

~Other Speakers S-Z: David Servant:

Everything about true, biblical house churches is what true believers desire and enjoy.

All true believers long for genuine relationships with other believers, because God's love has been shed abroad in their hearts. Such relationships are part and parcel of house churches. It is what the Bible refers to as fellowship, genuine sharing of one's life with other brothers and sisters. House churches create an environment where believers can do what believers are supposed to do, which is found in the many New Testament "one another" passages. In the house church setting, believers can exhort, encourage, edify, comfort, teach, serve and pray for one another. They can provoke each other to love and good works, confess their sins to each other, bear one another's burdens, and admonish one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. They can weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. Such things don't occur very often during the Sunday morning meetings of institutional churches where believers sit and watch. As one house church member told me, "When someone is sick within our body, I don't take a meal to a stranger's house because I signed up for the 'meal ministry.' I naturally take a meal to someone I know and love."

True believers enjoy interaction and involvement with each other. Passively sitting and listening to irrelevant or redundant sermons year after year insults their intelligence and spirituality. Rather, they prefer having an opportunity to share the personal insights they gain concerning God and His Word, and house churches provide that opportunity. Following a biblical model rather than a cultural one, each person "has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation" (1 Cor. 14:26). In house churches, no one is lost in the crowd or excluded by a church clique.

True believers desire to be used by God in service. In a house church, there is opportunity for everyone to be used to bless others, and responsibilities are shared among all, so that no one experiences the burnout that is common among committed members of institutional churches. At the minimum, everyone can bring food to share for the common meal, what Scripture seems to refer to as the "love feast" (Jude 1:12). For many house churches, that meal follows the example of the original Lord's Supper, which was part of an actual Passover meal. The Lord's Supper is not, as a little boy referred to it in a previous institutional church I pastored, "God's holy snack." The idea of eating a small wafer and drinking a little juice among strangers during a few seconds of a church service is utterly foreign to the Bible and to biblical house churches. The sacramental meaning of Communion is enhanced manifold during a shared meal among disciples who love each other.

In a house church, worship is simple, sincere and participatory, not a performance. True believers love to worship God in spirit and truth.