

**Articles and Sermons :: Comments...****Comments... - posted by Maria (), on: 2003/6/9 0:14**

Hey everyone! I'm new on this site and have been reading through this particular conversation and thought I'd add a bit. (I probably won't be on very often as I am very busy, but for what it's worth.)

None of us "have it all" but what we do have is the Bible. So, while I do not think that this post will necessarily change anyone's doctrine, I pray, at least, that those reading will be encouraged to search the scriptures and discern between truth and error.

Quoting Todd:

"Especially I think you need to defend that last statement. 'sadly I believe that he is not teaching the truth as it is in Jesus.' That is a very powerful statement to make. what makes you think that? what is 'the truth as it is in Jesus?' What do you mean by that?"

First of all, let me say (and I do say this in love) that I was blown away that you so openly attacked others in the spirit in which you did--it seems that everything you accused them of doing, you were doing yourself.

If I am correct, what Jason and the webmaster were referring to was this passage:

"So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE OF YOU WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND YET DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity." Ephesians 4:17-27

As you can see, Mr. Webmaster and Jason were merely quoting scripture (by the way, you are right about one thing! It is a "very powerful statement." PAUL is the one who originally said it.)

To answer your question, ("the truth as it is in Jesus?' What do you mean by that?") I will again use scripture:

"If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." 1 Timothy 6:3-12

First of all, let us note that the ones whom GOD considers conceited are those who do not conform to a doctrine of godliness -- NOT those who test and examine everything with scripture.

("Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." Acts 17:11 )

"Truth as it is in Jesus" :

We are to "lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." Eph 4:22-24

We are to walk "in the light as He Himself is in the Light" (See 1 John 1:5-7) and be "crucified with Christ" (See Galatians 2:20) and no longer live for ourselves or the lusts of this world.

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you." Titus 2:11-15

Luke 1:74-75 says that Jesus came to: "rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days."

THIS is the Gospel that must be preached. It must not be a "showy" Gospel, or one that appeals to the lusts of the flesh. It must bring a "Godly sorrow" that produces repentance. (See 2 Corinthians 7:10)

Mr. Todd - you mentioned that God told you to keep your mouth shut and mind your own business (I'm paraphrasing). That may be true, but I have a hard time believing God told you to stop using discernment! (Also, if He did indeed tell you this, you should probably be obedient and not attack others as you have been.)

Consider what Jesus said to the church in Revelation: "I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false." Revelation 2:2

And what does John say?

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1

Matthew 24 describes what Jesus Himself said to His disciples:

Matthew 24:3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

"And Jesus answered and said to them, "SEE TO IT THAT NO ONE MISLEADS YOU; For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many..."

...Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another...

MANY FALSE PROPHETS WILL ARISE AND MISLEAD MANY; Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved...

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance.

"So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them. For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be...42 Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming." (Matthew 24)

The bible makes it very clear that we must be alert and test EVERYTHING!

"Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. BUT EXAMINE EVERYTHING CAREFULLY; hold fast to

that which is good; abstain from every form of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

"But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. BUT false prophets also arose among the people, JUST AS THERE WILL ALSO be false teachers AMONG YOU, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, AND BECAUSE OF THEM THE WAY OF THE TRUTH WILL BE MALIGNED; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep." 2 Peter 1:20-2:1-3

It is VERY DANGEROUS to open yourself up to anything - except TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS! And the only way that we can find this truth is by looking to HIM and not to men - no matter how great the "manifestation" and "healing's."

"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds." 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

If we truly love the Lord, our heart's cry will be:

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way." Psalm 139:23-24

"Teach me good discernment and knowledge, for I believe in Your commandments." Psalms 119:66

"Make me know Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day." Psalms 25:4-5

If God did not want us to scrutinize those who claim to be ministers of His Word, than He wouldn't have emphasized so strongly that we do.

I don't have much time, so I'll leave you with this:

"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thessalonians 2:7-14

Jesus, may we all lay aside our pride and submit ourselves to YOUR Word and YOUR way.

In Jesus,

Maria

P.S.

I believe that Jason and Mr. Webmaster are right on with their statements, and I recognize them to be operating in a spirit of Love, not judgement.

**Re: Comments... - posted by todd, on: 2003/6/9 2:22**

Maria,

Ok, I might have deserved some of that, maybe all. It would help me a lot if you could slow down and be more specific with me about where you think i am in error.

I don't know why you think I am trying to say that we shouldn't examine everything carefully, be discerning, etc. if i said that anywhere, that's strange because i don't believe that is true (and neither would the people that are being constantly criticized).

Quote:

"First of all, let me say (and I do say this in love) that I was blown away that you so openly attacked others in the spirit in which you did--it seems that everything you accused them of doing, you were doing yourself."

Can you please explain this for me? Perhaps i am in the wrong here. If so, i would like to make right what i have wronged. but i truly don't understand your perspective at this point. For example, i don't know why you wrote this: "First of all, let us note that the ones whom GOD considers conceited are those who do not conform to a doctrine of godliness -- NOT those who test and examine everything with scripture."

who said anything about not testing and examining everything with scripture? Please, let's dig in to scripture about these things. Let's take it one verse at a time and see what happens. I challenge you (which is not an act of anger like you might perceive but only a fair means to an end) Maria, to show me where any one of those scriptures you cited can undermine any of these ministries that have been referred to. This can be very fruitful i think.

"Mr. Todd - you mentioned that God told you to keep your mouth shut and mind your own business (I'm paraphrasing). That may be true, but I have a hard time believing God told you to stop using discernment! (Also, if He did indeed tell you this, you should probably be obedient and not attack others as you have been.)"

Yes, He told me to shut my mouth and no, He didn't tell me to stop using discernment. why do you think that? And like i said, i feel that recently God has given me the grace to speak about these things, but perhaps i am wrong here as well. as far as me "attack others," please clarify. it's one thing to rebuke and attempt to correct, it's another to attack. I feel like i am doing the former. i am just trying to be honest and get at the truth.

The interesting thing is that i agree with you on most of what you said (except about me). i know that i am treading on thin ice here (discussing these sensitive issues) and i may need to watch my step more carefully. But i really need specifics to figure that out. and, if you really are doing this in love, you can help me.

Quote:

"It is VERY DANGEROUS to open yourself up to anything - except TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS! And the only way that we can find this truth is by looking to HIM and not to men - no matter how great the "manifestation" and "healing's"

Amen! I believe that statement with all of my heart. This is another example of why i think you are misunderstanding me or i have been unclear.

I look forward to hearing back from you. and by the way, welcome to the forum. i hope your zeal in continuous and contagious. it has encouraged me.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2003/6/9 12:19

Replying to Todd's post.

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Quote:

"here's the other thing that caused my crisis. i realized how unfair, unjust, and especially unloving i had been towards all of these things and people. God basically told me to get a life and to shut my big mouth about it all. why did i care so much and spend so much of my time and life worrying about it? what about me? how am i experiencing God? i had fallen in to the trap i see many people in (mostly because they are scared) of unrighteous judgement. it can make a person feel significant to think they are 'defending the faith.'"

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Unrighteous judgement would be judging ministers according to the flesh - by what we see on the outside, rather than seeing the fruit of their ministry (which isn't large crowds or signs and wonders). I believe Carter Conlon puts it best when he says that the real test of what is spoken is whether it causes the Kingdom of God to advance in the lives of His people. (Paraphrased)

Of course, we all must have a proper idea of what the Kingdom of God is ...

"For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but RIGHTEOUSNESS and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Romans 14:17

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Â"concerning the 'new movement' that's going on:

why aren't some of these manifestations in the Bible? i don't know. we live in a very different time, things have changed since then i think. perhaps God just wanted to bless these people in this way for His own reasons. who are we to judge (by the flesh)?"

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This "holy spirit manifestation" thing makes me very, very sad. WE MUST BEGIN TO ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION: What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit?? Is it for signs and wonders? Or is "Power for Purity" (as my father likes to say)? The problem is, many do not even think or care to discern whether or not what is going on is truly edifying to the Body.

"What is the outcome then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the mind also; I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also. Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not edified. I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all; however, in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind so that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature." 1 Corinthians 14:15-20 (I'm not posting this scripture to argue about the use of tongues - I am using it in a different context now .. which makes me ask another question: if these "manifestations" were truly of God, why didn't Paul emphasize "manifestations" strongly, instead of emphasizing basic principles of righteousness?)

To be frank, I have a hard time believing that God would desire His Church to be so "showy" and "light" (as in "lightness") as they gather together, while so many are going to hell! God's heart is broken - and not only because of those lost in the world, but also because of those who are lost in churches! Churches that preach more about "anointing" and "destiny" than they do about "righteousness and truth." (Eph 5:9)

"If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing..." 1 Timothy 6:3-4

I know what it's like to "feel the spirit fall" at these places - feeling this sense of awe and emotion - but also knowing what I was like on the inside! Dead! Dead in bondage to this flesh - and I wasn't freed until I got away from the altars that seemed "safe" and "full of life" and got on my knees and into the Word to find out what the REAL purpose for Church is!

Other comments I was responding to:

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"it's so interesting how half the church thinks they have the gift of discernment and yet these same people don't have any other gifts. the attitude is like 'i know God and so i can trust my instincts because God would not let me feel this way about it if it were true.'"  
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Nobody said anything about trusting their instincts. I think they were saying just the opposite.

What really disturbed me, was this comment:

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"i saw it with my own eyes...how can i not believe? why would i assume it's a farce, a fake? why not just believe?"  
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This is why I put up so many scriptures in my previous post. In what you now posted, you were saying just the opposite of what you said here ... so what do you believe?

As I stated in my previous post, my purpose for writing was not to "change" anyone's mind, but, to challenge others who might be reading to get into the scriptures and not be afraid to test things...

Speaking of fear, while we shouldn't fear man, we SHOULD "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." 1 Peter 5:8

If the teachers mentioned are not encouraging the Body of Christ to live a life of separation to this world - and if they are not emphasizing that we die to ourselves and our desires - ("you must be born again" - and not just saying it, but abiding in it and teaching what it truly means) just because there seems to be "life" somewhere, doesn't mean there is - Jesus is the only way, truth and life - and since no one comes to the Father but through Him, we must be careful not to involve ourselves or expose ourselves to teachers that are advocating a different doctrine than Christ's.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." Psalms 51:17

"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." Philippians 1:9-11

Grace and Peace

-Maria

**Re: Comments... - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/6/9 12:35**

First of all thanks maria for your time and diligence in compiling and praying over your response and listing all the scriptures. You have encouraged us all with your selection of scriptures!!

Quote:  
-----THIS is the Gospel that must be preached. It must not be a "showy" Gospel, or one that appeals to the lusts of the flesh. It must bring a "Godly sorrow" that produces repentance. (See 2 Corinthians 7:10)  
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I totally agree and who can argue with you because its not your viewpoint but the scriptures themselves.

I think we are addressing a very crucial and maby the most crucial topic in Christianity, the charismatic movement in the Church. Its a topic that people are scared to discuss and share there feelings with and on this site it seems we are being open with this topic. I believe we are all trying to do this in a spirit of love and of godly concern and I am not trying to bring down todd or any others who hold certain views. let us all humble ourselves and seek God more and search the scriptures for in the scriptures is the "truth that is in Jesus".

**Re: - posted by todd, on: 2003/6/9 12:51**

Quote:

"Unrighteous judgement would be judging ministers according to the flesh - by what we see on the outside, rather than seeing the fruit of their ministry (which isn't large crowds or signs and wonders). I believe Carter Conlon puts it best when he says that the real test of what is spoken is whether it causes the Kingdom of God to advance in the lives of His people. (Paraphrased)"

Amen! to most of that. what is fruit to you?

But either way, let's go ahead and apply this to any specific ministry that worries you and see what happens. i usually don't hear people talking about the fruits but about the problems they have with what they see on the outside (which can seem offensive). the other thing is, even these ministries don't claim that everything that is going on is of the Spirit. but we don't take the time to really find out, we just assume a ton and that's where we stumble i think.

Quote:

"This "holy spirit manifestation" thing makes me very, very sad. WE MUST BEGIN TO ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION: What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit?? Is it for signs and wonders? Or is "Power for Purity" (as my father likes to say)?"

I think it's clearly both. as ravenhill would teach. and i don't think one can go without the other (unless the signs and wonders are not of God). it's hard to believe that the same people that are casting out devils, delivering people, healing and cleansing the sick, exhorting the body of Christ to greater purity and sanctification, and proclaiming Jesus Christ on the rooftops, are secretly working for the devil.

Acts 1:8 "but you shall receive power when the HOly Spirit has come upon you" for what purpose, only so we can be pure and holy in His sight?, nope, so that "you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samria, and even to teh remotest part of the earth."

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with" what? "miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know."

Acts 2:43 "And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles."

2:46-47 "and day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. and the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."

The Bible seems to be pretty clear that when the Holy SPirit comes, it's exciting and things happen that are supernatural so that God get's the glory and not man.

look at acts 5:12-16. this was normal and still can be today if we would only believe.

Quote:

"The problem is, many do not even think or care to discern whether or not what is going on is truly edifying to the Body."

From my experience i disagree. people are all caught up in discerning but they go about it unjustly. what things do you not think are edifying to the body? it's good to get specific here, although i know most tend to shy away from naming names (except Jason) but i think it's the only way to do this. if not naming the person, name the thing at least. then we have something to work with. but the key is to get specific. overgeneralization is the error of a lazy thinker.

Quote:

"if these "manifestations" were truly of God, why didn't Paul emphasize "manifestations" strongly, instead of emphasizing basic principles of righteousness?"

Ok, this is a good question i think and i still think about this. it's also a huge question. but let's begin to discuss it since it keeps coming up.

just because they didn't mention it doesn't necessarily make it ungodly and wrong. right?

Paul also didn't emphasize intercession, travail, fasting, wearing necklaces with crosses on them, listening to Christian music, reading Christian books, watching or not watching t.v., doing or not doing drugs, how much to sleep, and a host of other things that most people agree are relevant to modern discussion. but the thing is, we don't have a problem with those things. and you may respond that the Bible says enough that we can apply it to these things, but the point is it's not actually in the Bible.

now if it contradicts or goes against the Bible, then that's wrong of course. but if it's simply not mentioned in the Bible, that doesn't necessarily make it wrong. right?

how about what Paul did mention? women keeping silent in church, having a hair covering, etc. but most have come to understand that this is not relevant for our time, right?

the point is, we tend to pick and choose what we like and feels comfortable to us. that often means staring so much into the Bible all the time that we don't see what God is doing around us right now. and we end up doing little for the kingdom because our Christianity is all in theory. it's like a fantasy. the attitude is like "well, some day when the time is right God will bring me into my ministry", etc. but it never happens and people settle for something less just to have a ministry so they can feel like they are doing something. The good is the enemy of the best in the Christian life.

And you (not just you personally but hypothetically as well) can have your opinion (i.e. "manifestations" are evil because it's not emphasized in the Bible) but you can't spread unjust criticism. and i believe it's so debilitating to the Body of Christ and undermines so much God is trying to do.

Did Paul emphasize "altar calls" or dancing in worship, or sitting in pews, or spending tons of money on crusades, or on wearing a suit in church, or having stained glass windows, or having an organ... of course not.

there's lots of things not mentioned in the Bible that most of us are still fine with. but once it makes us really uncomfortable we take offense. and that is where the root of unrighteousness comes in.

Quote:

"What really disturbed me, was this comment:

“i saw it with my own eyes...how can i not believe? why would i assume it's a farce, a fake? why not just believe?”  
This is why I put up so many scriptures in my previous post. In what you now posted, you were saying just the opposite of what you said here ... so what do you believe?"

a couple things here. first, i was just trying to make it clear that, whether or not this dust thing is right or wrong, it's real. i want that to be very clear. none of the scriptures you posted, nor any i have ever read, say that gold dust or diamond dust is of the devil. but... it's not in the Bible.

critics tend to quote all these scriptures about how many false prophets will arise and deceive many and the like. and, of course, i believe that and so do the people getting criticized. but just because that's true doesn't mean it applies to these people. but since it could (technically) then we often try to pull that card on them. and again it's ok to think that privately, but not to proclaim it openly, unless you are justified in doing so.

while Paul and Jesus didn't emphasize "manifestations" they did emphasize the power of the Holy Spirit (power from on high), signs and wonders, healing the sick, cleansing the leper, raising the dead, etc. so whomever thinks they fully have the Spirit should be operating in some of these things, right? but the Western Church has largely nudged these things to the side or made excuses about why it's not happening while maintaining their views which they have become unable to let go of.

and what did i say that was opposite?

Quote:

"To be frank, I have a hard time believing that God would desire His Church to be so "showy" and "light" (as in "lightness") as they gather together, while so many are going to hell! God's heart is broken - and not only because of those lost in the world, but also because of those who are lost in churches! Churches that preach more about "anointing" and "destiny" than they do about "righteousness and truth." (Eph 5:9)"

ok, i sympathize with that point. but Paul often spoke of rejoicing. always rejoicing and making melody in the heart. singing to each other. but he also emphasized being sober minded and serious. There's always this balance with God.

He's the gentle One and lover of our soul on one hand, and then He's the righteous and often angry judge on the other. if we get too extreme either way (individually this is fine depending of God's timing) as a body, then we become paralyzed and weak.

there's the simple things of God and then there's the deep and mysterious things.

Preachers have been preaching about righteousness and truth for 2000 years, and they should continue to do so- and they are- but there is lots of understanding out there concerning these areas (although it seems like most still can't agree on it). and so, what's wrong with bringing forth what is new?

Matt. 13:52

"Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old."

The old is great, but what's wrong with the new?

Quote:

"I know what it's like to "feel the spirit fall" at these places - feeling this sense of awe and emotion - but also knowing what I was like on the inside! Dead! Dead in bondage to this flesh - and I wasn't freed until I got away from the altars that seemed "safe" and "full of life" and got on my knees and into the Word to find out what the REAL purpose for Church is!"

i would like to hear more about your experiences. where were you? what happened? please share more. what altars are you talking about? and shouldn't you have already been on your knees and in the Word? if they weren't teaching you that, that's not good.

and, what is "the REAL purpose of the Church?"

Quote:

"As I stated in my previous post, my purpose for writing was not to "change" anyone's mind, but, to challenge others who might be reading to get into the scriptures and not be afraid to test things..."

Amen! and i appreciate all your input. i have you considered my challenge yet?

Quote:

"If the teachers mentioned are not encouraging the Body of Christ to live a life of separation to this world - and if they are not emphasizing that we die to ourselves and our desires - ("you must be born again" - and not just saying it, but abiding in it and teaching what it truly means) just because there seems to be "life" somewhere, doesn't mean there is - Jesus is the only way, truth and life - and since no one comes to the Father but through Him, we must be careful not to involve ourselves or expose ourselves to teachers that are advocating a different doctrine than Christ's."

Amen! Please explain specifically what you are referring to (if you have anything in mind) so that we can discuss it further. because, once again, i agree with a lot of what you had to say.