer treatment
- Stacey Whittington, Brinda's cousin, is being treated for stage 4 cancer, in hospital with health problem
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- We are looking into the next Wednesday evening bible study material, there are a couple of lesson books in the back that are options and there for review and comments.

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<u>Today</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Ben Palmer Lord's Table – Larry Thompson Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – Ben Palmer Invitation – Ross Ward
<u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Ross Ward Song Leader – Tom Mitchell Lord's Table – David Porter Sermon – Ross Ward	<u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ross Ward

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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