

Antioch Church
By
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Text: Acts 11:19-26

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Essential Mother-Daughter Authority, (EMDA).

This term means the no church can be formed without a mother church granting specific permission for another assembly to be formed. There are several additions which are added to this definition by some EMDA brethren, such as an ordained elder must also give his permission

Direct Authority or Divine Authority, (DA).

By this term I mean a group of believers in gospel order believe it is for the glory of Christ for them to form themselves into an assembly by covenant and thereby to carry out the will of Christ. The authority for this action is given directly by Christ according to Mt 18:20; 2 Co 8:5.

I. ANTIOCH CHURCH

1. I select this account because it is one of the most detailed recorded in Scripture
2. All parties admit that Antioch became a true church
3. If EMDA is the doctrine of Scripture, this is where we expect it to be spelled out
4. My EMDA brethren appeal to this church as the Scriptural way of constituting a church, that is, they contend, Jerusalem gave Antioch authority to constitute through Barnabas
5. If I can demonstrate that this church did not have EMDA then it

will be clear this was not the doctrine of the NT

II. EMDA TEACHES ANTIOCH HAD NO AUTHORITY

1. Jerusalem was the only original *mother church*
2. Therefore, according to EMDA, all churches had to derive authority from Jerusalem
3. We know **Antioch had no authority to constitute**, because Jerusalem did not know Antioch existed until, Ac 11:22
4. This means that if EMDA is the law of Christ, then, the following propositions must be granted:
 - 1] Antioch had no authority to meet, vs 22
 - 2] Antioch had no authority to preach
 - 3] Antioch had no authority to receive members
 - 4] Antioch had no authority to baptize
 - 5] Antioch had no authority to worship
 - 6] Antioch was an unscriptural work *out and out*
 - Like Nadab and Abihu, Le 10:1
 - Like those in Ac 15:1, 5
 - 7] Antioch was therefore a false church

III. EMDA TEACHES BARNABAS WAS SENT TO CORRECT ANTIOCH

1. Jerusalem sent Barnabas to correct the unscriptural and illegal practices of Antioch and to constitute them into true NT church by giving them *EMDA*
2. This means:
 - 1] Antioch had to recognize that they were out of order
 - 2] Antioch's members had to join the Jerusalem church
 - 3] Antioch had to ask Jerusalem to become their mother church
 - 4] Antioch had to ask Jerusalem to grant specific authority so they could become a church
 - 5] Antioch had to be re-organized under Jerusalem's authority
 - 6] Antioch's baptisms had to be repeated
 - 7] Antioch's ordained men had to be re-ordained
3. Nothing else could give Heaven's blessing to Antioch
4. Is this what happened? Where is this recorded in Scripture?

IV. WHAT ANTIOCH *DID NOT DO*.

They did not:

1. Send to Jerusalem for any kind of authority either before or after Barnabas' visit
2. As far as the Scriptural record goes, they had no idea of any authority other than what they already received directly from Christ, Mt 18:20; 1 Co 3:11
3. Nothing indicates they recognized any need for any authority they did not already have, *without a mother church*
4. This indicates EMDA was not scriptural doctrine
5. So far as such things go, Antioch had all the authority needed
6. Antioch would never have met if EMDA had been Christ's Command, Mt 28:20
7. I can say in all sincerity that I wish we had a thousand churches like Antioch today—just as Barnabas found it!

V. WHAT THE JERUSALEM CHURCH SENT BARNABAS TO DO

They **did not send Barnabas, to Antioch**, but *as far as Antioch*,
Ac 11:22

1. There were other churches between Jerusalem and Antioch, Samaria, Ac 8; Damacus, Ac 9:19, 22, Tyre, Caesarea, Ptolemais, Tarsus, and probably many others, **Ac 9:31; 21:7, 8**
2. Olshausen says on Ac 11:22, “**as far as Antioch**--implying that even on the way to Antioch there were churches to visit.
3. **Antioch was the limit, not the destination**, of Barnabas
4. Barnabas was sent to see how *churches* were doing, not to *constitute churches*, Ac11:18
5. Jerusalem did not instruct Barnabas to ask any church—**by Whose authority, are you doing these things**, Mt 21:23
6. They did not send Barnabas to ask “**Who is your mother Church?**”
7. **Therefore, Barnabas was not sent to constitute Antioch a Church**

VI. WHAT BARNABAS DID WHEN HE GOT TO ANTIOCH

1. EMDA says Barnabas was sent to Antioch constitute them a true church
2. But the Bible account tells an entirely different story
3. Here is what the text says:

Acts 11:23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

4. He exhorted them to *Remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose*, Ac 11:23; 3 Jn 3; rejoiced greatly, Ac 11:18
5. There was not a single alteration needed or it would have been plainly stated, 1 Co 11:17, 22
6. Barnabas, knew Scriptural order, and he recognized Antioch as a legitimate church in every aspect
7. He did not find anything lacking in Antioch
8. Nothing was out of order
9. He did not correct anything
10. He did not change anything
11. He did not add anything
12. We know this was Barnabas' judgment for two reasons:
 - 1] Because of his statement, Ac 11:23
 - 2] Because he went and found Saul and both of them **joined this church without any correction**, Ac 11:26

Therefore—

- 1] According to Barnabas's own statement recorded in Scripture, Antioch was as sound as the church in

Jerusalem

- 2] According to Barnabas Antioch was a sister church on equal terms with Jerusalem but without EMDA
13. The man Jerusalem sent to correct Antioch, because they did not have EMDA, joined this church that was constituted by DA! without any correction!

VII. QUESTIONS ON THIS CASE

If EMDA was the law of Scripture, Antioch was not a scriptural church

1. How could the Lord be with them without EMDA, Ac 11:21
2. How could Barnabas **state the exact opposite** if EMDA is True
3. How could Barnabas give such a glowing report if they were **in open violation of scriptural order, Ac 11:23**
4. How could Barnabas **recognize the grace of God** in them, Ac 11: 23
5. How could the hand of the Lord be with them, Ac 11:21
6. How could Barnabas **be pleased when he saw the work they were doing**
7. How could he exhort them to *remain faithful* when EMDA says they were a false church and out of order
8. How could they *remain faithful* if disobedient to the first principle of a church, namely EMDA
9. But the evidence is overwhelming, Antioch was a **Spiritual church carrying out the Great Commission of Christ before Barnabas got there**
 - 1] **Hand of the Lord was with them**
 - 2] **Great numbers turned to the Lord**
 - 3] **Grace of God was visible, vs 23**
 - 4] **He was glad, vs 23**
 - 5] **He exhorted them to remain faithful**
 - 6] **He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit & Faith, 24**
 - 7] **Much people added to the Lord, vs 24**
10. Hence EMDA cannot be the law of Jesus Christ!
11. Consequently, EMDA falls to the ground like a spent bullet,

[Admiral Kimmel, Dec. 7, 1941] .

All admit, they were, in Barnabas's estimation a going,
glowing, growing Church doing everything
according to Scripture

VIII. IF EMDA WAS A LAW, JERUSALEM WAS A DISOBEDIENT CHURCH

1. Not one time does Jerusalem ever mention the law of *EMDA*
2. If EMDA was the law of Christ, then Jerusalem had to give authority to Antioch and all other churches, for there was no other source originally
3. But not one single account of this essential is found in the NT
4. If she was *the mother church* then she utterly failed
 - 1] For she never gave EMDA to a single church, Jn 14:26
 - 2] She failed to set forth EMDA in Samaria, Ac 8:14-17
 - 3] She failed to set forth EMDA in the case of Cornelius, Ac 11:1-4,17-18
 - 4] She failed to set forth EMDA in the case of Antioch, Ac 11:23
 - 5] Jerusalem did not rebuke Antioch
 - 6] Jerusalem did not correct Antioch
 - 7] Jerusalem did not give church status to Antioch
 - 8] Jerusalem did not give authority to Antioch

- 9] Jerusalem did not rebaptize anyone at Antioch
- 10] Jerusalem did not re-ordain anyone at Antioch
- 5. But Jerusalem was not a disobedient church
- 6. Jerusalem cancels out EMDA just as she did the law that said you must be circumcised to be saved:
“*We gave no such commandment!*” Ac 15:1, 24.

IX. HISTORICAL QUESTION

- 1. Why should we discuss Baptist History
- 2. The doctrine of EMDA demands a historical connection of churches which believed and practiced EMDA. They also maintain churches, who do not receive this doctrine, are false churches!
- 3. Now if true, then Baptist churches have taught this doctrine consistently throughout their history.
- 4. Due to its nature, EMDA cannot be an accidental or undesignated matter. It must necessarily be declared again and again. Churches cannot have EMDA without stating what it is and how it is received. EMDA brethren maintain any church constituted, without explicitly stating this doctrine, is a false church, and they require every such assembly to be re-constituted.
- 5. But in the face of all these claims by EMDA brethren, when we survey Baptist history, we are immediately confronted with this contradiction—
- 6. **EMDA has never been found in Baptist History!**
- 7. No Baptist history, no Baptist confession, no Baptist Church Manual, nor **any other Baptist document ever mentions EMDA!**
- 8. I have challenged my EMDA brethren to produce one explicit statement of this doctrine before 1900 for twenty-five years and my mail box is still empty! How can this be?
- 9. I do not belabor the point. You have my book *Direct Authority: Biblical and Historical*. Please examine pages 13-51 for numbers of references, too extensive for me to present here.

If EMDA is not found in Baptist history—and I challenge any man to show where it is explicitly stated there—whatever EMDA is, it is not Baptist doctrine! Baptist History is absolutely silent on EMDA!

But this is not the final setback for EMDA—there is more! Baptist history not only refuses to speak the EMDA shibboleth—but commits the unpardonable sin by **pronouncing DA consistently without the slightest lisp! Judges 12:6.**