

Pastor and Flock.

Base Lines:

A general discussion regarding God's heart and current issues with the fellowship we claim with one another and the disregard of the unity in Christ following the everlasting gospel. Luke 9:49-50, Revelation 14:6-7

The baseline may require you to dust off your understanding a bit so you can focus on what Jesus has done in/with you when you **Truly** – emphasis – **Truly** accepted His Gift of salvation. That gift includes an ability to walk in the gift of life and it more abundantly in the body of Christ, in truth together with others who may hold to a different method than you of worshiping the one true God.

Information.

As I enter commentary within the scriptural references I will use **this color text** to set emphasis to the fact it is commentary. I will at times highlight scriptural text to emphasize it **using this color to do that**. Additionally, unless otherwise stated all Scriptural reference quotes are from the King James Version. Where other translations are used it is noted for clarity. Should you have issues with the colors I have chosen email me at seeker@godsprovision.org

Pastor and Flock,

The Lord continued to impress upon me that I needed to stay in Ezekiel with you.

We can see in Ezekiel 34:1-16 how God chastises shepherds. Then we see God admonish the flock as well in Ezekiel 34:17-22. I see that as a timeless warning to what people are calling the modern church. I also see the parallel later on as he defines what the temple is when he discusses the table of the Lord and the correlation that it has with Malachi.

Ezekiel 34:1-22

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe *be* to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: *but* ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up *that which was* broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty

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have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because *there is* no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; *As I live*, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even I*, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up *that which was* broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. And *as for* you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. *Seemeth it* a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And *as for* my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them; Behold, I, *even I*, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.

Malachi 1:6-14

A son honoureth *his* father, and a servant his master: if then I *be* a father, where *is* mine honour? and if I *be* a master, where *is* my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests,

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that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD *is* contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts. And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts. Who *is there* even among you that would shut the doors *for nought*? neither do ye kindle *fire* on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense *shall be* offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name *shall be* great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD *is* polluted; and the fruit thereof, *even* his meat, *is* contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness *is it!* and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought *that which was* torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD. But cursed *be* the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I *am* a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name *is* dreadful among the heathen.

God's first concern is the feeding of his flock. See where God admonishes priests and shepherds those called elders of the church and he tells them that he is unsatisfied with their current feeding of his flock. Additionally; because there is no feeding of his flock, God declares that there is no shepherd, as a result of no shepherd the church body becomes scattered. He says his sheep wander everywhere and that they are scattered and that no one is looking for them. It is this reason that first, God's sheep are not being fed and secondly, they are scattered to the wind and no one is looking for them, that he is against the shepherds and that he'll stop them from even trying to feed the flocks and he also will not allow them to prey on the flock any longer.

It has always been God's contention, that the care taking of the sheep should be the primary responsibility of the church/fellowship. That doesn't mean building more churches, the increasing the size of a church, the beautifying of the building but rather the caring for the sheep. It means fostering an education in God's Word such that the congregation learns to care for one another in the way that God would care for them.

Feeding of the sheep first consists of giving them the word of God with an excellent spirit to teach them to rely upon one another without fear of rejection, without fear of retribution, without the fear of condemnation, backbiting, rumors and murmuring.

Feed my sheep . . .

Matthew 4:1-4

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, *It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

John 21:14-17

This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. *Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

The shepherd can be the head of the body in a church fellowship, he certainly is not the head of Christians; Jesus is, but he is someone whom Christians look to in their congregation to determine the pace and tone of how the body should be worshiping, caring, loving, disciplining and treating one another.

As demonstrated by the community property in the book of Acts, Christians who are part of the body should be willing to freely contribute to one another so that there is no want in that body of fellowship God has given them. This isn't some legislated thumping of the body, this isn't some moral obligation pushed upon the congregation but rather a compassion that develops over time based on the relationship between the members of the congregation as led and taught by the shepherd.

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Acts 4:31-35

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Are you filled with the Holy Ghost? Is your fellowship of one accord? Yet is there folks in your fellowship that lack? Why? Do you claim ownership of what God has given you?

The full weight of this starts at the pastor but certainly does not end with the pastor. Those in the body of Christ who are called to the instruction of the children of God, to be the teachers of the congregation, to be the leaders of the church are in fact called to be servants and as servants should demonstrate the concept to the remainder of the congregation. If this is correctly communicated to the body, then the body has truly been fed. Will you feed the sheep?

This isn't a dragging, kicking and screaming of the people to what God's truth is in His Word but rather leadership by example. As long as there's one family in your congregation that's hungry, no new curtains should be purchased for the church, if there's money to be spent for new curtains then there should certainly be money that could be spent to provide for a family in need.

If the church has sufficient money to purchase a shiny new sound system the church surely has enough money to ensure her children are covered and clothed. At what point did the inanimate objects and the trappings of a building called church supplant the significance of caring for God's children who are the church?

If there is one hungry child within your congregation the entire effort of your body in Christ should be focused on that child. Every member with no excuse before God.

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The real mystery is why is it not, why isn't the whole church focused on this child? According to God in the book of Ezekiel it is because the shepherds have not fed the flock and the flock is full of fat cattle.

Shepherd if it ends up being you and just three other people left after you speak truth then God is good enough. Sometimes in an effort to grow a congregation the church will start seeking to please men, it will chase down the pleasures of man's eyes, it will present itself larger than life yet, it will miss the mark because it has forgotten to care for all God's people even the lost and His children.

The remedy is simple, teach them first to love. ". . . He who knows not God knows not love for God is love"

1 John 4:6-11

We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Some pastors after hearing the truth will change their hearts and make the shift to truly feed the flock and then will be despitely used by the flock, the fat cattle of the flock, the ones who trample the feed for the rest. That's why God in Ezekiel admonished the fat cattle of the flock.

I have seen flocks stomp the snot out of a pastor that is preaching truth to their conviction. God will deal with you fatted cattle, repent and believe the gospel. Foolish elders in a dead fellowship.

The answer is not to run and demand but rather to demonstrate by example how to deal with this issue. The admonitions in Ezekiel aren't just to the pastors but also to the flock. Many today point at pastors and declare them the issue when in fact the flock has some issues itself.

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Together it's time to make a change in our collective hearts to the gospel of God, the everlasting gospel. Those who have ears and eyes, see and hear.

The largest single problem is that folks that are called to edify the body refuse the gifts and office given them by God because they chose to remain quiet, asleep.

They fear what the gifts and offices provide and what responsibilities they bring and thus do a disservice to themselves and the church/fellowship/congregation. This causes a fragmentation of God's people who have no apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

Ephesians 4:1-16

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *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. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 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: That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 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.

This fragmentation of the body of Christ is completely due to the reluctance of his body to do as he calls. This is foolishness. It causes all manner of bad philosophy and traditions not after Christ.

People standing there in tears screaming why can't you see us Lord? People charging off doing all manner of things, vainly seeking a god they have made themselves. God wants your first fruit in Love, effort, worship, compassion, freedom not some broken philosophy of man or tradition not after Christ.

The lost can't see God's goodness through your contempt of each other.

Colossians 2:1-15

For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; 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; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Do you really believe God wants fifty church buildings per mile of road? I would suggest that we are altogether in error.

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How can we fix that? Well first we need to look outside ourselves; turning ourselves to what God has called us to, the everlasting gospel. Each individual answering the call upon her/his life as God defines.

We may need to redefine some things first.

The church building; why it is there and what is its purpose?

Just as the temples of old it was a focal point of gathering for God's people however when Jesus came to us it became a place of fellowship. A church can be your living room just as easy as a cathedral. The centralized churches are no more invalid or valid than the home churches. Several home churches are testified of in the bible. As it turns out it isn't the building or method of fellowship at task; it's the attitudes behind them.

The central church structure is no more in error or grace that the home church structure. Equally serving man for God, rather the issue is the "us versus them" mentality that exists between the differing approaches. What harm can a centralized building have on a group of believers of Christ? What harm can a specialized home church have on the people of God, if in fact they are both people of God?

It's not the method of worship at issue, it is the contentious heart of accusation that kills fellowship. Worshiping of self and method, as opposed to worshiping God is the issue.

That doesn't mean God wants everyone in a centralized church to run off and start home churches any more than God desires all home churches to close and start centralized buildings. It's not about the building and never has been ever since Jesus tore the curtain, what it means however; is that if the hearts involved aren't about Jesus but rather the distaste and dislike and us versus them mentality, both will fail because neither of them are in Christ.

Failing as central church or a home church isn't about number of followers or of financial success; many failed churches both home and centralized have tons of cash and many in the congregation; they fail rather by the measure of God in that they do not feed the flock or by the flock being fatted cattle ignoring the lean of the body. To God the greatest fail of the church/body of Christ is the way we allow His children to suffer because they feel it is "us against them".

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Ask a home church person/leader to come to a central building to worship or a central church person/leader to come to a home church to worship and see how many failed churches you really have. Failed; by reason of a contentious heart; in that the purpose of worship has been forgotten, Jesus is the reason and justification for all churches, centralized or home. How sad people see it as a comparison of method of worship rather than the true reason for fellowship the Gospel.

God is displeased with the fact we measure our fellowships by the differences to others, shepherds preaching the “look how messed up those other Christians are . . .” messages. Flocks, pointing to others and declaring how holy they are because they aren’t one denomination or another of Christians. Foolishness. The lost can’t see God’s goodness because we despise each other. Cannibals.

Your heart causes your mouths to speak even as you tear each other in the same fellowship to bits.

You may say home churches are wrong and they may say central churches are wrong and no one stops to consider Jesus alone is right and God alone is good. How sad. Broken from the start at the foundation, with no hope of ever reaching the truth which is the true foundation the gospel which according to scripture is everlasting Revelation 14:6-7

Revelation 14:6-7

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

The issue isn’t your worship method, it’s the purpose of your worship. What is your purpose? What is their purpose? Aren’t you both seeking to worship God? If so why do you contend? How could a home church that chooses to worship God be any more in error than a central building church when their intention is to worship God?

Seriously if their heart is to worship God, how are they in error? Is it because they don’t accept your method of worship?

Explain to me where the building is important according to scripture or the name of your denomination. Is the name of your denomination higher than Jesus' name? Should what is important be rather that all men and women who are called by Christ's name are to worship God?

According to the bible the everlasting gospel states clearly that he created everything, both the home and central body of believers.

Revelation 14:6-7

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

So what is the issue?

Is worship occurring at central building churches?

Is worship occurring at home fellowships?

So what's the issue?

The issue to God is the hearts of those who attend both. What are the problems folks? Why can't you stop treating the body of Christ as an, "us or them" proposition?

We have the lost totally confused by the duality of our demonstration of the supposed church? That is a millstone I'm personally not interested in carrying.

"I don't count him as brother because of his method of worship of Jesus Christ. He isn't doing it the way I feel he should so I have broken all fellowship with him."

Instantly; folks want to go off and talk about false christs and false doctrines but that is not what the main issue is, is it? You more likely simply disapprove of the method. You are so obsessed with the "us versus them" mentality straight from hell that you pick each other's bones in the same fellowship you claim is yours. Be advised, your testimony has been witnessed and God is dissatisfied.

How can you even consider yourselves to have enough wisdom of discernment when you can't even discern the true gospel intent of a brother or sister in Christ?

Luke 9:49-50

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

How do you hope to discern the enemy when you call a Christian; enemy? You don't have the foundation correct and you want the end, utterly without truth. You change in an instant God's intention to keep his worship pure, to a worship of ignorance; you might as well be worshipping the trees with the druids.

You say from your point of view those other Christians have it wrong with regard to their style of worship, really do you have it all right? You even remain so poisoned by this position that you claim it also occurs in members of your very own fellowship; Cannibals, foolishness. What is our guiding scriptural measure of right and wrong between Christians?

Luke 9:49-50

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

Please note I said Christians. None of your silly "they are false Christian" arguments count here because this is a comparison and illustration using apples and apples, Christians and Christians. So don't even waste your time arguing the other.

Luke 9:49-50

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

I would submit to you until you get this first principle down you wouldn't know a true worship if it bit you.

A little strong of an admonition; perhaps, none the less it's true and if you took the time to ask God about it he would agree. He did after all place it on my heart to write this letter to you.

So what is our guiding principle when it comes to other believers of Christ in faith, Christians?

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Romans 14:1

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

Luke 9:49-50

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. **And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.**

On items of doctrine of true faith we are to exhort one another

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Arguing which Christian is correct with regard to central building or small fellowship or worship of God, when they are both Christians is foolishness. What is the gospel?

Revelation 14:6-7

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Do they worship God? If so be still; unless of course you feel as if you have another gospel?

Now that's a whole other topic isn't it?

I offer you this letter with the hope that in God's instruction of me, I can offer a seed that will grow to true faith in peace among the brethren in Christ. I leave this work to the Holy Spirit, who is enough.

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This is written to you in faith that God is big enough for his central churches and his home churches. It is also written to ask the question; what is your gospel? Is it our church is better than yours? Is it our church is holier than yours? Is it Christian cannibalism as in; “Christian group one versus Christian group two”?

Is that really your intention?

You in the central church here is God’s heart on the matter. Go search out a home fellowship and worship with them from time to time, let them know they have a sister or brother here in your fellowship, in you, if they should have need.

You in the small home fellowships here is God’s heart on the matter. Go search out a central church and worship with them from time to time, let them know they have a sister or brother here in your fellowship, in you, if they should have need.

You are after all spreading the gospel, which you both say you follow.

Revelation 14:6-7

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Ok we have tried to dust off size of worship facility. What’s next?

Who is the purpose of our worship?

Christians it had better be Christ.

Who do we serve?

John 15:15

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, **because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth**; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:26-27

For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. **For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.**

James 1:27

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

You are called to serve mankind and thus serve your God.

So if you serve man in truth what type of men/women do you serve? Just the good ones, just the ones who chose to worship exactly as you do? In mission; you serve all mankind. In fellowship you serve each other.

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Serve the whole fellowship of the saints who are like minded with regard to Jesus, who are Christians, not church size or other foolish measure but Christians who profess and follow Jesus in faith. Without that true fellowship you will not be able to show charity and with no charity no love and no love no God. What do you demonstrate?

Jesus said:

Matthew 5:43-48

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Paul when confronted with us versus them foolishness said the following:

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. **For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.** And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

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teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

He also admonished:

1 Corinthians 3:1-23

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ *is* God's.

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Do you have the mind of Christ?

1 Corinthians 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Simply act that way.

Some of you have experienced liberty in Christ and some are not yet able, some of you have received of God wisdom in a subject where another may not yet have received. Some of you may have conviction that another has not shared. Some of you may look a certain way upon a topic of faith than another. Where your common ground and God's command come together is where these differences disappear. They are the cause for your many denominations and Christian clubs, your banners fly all over the world. Where the differences disappear is in your everlasting gospel. It doesn't provide for despising another, it doesn't provide for walking away from the truth of the everlasting. You join together with all men and women who declare Jesus is Lord alone in agreement with the Holy Spirit, you have no choice or voice because it is in God alone you are free to worship him together in unity by the Holy Spirit who is not going to hate or despise or neglect because of your opinion. God alone is good; the rest of us need to love to learn and love the unlearned. Be wise. Understand his grace goes beyond your ability.

That is how we repair the damaged church we have become in many cases; just allowing God to repair our heart through the Mind of Christ.

John 13:34

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Matthew 5:44

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Why would you turn away from another fellowship group?

God says:

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“it is because you already turn away from each other. You can’t even love one another when you walk along side them. How will you ever discern my love, if you are unwilling to even do that?”

If our favorite fellowship has one ignored need, one hungry, sad, sick lost person in it that is not the focus of the whole congregation, we are in error leaving off our first love who has instructed us to love beyond the Samaritans. How long will you wander without a shepherd and when will you turn and lift up the lean cattle?

It is time to awaken from your sleep in which many die daily. To awaken to our calling and our first love Jesus.

God has taken this time to spend with me so that I may share this letter with you, His heart is for the scattered and lean, is yours?

Who do you follow?

Love one another.

Bro. John

If you have any questions or issues feel free to email me. Seeker@godsprovision.org