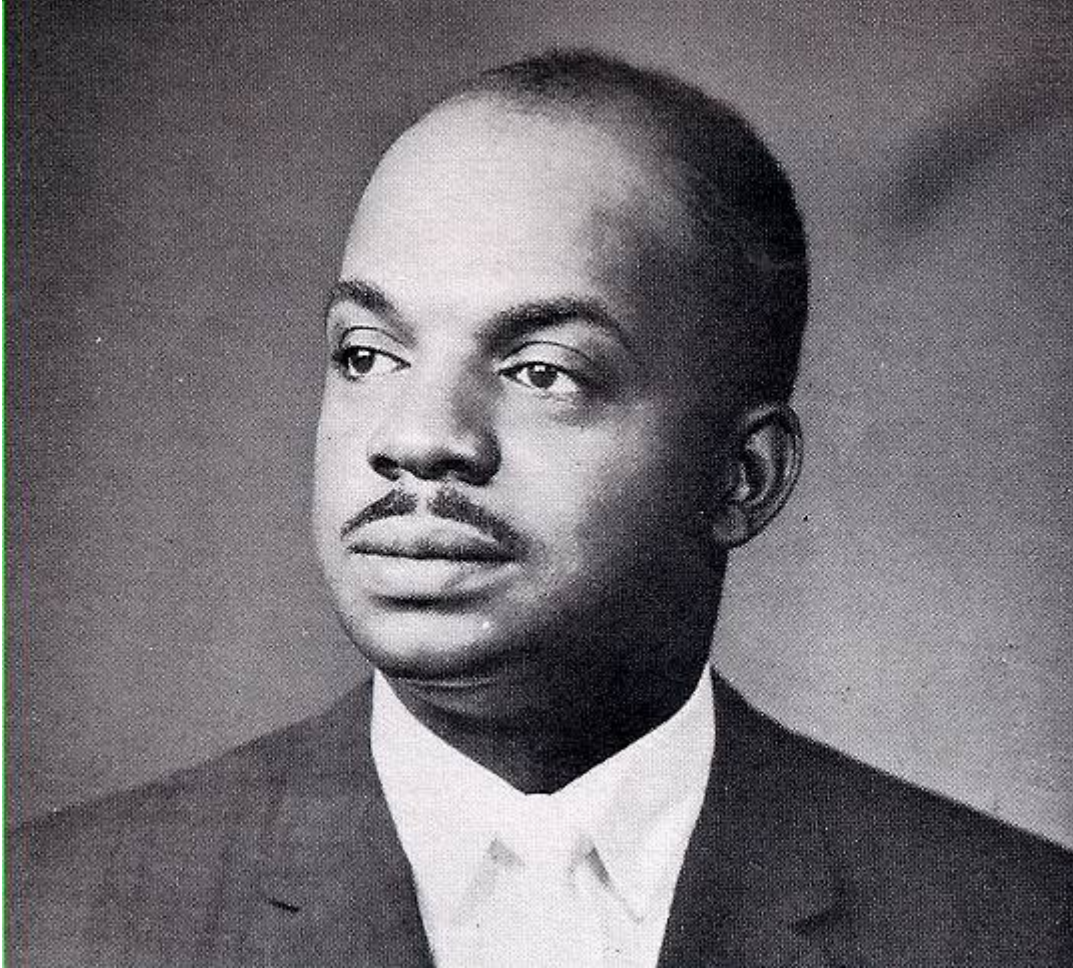


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**Reflecting On The COGIC'S Pattern Of Organization,
Its Constitution & His Personal Disagreements To Allegations
Concerning Bishop O. T. Jones, Sr., After He Was
Elected As Senior Bishop Of The Church Of God In Christ**

THIS IS THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

Its Pattern of Organization

"Therefore, since we have received this wonderful ministry, having obtained mercy, we take this method of setting forth what we understand to be a God-accepted rule to govern the church. We hold the holy scriptures as contained in the Old and New Testaments as our rule of faith and practice . . ."

—from the "Preface of the OFFICIAL MANUAL,
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

The "Pattern" — Same for National, State, Local

1. The same scriptural "pattern" that is followed by the National Church for its order and government is likewise followed by the State and Local works for their order and government.

Hence, each office, department, and meeting that exists on the National level may likewise exist — in its counterpart — on the State and Local levels. In other words: the Church is organized on the State and Local levels just like it is organized on the National level.

In the *National Church* there is a *General Assembly*, presided over by the *Senior Bishop*.

In the *State* there is a *State Assembly*, presided over by the *State Bishop*.

In the *Local Church* there is a *Local Assembly*, presided over by the *Pastor*.

2. This is because the Church Of God In Christ, as an organized body of believers, *began* as a National body. This is indicated in the Church's history.

"Later in the same year 1907, Elder C. H. Mason called a meeting in Memphis, Tenn., of all the ministers who believed in receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost according to the scriptures Acts 2:4 . . .

These brethren formed the first General Assembly of the Church Of God In Christ, whose faith was founded upon the doctrine of the Apostles as received on the day of Pentecost."

—OFFICIAL MANUAL, CHURCH
OF GOD IN CHRIST, 1957 Ed.,
pp. 8-9

3. Thus, the Church Of God In Christ on the State and Local levels looks to the Church on the National level for clarification of the "pattern" it is to follow in its faith and order and government.

"The General Assembly is the only doctrine expressing and law-making authority of the Church."

—Church Constitution, Art. 7; par. 1

4. The "pattern" of the Church's organization is not a mere human arrangement; its ministries and offices are of Divine origin. Hence we read—

"And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily phophets, thirdly teachers . . ."
—1 Cor. 12:28

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." —Eph. 4:11

"All members have not the same office." —Rom. 12:4

5. Our Church believes that the office of Senior Bishop, which is the office of the Chief Apostle, was placed in the Church by the Lord — just as was the office of State Bishop or State Overseer and Pastor were placed in our Church by the Lord. This is indicated in our Church's official history.

"The Lord gave Elder C. H. Mason to be Chief Apostle, to which the whole assembly accepted."

—from "History" in OFFICIAL MANUAL
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, 1957
Ed. p. 9

The Appointive Powers of the Office of Senior Bishop

1. In the Church Of God In Christ, the Senior Bishop appoints State Overseers or State Bishops and Heads of National Departments. This is according to our Constitution.

"The Overseer will be appointed by the Senior Bishop and may be removed for cause by the Senior Bishop or his appointee."

—Church Constitution, Art. 11, par. 1

"Said National Officers [of National Departments] to be appointed by Senior Bishop."

—Church Constitution, Art. 13; par. 10

2. The appointive powers of the office of the Senior Bishop are in accord with the scriptural "pattern" which gives the Leader on each level of the church (national, state, and local) the power of appointment.

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."—Titus 1:5

This scripture which gives to one man (the State Bishop) authority to appoint pastors in the state also gives to one man (the Senior Bishop) the authority to appoint Bishops over the states.

Note: The Scripture does not read: for this cause left *WE* thee in Crete. Rather it reads: for this cause left *I* thee in Crete.

3. The appointive powers of the office of Senior Bishop on the national level follow, fundamentally, the same "pattern" as is followed by the Leaders of the Church on every level of its existence (national, state, and local). Hence:

On the national level the Senior Bishop appoints Heads of National Departments and the Bishops (or Overseers) of States.

On the state level, the State Bishop appoints State Officials and the Pastors to local churches in the state.

On the local level, the Pastor appoints Local Officials and Heads of Local Auxiliaries.

4. The Church Of God In Christ has been greatly blessed of the Lord by following its God-given "pattern." Our official history says:

"Under his leadership [that is, the leadership of the first Senior Bishop] the Church has witnessed a great triumph and growth."

—"History" in the OFFICIAL MANUAL, CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, 1957

Our Church Has Covenanted Not to Change Its Spiritual "Pattern"

1. While it is true, that the General Assembly has the authority to make laws for the Church, it is *not* true that the General Assembly has the authority to change the "pattern" of the Church's leadership. Article 9 in our Church Constitution restricts the powers of the General Assembly in this regard.

"(a) It [the General Assembly] shall not set aside or change any of our articles of faith, nor shall it establish any new doctrines contrary to the doctrines that now exist in the church.

"(b) The General Assembly shall not abolish our representative form of government *nor the General Superintendency, nor deprive it of any of the authority given it by this Constitution.*"

If the Church is to be consistent with its own history, organizational structure and composition, and Consti-

tution, the General Superintendency not only consists of State Bishops (who presently compose the Board of Bishops); but also the office of Senior Bishop.

For it was by authority of the Board of Bishops, that the office of Senior Bishop was filled after the death of the late first Senior Bishop. The present Senior Bishop was elected to this office by the General Assembly in 1962, which was an election held by authority of the Board of Bishops.

2. Hence, the General Assembly cannot be legally convened by any person or group for the purpose of depriving either State Bishops (or State Overseers) or the Senior Bishop of any of their constitutional appointive powers.

Overseers are granted by our Constitution the power to appoint and assign Pastors, District Superintendents, and to preside over their respective State Assemblies.

—Church Constitution, Article 11

The Senior Bishop is granted by our Constitution the power to appoint State Overseers and the Heads of National Departments.

—Church Constitution, Articles 11, 13

3. The General Assembly has been given the authority, by our Constitution, to make Amendments to our Constitution. However, the General Assembly has been prohibited from Amending Article 9 of our Constitution, which, among other things, prohibits the General Assembly from depriving the Church General Superintendency (which includes both State Bishops and the Senior Bishops) from exercising the appointive powers vested in their respective offices.

4. These constitutional restrictions upon the General Assembly are an additional safeguard built-in the Constitution to protect the "pattern" of the Church against any possible subversion, even by the General Assembly.

Contemplate the Confusion if Our God-given "Pattern" Were Subverted

1. In the Scriptures, the Church is found in all its spiritual and structural wholeness wherever any fellowship of believers is found. The only difference in the church anywhere on any level is size.

Whatever "gifts", or "administrations", or "operations", or "offices" God is said to have placed in the Church, these should be operative in every Church — large or small, national or local, then and now.

2. Hence, if "twelve" men or a "board" *ought* to lead the Church on the national level, then "twelve" men or a "board" *ought* to lead the Church on the state and local levels. For the scriptures recognized no different "pattern" for the national or larger than for the state or smaller body.

This would mean that, instead of one man, there ought to be

"twelve" Co-Chairmen of each national, state, and local board

"twelve" Co-General Secretaries and "twelve" State Secretaries

"twelve" Co-State Bishops of each state

"twelve" Co-Pastors of each local church.

3. Obviously, if our church or any organization were to follow this latter "pattern" in its leadership, it would inevitably fall into confusion and disintegration. And "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."—*1 Cor. 14:33*
4. Throughout the Scriptures and church history, God has always made choice of one man to be the chief leader for His people at any one time and place. In our Church—he is the Senior Bishop.
5. This chief leader has always been given by the Lord authority not given to any other office or person or group of persons.
6. Do not the holy scriptures, especially in Numbers 16, warn and denounce any policy or procedure — undertaken by any person or group, deliberately or unintentionally — which seeks to subvert or overthrow the Divinely chosen leader?

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."

—*1 Sam. 15:23*

The Church Of God In Christ Is A Unique Spiritual Organism And Its Genius Rests In The Fact That It Is Unique. To Know And Understand It Is To Love, Support And Defend It.

SPN

TO "MAKE IT PLAIN"

... Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. *Hab. 2:2-4*

Reasonable men may disagree, but reasonable, intelligent, honest, saved, "Holy Ghost-Filled" men will hear the truth about any matter and admit the same. It is not very difficult to read certain statements and arrive at different conclusions. The answer we get, in many instances, is determined by our attitude at the time when we are reading, our desires, our intentions, our intellectual ability, our exposure, and our direction.

Sometimes men who are really interested in the Truth — and will stand for it — like to find out just how many people will stand with them. They send out certain statements to watch the response of the readers. In such a case, the writer may not be voicing what he knows to be the Truth, or even what he believes himself.

Because it is assumed that all true members of the Church of God In Christ take the happening of the Church very seriously, and because certain recent documents, inconsistent with the Spirit of the Church, have been circulated throughout the Church; this space is devoted to a critical analysis of that certain document, dated February 8, 1965, under the heading of "Executive Board Church Of God In Christ, Inc." and written over the signatures of the General Secretary and other "Executives" acting with him. In this space we are seeking the TRUTH of the MATTERS set forth.

We will seek to analyze the document by setting forth THE ALLEGATION by the "Executive Board", and then follow it with THE FACTUAL picture or analysis of the matter involved.

THE ALLEGATION: — that "under the constitution and by-laws of the Church Of God In Christ, there is no

provision whatsoever for a 'Senior Bishop', after the death of the late revered Bishop C. H. Mason;"

THE FACT IS — There is no place in the COGIC Constitution which terminates the Office of Senior Bishop with the death of the late Bishop C. H. Mason.

THE constitution anticipates and provides for the continuation of the Office of Senior Bishop in that it expressly sets forth:

— "the Overseer will be appointed by the Senior Bishop and may be removed for cause by the Senior Bishop or by his appointee.

COGIC Const. Art. 11; par. 1

— "Said national officers (of National Departments) to be appointed by Senior Bishop."

COGIC Const. Art. 13; par. 10

THERE is nothing in the constitution which establishes any other appointive authority for these vital offices and positions in the Church. It seems reasonable to conclude that it was intended that the incumbent in the Office of Senior Bishop would make the appointments, no matter what his name might be.

NOTE: When the late Bishop C. H. Mason died the "pattern" which God had given for the Church did not die with him. It should also be remembered that God did not die either. THANK GOD! *HE LIVES.*

THE ALLEGATION: — that "the constitution and by-laws expressly state that on the death of Bishop Mason, the power, authority and government of the Church shall vest in the Executive Board."

THE FACT IS — The COGIC Constitution provides: "... Bishop C. H. Mason, the present Senior Bishop, shall retain his present power and authority during his life-time, but upon his death said authority shall revert to the Board of Bishops."

COGIC Const. Art. 7; par. 2

THE constitution does not mention "Execu-

tive Board", for there was no such creature at that time. And by the constitution there is no such creature at this time.

THE ALLEGATION — that "this board was created by the late Bishop C. H. Mason."

THE FACT IS — There is no record which shows when or that the late Bishop C. H. Mason, serving in the Office of Senior Bishop during his life on earth, created the "Executive Board."

THE ALLEGATION — that "its power and authority was recognized and ratified by the General Assembly . . . on several occasions."

THE FACT IS — There is no record to establish that "its power and authority was recognized and ratified by the General Assembly . . . on several occasions."

NOTE: Even if the allegations of the "Executive Board" were true, they allege that the "General Assembly" attempted to do what the COGIC Constitution Art. 9 (b) expressly forbids it to do. The General Assembly "shall not abolish . . . the General Superintendency." To seek to place the "Executive Board" in a position above the Office of Senior Bishop is to oppose one of the Cardinal Principles of our church.

THE ALLEGATION — that "Bishop O. T. Jones has, since 1962, usurped the power of the Executive Board, and abrogated unto himself the authority to appoint Bishops, Overseers and other Officials of the Church."

THE FACT IS — With the authority and approval of the Board of Bishops of the Church, into whose hands the power of the Church was vested upon the death of the late Bishop C. H. Mason, COGIC Const., Art. 7; par. 2, Bishop O. T. Jones was duly elected Senior Bishop of the Church Of God In Christ by the General Assembly, 55th Annual Convention, Memphis, Tennessee, December 7, 1962. This is in the RECORD and the fact of the same was officially released to the world by our National Public Relations Office.

THE "Executive Board" is not a constitutional board of the Church. There is nothing to show any

rights, authority or power which the "Executive Board" was possessed of; therefore, the question of usurpation of their authority is an unreasonable claim.

NOTE: Judging from the attempted actions of the "Executive Board" in the document under analysis, it appears that the said Board might be guilty of the act of which it wrongfully accuses our beloved and duly elected Senior Bishop O. T. Jones.

SENIOR Bishop O. T. Jones has not "abrogated unto himself the authority to appoint Bishops, Overseers and other Officials of the Church." To the contrary, he did make appointments within the authority granted the Office of Senior Bishop by the COGIC Constitution, Art. 11; par. 1 and Art. 13; par. 10.

NOTE: The term "abrogated" means "to annul by authority or by later enactment; abolish, cancel or repeal." The term is improperly used and is inconsistent with the allegations of the "Executive Board." In this very statement they admit that the accusations made against the Senior Bishop are false.

There is a word arrogate (to take, demand, or claim unreasonably or presumptuously; assume; usurp) which could have been used by the "Executive Board," but even if they had used the word arrogate, the Senior Bishop would not be guilty of their allegations because he assumed or usurped nothing. The COGIC Constitution gave him all the authority which he has used and which he is now using.

THE ALLEGATION — that the Senior Bishop's Appointments of Bishops, Overseers and other National Officers "were unlawful and without authority."

THE FACT IS — The Senior Bishop's appointments were legal and within the appointive authority granted to the Office of Senior Bishop, Art. 11; par. 1, and Art. 13; par. 10.

THE ALLEGATION — that the "Executive Board" was making the appointments of six state Bishops and two National Officers who had been previously appointed by the Senior Bishop.

THE FACT IS — The "Executive Board" has no appointive authority in the Church. The fact is, there is nothing to show that it has any authority in the Church. Such an action is unreasonable, inconsistent with principles of mutual respect, and is not worthy to be followed. Only the Senior Bishop of the Church has the appointive authority in the categories under discussion here.

THE ALLEGATION — that the Senior Bishop was being officially notified "to cease and desist from making any appointments."

THE FACT IS — A Board which has no constitutional or other status in the Church has no authority to notify the duly elected Senior Bishop of the Church what he must do. This is in poor taste, it is not "good manners" and it is a nullity.

NOTE: As duly elected Senior Bishop and Chairman of the General Assembly, it is the Senior Bishop's responsibility to defend the Church against its enemies, within or without. The Senior Bishop not only has power to appoint, but he has authority to remove from office those who give cause for such removal.

It should be remembered that, in this Church boards do not tell the Senior Bishop what he is to do, and in the states the boards do not tell the Bishop what he must do.

THE ALLEGATION — that "from and after this time, the Executive Board will NOT recognize appointments made by" the Senior Bishop, "and we also serve notice that he nor any appointee he may name will act at their own risk and peril."

THE FACT IS — This statement is an admission by the "Executive Board" that it has no authority, and that it is in no position to take any action relative to appointments made by the Senior Bishop or to any of his appointees. The Lord must have led them to conclude "he nor any appointee he may name will act at their own risk and peril."

NOTE: It is interesting to note that the Supreme Court of the State of Texas in the Case: Church Of God In Christ, No. 1, Silsbee, Texas VS R. J. Darrett, seems to suggest that the "Executive Board" has no legal standing in the Church Of God In Christ. If the "Executive Board" has no

legal standing in the Church, doesn't it raise a question among reasonable men as to whether or not that board is acting "at their own risk and peril?"

TRAVEL — Senior Bishop and Mrs. Jones have enjoyed the fellowship of saints in almost every state of the brotherhood. They have attended Conventions, Convocations, Workers' Meetings and other important events in the Church. The people received them gladly. By going to the people and observing the work on the field, a firsthand knowledge of the various fields of labor has been obtained.

GIVING THE CHURCH A PROGRAM — Significant steps have been made to make certain important changes for the betterment of the Church. Seven (7) Special Committees are now working in various areas to determine what recommendations should be made at this time. After the studies have been completed, workable parts of the suggested program will be approved and put into action.

APPOINTMENTS — Since it is the Senior Bishops feeling that the Church will be better if more people become involved in the leadership and operation of the same, he has selected and appointed persons to those positions where their special talents and training best qualify them.

CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS — Seven (7) Elders were consecrated to the Bishopric during the 56th Convocation and two (2) in the 57th Convocation. These men were consecrated only after they had successfully passed the Special Examination Board.

It is the Senior Bishop's policy to restrict the consecration of Bishops to those persons who meet scriptural standards of our Church, and it is his desire that men will not be consecrated to the Bishopric unless they are given a particular jurisdiction in which to operate.

UNIFICATION OF THE CHURCH — The Senior Bishop has conferred with leaders of the Church in every area of the Church. These conferences have been designed to get the thinking and assistance of the total Church. Much good has been done in this regard. At this point, a greater spirit of unity exists in the Church than was the situation three years ago. Many of the Court Cases have been resolved, and peace and fellowship are being revived.