

**General Topics :: Modern day churches****Modern day churches - posted by bible4life (), on: 2017/8/27 18:57**

I have Christian friend of mine who was talking to me about the modern day church and how he is was saying that much of it is unbiblical and comes from Rome from the time of Constantine. He was saying from the church building to the past or leading the church to everyone in the church sitting in pews watching the leaders and pastors. He was saying it was unbiblical and he is pretty much against the idea of their being a pastor over the body of believers but used the example from Corinthians where everyone was involved giving a prophecy or song or a tongue. He doesn't think we should meet in church buildings because that came from paganism. I have been praying about this and even sent me some video the church of tares. I find it fascinating but something isn't setting right in my spirit about this. Most Christians would have no clue of this.

**Re: Modern day churches - posted by DEADn (), on: 2017/8/27 20:14**

I would be asking the person what is his proposal of what the church should be look like. I think you would find his response more troubling then this response he gave you.

**Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2017/8/28 0:27**

From what he is telling me is that he thinks just getting together at a park or a house or in a car or wherever should be considered fellowship or what we should be doing. He believes that church buildings and pews and many other things in the church historically are taken from Rome and are pagan. Also that the protestant reformation though it was good still kept some of the traditions from the Catholic church. He doesn't think their should be a pastor but everyone as a whole should be the church. One might give a word of knowledge or something from the scripture and read it, someone might pray, and someone might sing, but he doesn't think the way we see a pastor today as the main guy of the church is biblical. He thinks that the way church is setup today makes many believers observers and doesn't help them to grow and get them active. Much of what he says is interesting and I need to study more about this.

**Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/8/28 4:31**

Hi John,

If you search on this site regarding house churches or home churches you will find a lot of information as well.

Greg also has a book about it you can download.

You will find a lot of people agreeing with a lot of what your friend seems to be saying.

That church, as we know it, is in serious need of reformation seems to be pretty clear to any believer living in these times.

The gifts given to the church, as in pastors, teachers etc, are to be seen as a spiritual ministry of service to the body, not a job title or a secure, well paid job.

Do we have all the answers? Probably not, but there is no reason not to hope and work for a better way of doing and being church

Blessings,

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/8/28 7:08

Quote:  
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I have Christian friend of mine who was talking to me about the modern day church and how he is was saying that much of it is unbiblical and comes from Rome from the time of Constantine. He was saying from the church building to the pastor leading the church to everyone in the church sitting in pews watching the leaders and pastors. He was saying it was unbiblical and he is pretty much against the idea of their being a pastor over the body of believers but used the example from Corinthians where everyone was involved giving a prophecy or song or a tongue. He doesn't think we should meet in church buildings because that came from paganism. I have been praying about this and even sent me some video the church of tares. I find it fascinating but something isn't setting right in my spirit about this. Most Christians would have no clue of this.  
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Brother John,

After connecting with house churches and house church leaders for almost 4 years mostly in North America, I saw as many problems or more than in the institutional churches. I do believe house church ministry is valid but it is not the only way. The early Church did start in house churches but those house churches were more formal, religious and the house churches themselves at times were set up as churches with a permanent baptism font out of stone etc.

I wrote an abbreviated short volume to speak about these things in more detail:

Starting a House Church  
<https://www.amazon.com/Starting-House-Church-Greg-Gordon-ebook/dp/B06W53XTYN/>

other formats (pdf) etc: <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/701703>

With a good reading of early Church history the proposal given that the whole church changed drastically during the time of Constantine is wrong. There were changes that happened but since AD 100 it was the same, leadership style was the same and many traditions of the Church from the 12 apostles were the same also.

Here is an excerpt of the short book I did from the first chapter:

#### First Century Apostasy?

The main driving force of some people to start house churches is the strong belief that the entire Church, by and large, apostatized shortly after or during the life of the Apostle John. This means that the truth was lost, and the Church began to depart from God's intention and direction. Therefore, there is a distrust of all of Church history and now some current house church movements are looked at as the restoring of the original Book of Acts Church.

What this also means is that there was always just a very small minority of those who somehow held to the truth, and the majority was always wrong. Does this type of thinking seem familiar?

I took a phone call once from a man who stated that he could not find others who believed his gospel. My first assumption was that, after he left the pastorate, he was simply having a hard time finding other fellow believers who would hold to similar convictions. After two hours on the phone with this man, I realized he was preaching another gospel (Galatians 1:8). His argument was that, after the death of the apostles, the truth died and only now, in the twenty-first century, it had been revived and he was the messenger. If someone attended a church of any kind, he stated, they were believing a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:11) and lost! When he asked me what my gospel was, I shared with him the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. His reaction was curse words!

One term for this type of thinking is Restorationism, which means the truth was lost with the apostles and now in our modern day is being restored. Such thinking is the seed-bed of many denominations and especially cults. Also this thinking is usually very exclusive, meaning that we have the truth that is restored and others do not. Even other restoration type groups fight amongst each other over who really is the group that the Lord is with. If Jesus came back, we could see the picture of all the leaders of these groups asking the Lord to verify t

their own church as the true and only church.

How do we know if our actions and words today are following in the same spirit of some of the opposers of the Gospel in the beginning of the Church? One test we can take is to ask ourselves: Do we consider God's Church sacred? (1 Corinthians 3:17). Or do we speak and treat other believers with little care, speaking our mind strongly and seeking to prove what we feel is right at any cost?

I have heard some people in our modern day speak without blushing that the entire Church has been wrong throughout history, and they now understand the true way. Most of the people I have heard espouse these new ideas do not fellowship in any church and also have moral laxity in their lives. In free thinking societies with complete religious freedom, we should have a great fear of God that we do not speak and teach in ways that are departing from "the faith once given to the saints" (Jude 1:3).

Being a Part of the Historic Church

Some believe that Church history began with Martin Luther in AD 1500, and to consider anything before that time is not worthwhile. Such thinking also has created a narrowed vision of the Church Jesus has established.

Perhaps we can consider another way of thinking. We can consider that the Lord has always had His Church (Matthew 16:18). It has not been perfect, has failed and, at times, has needed to be reformed and restored. There has always been a continuation in the work of God, and we are not called to start something new but rather continue something that is old. This does allow for new denominations but these groups should be helping to reform and build upon the 2000-year-old Church we are all a part of.

Individualistic evangelicalism has been leading to what today is over 42,000 denominations worldwide. God has called some of these groups to stand for a truth, yet not apart from the larger testimony of the Church throughout the ages. The Corinthians were of this individual carnal thinking, everyone doing what was right in their own eyes (1 Corinthians 3:4, Judges 21:25). It is a humbling reality that the Church did not begin with us and might not even end with us. We are just a part of God's plan through the ages. Instead of trying to deconstruct what the Church is today, we should be seeking to join with God's testimony and possibly help reform it. What is exciting is that we can actually be a part of the Church Jesus is building in our day (Matthew 16:18). Being involved in a house church meeting can be very much the will of God and his leading.

Some things that keep us in line and with the historic Church is agreement with statements of faith that ancient believers held to.

Along with common practices such as communion and water baptism, we can ensure we are a part of the Lord's work by not being apart from other believers, or being so exclusive that we do not agree with any other believers in Church history.

Starting a house church can be a very simple thing to do but we must carry with it the solemn sense of carrying on what Jesus and the early apostles did.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/28 7:10**

"Pagan Christianity" by Frank Viola discusses this topic. I've never read it but I've read about it.

**Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/8/28 9:25**

Yes the practice of having one Pastor over the entire Church is not Biblical. Paul asks Titus to appoint elders.

Titus 1-5:- The reason I left you in Crete was to set in order the remaining matters and to appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

'Elders', the word used here is in plural. Which means there should be more than 1 person leading every Church. Also they should be appointed not elected. Democracy of electing elders is not God's desire at all.

Also Elders should be working voluntarily not by receiving salary like a hired hand. Because they receive a salary, they try to please men than God in their sermons!

1 Peter 5:1 - Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness.

You can do more research by searching for 'Elders' in the bible.

Also regarding the congregation just being passive listeners, it is not at all Biblical.

1 Cor 14:26- What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a re

velation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and one must interpret; 28 but if there is no interpreter, he must keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. 29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

Just read the scripture and compare it to any institutional church of today. We find these scriptures not at all being applied. One might sight big number as a reason. But it is not true. I was part of Churches with over 200 people gathering, still there will be multiple speakers among the brothers. There will also be open call for prophets to share during the meetings.

Do we want to honor God's word or follow the institutional pattern? Most of them are content to attend such institutional churches because if they step into Home Fellowship, they have to sacrifice something. People themselves are happy to be just visitors in Church rather than being part of a Body of Believers.

Church is compared to a Body of Believers. In a body every part plays a role, hence in the Church as well, everyone who is committed to that body should have a function. Just one person running the show is not a church but just a gathering place or club.

**Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/8/28 9:25**

If your friend is basing his argument on Bible then he will find the Church I am part of in US matching the pattern. But pattern is not the most important thing. I do not want people to come to our church because we have the right pattern. The most important thing in a Church is the presence of God not the pattern. Yes we need to run the Church based on God's word with Christ alone being the head.

Hence I would suggest people not just be carried away with pattern but seek for a church that has God's presence.

**Modern Church versus Early Church, on: 2017/8/28 19:17**

If you compare modern church and early church which the Apostles started, there is a very huge difference...

If church today will have a head pastor like Apostle Paul, many people will leave the church...

Well known professing churches today is a psychology assembly...

**Re: Modern Church versus Early Church - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/8/28 19:26**

Brother Greg,

What IS the problem? Is there a root cause or many root causes? Are there different types of problems in institutional vs house churches? I would love to hear y'all's perspective on this.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/28 19:45**

I think a major problem with institutional churches is that people can hide out there and be safe. There is no need for them to perform their necessary bodily function.

**Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/8/29 12:16**

TMK,

I agree with you. In my church, there are many who go to church, but do not do anything. There are a few who carry out the work. I feel like we make it that way though.

There are some people who do not share in responsibility. They simply will not allow anyone to assist them.

That is regarding strictly the physical work to do. Spiritually, I feel it is lacking even more. The pastor does all the preaching, the Sunday school teachers do all of the teaching, and the rest just come to listen. I have been to a house church before and I liked the element of discussion. I wish a sermon was more discussion oriented, maybe not all of them, but

many of them.

**Re: Modern day churches - posted by mguldner (), on: 2017/8/29 12:47**

Your friend seems a bit jaded by western culture church. Maybe that is where your friend is coming from and what isn't settling well with you. I don't know a whole lot about Rome and paganism but I what I do know is we are called to Community. We aren't called to a church, we are called to be the Church. There are some really great things your friend has said but if it is coming from a spirit of bitterness or jadedness then I would say it's in the wrong spirit. I remember when I became bitter with the "system" and wanted to quit church altogether but even if we didn't get the formula 100% correct we are still called to that Community. I would say as long as your friend is gathering with other believers and those believers are challenging him in his walk with Jesus to closer relationship then he is probably alright. Our modern church is more country club than Body of Christ in my opinion but I have learned that there is no such thing as a perfect church but the Church of Jesus Christ is perfect when those individuals come together and seek to attribute worth and glory to Christ Jesus. I try not to get hung up on location and how church is done and focus on how I can give my all to Jesus throughout the whole week. One thing I will say is Paul preached and taught in many different mediums. Don't get the tools mixed up with the Message and Gospel. I don't think God cares about the meeting place but cares more about the Heart Attitudes of those meeting.

**Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2017/8/29 15:03**

Hey guys thanks for the responses. Greg I downloaded the free book will be reading it over the next few weeks to get a better perspective on this. I think my friend has had some bad past experiences with churches in general. Also he goes door to door witnessing and he contacted many churches to see if they were serious about outreach and found none until he contacted the one I am going to. But, my church was going out twice a month to witness but I don't think it was exactly what he wanted because he wanted it more than inviting them to church, but the focus to be the gospel which I totally agree. Please pray for him. His name is Chris and his wife Jessica became very hostile to him going door to door and wants to divorce him because he was getting way too serious about his faith. As far as I go I think I can focus on serving the Lord myself and obeying the word and being a light to the world. Doing my part in the body wherever I go.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/29 17:16**

I appreciate your friend's zeal, but I am not sure going door to door is the most effective method for witnessing in this day and age. I don't open my door to strangers. Is anything coming of it?

**Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2017/8/29 17:58**

I went twice and I would say definitely yes. Remember just to do his calling in general and to preach the gospel gives a testimony. From what I have noticed is that gets people to think spiritually and most take the gospel tracts. We even asked someone professing to be a Christian how he knows the gospel and we found out that he was hoping that he would get their. So we told of the promises of the gospel. We had a couple good conversations too with believers and nonbelievers. Brother I believe the Lord was blessing what we were doing and if they did ignore it. We could pray for them. I highly recommend it, it takes courage but it is so worth it in many ways.

**Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/29 18:36**

That's awesome.

**Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/8/31 21:26**

I think there is too much unjustified jadedness, negativity, complaint, accusations etc that are launched against the true Church of Jesus. I realize there is a visible Church and an invisible one, an institutional Church and denominations and home fellowships. I don't believe any of these hold the keys when it comes to connecting with community (which is the new Christian buzzword now-a-days) I read Frank Viola's book on Pagan Christianity and it's really just an anathema against institutional churches (in my opinion). But such dismissive conclusions are formed because some kind of negative report is generated against them. Same with home fellowships where they consist of unproven men, teaching who know what and have not learned to be submissive to God or anyone else. There is good reason to believe there is truth in that. But, what I'm getting at is Christians today are being affected by postmodernism which rejects the metanarrative of institutional anything. It's the search for truth on ambiguous terms and who knows if it's according to scripture.

There is a reason why God had the creeds created, there is a reason why the Church always has had home fellowships and institutions to serve the God in the world.

Before we anathematize everything that doesn't strike our spiritual fancy at the moment, let's refrain from judging matters way beyond what God has given us to judge and pretending Myself+bible is as good as apostleship over all things. It's not

ot brothers its not.

**Re: Modern day churches - posted by passerby, on: 2017/9/1 11:07**

The true church is not about form and creed, men can mimic and emphasize the ecclesiastical pattern as accounted in the new testament but miss the crucial element of the Lord's approval and attestation.

**Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2017/9/1 12:22**

To seek acceptance to the true church, seek to adhere to Christ words not to a particular denomination.

This is the enigma of ekklesia, kuriakon, and the church in a nutshell.

**Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/9/1 16:21**

The True Church are those who are elected to saving grace through Christ Jesus, they are born of God, redeemed by the blood, given the new covenant, given an intercessor, a mediator, a Holy Father an Indwelling Spirit and sonship. This is all done by Jesus Christ...after that, creeds, denominations, non-denominations, home fellowships, groups, movements, organizations are all just outworking of those who are born of God that have come into agreement in mind and purpose.

What I see as a means of an order in God's people, so many see as a wall, I see it as God's ordained plan to keep doctrine, truth, the gospel, leadership and a witness to the world intact. So many (even on this website) cannot seem to see past the negativity of the bad report made against any of these modes of God's providential workings in his body.

Jesus Church in both millenniums has had its witness in a variety of ways, to condemn them is to say "Jesus you should have waited until I got here and asked me what to do, I would have counseled you".

Maybe I'm not as spiritual or as mature as you all, but I cannot get past the smallness of trying to fit the Church into an "early church" picture when God never intended to leave it in that mode.

Yes, there terrible issues facing the Church today, but so much criticism I read is purely preferential modes of operation not appreciating at all there are plenty of Godly people in years past that were acting in faith and love toward God and doing exactly what so many here condemn.

As for me, I don't know diddly about how Jesus should run his Church, and I don't see how any "revival" can occur when the base attitude is "man, they should just do it my way because I have the spiritual truth all worked out".

**Re: The Way - posted by savannah, on: 2017/9/1 19:59**

I'm so thankful that my body has only one Head. And that my body is not fighting itself. Every part knows it's function, and doesn't deviate from it. If the smallest part ever got the idea that it could change just one degree to make the body operate better, we'd have to think of a name for another cancer.

It's His House, His Kingdom, His Family. How dare the children take the reigns! How dare the children re-write the book or re-interpret what the Father by His Spirit has said and taught.

There are a few things spoken of in Scripture as being shameful. This is worse than being shameful. It is detestable!

Go search the Scriptures and see, that there's a way that seems right, but that way leads to destruction.