

### Comparison of Doctrines

#### [Between the Fundamental Protestant Community and the so-called 2x2 Sect]

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#### A. Purpose and Background of the Paper

1. The intent of this paper is to compare analytically the doctrines and practices in a number of important theological topics of interest between the Fundamental Protestant Christian [abbreviated herein as FPC] belief system and the so-called 'Two-by-Two' [abbreviated as 2x2] sect so as to facilitate those in the 2x2 sect and that those who have left this sect might come to correct understanding of the differences and the truth of God's way.

2. The Two-by-Two sect was founded by William Irvine in 1897 in Ireland and has spread to many countries of the world. Their workers preach to their listeners that this sect is the only 'true' way because they adhere to and practice the teachings of Christ faithfully whereas all other Christian churches do not. I was in this sect for 47 years but left it after researching for a number of years on the veracity of the claims of this sect and having concluded that their claims and beliefs have been erroneously formed and guided by uneducated and misinformed leaders who lack theological background.

3. Thus, it was deemed necessary for the author, who is currently studying the Christian theology in a formal seminary graduate program and has intimate knowledge of the 2x2 belief system and its practices, to compile the differences between the Fundamental Protestant Christian community and the 2x2 sect so that those who still remain in the sect as misinformed may be guided logically and rationally and come to a correct understanding of what is really the truth of God's way.

4. Major doctrinal areas for comparison were selected after careful consideration of typical doctrinal subjects with particular attention given to the peculiar characteristics of the 2x2 sect.

Topics
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1.	Christology
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2.	Creation and Fall of Man
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3.	Ministry
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4.	Salvation
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## Comparison of Doctrines

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5.	Trinity
6.	Church
7.	Bible
8.	Baptism
9.	Celibacy of pastors
10.	Contributions & charity
11.	Denominational recognition
12.	Christian education
13.	Legalism

14.

Pastoral Compensation

### **B. Doctrinal characteristics of the 2x2 sect**

1. A pronounced characteristic of the 2x2 sect in terms of its doctrines is that its doctrines are not clearly evident due to the absence of the sect's formal declaration of what they believe in. The available evidences are convention notes and verbal dialogues. The leaders used to encourage or acquiesce exchanges of written convention notes in the past. However, recently they discourage such exchanges probably for fear that the written notes might be used as sources of criticism by those outside of the sect pointed against the sect.

2. Even senior workers, except perhaps overseers of states or countries, are afraid of crossing the views of their higher authority and thus shy away from the sensitive doctrinal issues such as trinity, Christology and eschatology. Therefore, only the very senior workers retain the right to preach on such topics. Even these top leaders shy away from doctrinal topics and focus on evangelical or pastoral topics. This tendency can be attributed to two motives: One, they might be afraid of creating dissension among the believers by encouraging some studious believers to come up with contrarian rationale against spoken sermons. The other, they certainly do not wish to be criticized by outsiders for preaching wrong doctrines.

3. Because the preachers, called 'workers,' are not doctrinally trained at any seminary institution or through any of their institutional training programs, most of them lack clear conviction on major issues of the Christian doctrines such as trinity. Most of them tend to emulate what they have heard from senior workers and visiting workers from platforms during their annual conventions. Therefore, it is difficult to pin down on what their beliefs are on major issues. The comparison in this paper, therefore, is based on what the author has learned or witnessed during his half-century of association with many workers in the sect.

Overall, there are some major differences between the FPC community and the 2x2 sect in topics such as the Christology, ministry, trinity and church that are worth noticing. Differences and similarities are discussed by topic below.

### **C. Doctrinal Comparison**

#### **1. Christology**

i. Christology deals with the question of who Jesus Christ is and the significance we place on his human birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. The main difference here is that the workers of the 2x2 sect do not preach that Christ was God incarnate, whereas this belief, that God himself came down in the form of a human to be the ransom for human sins, is one of the key tenets of the FPC belief system. In John 8:58 Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." He also forgave the sins of those who came to him. Scribes and Pharisees understood from his sayings that he was in fact claiming to be God himself and thus accused him of blasphemy.

ii. The 2x2 workers believe that Christ was formed by God sometime before the creation and came to the earth as a baby born of virgin Mary. But they never teach that he is God himself but maintain that Christ is Son of God, thus Christ takes a lesser position than God. This is similar to the positions of the Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses' belief that Jesus is a 'minor' God.

## 2. Creation and Fall of Man

i. The account of God's creation of the universe and the man in Genesis is never meant to be a scientific narration of the great work of creation. Rather it is an account of creation from God's viewpoint that has been revealed to humans through Moses. Thus, the creation story of Genesis does not conflict with the scientific discoveries of the past few centuries. Although there are some theologians who view the days in Genesis 1 as 24-hour days, the FPC community believes the lengths of the days of the Genesis account are not known and they represent 'stages' of creation. The sun and the moon are not mentioned until the fourth day of creation. Therefore, the first three days may not have been 24 hours long. A day could have been millions of years long. God chose not to reveal such information to us. What God has not revealed to us should not be a subject of argument. Yet God gave us the intelligence to discover many facts that modern science has come to know to be true. Science, however, has only scratched the surface of the great mystery of the creation in which God has placed amazing order and intellectual design. The more that scientific discoveries are made, they cannot help but marvel at the super intelligence behind the creation.

ii. Workers of the 2x2 sect are also ignorant or reticent about the consequence and aftermath of the fall of the first parents. They fail to teach clearly the meaning of the 'covenant of works' between God and Adam, which was broken through the sinning of Adam and Eve. They fail to mention that the total depravity of the humans and the evil in the world are the consequences of the fall. And they fail to mention that Adam and Eve, after they were chased out of the Garden of Eden, learned to offer the sacrifice of animals as tokens of seeking God's forgiveness and that their son, Abel, learned how to do this whereas Cain chose to make offerings in his way, thus practicing the false way as enticed by Satan. They also fail to mention that God is a just God so that His wrath towards the human fall could not be assuaged in spite of the animal

sacrifices. But, in His infinite love for the humans He planned to have His Son, who was God Himself in nature, to come down to the world as a human so that He could become the rightful ransom for the human sins to free them from sin's bondage and the death and to achieve the ultimate reconciliation between the man and God. They explain some of these thoughts but not in any complete way because they have not been taught to divide the Scripture in the true way.

### 3. Ministry

i. As the nickname 2x2 sect implies these people firmly believe that the way Christ sent his disciples in Matt 10 is the only right way for Christian ministers to work. They must go two and two as unmarried men and women, without possession and promise of wages, depending solely on the kindness of their believers. However noble this method sounds to the readers we, who have been in the sect, know that actual facts are quite different. For example, Christ told them "

*not to take two tunics*

"[v.10]. But I have never met a worker who takes only a single set of clothing. Christ told them to go to the children of Israel only [v.6]. But we know that particular command is not followed today without a valid reason.

He told them not to take "*any gold, silver or brass in purses*" [v.9] But we know that many workers maintain bank accounts. So why do they insist on complying with most of the instructions while ignoring a number of them? If so, how can they claim they are adhering strictly to the instructions of Christ? I have never heard satisfactory answers to this question.

ii. The key problem of the misunderstanding of this portion of the scripture by the 2x2 preachers and the consequent arrogance on their part based on their claim that they are the only group of preachers who practice the true ministry stems from the misguided interpretation of these instructions as pertinent in the present day whereas they were meant to be for a short-term practice mission that Christ sent his disciples to Israeli villages in advance of his personal visits to these villages to prepare the way and to provide them with ministerial

training. We observe the value of such a short-term mission as follows:

First, they learned how to focus on delivering the gospel message only. Second, they learned how to depend on God's provisions instead of allowing material concerns to affect their work. These are the goals to maintain in the Christian ministry. That does not mean the specific instructions meant to be for a particular short-term mission work two thousand years ago must be broadly applied in the present-day evangelical work. Some of the disciples, Peter for certain, were married. Then, why does the 2x2 ministry impose celibacy on workers? [We will discuss the celibacy issue later.]

As Christianity spread and many people came to believe in a single locality, there arose a need for stationary mission work, whereas this particular short-term mission work was an itinerant nature, visiting one village after another. The workers rotate from one field to another although the number of fields in a state remains virtually the same year after year. Yet, they claim erroneously that their missional method is patterned after Jesus' way of evangelism. Keeping a semblance of the first century practice for the sake of the claim that they are keeping the apostolic tradition is truly absurd when it is obvious that their practice is not based on the true necessity but of outward form only.

iii. Christ never meant the 'methods of ministry' to be a crux of the salvation work. He himself preached in homes, at seaside, on mountain sides, in synagogues and in the temple. He told the Samaritan woman that he was seeking those *who worship God in spirit and in truth* [John 4: 23].

Methods of the ministry evolved over the years and centuries as the mission environments changed. Surely the Lord does not want us to limit our work by applying the methods of mission work He prescribed for a particular mission work of a few weeks' duration two thousand years ago. He guides us in our mission work through the Holy Spirit, not with the temporary instructions which were pertinent during Christ' time.

Surely the builders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century do not apply the construction technologies of the first



century to building today's homes and structures. Yet, the sound principle of solid foundation espoused in the Bible must be applied just the same today as it was centuries ago. Wise application of Biblical hermeneutics is the key here and yet the 2x2 people are so uninformed in this regard.

iv. Another important part about the Christian ministry is how a person becomes a minister of the church. In the 2x2 sect most healthy persons of good reputation, willing to go into the homeless ministry as unmarried, without material possession and go with a companion are accepted without any theological or spiritual or pastoral training. On the other hand, in most of the protestant denominations, a minister must have at least a master's degree in theology or pastoral care and be ordained by an established church upon recommendation by the congregation.

The many unhappy experiences of young 2x2 workers during their initial years in the work are due to the absence of any training system in the sect. Without any formal definition of the doctrinal beliefs, set of guidelines and rigorous training system that filters out the unfit in the early stage, the ministry system of the 2x2 is bound to result in disappointments, heartaches, and excessive mental wounds that often last throughout a person's life.

What is sad and unfortunate is that it is the friends who suffer the consequences of the low quality of the worker's ministry. The exchange of ideas, thoughts, advice and other communications between a friend family and the workers are fully dependent on the level of moral, ethical, spiritual and physical preparation of the workers who stay in the homes of the friends. When the workers are not prepared to deal with the spiritual, mental and physical needs of the friends, it is the friends that suffer the consequences of often poor, unfit, unwise, or cruel exchanges. Of course, there are many workers of fine, respectable character and they deserve our admiration. What I am pointing out is **the need** for a well-structured training system for the ministry to maintain high quality evangelical and pastoral work.

### 4. Salvation

i. Issues of salvation are as follows:

- 1) Can salvation only come through the 2x2 workers?
  
- 2) Can salvation be taken away from a believer when the believer leaves or is excommunicated from the 2x2 sect by the workers?
  
- 3) Does salvation come to us by God's grace only or through grace and works?

There are other issues but we will deal with the above issues for our analytic comparison purposes.

ii. The 2x2 workers maintain that the 'true' gospel can be effective to bring about the 'true' salvation in the hearers when the gospel is preached by the 2x2 workers sent as Jesus sent his disciples in Matt 10. Thus, they forbid the lay believers from preaching the gospel and insist that other preachers' ministry is not effective because they are not sent forth in the way Christ sent the disciples. This exclusivism is perhaps the most dominant heresy of the 2x2 sect. They forget that the method of the one-time evangelical mission work prescribed in Matthew 10 was for the specific mission only and the spirit of this mission as what should be kept, not the details which are no longer relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

iii. Philip, who was one of the elders, preached the gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch and even baptized him. He also conducted successful mission work in Samaria, and his companion is not mentioned in Acts as he took up the evangelical work. Preachers often went by themselves, sometimes with their wives and sometimes in a three-some. Going two and two was not the doctrinal method and the lay believers spread the gospel as often as situations permitted. Thus, the number of believers increased explosively during the early days of the 1<sup>st</sup> century mission work. We cannot believe that all the mission work was done by the 12 and 70/72 disciples only. The 2x2 sect's exclusivism doctrine is absurd and not biblical.

iv. Salvation by works vs. salvation by grace of God through faith in Christ: Although the 2x2 workers preach from the gospels, they make it plain that unless one does appropriate works after professing, one cannot attain to salvation. The typical verse quoted to stress this point is Phil. 2: 12, where Paul wrote "work out your own salvation in fear and trembling." The expression "*work out*" in Greek has the meaning "*to bring out, to make it evident outwardly.*" In a number of places in his writing, apostle Paul makes it plain that the salvation of God is ours

*not by grace but by the grace of God through our faith in Christ*

." The applicable verses are Rom. 4:2, Rom. 9:32, Gal. 2: 16, and Titus 3: 5.

James' emphasis that "*faith by itself without works is dead* [James 2:17]" is meant to encourage good works to the professing Christians who are already saved, but never intended for propagating the "salvation by works" theology, which has been the doctrine the Catholic Church has used for over 20 centuries to deceive the congregants.

The 2x2 workers are utterly confused about this and so are the friends. The workers emphasis on the works keeps the friends in a limbo because they are never certain whether they are saved or not. If a senior worker says, "I am not sure so-and-so is saved," that judgment makes this person in an uncertain status of salvation and that is a strong hint that he/she must strive hard to "get inside" the circle of the workers' grace/favor and thus be saved securely. This was

the strategy used by the Catholic Church, Communism and the cults as an effective way of keeping their adherents in line with the church leadership and policies.

The gospel of Christ sets us free from this awful bondage of 'salvation by works doctrine.' To those who are still in the 2x2 sect who are reading this document, I want you to read the Bible verses and be assured that our Lord Jesus wishes to set you free from the age-old, Satan-instigated bondage of spiritual slavery and bring you into His marvelous freedom, wherein you serve God and follow Jesus because you love Him for His unspeakable grace.

### 5. Trinity

i. The 2x2 sect preachers do not believe in the doctrine of trinity, that is, they believe that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are three different persons and have the same spiritual nature but they are not one. The fundamental majority of the Christendom, however, believes that God is one and is of three persons. It is like a pyramid with three sides. It is one body but has three persons. The Son emanates from the Father and the Spirit emanates from both the Father and the Son. There is no Bible term that directly indicates the triune nature of God but many verses dictate the trinity. Thus, most Christian denominations consider any sect that does not accept the doctrine of trinity as a cult. For a discussion on the nature of God, please refer to the following study note:

<http://www.douglaschoministry.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Bible-study-1-God-and-His-attributes-1.pdf>

ii. The 2x2 workers fail to believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person. They believe Him to be a subordinate spiritual entity that works in subjection to God. Therefore, they fail to honor and adhere to the guidance and influencing of the Holy Spirit as a divine person who resides in you, in your family, in your church and in your community. Therefore, it is only right that true Christians honor and respect the Holy Spirit daily just as you would honor your father and mother who live with you in the same house.

### 6. Church: Must the churches meet in homes?

i. The 2x2 churches meet in the homes of the believers, usually in the homes of the elders who lead the 'meetings.' They cite the first century practice found in a number of Bible verses which refer to "church in so-and-so's home. [1 Cor 16:19, Col. 4:15, Phil 1:2]" It is true that the early churches met in the homes of the believers. However, it is also true that the Jewish believers met in the synagogues where most of the villagers had been converted from Judaism to Christianity. The synagogue was a natural choice for their meeting place because the Jews had been meeting there for centuries. The synagogue in a village was the natural gathering facility for the villagers.

In other regions the church history records show that the Christians often met in homes in the early years when the number was limited. However, as the number of converts increased, they built buildings dedicated to regular church gatherings. Why do the 2x2 people have annual conventions on large farm grounds? It is simply because a person's house is not big enough to accommodate a large gathering. Likewise, the early Christian churches of the first few centuries built dedicated church buildings as stable facilities for regular worship, learning and other church activities, very much like the church buildings of today. The criticisms that the 2x2 people express regarding church buildings of the Protestant community are unreasonable and unfounded.

ii. The protestant churches, however, must be careful that the financial burden placed on the congregation for church building construction are not be overly heavy on them. Lord Jesus said, “ *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light* [Matt 11: 30].” He does not want His servants to make the burden heavy on His people. God’s servants must be careful in the church finances so as to keep this principle of the Lord faithfully.

### 7. Bible

i. The only translation of the Bible that the 2x2 workers recognize as valid is the King James Version of the Holy Bible (KJV). Other translations are considered too liberal or inaccurate and the believers are discouraged from using translations other than KJV although several centuries have passed since the KJV translation and the terms and expressions in KJV have become archaic for modern day comprehension.

Other translations based on the ‘majority text [*textus receptus*]’ are recommended for the benefit of the young generations include King James Bible 2016 and the New King James Version. We note, however, that Protestant churches have accepted English translations of the Bible, which are not based on the majority text but on ‘corrupted, minority texts,’ such as New International Version, Modern English Version and many others. These multitude of new translations are not recognized as valid translations by the Fundamental Protestant community and therefore, should be avoided.

ii. Although the 2x2 preachers believe in inerrancy of the Bible, there is no consistency among the workers. And they never explain this doctrine clearly and forcibly to the friends. I have never heard this doctrine explained clearly in all the years I was a member. It is probably because the workers themselves do not fully understand what ‘inerrancy of the Bible’ means.

### 8. Baptism

i. The 2x2 sect workers believe and practice the baptism by immersion correctly and that is the way it should be. Their unwavering belief in this doctrine of baptism is commendable in the face of the changing wave of revisionism in the Christian world. What is erroneous, however, is that some workers believe that the baptism is a requirement for salvation. They believe that, unless one professes through the 2x2 workers and be baptized by one of their workers, one is not saved.

ii. God is pleased to see a person express his/her profession by willingly stepping into a body of water to be immersed and be raised from the water so as to signify that he/she is now dead to the past sinful life and is now raised to be a living, new life with Christ. However, if a person has not been baptized for whatever reason, it does not take away salvation from this person.

### 9. Celibacy of ministers

i. The 2x2 workers cite the two cases of Lord Jesus and apostle Paul as their reason for insisting on the celibacy requirement of their workers. Lord Jesus chose to remain as 'a eunuch for the kingdom's sake' [Matt 19: 12]. Perhaps the Lord knew that His life would end at age 33 and chose not to leave a family behind as a burden to His disciples. Certainly, He would not have wished to have His family to be 'worshipped' as His mother would be. Apostle Paul chose to remain unmarried because he believed it was a more expedient way in doing the Lord's work [1 Cor. 7:8]. However, Paul noted that other apostles accompanied wives. In other words, the choice of remaining single was a personal choice for expediency in both cases.

ii. The church history tells us that the itinerant mode of ministry stopped after the first century and gave way to stationary church governance system, where a bishop ruled the churches in a given locality and an elder in the local church. These church rulers formed the church ministry. As apostle Paul specified, bishops and elders were to be husband of one wife with obedient children [1 Tim. 3: 2, 3:12; Titus 1: 6]. They were to set a good example of a model family to the Christians under their charge. This was the God-designed way to eliminate immorality in the church and to sustain a living model for all to see and follow.

The 2x2 sect breeds sexual deviant behaviors and immorality due to the physical closeness of the workers and the friends' families. The recent exposures of sexual harassment and violence cases of the Catholic Church in both the U.S. and Ireland are indicative of what has been happening within the 2x2 sect. According to apostle Paul, the celibacy doctrine originates from Satan, who devised various ways to corrupt the Christian churches and cause them to slide down toward the slippery path of sexual decadence and depravity. This ill-informed practice must be stopped now.

*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, **forbidding to marry**, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.*  
[1 Timothy 4:1]

## 10. Contributions and charity

i. We see a great difference between the OT and the NT teachings on financial contributions to the church. During the OT era the temple worship was supported by the people in the form of offerings and tithes. The period of Lord Jesus' ministry was still in the OT domain. Therefore, He taught the leaders of Israel to offer tithes. However, He praised the devotion of the poor widow



when she gave all she had into the temple collection box [Luke 21: 4].

ii. The NT apostles, however, never mentioned the tithing rule for the church. The only collection mentioned in the NT was Paul's campaign to help the needy in Jerusalem and Israel in general. A number of churches founded by Paul and his companions took part in this charity campaign. He and several others brought this 'gift' from the Gentile churches to Jerusalem and delivered it to the church leaders there [1 Cor. 16:3].

iii. Paul wrote that the pastors are worthy of financial support of the saints. Yet, he claimed he was preaching for free, i.e. he was not asking for any compensation. He also mentioned the churches in Macedonia which had supported him financially. From these references, we conclude that the financial support for the ministers was purely voluntary and was not based on any established collection or tithing system. The present-day tithing practice of many Protestant churches was established later as the churches felt the need for a stable financial source for supporting the ministry and the church activities. This return to the OT practice, however, is not Scripture-based and has been a point of debate and contention in many churches.

iv. The practice of the 2x2 sect method of giving voluntarily without a firm rule on contribution is commendable. This is possible because the workers live on the support of the friends and there is no need for any church building procurement or sustainment, apart from the convention ground maintenance.

v. However, there is the problem of financial transparency. Most established Protestant churches maintain clear transparency, wherein the financial reports are made to the general assembly and the finance committee acts as the watch dog over the revenue and the spending of a church. On the other hand, the 2x2 sect has zero transparency in their finances. Over the

47 years I never took part in a financial review meeting although I was a senior elder and former owner of a convention ground in South Korea, nor have I ever heard of such a review session or seen a documented review report.

vi. Another important doctrinal difference is the church's attitude toward charity programs. Both in OT and NT eras God has shown keen interest in the poor, the deprived, the orphans and the widows. In Acts we read about the early church caring for the widows and the poor [Acts 6:1]. Compassion toward the poor, deprived people among the congregation was regarded as an important mission of the church as emphasized by apostle Paul [2 Cor. 6-15], and the same is true in modern-day Christian churches.

However, the 2x2 sect ignores this important mission because the overseers teach the friends that the workers are the 'beggars' like Lazarus at the gate of the rich man [Luke 16: 18-19]. To them the charity mission is to the support of the workers, not the poor and the deprived friends or people outside of the church. Another famous quotation they use to support their argument is what Lord Jesus said about the poor, "*For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always* [Matt 26:11]." When we read carefully and think about the intent of our Lord, He never meant to slight the need to help the poor, but it was the time to focus on the Messiah because He only had a short time left until His death. After His ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the church membership grew rapidly and the need to help the poor came to the fore. The church responded and put the program in action to meet this need because the church leaders shared the heart of their Master. And the need has persisted until now. So, we see clearly how the 2x2 senior workers misunderstand the Lord's heart, which was full of sympathy and compassion toward the poor and the deprived.

## 11. Denominational Recognition

i. The reason why we refer to the 2x2 sect as such is because they claim they have no name because the early Christians did not have a name other than “Christians.” The Christians of the 1<sup>st</sup> century were called ‘Christians’ for the first time in Antioch by those outside the church. The name meant ‘those professing to follow Christ.’ So, the name got stuck and it was an appropriate name. There was no problem in the early centuries because there was only one denomination then and the total number of Christians was perhaps less than a million. Today there is a total of 2.2 billion Christians in the world. And it would be difficult to identify who is who without the churches having names. Thus, for the simple practical need of identification, churches have names and this is nothing to be critical about.

ii. One of the first things that God instructed Adam to do after giving him the assignment as the governor of His creation was to give names to all creatures:

*Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So, Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. [Genesis 2: 19-20]*

When a child is born into a family, the parents give it a first name, followed by the family name. So, all Christian churches bear a first name followed by the last name, “such-and-such Christian Church.” It is a natural thing in accordance with God’s order of naming names, especially to churches of His kingdom. The argument of the 2x2 sect that they are more righteous than all other 2.2 billion Christians by not having a name is absurd and foolish. In order to satisfy the legal requirements with the government of the nation they are in, the 2x2 sect has registered with diverse names, which are not used in practice.

[Their name varies depending on the country. See list at: [https://www.tellingthetruth.info/lists/church\\_names.php](https://www.tellingthetruth.info/lists/church_names.php) ]

iii. A criticism they hold against the established churches is the issue of division. They say the churches are so divided and this is not right before God. They do not know the fact that the Protestant churches are very much united in Christ. It is true that the denominations have differences in doctrines and cultures. However, they all regard one another as brethren in Christ, i.e. members of the same family, except the 2x2 sect people, the Catholic Church and certain other cults that espouse exclusivism as their doctrine. To these sects they are the only 'true' believers and no one else is right before God.

iv. If one of the siblings of ten of a certain family claims he/she is the only 'true child' of their parents, how would that be viewed by other siblings and their parents? Members of a family have differences in their life styles, where they live, what foods they eat, etc. Sometimes they may have squabbles. But they are all brothers and sisters. And they call their father 'Dad' and mother 'Mom.' There should not be any division among the siblings and for most all of us, there is none other than trivial differences that do not exclude them from the family identity.

I encourage the 2x2 leadership to seriously consider taking a first name and combine it with the common family name, "Christian Church."

## 12. Christian Education

i. Most workers of the 2x2 sect regard Christian education with disdain. And that is why they are so ignorant in theology, in church organization and management, in people management skills, in financial management and many other topics. Their culture does not foster learning. They prohibit friends from reading Christian books and literature other than perhaps their own convention notes. Thus, they are oblivious of the church history, doctrinal discussions, evangelical progress around the world other than their own workers' activities.

ii. Because they do not appreciate the value of higher education, they are afraid of engaging in sound theological discussions and refuse to listen to the voices of the educated people of their ranks. Their exposure to the Christian literature is limited. Even when a worker or friend reads Christian books and comes to have questions, he/she is often discouraged from bringing it up in their meetings.

### 13. Legalism

i. Legalism in a religious organization is not unique to the 2x2 sect, although their culture is rather unique in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Lord Jesus severely criticized the legalism of the Pharisees who had formed strict rules that all Jews must keep to be saved. They wrongly believed that the people of Israel met military conquest and deportation to Assyria and Babylon because their ancestors failed to adhere to the Mosaic law. Their logic goes that, in order to win back God's heart to them, they had to faithfully keep the ordinances of the Mosaic Law, which they carefully defined and proclaimed to all people. Lord Jesus pointed out to them what was in their heart was far more important than giving sacrifices and keeping the artificial rules.

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. [Matt 23: 27-28]*

Many times, Lord Jesus admonished the people to accept the seed of the gospel and to nourish the spiritual life in a person's heart. If the inward life is not supported by good works outwardly, what good is it? James wrote, "Faith without works is dead." But, does the church have to stipulate the rules of behavior like the Pharisees? They set up the rules they themselves could not keep yet demanded the people to keep them. This made them hypocrites.

ii. In my search for Christian behavioral rules that are specific like those of the 2x2 sect is what apostle Paul said about men's short hair and women's long hair:

*Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her for a covering. But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.*

So, this was his recommended rule but not as a church ordinance. Furthermore, the detailed definition of 'long hair' cannot be found in the Bible. It just had to be long enough to clearly distinguish them from the short hair of the pagan temple prostitutes, who were many in Corinth at this time. So, if a woman wears hair long that can be viewed as 'long hair' by others, she is following Paul's recommended rule. Wearing a 19<sup>th</sup> century hair style or forbidding to cut their hair is certainly going excessive and is not biblical.

iii. The 2x2 sect has a number of ordinances. Some of them include the following:

- 1) Women must not wear pants, makeup or jewelry.
- 2) People must not own a TV.
- 3) People must not go to the movies, bars, sports events, etc.

Some of them may have changed since our departure from the way, and the above is not the full list. Others may have experienced additional rules that are enforced either explicitly or implicitly. There are other churches that impose stricter rules of behavior such as the Amish group and the Mennonites. We live in a free country and the 2x2 people can voluntarily follow the rules they honor. No one can tell them to stop doing so. However, unseen pressure including shunning or ostracization against those believers who are not agreeing with the rules but staying in the fellowship is the problem. What is worse is that the workers make the friends believe they are never saved until they follow all of such rules and lead 'exemplary' lives acceptable and commended by the workers. To them, salvation is never meant to be free or by the grace of God only.

iv. Legalism is not what the Bible teaches. Mosaic laws and stipulations were relevant to the Old Testament times before the Messiah came. And there were reasons why God gave such rules to the people of Israel then. We must not apply the OT rules to our worship in modern day, but the divine principles found in the Scriptures must be kept. Let us discern them with care and wisdom and apply the 'principles' to our church culture and stay away from the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and Scribes of the first century.

### 14. Pastoral compensation

i. One of the practices of the 2x2 sect is the 'free gospel' doctrine. When Lord Jesus sent His disciples on a short mission work, He taught them to preach the gospel freely:

*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food [ Matt 10: 8-9].* M

ii. Apostle Paul also asserted that he was ministering to the Lord's churches freely, that is, without demanding compensation.

*Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? [2 Cor. 11:7]*

iii. However, Lord Jesus also stated that the church congregation is responsible for taking care of the needs of those in the ministry. Apostle Paul believed the same as did those in the ministry in the first century.

*For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages." [1 Tim. 5:18]*

The churches, without imposing a tithing system, met the needs of the ministers voluntarily through "cheerful giving" [2 Cor. 9:7]. So, the doctrine of free ministry was one of the principles of the early churches.

iv. There are two parts to the subject of pastoral compensation. The pastor's attitude about his compensation and the position of the congregation about the compensation for their pastor's labor:

1) First, the true shepherds never work for money. Lord Jesus declared that He is the good shepherd. His ministry never demanded money although He and His disciples were served by the believers cheerfully.

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own." [John 10: 11-14]*



2) Apostle Paul had a very serious attitude toward the ministry. To him the gospel of Christ was so precious that he would not dare to bring this gospel for money:

*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. [2 Thes. 3: 7-9]*

What a marvelous, exemplary standard of Christ's ministry did Paul set. All Christian pastors/ministers should follow this example, but not many do, in fact.

3) On the other hand, the other part is how the congregation compensates for their pastor's labor. Both Lord Jesus and apostle Paul made it clear that the pastors deserve to be compensated by their congregations:

*But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you.  
And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages  
[Luke 10: 5-7]*

4) The people of the house or the congregation that has accepted a servant of Christ as the

pastor/minister of their church must provide the necessities for the pastor because “he is worthy of his wages.” However, note that the preacher does not “demand” the household provide for him. He eats and drinks what is set before him by the household/ congregation. In other words, the pastor’s compensation must be determined and provided by the congregation in all sincerity such as is sufficient to meet the pastor’s needs. I believe this is the principle our Lord has set to His disciples. That is why we read of no instance of the apostles demanding material compensation to the saints. Rather, they chose to leave money out of the ministry but for the church’s good works.

v. Therefore, this practice of not taking collections in the meetings and not demanding tithes and other contributions is a praiseworthy tradition of the 2x2 sect.

1) However, their practice lacks some serious drawbacks. One of them is lack of transparency, which has been discussed earlier in this paper.

2) Another major deficiency is the lack of a minister’s pension system in the 2x2 sect. Workers who stay on and get too old to labor are left out of support unless some friends volunteer to take care of them. Furthermore, those workers who leave the work and leave the fellowship are totally ostracized and left without any type of compensation after spending years of their life in the ministry. This is a highly cruel aspect of the 2x2 sect culture.