

The State of the Church 6-17-02

(1) The church services (in the Church at large) held on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, Wednesday evenings, etc. are, for the most part, not led by the Lord or the Holy Spirit. The Lord (even the Father) wants to come close and have a meal or a feast with us but we do not have the patience or diligence in seeking his presence to see what he wants to do. We try to fill in the gaps when he is not there (which is most of the time). Our meetings, services, offerings, songs, sermons, etc. are not acceptable to the Lord for they are either a mixture of Spirit and flesh (these are antagonistic, enemies of each other, at enmity with each other, cannot cohabit), or these things at our meetings are mostly flesh. The “Holy of Holies revival” will have no mixture of flesh and Spirit. Joel 2:12-14 (Amplified Version) says, Now, says the Lord, turn to me and keep on coming to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning (until every hindrance is removed and the broken fellowship with me is restored). God is not in charge at our meetings and we must admit something is terribly wrong. We have substituted our things and they are hindering his things from coming in. Verse 13 says, “Rend your hearts and not your garments (real repentance) and return to the Lord...and He will revoke His sentence of evil (when His conditions are met).” A sentence of evil is on the Church and we don’t even know it. Also, we haven’t stopped to find out what conditions must be met before the Lord will even come to our meetings. He really wants them to be his meetings. Verse 14 says, “Who knows but that the Lord will turn back to us, revoke His sentence of evil, and will leave us his blessings, His feast...,” and even will stay with us forever as His dwelling place. The raising of our hands, our prayers, the trampling of his courts in our 3-day and 7-day “revivals” that he did not call for, designate, plan or specify as his will are all rejected by him with 12 words of rejection (Is. 1:11-15). To what purpose is the church doing its services, who has required these things you do (saith the Lord), Bring no more vain, man-made things before me (saith the Lord). I am full with your things, I delight not in your things, bring your things no more, they are abominations, I cannot endure them any more, they are iniquities, I hate these things, they trouble me, I am weary of them, I cannot bear them any more, I will hide my eyes from them, I will not hear them. (12 rejections).

Many leaders are saying, “Peace, peace, everything is OK.” The prophetic voices are saying, “Do not say peace, peace, when there is no peace.” Do not say love, love, when there is no love. Do not say revival, revival, when there is no revival. If what is happening in our churches is not a “Spirit thing” or a “God thing” then it is not acceptable to the Lord. Only Spirit prayers, Spirit intercessions, Spirit gifts, Spirit sermons (who has stood in the counsel of the Lord to hear and perceive his word, who has a “thus saith the Lord” (Jer. 23:18)). We need Spirit testimonies and spirit songs and “Spirit things” to be pleasing to the Lord, these will change our lives and the world who is looking for the real thing. (We must worship him in spirit and in truth, for such worshipers He is seeking and looking for). Man-made things are not acceptable and will not change people. Please, let us search for the true things coming from the throne of God for truly then we will see and find Him. “You will see me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.” (Jer. 29:13)).

(2) Individuals are not learning the art of waiting on the Lord, listening to the Lord, or hearing his voice clearly. We should be able to write down exactly he says clearly (day by day). It says in Hab. 2:1-3 that we can do this. If we spent as much time learning how to hear God and know God as we do in our services and “activities for the

Lord” we would really learn the most valuable part or really the main or central part of Christianity, in other words, hearing and obeying the voice of the Lord.

(3) Corporate revival is our corporate meetings when we meet with the Lord and hear from Him publicly (as we are all together). Individual revival is when we are seeking God diligently and we find him (hear from God alone) and then we are to tell others what he said (unless the Lord specifically tells us not to tell others, we are to shout what he says from the rooftops).

(4) There is a great lack of love in the Church. People pretend that they care about each other but the truth is, “out of sight, out of mind.” Instead, this should be our aim or the end desire of our relationships, “absence makes the heart grow fonder.” It may seem strange to use these two phrases but do you see that one forgets people and in the other phrase love grows stronger? “Out of sight, out of mind” means we really don’t care if others live or die, though we profusely pretend that we do. We don’t really care if others are close to God, love God, hear from God (unless we can use them to get “spiritual information” for our own selfish advancement). We have walls between us that cause us to fear one another, be jealous and envious of one another, think negatively of other’s motives and actions, we are suspicious and skeptical of others, we don’t trust others, we don’t care if they are praising or loving God, and we don’t care if they are getting blessed. We don’t care what happens to them when they leave the church building or house meeting. Perfect love casts out (all) fear of one another. If we fear we have not yet been perfected in love. We fear when we are afraid to speak, pray, prophecy, share our hearts. We are not transparent, vulnerable, guileless, because we want to protect ourselves, we don’t want to be hurt by others. So we guard our hearts, we will not give our hearts to others (lest our heart be broken by them). So, we wear masks and pretend, and say many words to others that we don’t really mean, even though we may have good intentions of following through, but because real love is not there we let our words, promises, and “love” fade with time. Hence the phrase, “out of sight, out of mind.” If people were really in our hearts, “absence would make the heart and love grow fonder and deeper.” We do not love each other as Jesus loved us, we do not love each (and we are not united in heart) as the Father loves the Son (and as they are one) (Jn. 13:34 and 17:26). The true, agape love (the Father’s heart) will have to come back into the true leaders (Mal. 4:6 the hearts of the fathers (true leaders and physical fathers) will turn to the children (the Church people and the physical children). The leaders will then have true love and hearts for the children of the Church and will persistently and methodically teach the Church true love. Or intercessors, or the least of the brethren, or anyone who will sit at the Lord’s feet will learn of this love from God and they will live it and teach it also. As wickedness increases and love decreases (grows colder) fear also increases. (Fear of one another). People will be easily offended at what others do to them (or what they imagine others are doing to them) and so they will betray one another, talk behind one another’s backs, and allow wedges to be driven between themselves and others, (friends, relatives husbands and wives, parents and children, church splits, even divisions between Christians who at one time had very close relationships).

(5) The true Church, Remnant or Bride will be characterized by: agape (unconditional) love for each other and all people, sweetness of spirit, humility, transparency, acting without guile or pretense, openness, honesty, they keep their word, are forbearing and forgiving of the faults and offenses of others, they have generosity,

hospitality, kindred spirits for the things of God, a sincere hunger for the things of God, desiring purity and holiness in their daily walks, welcoming strangers, befriending the lonely, unlovely, and those unwanted by others, kindness, gentleness, giving people the benefit of the doubt again and again and again. They believe the best, hope for the best and endure all things done and said against them, they do not wish bad on anyone but bless everyone, they have oneness of heart with those who love God, never speaking negative about others, they are lowly, teachable, tenderhearted, loyal friends (through all ups and downs), available, approachable, not in a hurry, easy to please, uncomplaining, fair, no respecter of persons (favoring one over another), show no partiality to rich or poor (popular or unpopular).

Is anyone like this? By God's strength and grace each of us can walk in this anointing. Let us be a Bride prepared for her Master, without spot or wrinkle. He is at work in us to make us the beauty of holiness as He is.

(6) We need to escape the gravity of this earth. Much of the Church are ground birds that cannot fly. They peck along the ground and seldom look up for higher things. It takes a lot of energy to flap your wings hard and get the thrust you need to break the hold this earth has on us and get up in the air and soar where the eagles fly. We are so busy, even with what we consider "Christian things." Our appointment books are full. Our lives are really full of worldly things, love for the world and (our own ideas) of what God wants us to do. To break free of the gravity of this world takes a considerable effort to hear and see and do only what he says. With our appointment books empty to see only "what the Father is doing" and hear only "what the Father is saying" and do nothing in our own authority or of our own ideas will take a radical change in our way of living. All errands, our own ideas about ministry, our own works "for the Lord", our business, our activities, our recreations, our free and relaxing times, our "must do" lists must be given over to the Lord so that we will be completely led by the Spirit 24 hours a day 7 days a week. We must be comfortable in his world when really his world is much more foreign to us than we know, and also we are already comfortable in our world. (TV, work, errands, responsibilities, church activities, our own devotions, our own daily agendas, our tapes, CDs, Christian music, Christian television, teaching tapes, TV sermons, Christian books). These things can be good but sometimes the good gets in the way of the best, really knowing God personally for ourselves. Press into the Lord himself, learn the secret of living in prayer, living in his presence, and not being at home or comfortable in this world. When we really decide to make a radical effort to know God for ourselves and live in his world we will begin to leave the gravity and orbit of the earth and fly where the Lord lives, breathe his air and eat from his hand. Then truly we will be seated with him in heavenly places and we will live all the rest of the days of our life (now) in his house and dwell on his holy hill. We will walk with him as Enoch and Moses and Abraham and Paul did. Do you want that? It is for every child of God from the least to the greatest. These things (#1-6) are not just theories for the Church to read and hope for but they can be lived. Don't just hope for these things, you enter in and live them. The Lord is ready and waiting for you.



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