

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?, on: 2007/7/29 17:23

The thread " Does everyone have a local church?" was locked before I even got to read it, let alone make any comments! It could I think have been a good thread if not spoiled by infighting.

This is a different aspect and a slightly different question, and hopefully won't end in fruitless argument this time.

First: **What is the Church?**

I think we would all agree we are part of a Body that is independent of space and time - even including those who are no longer alive on earth. One creed calls this the "communion of saints". Although of course we are NOT to use this as an excuse for trying to contact or pray to those who have gone before us.

I also believe (although some have taught otherwise) that we are one with Old Testament saints, because Jesus is spoken of as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:7). So His atoning death is effective both for us and for them and for those who will be born before He returns.

Ephesians 3:14

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Hebrews 12:22-24

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel

1Corinthians 12:12-14

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and we have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.

Second: **What is my relationship with the Church?**

Apart from the obvious, spoken of above, that we are one Body (whether we like it or not!), this is the practical, local, everyday aspect.

I believe we DO need regular fellowship, if it is in any way possible, with other members of the Body.

What that means, in practice, will be different depending on circumstances, where the Lord leads us and where we feel "at home". Especially, where the Lord leads us.

For some individuals I think this could mean worshipping at home with our family for a season, or even alone; although we would have to be very very sure of the Lord's leading in that case. Unless of course, circumstances make it impossible to meet physically with others, (Forrest is one example here on SI).

But we have no permission from the Lord to isolate ourselves in spirit. Even if we have no-one else that we are able to fellowship with, we are still part of the Body, still joined to others through Christ. To deny this truth leads to a superior attitude, that too often ends up in despising our brethren. It is also dangerous in the same way that a sheep separated from its local flock has a hard job to survive.

And yet, there are times when we do have to walk alone with God without "human" fellowship. The loneliness of the prophetic walk was spoken of on another thread. This will be increasingly true in these perilous times.

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Therefore, we must not be so dependent on the local fellowship that we are unable to stand alone. Neither should we take on the particular "colouring" of the local church to the extent that this identity dominates our lives at the expense of whole Body unity.

My personal experience:

In the early 1980's I became involved in a small prayer group of those from different denominational backgrounds. The Lord brought each of us out of the denomination we were in. Among other things, the Lord gave us such a vision of what the Church that we were spiritually "moved", and this led to a physical move.

Then one prayed "Lord, what do we do now? Where do we go?" and the answer came, "**Go wherever God's people gather**".

So the vision didn't cause isolation, but freedom to fellowship wherever He sent us.

That doesn't mean "church-hopping" but remaining in that *spiritual* place with the Lord where He has put me, and to the physical place where He sends.

I have since met others in the same place spiritually, and fellowship with them is richer than with any in the local church where the Lord has me.

In Him

Jeannette

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?, on: 2007/7/29 17:55

If a person learns to walk in the Spirit of Christ and know His Voice and leadings, than he is always where HE wants him .

If we hang out with unsaved folks, it is only to win them to Jesus, otherwise - we should always want to be with His Body , always because we will be Forever.

Is O.K. Sis ?

Love.

Annie

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?, on: 2007/7/29 20:28

Quote:
-----Jeannette said:remaining in that spiritual place with the Lord where He has put me, and to the physical place where He sends.

I like that Sis. I was wondering what I should do next. After being out of the mainline church for 4 years, I have been asking that same question, "Where do I go now?". I like that answer, "Go wherever God's people gather".

I think I'll try that, whether it be Church or a home group setting. I was getting battle weary just being at home and waiting for the LORD to send me someplace else. I think that might be the answer. Thanks Jeanette for sharing that. ;-)

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Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it? - posted by tinluke (), on: 2007/7/30 0:17

Jeanette,

The Lord said something similar to me while searching for a church. He said "go where MY heart is." I wasn't sure exactly what that meant, and I continued my quest for the "perfect" church, just to become increasingly frustrated. A short time later, I asked the Lord specifically where to go, He said, "take my hand and follow ME." I have to admit that I didn't like that response. I wanted Jesus to give me an address within 30 miles of my house with a great Sunday school for my kids and tons of happy, Christian couples for my husband and I to have fellowship with. I could picture the whole thing in my mind...me, my husband, the kids and all our new church friends. I was angry that I couldn't have it! The Lord began to show me how that image was just that...an image that man has created. I'm not saying I have it all figured out, but I think I have a better understanding about what church is.

For me, to "go where HIS heart is" is to be close to the broken-hearted, to offer a drink in HIS name, clothe the naked and feed the hungry. To be partakers in Christ's suffering, to share HIS burden, to be co-laborers with Christ!

Having fellowship with other believers is part of the Church, but not Church in itself. Yes, I need my brothers and sisters in Christ. I am so encouraged to visit a church like Times Square Church. It's like a small piece of heaven to be in the sanctuary and hear anointed preaching and heavenly worship! I'd like to "hide" there forever but I am not Jesus's hands and feet by visiting any Church. I am part of HIS body when I am in HIM.

I think we need to put down our image of what we think church should look like. Once I did that, God led and opened the doors to put a small fellowship together. We got a church in our neighborhood on Sunday nights for free. Our "worship team" consists of one guitar player and me singing. We have no goal or agenda other than to seek HIS face. We're not trying to start a new church, just be the Church.

In HIS love,

Tina

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?, on: 2007/7/30 17:25

Some great replies already. Thank you all!

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/7/30 17:42

I think that a lot of the problems when someone leaves a church is that we may do it for the wrong reasons, when the Lord is *not* telling us to leave. Maybe we don't like the new minister, or disagree on some non-vital point of doctrine or practice, or want to do our own thing, (using one of the above as an excuse perhaps). Or maybe we have a "vision" that we think is superior to that of the local church (that can be a very subtle temptation, as I have found).

Problems when we stay in a church when *the Lord* is calling us out, may be fear of the unknown - especially if we have been brought up in a particular denomination all our lives. Or maybe we are simply settled and set in our ways and don't want to change.

It takes courage to "get out of the boat and walk on the water", even when the Lord Himself is saying "Come"

I believe that the real move is going on with the Lord, not moving geographically. But if the Lord takes us on spiritually we may find that the church we are connected with can no longer support that growth. It may have been right for a season but now we can no longer remain. That was my experience with the Presbyterian Church.

in Him

Jeannette

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it? - posted by LiveforGod (), on: 2007/7/30 17:56

This is very, very long, but it sure does have a lot of questions answered. This is written by Daniel Sidney Warner.

THE CHURCH OF GOD

What it is and What it is Not

By. D.S. Warner

CHAPTER 1

What is the Church?

The words church and churches occur in the New Testament 109 times, always translated from ekklesia, which would have been more correctly rendered congregation, which, with the Bible qualifications, would have read, "the congregation of God," "the congregation of the first-born," etc., denoting its divine Founder and Owner. And, "the congregation that was at Antioch," "The congregation of God which was at Corinth," "The congregation of Asia," "The

congregation of Galatia," etc., denoting the different geographical locations of the congregations of God. But whether we use the word church, as in common use, or congregation, the more correct appellation, we should only attach such meaning to it as agrees with the Word of God. To use a Bible word out of its biblical meaning is perverting the Bible.

What then is the Bible definition of the church? Answer: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22, 23. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Col. 1:18. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." Col. 1:24.

The church is the body of Christ. And its being the body of Christ, necessarily includes all His members.

Therefore to call an earthly building the church is ridiculous, and to call an organized division the church is subverting the truth. No sect contains all the body of Christ, therefore, no sect is the church of God. Then as honest men, who expect to be judged by the Word of God, let us never call anything the church but the body of Christ; i. e., all the saved, either universally, or in any given locality.

CHAPTER 2

Who is the Founder of the Church?

We are told that Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10. And the apostle Paul says to the converted Hebrews in the next chapter (verses 22-24), "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

That city whose builder and maker is God we have come unto in the gospel dispensation, and it is the church of the first-born. Christ, who was "God manifest in the flesh," is the founder, builder, and maker of the church. "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." Heb 3:3, 4. ". . . feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28. "Husbands, love your wives, even

as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church . . . holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:25-27. ". . . upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18.

CHAPTER 3

When Was the Church Built?

The last text cited above speaks of her building as then in the future. Now read I Cor. 3:9, ". . . ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:20-22.

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Pet. 2:5.

In A. D. 32 Christ said, "I will build my church." In 59, and after that, the apostles said, "Ye are God's

building,Â” Â”are built up a spiritual house.Â” So the church was built between those dates. It is true that the church was begun under the labours of John the Baptist, Jesus, and His apostles, before the day of Pentecost. Many believed and entered the kingdom then, and constituted material for the church. But the coming of the Holy Spirit was the point of time when the church was really built, and set in order, as seen in I Cor. 12:6, 11-13, 18, 24. The church is defined as Â”his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.Â” Eph. 1:23. The church proper then did not exist until the fulness of Christ came, which was on the day of Pentecost. Then it was fully set up, and Â”fitly joined together and compacted.Â” That being the time of the founding of the church of God, it follows that every religious body that has since come into existence is not the church of God, but a daughter of confusion, born out of due season. This includes Romanism and all the Protestant sects.

CHAPTER 4

Who is its Foundation?

Â”Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.Â” Isa. 28:16.

Â”For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God?Â” Psalm 18:31.

Â”For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.Â” I Cor. 3:11.

Â”And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.Â” Eph. 2:20, 21.

In the last text we see that the apostles were foundation-stones. If we were held to apply the Â”rockÂ” in Matt. 16:18 to Peter, there is nothing in such an application of the text that conflicts with the scriptures. The apostles all being foundations, of course Peter was one of them. He does not single Peter out here because he had any preeminence over the rest, but because he was conversing with him, and his name, Cephas— a stone— called out the assertion. For evidence

that all twelve were all foundations, see Rev. 21:14.

Yet, Christ is the all-underlying foundation. The apostles being first chosen and inspired to give us the new Testament, were foundation stones occupying a connecting position between Christ, the Rock, and the rest of the building. Christ is then the only Rock. Â”Other foundation can no man lay.Â” Only one structure can stand on one foundation. Christ built His church on Himself. All later organizations are without Christ as their foundation, and must perish.

CHAPTER 5

Who is the Head of the Church?

Â”And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.Â” Eph. 1:22.

Â”But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.Â” Eph. 4:15, 16.

Â”For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.Â” Eph. 5:23, 24.

Â”And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.Â” Col. 1:18.

Â”Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.Â” Col. 2:18, 19.

The head of an institution is its lawmaker. Â”For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.Â” Isa. 33:22.

Â”There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroyÂ” James 4:12.

All organisms that make their own laws, creeds, disciplines, and systems of co-operation, do not hold the Head—Christ. Their law-making synods and general conferences ignore the divine lawgiver, usurp the place of Christ and sit in the stead of God, and are not Christ's church, which is subject to Him.

Again, there is one head; hence there can be but one body.

CHAPTER 6

What is the Door of the Church?

Thus saith the Lord: "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep . . . I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." John 10:7, 9.

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." Rev. 3:8.

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Eph. 2:18.

In these scriptures we see clearly that Christ is the door of the church, and salvation the mode of induction, and that it is a door that stands open continually, and no man can shut. Christ is not the door of any sect, therefore no sect is the church of God. The experience of salvation does not constitute a person a member of any sect on earth; therefore they are not the church of God. All sects have doors, a manner of admitting members, that are open and shut by men, hence are unlike the church of God, which no man can open and shut. They are therefore not His church.

CHAPTER 7

Who Takes Members into the Church?

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:46, 47.

"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." I Cor. 12:18.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." I Cor. 12:13.

Here the setting of the members into the body, or adding to the church, is ascribed to God, to Christ, and to the Spirit. Of course they are one, the triune God.

But God never takes men into a sect. Therefore no sect is His church.

CHAPTER 8

Who are Members of the Church?

If, as we have seen, salvation is the process of entering the church, it follows that no one is in the church who has not salvation. The church is one "family in heaven and earth," named from the Father. Eph. 3:15. This family is "the household of God." Eph. 2:19. Then it follows that only the sons of God, such as are born of the Spirit, are in the church. And we are told that "he that committeth sin is of the devil," and "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil" (I John 3:8-10), namely, in the fact that children of the devil commit sin, and the children of God do not. The holy apostle repeats the fact with emphasis "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." I John 5:18. There are no sinners in the church. But all sects are more or less filled with sinners. Hence, no sect is the church of God.

CHAPTER 9

Who Organizes the Church?

The word "organize" is not in the scriptures. It is defined in the dictionary as follows: "To furnish with organs; to arrange in parts; to form in due order."

God's church is furnished with organs, arranged in parts, in due order; hence, is an organic structure. But who is the organizer of the same? Who furnishes it with organs? Answer: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." I Cor. 12:8-11.

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Verses 27, 28.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and unto all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28.

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." II Cor. 3:5, 6.

"He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he

gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.â Eph. 4:10-13.

These are sufficient to prove that God furnishes His church with all its organs, namely with all necessary gifts of the Spirit, and officers. The foregoing scriptures cover the first two definitions of the word organize. But who forms in due parts? âBut now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him . . . For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.â I Cor. 12:18, 24, 25.

Other scriptures also show the harmonizing of the body of Christ, by the hand of God and through the Spirit. But those given above are sufficient. One thing, however, we mention, and that is, the laying on of hands by the elders in ordaining elders, etc. That this pertains to the organization of the church, we freely allow. But it is never called organizing the church. God ordains by way of qualifying and choosing, and His ministers ordain in the sense of recognizing the divine call, and dedicating thereunto. This order is clearly seen in Acts 13:1-4.

Succession of authority down through a course of ecclesiastical lords is all a superstitious delusion; a dragon power. Those whom God saves, baptizes with power, and commissions by the Holy Spirit have the only ecclesiastical authority instituted of God, and this comes direct from heaven, and not through any imaginary line of predecessors.

Voting for officers only belongs to Babylon formality, where God is not present to work âall in all,â by the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He wills.

The church, then, is organized by the Lord, who sets all the members in the body as it pleases Him, and distributes the gifts and callings by His own wisdom to all the members of the body. Men may organize a human compact, but never

the divine body of Christ, which is the church. Thus said the Lord: âAnd who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew

unto them.â Isa. 44:7.

This is to the point. God Himself âappointed the ancient peopleâ to their several places in the body, and who will now presume to take upon himself the prerogative of the Almighty? âEvery man is brutish by his knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things: and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts is his name.â Jer. 51:17-19.

The sect-founders are confounded because their structures âhave no breathââno life. They call them churches, but it âis falsehood,â the work of error. But Godâs true church is the former of all things, the primitive church that Jesus bought with His own blood, and built before the rise of the first sect of the apostasy.

He that builds a house organizes the same. But if other men were to come and saw the same house into four parts, and throw each off its foundation, such work would be disorganizing the building, and destroying the same. Just so should God, by the pure Word and Spirit, fully save, say four hundred souls in one city, He would organize and temper all together in one body. But should four preachers, representing as many sects, each form his schismatic organism there

of equal members, each would have the impudence to report to his conference that he had organized a church there of one hundred members while the facts would be, they, like the parties cleaving the house asunder, would really disorganize and disintegrate the church. Thus, we see that the organizing sects, the work of men, is the disorganizing of the church, which is built of God. Since, then, the church is organized by the Lord, it follows that so-called churches organized by men, lack the authentic seal of God, and are not His church, but unscriptural schisms.

CHAPTER 10

How Many Churches Does God Have?

Every description of the divine church shows its oneness âOther sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring . . . and there shall be one fold , and one shepherd.â John 10:16.

We have seen that Christ is âthe head of the body, the church.â Therefore, as there is but one head, there can be but one body.

âFor as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.â Rom. 12:4, 5.

âFor as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. But now are they many members, yet but one body.â I

Cor. 12:12, 13, 20.

“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain in the enmity thereby.” Eph. 2:14-16.

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Eph. 4:4-6.

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” Col. 3:15.

These scriptures prove positively that there is but one true church, just as there is but one God, one true God. Since we are called of Christ into one body, the call to join various bodies must be of the antichrist.

Again, the church sustains the same relation to Christ that a wife does to her husband.

“And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.” Hosea

2:19, 20.

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Rom. 7:4. “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” II Cor. 11:2. “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom. . . .” Jn. 3:29.

“For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.” Isa. 54:5.

The idea of Christ having more than one wife (church) is repugnant to the Bible, and a slander on the Son of God.

“Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.” Eph. 3:15.

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Eph. 2:19.

From these and other scriptures, we see the church is God’s family, or household. And, since a man can have only one family, it follows that God has but one church. It would be an awful reflection on the holiness of God to have many wives and separate rival families, and they of the “nude and lude” character Bishop Foster ascribes to the modern sects.

Therefore the multiplicity of sects, falsely called churches, are not God’s church.

CHAPTER 11

But Does the Bible Speak of More Than One Church?

The word “church” frequently occurs in the plural form, but never in the sense of sects of denominations. When more than one church is spoken of, it is always the one church of the living God, in different localities.

“ . . . they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch . . . and when they had ordained them elders in every church,” et cetera Acts 14:21, 23.

“And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.” Acts 15:41.

“Who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.” Rom. 16:4.

“ . . . as I teach everywhere in every church.” I Cor. 4:17.

“And so ordain I in all churches.” I Cor. 7:17.

“ . . . as I have given order to the churches of Galatia.” I Cor. 16:1.

“The churches of Asia salute you.” I Cor. 16:19.

“ . . . throughout all the churches.” II Cor. 8:18.

Thus we see that when churches are spoken of, they invariably denote the same church of God in several cities, or throughout one or more countries. But there is not the slightest intimation of more than one church in the same city.

Speaking of the church in various geographical localities, the apostle says: “So ordain I in all churches.” “As I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye” It can easily be seen that if these New Testament

“churches” were different sects, as we have today, one bishop could not give orders to them all. Bishop Simpson of the

M. E. sect cannot issue orders over the U. B. Lutheran, Presbyterian, and other sects. He has no jurisdiction over them. So we see a vast difference between Bible churches and sect divisions. The former are all one in Christ. The latter are independent and separate schisms. Several sects exist in the same town, but God only has one church in the same place.

Hence we read: " . . . the church that was at Antioch." Acts 13:1. " . . . the church of God which is at Corinth . . ." I Cor.

1:2. " . . . the church of the Thessalonians . . ." I Thess. 1:1. " . . . unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." Rev. 1:11. Thus we see there was only one church in one city. Seven sects can now be addressed in one town of no great size. But when messages were sent to seven churches in Asia, seven different cities had to be addressed.

All the saved of God in any place constitute His church in that place. Then it follows that a plurality of separate bodies in the same place are not God's church, but babel confusion.

CHAPTER 12

Does the Bible Teach the Unity of All Believers?

Yes. " . . . Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name . . ." John 17:11, 12.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast

sent me . . . and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." John 17:20-23.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." I Cor. 1:10.

" . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28.

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." Phil. 1:27.

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Phil. 2:2.

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 15:5, 6.

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." Acts 4:32.

Can anybody look upon this picture and not see an awful contrast between it and the dark picture of the present-day sect confusion? Do the members of the different sects have the same care one for another? Behold, they are not of one mind, nor of one judgment; they are not one in name, nor creed, nor body; they are not of one heart, nor of one soul, nor of one spirit, nor yet of one faith; they have not one mouth, nor do they speak the same things. They are never one, except it be in opposing Bible salvation. As God confounded the babel-builders, and they all became divided and of different tongues, so he has sent His thunderbolts of wrath upon Rome, the mother of harlots, and has knocked off several

hundred Protestant fragments, each one of which speaks the peculiar dialect of its creed.

The church, compared with a human body, is required to have but one mouth, which means perfect harmony in all her teaching. If we were to allow that the multiplicity of sects are the church, then a human monstrosity, having several hundred mouths, and every mouth speaking contrary to every other mouth, would be necessary to symbolize it. As the body of Christ has but one mouth and speaks the same things, it is very evident that the jargon confusion of sect tongues

does not represent His body, and is not His church.

CHAPTER 13

What is the Basis of Union?

1. " . . . all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ . . ." Rom. 12:5.

As it is here stated, there is but one body in Christ, it necessarily follows that the many separate sect bodies are not in Christ. As we are all one in Christ Jesus, to join anything else but Christ incurs the sin of sectism.

2. " . . . Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are . . . I kept them in thy name." John 17:11, 12. Here the church was named by "the mouth of the Lord" as had been predicted in Isa. 62:2. Eph. 3:15, as correctly rendered from the Greek by the Emphatic Diaglott and other versions, reads thus: "From whom the whole family in the heavens, and on earth is named."

The name of the church was given by the mouth of the Lord, and was derived from God, His Father. The apostles respected the prayer of Christ, and kept the church in God's name.

“... feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Acts 20:28.

“... the church of God which is at Corinth . . .” I Cor. 1:2; II Cor. 1:1.

“Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.” I Cor. 10:32.

“... despise ye the church of God?” I Cor. 11:22.

“... I persecuted the church of God.” I Cor. 15:9.

“... beyond measure, I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.” Gal. 1:13.

“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus . . .” I Thess. 2:14.

“... we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God . . .” II Thess. 1:4.

“If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?” I Tim. 3:5.

“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” I Tim. 3:14, 15.

Here are twelve instances of the title, “church of God.” This corresponds with the Saviour’s prayer, and is the only proper appellation. But as there was but the one church, the qualifying part of the name was not needed in every instance.

Hence, for convenience, they usually said, “the church,” or the church at some certain place.

We hear a babel cry, “There is nothing in the name.” It is a false assertion. In the Bible, as shown above, God is honoured as the maker and owner of the church. Would an appellation that does not indicate whether God, man, or the devil founded and owns the church do equal honour to God? Let it also be known there is enough in false names to divide and confuse the family of God. Therefore Christ prayed the Father to keep them in His name, “that they may all be one as we are.” Therefore all persons that join themselves to any other name, are guilty of the sin of division.

3. “I have given them thy Word.” This said Christ in His prayer for our perfect oneness. To impose any other creed, or subscribe to any other, is to make and join divisions, and is a sin against Christ and His body, the church. It is claimed that the organized divisions are necessary to convert the world. But Jesus prayed that all His disciples should be one as He and the Father are, that the world might believe.

O ye sectarians, thus saith God: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways.” Isa. 55:8.

CHAPTER 14

What is the Bond of Union?

Answer: Love. “Above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” Col. 3:14.

“That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.” Col. 2:2.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

“Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:35-39.

CHAPTER 15

What Experience Perfects Us in Oneness?

Answer: Entire sanctification, or perfection.

In connection with His prayer for oneness, the Saviour prayed the Father to sanctify the disciples and all that would believe on Him through their word, which included us. “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they

may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” John 17:22, 23.

Sanctification, perfection, and the glory of Christ all relate to the same experience, and this makes God’s children one.

“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Heb. 2:11.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Eph. 4:11-13.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain

conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. I Pet. 1:18, 19.

The salvation of the Lord, which qualifies us for heaven, makes us one on earth. A religion of divisions will deceive the soul. The chief object of God's ministers is to "perfect the saints." The blood of Christ not only purifies from "all sin" and "all unrighteousness," but also sweeps away all erroneous doctrines. The Comforter guides into all truth, which involves the removal of all error. It is true that cleansing from error is not as instantaneous as from sin. But the pure in heart have perfect fellowship, even though all previously educated errors have not yet disappeared. There is therefore no real cause of division but sin. Therefore to cry against sects and divisions without first being wholly sanctified, and then leading people into this precious paradise of holy love, is nothing but confusion mocking confusion, or satan buffeting satan, as the devil flogged the sons of Sceva. All efforts of union but that of God's holiness is like pounding cold, crooked pieces of iron against each other to make them fit together. The more blows, the more crooks and differences. Put them into a furnace of white heat, and they will lose their cold, stiff, crooked individuality, and flow into one mass. That is God's way of uniting His people, in the fire of the Holy Spirit. All tinkering up platforms of union is wasted time. Each effort has only molded another sect calf for the people to worship and wrangle over. Freedom from sin knits together in love. But all merely strapped-up unions are bundles bound together to be burned. Bible salvation is all that is needed. This obtained, both union of heart and soul, and harmony in outward worship and life, will follow as a result or fruit of the Spirit. When "baptized by one Spirit into the one body," and made to drink in the one divine Spirit in His fulness, there will be no trouble to "worship God in Spirit and in truth." For all such "know the truth, and the truth makes them free."

On the plane of Bible holiness, no outward observances are made a test, in fact nothing is made a test of fellowship. For holy men "judge not from appearance, but judge righteous judgment." "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light

, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" I John 1:7. Fellowship is of the Spirit (Phil. 2:1), and exists where heart-purity exists. It is the conscious blending of hearts filled with the same Holy Spirit.

One may have been led into all truth, the other not. This does not interrupt fellowship. Nevertheless it is the duty of such as "know the truth," in meekness to instruct others who do not. Ignorance of some truth does not destroy fellowship, but resisting the truth does, because it forfeits salvation. We must not sanction people's errors, but if saved, show our love and fellowship to them, so long as they do not get the evidence that their wrong doctrines have become wilful, or they have in some way lost salvation. The fellowship ends, but love and kindness still continue in faithful efforts for their salvation. To ignore fellowship simply because of some doctrinal error is bigotry. To agree to disagree, or to put on an equality truth and error, is babel confusion. To know the truth is our privilege; to teach the truth our duty; but to have fellowship with the pure and upright of heart is an involuntary and spontaneous fact. Sects are the result of carnality. Nothing but perfect holiness destroys carnality, and thus removes both sectism and its cause. The fire of God's

love saves the soul, harmonizes all hearts that receive it, leads them into perfect and uniform obedience to all truth, and drives afar all who refuse to pass through its purging fire, and gain the plane of holy fellowship.

CHAPTER 16

What is a Sect?

In a little tract entitled "Sects," written by the founder of the Free Methodist sect, who signs his name, Rev. B. T. Roberts, the following definition is given:

"The word 'sect' is from the Latin *secare*, to cut off, to separate. The word *section* is from the same root. Hence a section is a portion cut off, or separated from a body of which it forms a part. A sect of Christians is a part of the entire Christian body, separated from the rest by some peculiar doctrines or tenets which they hold exclusively, or to which the

give especial prominence. This we believe is a fair definition of the word sect, as commonly used by those who know the meaning of the words which they use."

This we confess is a true definition and explanation of the word sect. But how any man of ordinary intelligence can thus correctly define sects as separate, cut-off portions from the body of Christ, by some exclusive party doctrines and then turn around and say it is right thus to sever the general body of Christ into fragments, is a mystery of iniquity. It well demonstrates the fact that a heretic (i. e., sectarian) is subverted and sinneth. To justify and sanction such schism

from the general body is to sin against God, and utterly disregard His Word.

CHAPTER 17

What Does the Bible Say of Sects?

They "devoureth the man that is more righteous than he; and makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things that have no ruler over them. They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?" Habakuk 1:13-17.

"That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." I Cor. 12:25. Sects and schisms mean the same thing.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Rom. 16:17, 18.

"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Titus 3:10, 11.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." II Pet. 2:1-3.

The words "damnable heresies," are rendered "destructive sects," in the German version.

"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." I Cor.

11:18, 19. Here we see that heresies means the same as divisions. And in the margin the translators put it in plain English, "sects." Paul declared the Corinthian brethren carnal, because they were inclined to schisms, saying, "I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos." I Cor. 3:1-4. In Galatians 5:20 the apostle classifies "heresies," translated "sects,"

in the Emphatic Diaglott, with murders, and the whole catalogue of "works of the flesh," and declares "that they which

do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

God help man to flee out of heresies—sects—and be complete in Christ. Since God's word renounces sects, they cannot be His church.

CHAPTER 18

Can We Observe the Ordinances Outside All Sects?

The New Testament clearly shows that Christ enacted certain ordinances, namely baptism, or in plain English, immersion, the washing of the saints' feet, and the Lord's supper. But we need join no sect to observe them. They do not belong to any sect on earth, but they are placed in the body of Christ for the exclusive observance of its members. Sectarians who do not discern the body of Christ are not even qualified for their observance. See I Cor. 11:27-29.

CHAPTER 19

Can We Meet to Worship Without a Sect?

Is it so that God's children cannot meet to worship Him unless they meet in some sect name, some name other than the one Christ told us to meet in? Thank God, we find no difficulty in assembling together outside all sect names and inclosures. But sectarians are actually so blind that they think holy men cannot convene together to worship God and enjoy any means of grace unless they join some earthly craft; as though all grace were in the sect, and nothing in Christ.

CHAPTER 20

Is the Church Visible Without a Sect Organization?

Another plea for sect idolatry is, that the church is invisible, unless organized in sect order. This is another superstition of the dark age. The Holy Spirit, who organizes the church, is indeed invisible, but His organization is visible. As the invisible wind which is a symbol of the Spirit, produces visible effects, so the church of God is a visible

effect of His unseen power. Being composed of actual men and women, a city set upon a hill, the light thereof cannot be hid; "as terrible as an army with banners," she always was visible, and needed no sect-founder to make her such. Paul

was not addressing disembodied spirits at Corinth when he said: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Nor is it only the hidden man of the heart that belongs to the church; but "know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" I Cor. 6:15. And our physical bodies do not become invisible when God sets us into the body of Christ, and remain so until a sect builder comes along and organizes us into visibility. Not only are the members of the true church visible, but so is the organization itself. Every gift and office that makes up the divine institution is visibly exercised in all the members, by all the members, by the invisible operation of God "who is over all, and through all, and in you all," and "who worketh all in all."

CHAPTER 21

In Coming Out of Sects Do We Have to Form Another Sect?

This is the final question, and we are very thankful to God that we can answer, NO. God forbid that any more of the harlots should be "conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity." If that were so, sectism is a sin from which there would

be no escape. But the voice from heaven says, "Come out of her, my people." So there is a way out of her, and "It shall

be called the way of holiness."

When a non-professing sinner is converted to God and born of the Spirit, he is thereby made a member of the church of God, but is in no sect at all. And since there is no command in the Bible to join any sect, he can obey all the Word and keep salvation, in the church, without ever joining a sect, so can every saint of God on the earth do the same. But should any number of such disciples of Christ through false teaching be led into a sect corporation and afterwards discover the deception practised upon them, cannot they renounce the sect organization and come out of it, as the Word of God commands them, and remain only in the church, which is the body of Christ, as they were before they were decoyed into the sect? To deny this fact is simply perverse cant. If men were to come out of sects and join themselves together, and make their own creed, they would be another sect. But the church of the living God is not thus produced. She is the result of men and women being saved in Jesus, and therefore joined together by the Lord in the "bond of perfectness." The question is not, what system is most practical for all Christians to step upon as the basis of union, but

what foundation do all Christians actually and necessarily stand on? By abiding only in Christ, His body the church, we stand on the foundation which includes all Christians in heaven and earth, and not a member of any sect or cut-off faction.

If the Word of God had said, "We are all one in the Methodist body," or any other human corporation, then Methodists would occupy the divinely appointed platform of union, and every other name and order would stand condemned for the sin of division. But since the Word commands us to abide only in Christ and declares us "all one in Christ Jesus," "one

body in Christ," by staying in Him only, in whom all Christians must abide, and in whom there are no sinners, we are joined to all saints, and separated from all sinners, and stand free before God of the great transgression of sectism.

Therefore, since every intelligent reader of the Bible knows that the Protestant sects and Romanism are not the church of God; that every sect corporation yokes together saints and sinners, which the Bible forbids; since the most bigoted confess that "the church will not save anybody," and since Christ alone can save and keep us, and "we are complete in him," why not abandon the sect and abide only in Christ, and His body the church? Since there will be no sects in heaven, why cling to them on earth? Why insult the wisdom of Christ by the imputation that the church He founded is not practical, and some man has, in these last days gotten up a better one, which you prefer? In the name of Jesus Christ, whose Word will soon judge us, we beseech all men to escape from all sin and sinners, from all sect clans, and sectish bands, and take refuge in Jesus Christ, and His own church, which is the "pillar and ground of the truth." Amen.

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it? - posted by DTSheffler, on: 2007/8/1 9:56

I wrote an (<http://www.exicar.com/2007/07/23/church-shopping/>) article on my blog that had to do with people hopping around from church. I think our relationship to the a church ought to be a little like a marriage relationship in which intimacy and relationship are established through commitment.

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 10:13

Interesting article. A couple of thoughts.

Today's evangelical "church system" is largely antichrist and it is almost impossible to develop a NT style body of believers in the system. For this reason many ON FIRE & PERSONALLY REVIVED believers are being called out of the system as they were during the days of John Wesley to home fellowships that more closely resemble true NT christianity such as we see in Acts.

I believe that shopping for a "church" to call home in the last days is a lot like going to the bar at closing time to find a pure honest woman to court. Better to come out from compromised and unclean alters to find true NT fellowship in a house, park or alley then to take part in the plagues of babylon.

In Christ - Jim

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it? - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2007/8/1 10:59

We had an interesting discussion here on SI a few years ago that might be helpful in considering this question. The thread grew quite long but it may be worthwhile to peruse through it...

(http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id4793&forum35) What is a Church?

In Christ,

Ron

Re: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it? - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 11:19

Quote:

LittleGift wrote:

My personal experience:

In the early 1980's I became involved in a small prayer group of those from different denominational backgrounds. The Lord brought each of us out of the denomination we were in. Among other things, the Lord gave us such a vision of what the Church that we were spiritually "moved", and this led to a physical move.

Then one prayed "Lord, what do we do now? Where do we go?" and the answer came, "**Go wherever God's people gather**".

So the vision didn't cause isolation, but freedom to fellowship wherever He sent us.

That doesn't mean "church-hopping" but remaining in that *spiritual* place with the Lord where He has put me, and to the physical place where He sends.

I have since met others in the same place spiritually, and fellowship with them is richer than with any in the local church where the Lord has me.

In Him

Jeannette

We must never go on feelings, God does not give new revelation that is contrary to HIS word. Christ died for the church,

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

EPh.5:27 says that he wants to present her a holy and blameless.

We know that we should not forsake the assembly with others. Meeting in a house to have fellowship is great, but that would be more like a bible study or just fellowship. It should not replace coming together in a local assembly to equip one another, to serve, to be a blessing to others. Understand we can do those things with others privately.

I don't agree with not going to church and staying home. Its not biblical and foundational. The church doesn't save us, and we can't isolate ourselves from the church.

But that is my view, not a popular one on SI.

In CHirst

REformer

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 11:33

Quote:
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Reformer, in all love, from your posts I believe your concept of church is tainted by babylon. Can you give any scriptural evidence for what you have just written or are you merely relying on the empty way of life handed down through american generations and have trusted in it as being "church".

For instance, i write in humility and brokenness. here is a typical conversation with my false convert in-laws who "go to church" as you call it religiously.

THEM: What did you do this weekend

ME: We hung out with 7 brothers and sisters Friday night for a prayer meeting and communion. Then on Saturday night we went to feed, pray with, preach to and have an open bible study with the homeless, gangs and crack addicts in the gutters of inner city Detroit until 3 in the morning. Then we slept in Sunday, woke up at 11 to sit outside drink some coffee, read some scripture, and sing some hymns.

THEM: Oh, so you DIDNT "Go to church" this weekend

ME: UM, I have no idea what you are talking about

THEM: How are you getting fed, why are you forsaking fellowship, why dont you "go to church"

ME: Because the Lord delivered us out of the babylonian system that you call "church" when i was personally revived. We no longer go to "church". We are the Church, 24/7 and the glorious freedom of the fellowship of the saints is just a small taste of the goodness God has poured out in us through His Spirit and in His mercy.

THEM: But you didnt go to "church", how did you get fed?

ME: Through the true preachers of the word like David Wilkerson, Paul Washer, and Leonard Ravenhill... and personally through the Holy Spirit speaking through the saints I fellowship with.

THEM: but you're all just normal people, you dont have seminary (I mean seminary) degrees. You are not qualified to minister to each other or to the homeless.

ME: I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and prostitutes are entering into the kingdom of heaven before you :(I will pray for you.

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

I hope this clears up where I am coming from.

In Christ - Jim

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 11:35

Quote:
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Local assemblies in the scriptures met in homes. I can't find in scriptures and example where believers went to a building...sang a few songs and listened to someone preach for an hour and then went home. Can you?

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 16:03

Quote:

jjmdied2sin wrote:

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In Christ - Jim

G1577

ek-klay-see'-ah

From a compound of G1537 and a derivative of G2564; a calling out, that is, (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both):—assembly, church. Heb. 2:12

G4864

From (the reduplicated form of) G4863; an assemblage of persons; specifically a Jewish "synagogue" (the meeting or the place); by analogy a Christian church:—assembly, congregation, synagogue.

James 5:14

Eph. 3:21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 5:23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Eph. 5:24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Heb. 12:23 to the general assembly and the church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at HOME; for it is shameful for women to speak IN CHURCH (is the home and church two different places)

I agree that the church is not a building but it is a body of believers. You can't compare your in laws with everyone else. It is unfortunate that people do have a misconception of CHURCH. But, where I disagree with you is your reasoning behind in not going to a local assembly or "building".

David Wilkerson's church: Times Square Church

In 1986, after walking down 42nd Street in Manhattan at midnight, crying out for God to raise up a ministry in Times Square, Reverend Wilkerson sensed the Lord speaking to his heart: "You start a church. You know the city and you love it." At that moment Times Square Church was birthed in his heart, and the church opened its doors in October 1987. The church has a congregation of nearly 8,000 from over 100 nationalities, and is a virtual microcosm of New York City's inhabitants, in which doctors, entertainers, the homeless, teachers, the poor, attorneys, ex-convicts, Wall Street brokers, former drug pushers and addicts, CEO's, actors and students, to name a few, worship together under one roof. www.timessquarechurch.org

Paul Washer is part of First Baptist Church of Muscle Shoals. pastor is Jeff Noblit

Leonard Ravenhill sat under went to one of seminaries (seminaries) at Cliff College sat under the ministry of Samuel Chadwick, who was a pastor of a large congregation.

I don't believe these men will ever tell someone to leave a local fellowship, just because they feel it is part of the Babylon

system. These men you mentioned have been equipping and feeding saints for many years. They have done more for the cause of Christ than you and I could hope for. Could you imagine them just meeting with a few in a house of wherever they felt like?

Our church goes out and evangelizes, feeds the poor, goes to nursing homes, gives time and finances to support ministries and missionaries. We help people in our church who can't pay their bills. Acts 4:32, 34-37 My wife and I gave away our car to a single mom with 3 kids, who couldn't afford to buy one, she didn't know who it is from, but God placed it on our heart. That's one of the many benefits that come from being part of a local fellowship. To love others as Christ commands. We can't love those only who we feel agree with our way of thinking, what does that profit us?

James 1:1 To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings

Why were they dispersed? Persecution!! They were scattered and had only to meet in houses and other types of locations. They were afraid. But don't you think that if they could they would meet in a local fellowship? Can you imagine how large some places were to hold the brethren just to read the letters (Epistles)

Read James 2. If they didn't meet in an assembly why would James be concerned about showing partiality?

When people leave church because they feel it is a whore or it is a Babylon system, they are deceived, because when you say that or anyone else they are talking about the church (believers) Christ died for. 1 John 3:10 "By these children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness in honor of God, nor the one who does not love his brother." Loving your brother is not those just in your proximity, but all of them. (I know I touched on this already)

1 Cor. 12:4-31

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? 18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, 24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, 25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. 28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way

In summary: I understand that we are the body of believers. It is not a church that saves, but only the Blood of Jesus Christ

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

ist. If the church is such an abomination, then all these spiritual hero's on SI, went to a local fellowship a building whatever, I can bet they did not endorse leaving and starting somekind of group that gets together, just because the early church did.

oaky I am done. I hope my dribble makes sense
In Him and a proud church member,
Reformer

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 16:13

Quote:

sscott wrote:

Quote:
-----We know that we should not forsake the assembly with others. Meeting in a house to have fellowship is great, but that would be more like a bible study or just fellowship. It should not replace coming together in a local assembly to equip one another, to serve, to be a blessing to others.

Local assemblies in the scriptures met in homes. I can't find in scriptures an example where believers went to a building...sang a few songs and listened to someone preach for an hour and then went home. Can you?

Brother read my reply above, i can't type that much more.

I am actually tired of hearing that they met in houses! Your right they did, maybe for many reasons we can only speculate. If your going to take that so literal, you need to take everything in scripture literal. We should walk everywhere, we should pluck our eyes out and cut off our hand if they cause us to sin. Women should not speak. Lets sell everything.

Where should people send their offerings and tithes, givings too? you all can send it to me if you want?LOL Or is that unbiblical because that is churchy? I know I just opened a can of worms!

REformer

In

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 16:20

sscott wrote:sang a few songs and listened to someone preach for an hour and then went home. Can you?

eph 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

REv 15:3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

 "Great and marvelous are Your works,
(this is a scene from Heaven)

Heb.2:12 saying:

 "I will declare Your name to My brethren;

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.Â”

James 5:13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.

Acts 16:25 But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/1 17:05

dear reformer,

i appreciate that you are so passionate about church going. i see that you desire that a believer not set himself in isolation because he doesn't want to go to church. that being said, brother how can you define church as His body and then go on using the scriptures and take them to mean a physical place. if the heavens can't contain Him, do you think a physical building does?? no scripture is very clear that He makes His abode within us. brother we are the body, and anytime we meet with other members of His body we should be loving, edifying, encouraging and correcting. it should not matter if it is in a home, building, or cave. the question is not where we should meet, but what should be happening when we are meeting.

brother, scripture does not allow you to tell someone that they are wrong for meeting in any place other than a building, it does not afford you that luxury. i will never tell someone that because they attend a building, they are wrong. i will simply ask "is this fellowship a place where brothers and sisters are fulfilling the call to love God and love others"? are they hungering and thirsting to help one another grow in His image? are they being a light to the lost? these to me are of more importance than the physical location..

Quote:
-----And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at HOME; for it is shameful for women to speak IN CHURCH(is the home and church two different places)

it would be 2 different places for the believers who leave their house and go to another house..

Quote:
-----If the church is such an abomination, then all these spiritual hero's on SI, went to a local fellowship a building whatever, I can bet they did not endorse leaving and starting somekind of group that gets together, just because the early church did.

i bet they were trying to get people to quit doing church and start being the church. brother, that can and should happen everywhere we go..

Quote:
-----In Him and a proud church member,

me too. we should all be so grateful to be a part of His body. He is so amazing..

like i said above, a believer should never forsake assembling together with other believers, but when we start telling others that our "kind" of fellowship is the only way, we will start to cause unnecessary problems and feuds, know what i mean ?? anyways, love you man and i hope that the Lord may use something here to bless you. :-)

Re: - posted by LiveforGod (), on: 2007/8/1 17:18

Brother Phil you hit the nail on the head. Now I don't have to say anything else(even tough the article I posted here explains it all). God Bless you Brother.

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 17:44

Quote:

LiveforGod wrote:
Brother Phil you hit the nail on the head. Now I don't have to say anything else(even tough the article I posted here explains it all). God Bless you Brother.

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

Your article you posted from what I can gather does not forbid the church building; unless I missed it? Understanding that the author is offering gleanings from several verses of scripture. neither denying the building or promoting a building.

Personally I don't think a lot of my post was read, because I thought some valid points of attending a local assembly has many blessings and to be a blessing.

I still am confused about the view of a church. I guess all I can say is that the people I attend with at "church" we meet in a nice building. It is a place to meet. I guess I am viewing your opinions that having a "denominational" building is wrong. That somehow is unbiblical? That because they meant in homes, that's what we should do.

I would be interested in hearing what you think, not what an article says?

Reformer

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 18:05

Quote:

LoveHim wrote:
dear reformer,

if the heavens can't contain Him, do you think a physical building does?? no scripture is very clear that He makes His abode within us.

Quote:

I agree there is nothing to contain Him. No house or building or cave.

brother we are the body, and anytime we meet with other members of His body we should be loving, edifying, encouraging and correcting. it should not matter if it is in a home, building, or cave. the question is not where we should meet, but what should be happening when we are meeting.

I agree that it doesn't matter where you meet, but as long as it is not because of bitterness of the "church system". You do have to admit that people will forsake the church because of bitterness and choose to stay home and watch it on TV.

brother, scripture does not allow you to tell someone that they are wrong for meeting in any place other than a building,

I never said scripture says that's wrong.

it does not afford you that luxury. i will never tell someone that because they attend a building,

many on SI do feel that it is ok! Only houses.

Quote:
-----And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at HOME; for it is shameful for women to speak IN CHURCH (in the home and church two different places)

it would be 2 different places for the believers who leave their house and go to another house..

Quote:
-----If the church is such an abomination, then all these spiritual heroes on SI, went to a local fellowship a building whatever, I can bet they did not endorse leaving and starting some kind of group that gets together, just because the early church did.

i bet they were trying to get people to quit doing church and start being the church. brother, that can and should happen everywhere we go..

Quote:
-----In Him and a proud church member,

me too. we should all be so grateful to be a part of His body. He is so amazing..

proud to be part of the body and it just so happens that we meet in a building.

Brother I get what you are saying, I hope you are understanding where I am coming from. The most important thing we can do is Love the Lord, grow in the knowledge of His splendor, and share the good news.

Thanks for listening Phil

God bless you
Mike

Re: - posted by LiveforGod (), on: 2007/8/1 18:28

Hello. :-)
Allright, So I will say my point.

Quote:
-----Your article you posted from what I can gather does not forbid the church building; unless I missed it?

You are right he does not promote it or denyes it.

Brother, the issue is not where anybody meets. You can meet in a Building or in a House, in Earth or in the Moon :-).

Quote:
-----I guess I am viewing your opinions that having a "denominational" building is wrong. That some how is unbiblical?

I stongly belive that having a "denominational" building is wrong.
Why?

Because no denomination is the Church of God, there are people in various denominations that do belong to the Church, but the denomination is not itself the Church. Then we are not being of one mind as Jesus wanted us to be in Jhon 17. Different denominations are giving Christianity in the sight of men and women a "divided" look. Not that the Church of God is devided, but that Denominations are making it seem as if it where, because most people do not understand what the Church is. I do not want to go into all the reasons why I belibe that meeting under a denominational name is wrong. But if you read Chapters 16,17,19, and 21 the most inportant in this issue.

Brother, We should congregate anywhere where God's spirit is.
If you have any question please tell me so.

Love you in Christ.God Bless you.

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/1 18:45

Quote:
-----Brother I get what you are saying, I hope you are understanding where I am coming from. The most important thing we can do is Love the Lord, grow in the knowledge of His splendor, and share the good news.

Thanks for listening Phil

God bless you
Mike

i do understand friend. we should love the Lord, challenge each other and grow together and reach out to the lost and hurting. these are things that can happen if you meet in a building, house, cave, park, etc... the thing of utmost importance is "are we being the church, ya know"?? that is what i'm concerned, being the church, not where i go to. for now i do attend a building while hoping that the Lord will lead me to a house church, not because i'm bitter, but because i personally believe that it is more "each other oriented", "condusive for growth and true communion" and more "cost effective". but

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

i will not tell others that they are wrong if they don't hold my views. a place to go, is to me a conviction that each person needs to settle in their heart. once settled, then go and be the church in the authority of our precious Lord.

i appreciate your willingness to listen. love you mike.

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 19:08

Quote:
-----reformer wrote:

Quote:
-----LittleGift wrote:

My personal experience:

In the early 1980's I became involved in a small prayer group of those from different denominational backgrounds. The Lord brought each of us out of the denomination we were in. Among other things, the Lord gave us such a vision of what the Church that we were spiritually "moved", and this led to a physical move.

Then one prayed "Lord, what do we do now? Where do we go?" and the answer came, "**Go wherever God's people gather**".

So the vision didn't cause isolation, but freedom to fellowship wherever He sent us.

That doesn't mean "church-hopping" but remaining in that *spiritual* place with the Lord where He has put me, and to the physical place where He sends.

I have since met others in the same place spiritually, and fellowship with them is richer than with any in the local church where the Lord has me...

We must never go on feelings, God does not give new revelation that is contrary to HIS word. Christ died for the church, Eph.5:27 says that he wants to present her a holy and blameless.

We know that we should not forsake the assembly with others. Meeting in a house to have fellowship is great, but that would be more like a bible study or just fellowship. It should not replace coming together in a local assembly to equip one another, to serve, to be a blessing to others. Understand we can do those things with others privately.

I don't agree with not going to church and staying home. Its not biblical and foundational. The church doesn't save us, and we can't isolate ourselves from the church.

But that is my view, not a popular one on SI.
REformer

Hi Reformer

I'm puzzled why you quoted what I wrote to make these points.

You said:

Quote:
-----We must never go on feelings, God does not give new revelation that is contrary to HIS word. Christ died for the church, Eph.5:27 says that he wants to present her a holy and blameless

What feelings are you talking about? What "new revelation that is contrary to His Word"?

I know there are some who advocate withdrawing completely from fellowship and doing their own thing, but in quoting my words it seems you think I'm one of them, and I'm not quite sure why.:-?

The days are coming when we won't be able to easily meet in large open fellowships, and the true Church will probably have to go "underground" (as it already is in many parts of the world) but otherwise I agree with all you said.

Blessings

Jeannette

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

Re:, on: 2007/8/1 20:09

To LiveforGod

Thanks for the (long) article you posted. Looks interesting. I have cut and pasted it into Word for reading later (it's 1am here and I'm working early in the morning!)

Blessings and good night

Jeannette

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 21:06

The way I read it was that you had a vision to leave the church you were attending and gather where ever GODs people gather. I construed it as a revelation from God to leave the fellowship and just wander from place to place. I may have read it to fast and not fully understood it all. thats why I said what i said.

If I misunderstood you...sorry.

Mike :-)

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/1 21:10

brothers and sisters it has been good discussion and learned from all your input. 8-) I hope you got something as well. I will move on to another subject and I am sure I will run into you all again.

Blessings

Mike :-D

Re: - posted by DTSheffler, on: 2007/8/2 8:23

Quote:
-----Todays evangelical "church system" is largely antichrist and it is almost impossible to develop a NT style body of believers in the system. For this reason many ON FIRE & PERSONALLY REVIVED believers are being called out of the system as they were during the days of John Wesley to home fellowships that more closely resemble true NT christianity such as we see in Acts.

I agree. I have no problem with people leaving the system because it has nothing to do with God. The church I attend is an extremely rare find and I certainly don't take that for granted. I would much rather see people do what you are talking about and form home fellowships that are actually interested in seeking God (this is how my church got started 30 years ago incidentally). However, once people do that, they need to figure out the relationships that they are going to be committed to and stick with them. You can't go your whole life and never give yourself to relationships.

Re: - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2007/8/2 10:29

I long to see a Church radiant with the light of the gospel shining, a Church set apart for the cause of the cross and the kingdom of God, a Church filled with a people for His own possession!! :-D

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 11:30

reformer-

The first set of scriptures you posted are all awesome (as all scripture is), along with the esword expounding of the words, but they actually hinder your point. Mainly because you are starting with a false supposition that church = going to a building on Sunday morning, singing a few songs, listening to a man speak for 45 minutes then going home and are isogetically interpreting the scriptures to fit your preconceived conclusions. (thanks sscott for pointing out that this is found nowhere in the bible)

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

Quote:

And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at HOME; for it is shameful for women to speak IN CHURCH (is the home and church two different places)

This is terrible hermeneutics, using an unclear passage of scripture to contradict dozens of very clear passages. The entire NT clearly states that the first century church met in homes and not buildings. Therefore it is far more biblical, in the purest sense, to meet in homes than steeple houses. Note, I am not saying it is sinful or bad to meet in buildings; it just isn't in the NT. Here are a few clear scriptures.

Acts 2:2

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:1-3 (in Context) Acts 2 (Whole Chapter)

Acts 2:46

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

Acts 5:42

Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 8:3

But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

Acts 12:5 + 12

So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying

Acts 16:40

After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left.

Acts 20:20

You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.

Romans 16:

3Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. 4They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. 5Greet also the church that meets at their house.

1 Corinthians 16:19

The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house.

Colossians 4:15

Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

Philemon 1:2

To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

t meets in your home:

Quote:

I agree that the church is not a building but it is a body of believers. You can't compare your in laws with everyone else. It is unfortunate that people do have a misconception of CHURCH. But, where I disagree with you is your reasoning behind in not going to a local assembly or "building".

my reasoning is because God called me out of it, it is almost completely apostate and I am called to be the Church as w e fellowship with the other brothers and sisters who have "come out of her my people", and not "go to church" and take part in compromised and unclean alters

Quote:

David wilkersons church...

Paul Washer...

Leanord Ravenhill sat under went to one of cementaries(semenaries)...

I don't believe these men will ever tell someone to leave a local fellowship, just because they feel it is part of the babylon system. These men you mentioned have been equipping and feeding saints for many years. The have done more the cause of Christ than you and I could hope for. Could you imagine them just meeting with a few in a house of where ever they felt like?

I am well aware of the ministries that the pastor I listen to are involved with. These men of God, ALL have openly and publicly rebuked the American "church system" as being largely apostate, and have all said its better to find a bible study with a few on fire believers..., I can dig up the audios upon request. (BTW, it was ravenhill who coined the cemetery (I mean seminary) phrase)

I do not think that meeting in a building is evil, I just see that the GREAT majority of that which meets in a building is evil. It is quite obvious that Gods hand was on Dave Wilkerson when he was out preaching in the streets and it is on him when he is preaching from the Time Square pulpit.

Quote:

Thats one of the many benefits that come from being part of a local fellowship. To love others as Christ commands. We can't love those only who we feel agree with our way of thinking, what does that profit us?

Bro, seriously... you are killing me with this.

Going to a building on Sunday and Wednesday w/ occasional pot luck dinner= local fellowship
If you don't do the above you don't love as Christ commands

Seriously brother, read my posts. Our fellowship is SOOOO sweet, when it is just five brethren or if it is an open meeting with the prostitutes and gang bangers in the ghetto at night. Your entire attitude on this seems to be built of false suppositions and straw men, as I stated above.

Quote:

Can you imagine how large some places where to hold the brethren just to read the letters(Epistles)

In fact ALL I CAN DO IS IMAGINE, because it is not written in scripture, all that is written in scripture is meeting in houses. (Again, I am not saying buildings in themselves are bad, there just not found in the NT and the great whore has set herself up primarily in the buildings that people gather at today)

We can only at best twist a few scriptures from James, 1 Corinthians 11 + 14, and maybe a few others while ignoring a TON of clear scriptures on this matter to draw to the conclusion that the early church met in buildings. A quick study of Church history will actually reveal that when the Church apostatized under Constantine (and further under the pope), the whole Sunday morning building meeting appeared...

Quote:

When people leave church because they feel it is a whore or it is a babylon system, they are deceived, because when you say that or anyone else they are talking about the church (believers) Christ died for. 1 John 3:10 "By this children of GOD and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness in not of GOD, nor the one who does not love his brother." Loving your brother is not those just in your proximity, but all of them. (I know I touched on this already)

Brother, I am afraid again that you have a false idea of what the Church is and that you are greatly deceived in the matter and the way that you are creating false accusations about me not loving those who are of the bride is absurd and shameful :(I love all of my brothers and sister who were born, raised and still trapped in Babylon, not yet having seen the glory of Jerusalem with their own eyes. I love you too, and hope you will consider the testimony of scripture on this matter, whether you meet in a building, on the street or in a house. May the Lord continue to lead you in all truth.

I am working on an article that breaks down the modern church system and contrasts it to biblical Christianity. This is difficult because there is much to be said and to be divided and is no simple task.

In Christ - Jim

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/2 15:00

Quote:

-----Going to a building on Sunday and Wednesday w/ occasional pot luck dinner= local fellowship

Quote:

-----If you don't do the above you don't love as Christ commands

Sir you have NO idea what my Love for the One who died for me is! Brother if you think I don't Love HIM the way HE commands, then you are sadly mistaken! For you to even say that makes you sound like you have it right.

obviously you have not even read anything I have posted. I am NOT saying the church (the building) is a place where I meet God! Its a place I go!

You can't be that naive to think that just because they met in houses, means that is doctrine! Please! What about Corinth, was that not a building where people gathered? Surely their system was pagan, but did Paul tell them to go to your houses, because they acted like fornicators and pagans. He went as far in one case to oust the one out in blatant sinful behavior, was it the system that was wrong?

I will never see your point that just a few of you get together just because the system is broken in some churches. To me what you are doing is self martyrdom. have you ever thought about what can I do to help the system? Have you ever thought instead of leaving a church because somethings are not the way you feel it should be, is maybe I should start a min

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

istry or start a bible study within the "whore", as many of you call it. maybe if I pray and try to make a differnce, maybe G od will work through me?

So what about having pot lucks and meeting on wednesdays and sundays. Big deal! I think that is great. The more you c an get together the better in my eyes.

Do you go and see the widows in the nursing homes? WE do! How about visiting those that are in the hospital with a ter minal ill child? We do! How about going out on sunday nights and evangelizing in the community, visiting people that ca me to visit the church? We do. how about giving of your tithes and offerings? (I stated that point one other time and NO one commented on it.) You know it is biblical to support those who teach.

Yes i understand that sometimes you may have to start a fellowship in a house, or small office, then as it grows, will you buy a bigger house? No you will get a building and worship together.

you can spend all your time studying church history and post articles, but it is not going to matter to me. I am sorry but y our wrong. Your not apostles.

I don't agree with alot of things that go on in my church, that would make me a hypocrite, becausem I am not all togethe r, since I am the body of Christ, His church, I would like to jump out of flesh because I hate it! But that would be impossib le.

I don't think any of you are listening? I never said the church is a buidling. Now if it is wrong to meet in a building and ha ve fellowship and sing hymns and teach....then I have been doing the wrong thing for years and will repent and start a fe llowhip in my house. Thats isolation and rebellious. To seperate yourself because people have been influenced by other peoples opinions. I enjoy going to a nice and comfortable building, I enjoy it. I said enough and won't say anymore on thi s subject. it is fruitless.

I wonder why SI won't lock this done, when they locked the one I started? Maybe because what I believe in such a minor ity on SI.

For Him and because of HIm
Reformer

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 15:29

reformer- you misinterpreted my post completely. I never brought into question your love for Christ, as you did to me. Perhaps it is better to be done with this thread, though I wont let your unbibilcal views go unchallenged.

You have provided no scriptural evidence for your views regaurding home fellowship. Again, I do not condemn those who meet in buildings, as is often practical, but by in large it is apostate.

Quote:
-----maybe I should start a ministry or start a bible study within the "whore", as many of you call it

Paul said to come out of her, not reform her (2 Corinthians 6)

Quote:
-----...start a fellowhip in my house. Thats isolation and rebellious.

You are the only one making blanket statements in this post (and unbiblical ones at that). Scripture, along with Church a nd Revival history stand against you...

Good day sir - Jim

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/2 16:00

brothers, come on guys, we don't need the moderators all the time to lock up threads. we can and should moderate this ourselves with humility and God's grace. let's talk, but not get mad over personal preferences. these things mean nothing in light of Christ. as far as i see, if you meet in a building, home or the street, your salvation does not depend on it. it is not a "major" doctrinal issue that we need to separate over. this reminds me of 1 corinthians. "i meet in a home", "i meet in a building", "well i meet in the street". brothers, this is not something to get upset and mad over.

it might be a good idea to in humility understand that God has given us each personal preferences and to deal with each other in grace and love.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2007/8/2 17:17

Greetings Brothers and sisters

I read this from a teaching and thought I would share it here, it reflects my heart on this subject.

I don't believe where you meet to be so very important, but rather "who" you are fellowshiping with is what is vital. The Bible defines Christians (which by the way are the church) as ones who have forsaken all in order to be His disciple. They've lost their lives in order to find it. They've turned from sin and therefore can come to be called new creations because the old has been given away. They've died to sin and then buried it under the water. It does not matter that you don't meet in a certain building on a appointed date on the calendar, Christ calls us to live our life in submission to His good and perfect will daily with one another.

God Bless You
MaryJane

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 17:33

If you want to get the thread locked just somehow through the scriptures shed some light on a man that holds public office that stands against abortion, homosexual marriage, and how he professes that Jesus Christ has changed his life more than anyone or on give some scriptures about a women's authority role in the church. Regardless of who introduces the post, it very likely might get locked on your rebuttal, rather than the initial post. It might not get locked when it is posted as a "do you believe him" but only after the scripture had been given to shed light on the subject.

2 Tim 4:3

3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

Hang in there reformer. Just forgive and speak the truth. We are not responsible if it falls on deaf ears.

Ezek 33:8-9

8 When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. 9 But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself.

Heb 10:30-34

30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. 33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. 34 You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/2 17:59

Jimmie you don't remember saying this: "If you don't do the above you don't love as Christ commands"

Paul said to come out of her, not reform her (2 Corinthians 6)

We as believers should not be yoked with un-believers that knowingly admitted as members, worship of pagan idols and so for. Who am I to tell if someone is saved or not? Isn't that up to the Holy Spirit? By your scripture the reason to come out of a church is because they are lost and practice idoltry. The lived like the world openly fornicated, were unholy, practiced sensastionalism. He wasn't saying come out of assembly of believers, but un-believers but come out of idolatrous, demonic, false religions. I think you are twisting that scripture, to meet your need.

No one yet has mentioned anything about tithing or giving? If a few meet in a house, where do the offerings go? Are we not to support those that labor for the truth. Which is a command.

Good luck to you,
Regard
Mike

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/2 18:17

Appreciate that moe_mac, not trying to start trouble, I am strongly passionate about it and it is all one sided, because people listen to sermons and then take what they say as doctrine and get fired up, without allowing the Holy Spirit to teach them. just because Wilkerson, Tozer, Ravenhill and so forth, taught lessons on certain subjects doesn't mean

I already got a post locked when I wanted to discuss christians in public office. how do they stand for Jesus Christ. It has become such a main topic of the political debates, everyone running for office is a Christian if they can get your vote.

see ya
Mike

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 18:47

Quote:

reformer wrote:
The way I read it was that you had a vision to leave the church you were attending and gather where ever GODs people gather. I construed it as a revelation from God to leave the fellowship and just wander from place to place. I may have read it to fast and not fully understood it all. thats why I said what i said.

If I misunderstood you...sorry.

Mike :-)

Hi Bro Mike

You did misunderstand me, but that's OK.

What I meant by "revelation" was something that you have probably experienced too, on other matters: You think you understand a truth, then the Lord floods your heart with fresh light on the subject and it's almost as if you never *really* understood it before at all.

That is what happened to me re the Church. Not a new teaching but a fresh revelation of what has always been there in Scripture. I saw *— really* saw - for the first time that I was part of a Body that transcends distance and time, "the whole family in heaven and earth..."

In practice, "going where God's people gather" has meant nothing in the slightest like "church hopping". In fact I was rather alarmed at some others' comments on this thread, which seem to be taking things much too far in that direction, or advocating not having fellowship at all in the sense of meeting together for worship.

Since leaving the Presbyterian Church in 1983, I spent from 1983 to 2002 (nearly 20 years!) in fellowship with a little AOG church near home. This was where the Lord led me to go. I would probably be there still if it wasn't for a move after working abroad between 2002-2003. On returning I stayed in a few different places for several months, and went consistently to a local church fellowship in each place — a Charismatic Anglican (Episcopal I think you call them), another AOG, and finally after moving to the present address nearly 3 years ago, to a Restoration-based fellowship, about 8 miles away, where I've been ever since.

The Lord won't let me become an "official" member there, which I think bothers them. Re church, I just can't belong to anything less than the whole Body any more, even though based at a local fellowship wherever I happen to live.

The Restoration movement used to be into "heavy shepherding", but this particular church has moderated a lot, although there are still strong traces of this spirit, which surface now and again.

At one point last year I did think "I'm outta here". This was when a visiting speaker - the principal of the denominational Bible College - came to give some talks. I think his brief was to bring us back into order! He wanted us to toe the party line and obey the doctrine of our "apostle". His interpretation of "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" in Acts was that we should obey the particular "Apostle" of the denomination — one of two brothers who started the movement (the other brother has died). He suggested (kindly!) that if we weren't comfortable with that then maybe we should find another church - because they didn't want anyone on board who wasn't fully committed to that church alone!

I found this false teaching appalling, and didn't go to meetings for a couple of weeks. But then found myself going back.

I can't leave unless the Lord sends me somewhere else. There are two quite lively churches within walking distance of here, but neither of them are where He wants me it seems. Although I did go to the house group of one (a Baptist) for a while (until other commitments on that night made it impossible).

So I'm not really a church hopper (sounds like some kind of insect! :-D)

Blessings

Jeannette

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 18:48

Quote:

sojourner7 wrote:
I long to see a Church radiant with the light of the gospel shining, a Church set apart for the cause of the cross and the kingdom of God, a Church filled with a people for His own possession!! :-D

AMEN!!!!

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/2 19:58

Quote:

LittleGift wrote:

Quote:

reformer wrote:

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I can't leave unless the Lord sends me somewhere else. There are two quite lively churches within walking distance of here, but neither of them are where He wants me it seems. Although I did go to the house group of one (a Baptist) for a while (until other commitments on that night made it impossible).

So I'm not really a church hopper (sounds like some kind of insect! :-D)

Blessings

Jeannette

Sister you said everything just beautifully! I so appreciate your comments and testimony. You get it, you understand. Actually I don't even need to say anymore!(I know, it surprising! :-))

Thank the Lord for Godly woman that know the truth and stand up when most men are too busy watching the world go by.

AMEN

Love ya
Mike

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/2 20:26

brother mike (reformer) and moemac,

brothers, can i first say that no one is against you guys as if you are the target. i believe that the thread got locked because the moderator wants to see talk of scriptures or doctrine, but not politics. (please forgive me if i'm wrong, but i believe that i read that from the moderator).

i agrre that we should not say whether one is saved or not as if we truly know. but we can judge the fruits of the life and are actually commanded to do so. but i would never say that because of a person worshipping the Lord with other believers in a building or home, that they are not saved.

like i said before brothers, i personally believe that a home fellowship is more biblical in that it is usually more..

- * each other oriented
- * every member participating
- * very cost effective (no salaries, morgages, vans, budgets, and programs to pay for)
- * real (it's hard to just "come to church" and slip by unnoticed when there is only 15 people)
- * fellowship oriented (eating meals together and worshipping together in a close atmosphere brings unity)
- * backed a lot by scripture

like i said, i'm not against people meeting in buildings, i just believe that the NT shows us a better way to meet.

Quote:
-----No one yet has mentioned anything about tithing or giving? If a few meet in a house, where do the offerings go? Are we not to support those that labor for the truth. Which is a command.

brother reformer, i was gonna let this go by because tithing is a personal preference and it has been discussed on here plenty of times. but because you mentioned it like 3 times, i will try to address it for tithing and giving for you in a brief way.

brother tithing was a law given to the jews. the NT is explicitly clear that we are not under the OT law, but Christ has fulfilled the law. He was born of a woman, under the law, to redeem those under the law. (gal 4) the purpose of the law was to point us to Christ, but Christ is the end of the law. we who are born again, by His Spirit, love the Lord with all we have and love others as ourselves and thus fulfill the law (matt 22). what was the purpose of the tithes in the OT? to support the levites and priests who didn't work. this was the God ordained way to feed them. who is the priesthood in the NT?? pastors of "churches"?? by no means. we believers are a royal priesthood and a holy nation (1 peter 2).

brother, let me ask you a few questions...

- * do you observe the sabbath as they did in the OT??
- * do you have to be circumcised?
- * do you have to follow the dietary laws of the OT??

why not? because we are not under the law my friend. if you say, well abraham tithed before there was a law, then let me ask you a few more questions...

- * does the scripture ever say he was commanded to tithe??
- * did abraham tithe off of his possessions or the spoils from the war?
- * does scripture say if it was something to continually be done??

no, it was a one-time act that abraham offered up to the Melchizedek(sp), when he was on his way back from rescuing lot. he offered the spoils from the war and not his personal possessions. i am only recapping all this because it is a common objection to not tithing.

now, what do about tithing and the "church". first, if we meet in homes like the NT believers did, then there is no need to have tithing (we have no pastors on "staff" and no overhead like morgage and building programs and stuff like that). it is only when we take on extra possessions like a building, vans, staff, etc that we need to start some way of bringing in money to pay for this stuff. that is the birth of the modern day tithing doctrine and why we need it today.

is giving scriptural?? yes, yes, yes. personally i do not believe that tithing is scriptural as i have listed a few reasons above, but i fully support giving to support the poor, homeless, orphans, struggling believers and missionaries (which are kin

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

da like apostles of the NT). how should we give? gratefully and with a cheerful heart. is there any percentage that we have to give? no, but as the Lord has spoken to your heart (as the believer has purposed in his heart). but as i have said above, if we meet in homes, parks, or in the street, there is no need of a tithing law and then the money being given freely can go directly to what it was intended to go to in the first place...the true ministry (poor, widows, orphans, missionaries, etc).

but brother, if you believe you should give 10%, then by all means, obey that. i would just warn you not to try to place all believers under a law that we were never meant to be under in the first place.

"if you allow yourself to be circumcised, then you are obligated to keep the whole law. you have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace" (gal 5:3,4). i am not saying you are not saved, please don't come away thinking that i am saying that. all i am saying is if we allow ourselves to be placed under law in one area of our life, then we are obligated to keep the whole law. if you believe you should tithe, then brother do so in faith. but please brother, don't try to place other believers under the law. money is a matter of the heart. our money, time and resources are all God's and should be held loosely so that when God desires whatever He desires from us, then we should offer it up to Him freely. brother, it is all His, not just 10%.

brothers, i hope that you can hear what i am saying to you. i appreciate your guys' heart to love God and love others. that is the most important thing.

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/2 20:45

Quote:

LoveHim wrote:

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:-)

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General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

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brothers, i hope that you can hear what i am saying to you. i appreciate your guys' heart to love God and love others. that is the most important thing.

Thanks brother Phil, Let me address I think the most important for our hearts sake. No I don't think that you meant that I am not saved. :-) :-)

I will have to come back later and respond, brother but I will!

:-0

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 21:22

LoveHIM wrote:

No one yet has mentioned anything about tithing or giving? If a few meet in a house, where do the offerings go? Are we not to support those that labor for the truth. Which is a command.

brother reformer, i was gonna let this go by because tithing is a personal preference and it has been discussed on here plenty of times. but because you mentioned it like 3 times, i will try to address it for tithing and giving for you in a brief way.

Response: New Testament Jesus speaking:

Luke 11:42

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

KJV

2 Cor 9:7-8

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound t

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

o every good work:
KJV

Luke 12:33-34

33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

It was established in Old Testament Law.

Rom 2:14-16

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

KJV

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 22:01

Quote:

-----Jimmie you don't remember saying this: "If you don't do the above you don't love as Christ commands"

No, brother I have poorly miscommunicated what I meant there. i was typing that in response to what you wrote here...

Quote:

-----Thats one of the many benefits that come from being part of a local fellowship. To love others as Christ commands. We can't love those only who we feel agree with our way of thinking, what does that profit us?

I apologize for the lack of clarity and undue harm it may have caused (we already have a sensitive enough discussion).

I was simply responding to the implication in your post that I was not part of a local fellowship because I did not do Sunday/Wed/pot lucks, etc... and therefore did not love as Christ commands. It was not meant to reflect on what you DO do, rather on what I DONT do. I hope that makes sense.

In Christ - Jim

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 22:04

BTW-

Our giving goes to feed and clothe those we minister to, to the orphans, the widows and to biblically sound missions organizations such as

(<http://www.shepherdserv.org/>) <http://www.shepherdserv.org/>

This is a blessing to know it is not supporting the apostate missionaries and church plants that our old assemblies of Go

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

d fellowship did with the money.

In Christ - Jim

Re: - posted by reformer, on: 2007/8/2 22:29

Quote:

jjmdied2sin wrote:

Quote:

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In Christ - Jim

Agreed! Got it,thanks. :-)

Re:, on: 2007/8/2 22:39

Everyone should seek to give to good ground, but even if one make a mistake and give to an organization such as we have seen in the past that abuses the funds. The giver has accomplished that which has been placed in his/her/heart and the giver has just as creditable given the gift from the heart. The local church in my opinion and also what I interpret to be a biblical opinion is best place to give and have an accountability of the contributions and expenditure report, so that the giver can verify where the gifts go, to good ground and to know for what purposes the gifts went. To give to an organization to where there is no verifiable report to it's members would be as compared to buying a goat in a sack and not a wise decision.

Re: How much Commitment?, on: 2007/8/3 8:42

Someone used the illustration of marriage, re our relationship with the local church, but marriage involves "forsaking all others, as long as ye both shall live" (as the old form of marriage service puts it). Only **Christ** has the right to demand that level of commitment!

It's true that we need fellowship, and the best way to get that if possible is to be part of a local church.

But, as I said earlier on this thread, the days are coming when that probably won't be possible, and we need to be ready for that, and let the Lord prepare us; and to teach us to "walk on water" with Him - even alone if necessary - which it might be when persecution becomes intense.

It was rather scary when I left the Presbyterian Church, because suddenly I was "of no fixed abode" (as they say of vagrants and suchlike). I was never one for clinging to a denominational label, but still felt very insecure without one. (Like a tin of beans that had nothing on it to show it was of beans, not peaches! :lol:)

It quickly became clear that THE LORD was calling me out, just as clearly as He had called me *into* the Presbyterian Church.

urch. The scriptures given were Hebrews 13:11-14 and Song of Solomon 2:13.

Hebrews 13:11-14

11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. 13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. 14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

Songs 2:13

À...Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away!

I realised that this was, in a sense, my true calling, far more than the original call to the Presbyterian Church.

But, as I said, this doesn't mean church-hopping or isolation. I'm more aware of the "communion of saints" now than ever before.

Blessings to all. I'm blessed too, because there are those on this thread who are willing to listen to each other and work through misunderstandings, instead of quarreling over different views.

I can only speak from the perspective of the Lord's dealings in my life, which hopefully may be of some help and encouragement to others.

Thank you

Jeannette

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/3 8:53

Quote:

-----Response:New Teastament Jesus speaking:

Luke 11:42

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

KJV

brother please keep this in context. who was jesus talking to?? why did he say this in luke and also in matt 23 that they should tithe?? what did they tithe in these verses?? Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of the day and he told them this because they were still under the law. they still had the all the OT law to obey. this law was not given to the gentiles.

Quote:

-----2 Cor 9:7-8

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

KJV

a good verse, but please keep it in context friend. why were they taking up an offering? because paul was taking up an offering to help the church that was without (like 1 cor 16, paul took an offering to the church at jerusalem because they were going through a famine). this offering in 2 cor 8 & 9 was like that, to help other saints who were hurting.. this doesn't show that we should tithe..far from it, in fact "give as he has purposed in his own heart" (the amount is a personal conviction between them and the Lord).

brother moe-mac, giving is a matter of the heart. to say anything else is to make a law where the Lord intended us to walk in His grace. we should as believers give. we will be held responsible for what we did with what the Lord gave us. but let us not make laws about to whom we have to give it to and how much we better give. that is the Holy Spirit's job..we should be anxious to give and let the Lord lead us as He wills (to whom and the amount). thanks moe-mac for the conversation.

Re:, on: 2007/8/3 10:36

Lovehim wrote

brother please keep this in context. who was jesus talking to?? why did he say this in luke and also in matt 23 that they should tithe?? what did they tithe in these verses?? Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders of the day and he told them this because they were still under the law. they still had the all the OT law to obey. this law was not given to the gentiles.

response:

You are correct, we are not under the law but under grace and Jesus was talking to the pharisees and to all that read his word today and to reveal to us what is truth. Paul was talking to the gentile here. Rom 2:14

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

KJV

What we give, we give from our heart as you said. Jesus looks at the heart and the motive behind why we do what we do and why we do it. The question is where is my heart. Do we have a big God. How big is he. What if I say I have a big God but I can't give to much because he may be able to provide my families needs or that I have the mindset that he is able to save my soul supernaturally and take me to heaven but I must retain a certain % of my income to survive because he is not big enough to meet my needs and bring about circumstances that provide my needs. Notice I did not say wants. I think it is our wants that keep us from given freely. Sister, if I have anger in heart, and I do not, because you do not agree with me, then I have been defeated and you the same in the same respect. I respect your opinion and you gave it very graciously which is something I am not very good at. I wasn't blessed with that gift to a large extent. It is not a matter of the amount that one gives, remember the widows mite. It is really more about what he retains and why he retains it, that reveals where his/her trust in the Lord lies. I have tried it both ways and I can tell you from 5 years of given, God has supplied my needs and to a greater abundance on 90% than retaining a 100% of my income. Now, I don't believe in the prosperity gospel preaching. If one is to give in expecting God to make them rich then they have the wrong motive and have gotten off track. If I were to give, expecting to win the lottery or great material gain or preach or say anything similar it would not be scriptural. Thank you for your reply. God Bless.

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/3 10:52

brother moe-mac (i believe you are a brother..i hope because i've been calling you that), what you said was great. it truly is a matter of the heart. we should give to help others and be a blessing to some who are less fortunate. we should give and trust God to supply for us. we both agree wholeheartedly with that.

i come from a church that preaches if you don't tithe, then your finances are cursed and you can't won't be able to receive from God. i totally disagree with that and i guess that is why i don't want to see believers put under law by other believers. it reminds me so much of paul with the galatians and judaizers, ya know?? anyways, thanks for talking with me about this and let us both press on to know Him more.. love you man.

Re:, on: 2007/8/3 11:05

Quote:
-----It is not a matter of the amount that one gives, remember the widows mite. It is really more about what he retains and why he retains it,

Amen

Re:, on: 2007/8/3 11:36

Lovehim I just wanted to say that church you were at that told you if you were going to hell if you didn't meet their standard. Many churches have become like the pope, even in declaring one to be saved. No one can forgive sins but Jesus. When any of us declare one saved because of a certain act by oneself or by another we are being pope-ish. The subject we were talking about is not what is required for salvation. No other name in which man can be saved but Jesus, the way, the truth and the life.

I was only expanded on his love being manifested in a person life and not about salvation.

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/3 12:01

moe-mac, are you a guy or girl because i keep calling you a guy, i know what you're saying. i don't think that they would say you are not saved if you don't tithe, but they would say that you cannot receive further from Him because you are being disobedient with money (by their standards). many in leadership there know that i disagree with them on this stance, but they will choose to pretty much stay away from me and not talk deep with me because of this and 1 more disagreement over a "minor" doctrinal issue. i think it is sad because though me and you disagree on this issue, i believe that we would be holding hands and witnessing together and stuff like that. i just don't get it sometimes.. it's that kind of stuff that makes one feel like they are walking through a lonely season with God and my wife (and a very few friends..like 1 or 2). anyways, thanks for discussing this brother/sister.

Re:, on: 2007/8/3 13:51

The problem with many men is they declare souls to do this or that, and that it is the Lords will. When the true Lord never spoke to them in a manner or gave them authority such as the Judges, Prophets and Apostles. They clearly speak under their own whims and add a "Thus says the Lord". I will always speak for All To Beware of these men, for they have not been sent unless our Lord has truly sent them. And the Lord will send no man unless he sends authority and power to back the word in which he gave that man.

It comes down to living and breathing, eating and drinking this.

Galatians 2:20

1Jn 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God

1Jn 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

Mar 12:29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

Mar 12:30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Mar 12:31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

They that live lives such as this are the true Church. The True Body of Believers. They will one day be as one. Unlike the dis-unified Church at its present state that meets in Homes or in a Church Building, Denomination or Non Denomination.

Re:, on: 2007/8/3 17:00

Lovehim I am a male, at least my wife thinks so anyway. Other people might disagree at times. I wished I could convey humor when I say stuff like that with more than a ha ha. I thought you were a female for some reason or another. Nothing you said, that I can remember anything you said that gave me that impression. I don't know how I got it wrong. Anyway you gave the (edit) facts anyway, sorry. About feeling alone, just you God and your wife. I have went through those periods also, as a matter of fact my wife and I have been experiencing that much lately. You think God uses those times when he has our undivided attention to teach us things? I think so, at least that is how it seems to me. I have said to my wife, sometimes that I feel like John on the isle of Patmos, difference being, not with the depth of love and devotion that John had for Jesus and also the not the degree of love conveyed as you read God's Words through John. I wished I had that devotion and love that John had. Great sharing our thoughts together.

In Jesus

General Topics :: How do you see the Church, and your relationship with it?

moe_mac

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2007/8/3 17:28

brother moe-mac, i am so glad that i have met you. it is so nice to be able to agree/disagree in love because we are brothers in the Lord before we are anything else. no, i am not a female. maybe i will put phil (male) in my signature so that people will know. i remember you calling me sister and i was hoping that you were talking to someone else, but you were n't. that's ok, we know now.

yeah, i know that my times of greatest growth in the Lord is when i feel like nothing is happening and i am alone never going to be used of God to lead people to Him. i just continue to tell myself that i am in the school of the Holy Spirit and He will mold me and change me into Christ likeness. i just have to trust and obey.