



General Topics :: Unfriendly Churches

Unfriendly Churches, on: 2006/5/17 7:55

I would like to relate to you folks a real experience some good friends of ours had at a local church. This couple moved here a couple years ago, and are still looking for a home church. We have encouraged them to join in our journey of home churching, but they are not ready to make that leap yet. (But they may be now, after this recent experience!)

They started attending a local evangelical church just before Thanksgiving (early November). The church runs around 150 people, mostly older folks, mostly retired. Our friends are in their early 40's. Everyone was real nice to them and they felt welcomed so they decided to attend on a regular basis.

The pastor there is fairly new, and he and his wife are in their 40's as well. The pastor claimed to have a vision of reaching the community and bringing in younger families. Our friends are very outgoing, and the wife is very talented and gifted. They were excited about this vision of the pastor's.

Time went on, and the pastor made promises to get together with them at their home to get to know them and discuss how they could better reach out to the community as a church. Time went on... promises never came to fruition. Our friends tried several different ways to get to know people in the church... yet the folks in the church seemed content to talk to them for 2 minutes after the service... but that was it. Several folks did promise to invite them over for a meal, but after several months nothing happened. No one ever called them, no one invited them over.

There was one lady in the church who befriended our friends. She and our friends discussed a new sub-division that was going up next to church, and how the church should take cookies and tracts to the families moving in. It was brought up to the church board. The church board said they would put it on their agenda to discuss it. Several months go by... nothing ever happens.

I advised our friends to not wait for the board to move on it... do it yourselves. Why does the board need to vote on reaching out to the community? How stupid is that? Just do it... as Nike would say!

Our friends were getting more and more frustrated with the inaction of the church and the broken promises of the people promising to get together with them. Even after 6 months the pastor and his wife had never stepped foot inside the house of our friends. Never sat down to just talk.

So the wife called the pastor's wife the other day about something, and the pastor's wife suggested she call so-n-so from the church. Our friend said "I don't even know who that is! I don't want to put a face with a name with ANYONE in this church!" The pastor's wife said "That's your fault. You've been here for 6 months... if you don't know anyone, then that's your fault."

Then the wife explained to the pastor's wife that she and her husband are praying about starting a Friday night fellowship where people just come and eat and talk and sing. They want to invite people from the new sub-division. The pastor's wife said "First off, we might be interested in coming but I don't want to have anything to do with planning it. Also, if you invite every family from that sub-division you will may well be overwhelmed with people! And I don't think the board will be happy if you don't get their approval first."

You have got to be kidding me! That was my response when they told me this. I say "LORD... OVERWHELM ME!!" And since when do we need board approval to share the gospel??

I have advised this couple to move on and find another church... while explaining that this is exactly why we're involved in churches that meet in homes.

Unfortunately I think this is norm for churches today. We consider fellowship to be sitting and watching a show on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening... looking at the back of someone's head. That IS NOT fellowship. I'm all for teaching, but church should be about a body of believers traveling this journey together. Sharing all that we have and loving one another. Most churches in America are missing that. But if the people in those churches were honest, they would admit that they are STARVING for it!

When will the church wake up?

Krispy

Re: Unfriendly Churches - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/5/17 10:33

For some reason when I read something like this all the warm fuzzies grow cold and get real disgusting! Challenges my Christian love for some people....

I would think this couple has been shown where they should NOT go to church for fellowship.

ginnyrose

Re: Unfriendly Churches - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2006/5/17 11:25

This is certainly a difficult situation and unfortunately one that many find themselves in today. This is part of why we see so many "out of church" these days.

I have struggled with this issue myself and have prayed much about it. I wonder if much of the discontent with "Churchianity" as some call it, isn't just a cloak for our own selfish desires to have "our" needs met in church. Yes, there is much that is wrong that we can point to in many churches, but why do we attend in the first place? Is it to serve or be served? Is it so we can have our needs met or is it to worship God in lives surrendered to His will; do we wash feet as our dear Lord Jesus did just before He was to suffer immeasurably for us?

It sounds like this church could use some fervent intercession, and I mean intercession not just in prayer but in deed as well. Who will do this? Should we just run from churches like this or should we seek God fervently for His will in whether we should serve as lights in such dark places.

I've often wondered whether I would even hear if, for example, God called me to serve in a Catholic church (gasp!). God would have to remove a lot of darkness from my own judgmental heart before I could ever serve Him and others in true humility in a Catholic church. Would God do that? Why not? He loves Catholics just as much as anyone else, they certainly need some light.

Maybe this sounds like pie in the sky to some. Could God really use one simple person or a couple surrendered to His will to bring light to a whole church? I for one believe He can.

Much prayer required.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/5/17 11:38

Our church started a dinners for 8. Its 4 couples getting together once a month to have fellowship and get to know each other. Then we change and get in new groups after a few months. We know so many more people now.

But I agree this is the normal church in America...get your fix and GO!

Re: - posted by Scroggins (), on: 2006/5/17 11:52

Let hear it for the monstrosity that is main stream "Christianity!"

This kind of thing is (sadly enough) quite normal when you attend the majority of Churches today. So caught up with ourselves, what with the prosperity Gospel.

Silly people! Prosperity is for heathens!

Re: - posted by boomatt (), on: 2006/5/17 12:08

My fiance and I are in sort of a similar situation, only everyone at the church is real nice, the pastor is right on biblical teaching, and there are even a lot of nice people.

But everyone just says hi at church and never speaks to each other again till the next week. We have tried to go to some of the fellowship dinners at the church, but maybe 2 at the most 3 couples that actually come up to people. I have several times tried to talk to people, and they just dont seem interested, or even some cases ignore us. We have even gotten some rude comments about my fiance from the older people, scorning us because my fiance has a child. I wont mention that she has done more to bring the love of christ to that child than I have seen older people do with their kids.

I dont know what to do. I am in the process of lifting them up in prayer. We have just left the Church of God in our area because of their word of faith teaching. They were actually ten times more nice than they are at the church I am at now, and when we feel like we have a strong bible based church, the congregation is basically dead.

Maybe you guys can give me suggestions on what we can do.

My pastor tries his hardest to get people together and do outreaches and fellowship, but it seems to always fall of deaf ears.

I would also appreciate your prayers for our wedding

Re: Unfriendly Churches - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/5/17 12:18

I am not saying your complaints are invalid, for who am I to say, but if we were to start and complain about all the problems in the Churches far and wide, I am sure we could write a book longer than the bible. What about Churches who put fellowship above evangelism? Are Churches concerned enough with international missions? What about Churches whose pastor is a false prophet? What about Churches who are too big to care for their flock? What about Churches who are too small to be effective? Need I ask more?

I know that I could write lists of my own personal complaints about my own Church. Along side that list, I could write of complaints about myself too. I am certainly not perfect.

I believe the important thing is to go where the Lord is leading. These people should attend the Church where God places them. It very well could be that the Lord put them in that Church in order to stir a change in the Church, or in them. Who are we to say? They need to consult the Lord in prayer.

The Church I attend is not a perfect Church and it certainly is not my first pick. I am there, because that is where the Lord wants me to be. I do what the Lord tells me. He has a purpose for me there even though I don't know what it is. And even though, I may not see the success I wish to see, the Lord has a plan that is greater than I.

On another note: the whole meeting with the board thing does sort of bother me too. However, a Church needs to be like an orchestra. If one of the instruments decides to start playing a different tune, then the whole melody will be off. Or imagine if in an army unit, all the soldiers decided to go off and attack whomever they wanted without consulting the team?

The goal should be to unite the whole body to a common purpose. I would not tell someone to go off and do their own thing without consulting the rest of the group. That is disrespectful and selfish. We should love each other enough in a body to consult everyone involved, so that we can be united. That is the whole purpose of the board. It is to serve the needs of the body in these decisions concerning them. If we are a body, then we should operate as one. How could a hand ever pick up anything, if each finger decided to do it's own thing?

Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Quote:
-----Most churches in America are missing that. But if the people in those churches were honest, they would admit that they are STARVING for it!

When will the church wake up?

This is not just a Church problem, but a social one. All people are becoming more isolated from each other due to technological advances that remove our direct need for each other.

The Church will awaken when it truly realizes its need for one another and seeks out each other for help. Such will occur when the Church is placed under heavy persecution and hated by the world. Until then, we are becoming more and more autonomous.

I wonder if our focus on our own faults is the problem. We don't trust one another enough to draw close and trust one another. If we truly trusted each other in the Church, would not we truly give everything for one another? Would we not be more communal? Instead, we constantly point out the problems with other people. We are fearful of one another's faults, it seems. We don't want to draw close for fear of hurt. Not to mention, everyone seems too busy. We are too busy with T V, computers, games, music....personal entertainment. We entertain ourselves more than others. Not sure???? Just so me thoughts.

In love,

Blake

Re:, on: 2006/5/17 12:19

Quote:
-----I wonder if much of the discontent with "Churchianity" as some call it, isn't just a cloak for our own selfish desires to have "our" needs met in church. Yes, there is much that is wrong that we can point to in many churches, but why do we attend in the first place? Is it to serve or be served? Is it so we can have our needs met or is it to worship God in lives surrendered to His will; do we wash feet as our dear Lord Jesus did just before He was to suffer immeasurably for us?

IntheLight... I appreciate your input, and in some cases I would agree with you. However, if you re-read what I wrote you will notice that our friends main frustration is that they WANT to serve and reach out to the surrounding community... but this church is too slow to move on it. Sure, they are also frustrated because they are not receiving any fellowship, but is that bad? We NEED fellowship. I hear this all the time when people bring that up... are we there to have our needs met? Well... yes, to some extent we are. There is nothing wrong with that. Every sermon I have ever heard preached about "forsake not the gathering together" is preached from the perspective that we NEED fellowship with other believers in order to grow.

(I removed something I had written here in response to something else Inthelight had written because it was not really related to the topic and had the potential to spin this thread off into another direction.)

Krispy

Re:, on: 2006/5/17 13:07

Quote:
-----What about Churches who put fellowship above evangelism? Are Churches concerned enough with international missions? What about Churches whose pastor is a false prophet? What about Churches who are too big to care for their flock? What about Churches who are too small to be effective? Need I ask more?

Beenblake... there needs to be balance, you are right about that.

Quote:

-----I would not tell someone to go off and do their own thing without consulting the rest of the group. That is disrespectful and selfish. We should love each other enough in a body to consult everyone involved, so that we can be united. That is the whole purpose of the board. It is to serve the needs of the body in these decisions concerning them. If we are a body, then we should operate as one. How could a hand ever pick up anything, if each finger decided to do its own thing?

If you read what I wrote you would realize that they DID approach the board about reaching out to new families moving into this new sub-division... and the board did NOTHING. It was after this I encouraged them to ignore the board's inactivity and be obedient to the Word of God and "go into all the world". How is that selfish?? How is that disrespectful? In my opinion, a church board that refuses to take the gospel to the lost is unworthy of respect.

Quote:
-----I wonder if our focus on our own faults is the problem. We don't trust one another enough to draw close and trust one another. If we truly trusted each other in the Church, would not we truly give everything for one another? Would we not be more communal? Instead, we constantly point out the problems with other people. We are fearful of one another's faults, it seems. We don't want to draw close for fear of hurt. Not to mention, everyone seems too busy. We are too busy with TV, computers, games, music....personal entertainment. We entertain ourselves more than others. Not sure???? Just some thoughts.

Agreed, I think you have a good point here.

Krispy

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2006/5/17 13:10

Quote:
-----True, God loves Catholic people. He loves Muslims too. Too bad neither religion teaches salvation. God would not call you to serve in a Catholic Church because He has already called you to this:

Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. Rom 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Krispy, I can appreciate your thoughts here and I have considered these verses as well. You may be right about a calling to the Catholic church however, one thing I have struggled with is this, how do we reconcile your application of these verses in this matter with what the Lord Jesus said to the churches in Revelation? For example, here is what the Lord Jesus said to the folks at Thyatira...

And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.* And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.
(Rev 2:18-29)

The Lord Jesus chides His people at Thyatira for their awful false doctrine but He told those in the church who did not hold those doctrines to "hold fast till I come". He doesn't tell them to run away, He doesn't tell them to wait and see if the others repent, He just tells them to hold on and overcome. I find that very interesting, don't you?

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by Scroggins (), on: 2006/5/17 13:28

Amen Brother Blake!

That is very much true. I know that I catch myself many times keeping people just far enough away to where they are close yet cannot hurt me. It is tough to beat, but when you realize that being Christian is all about giving yourself up, then it becomes easier.

I think it is very important that we get back that Love that we are supposed to have filling each one of us. That sacrificial Love for one another. Cause' it isn't about what GOD can do for you so much as what you allow HIM to do through you. You can only serve as much as you allow HIM to use you.

Bless you and your friends Bro Krispy.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2006/5/17 14:11

Krispy, I would contend that the problem is that Church "and many others" but we are the Church and either the Church meaning the people there like the way it is or to "chicken" to stand up to the Pastor and let him know that "You ain't right" and we want change but no one wants to be the hand that rocks the cradle. This is where I go back to what I have said before in a five fold ministry where there is really no "absolute" power you won't find these kinds of things going on, and I still believe that one day the walls of domination will be torn down and these five fold ministries will prevail and this example you posted will be a thing of the past.

Re: - posted by Scroggins (), on: 2006/5/17 14:49

Amen Bro Bill.

Re: - posted by disciplejosh (), on: 2006/5/17 15:58

We are to be salt and light. I have been at the same fellowship for almost 15 years now. I could have left 100 times over, I could have pointed the finger and accused, AND BEEN RIGHT doctrinally. But the thought I kept having was "If I leave along with everyone else that has left and is leaving, who is going to stay here to be salt?" I know we are to be salt out in the world to stop the rot, the decay, etc...how much more is it needed in the fellowship we are attending?

The problem with "Christians" today is that the easiest thing to do is leave the 'church' we are attending and go to the next church down the street...even if we are 'right' in leaving. The issue isn't one of finding the 'right' body to join. The real issue is "Where do You want me, Lord?"

When you find where God wants to plant you, you'll stay no matter what happens, because God put you there. And you will pray, because God put you there. And you will submit to those God has placed over you and they will be accountable to God someday for the way they watched over your souls (Hebrews 13:17), because God put you there. You are not your own. You have been bought at a price. It will keep you humble, broken, repentant for yourself, your wife, your family, the body God placed you in...and the beautiful thing is you have nothing to boast in, nothing to complain about because God has to do it.

Lord, help us to walk in love towards the 'bodies' we are fellowshiping in today, as Shem and Japheth walked backwards with the blanket to cover their father's nakedness, which led to blessing later on. Help us to repent of being like Ham, who saw his father's nakedness and went out and told his brothers all about it, which led to being cursed later on.

Love covers a multitude of sins.

Re:, on: 2006/5/17 16:45

Josh... good word. I agree with your point. However, in this particular instance one of the issues our friends are having is the lack of true Christian fellowship. Saying hello on Sunday morning with no interaction during the week with anyone. How can one be "salt and light" when there is no interaction? There has to be interaction. And without fellowship a believer will suffer in the spiritual life. So in this instance my advise is plug into a place where you can find true biblical fellowship, and people who share your vision for out reach.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/5/17 16:49

I've concluded that these problems are touched on by the Reformational idea that the true Church is invisible, and that she exists partially within visible churches, and partially outside of them.

Quote:
-----If we truly trusted each other in the Church, would not we truly give everything for one another? Would we not be more communal?

I have found that this type of communal transparency does exist even in the US, but it has little to do with the churches we attend. In fact, Sunday morning has become a familiar rite (nothing wrong with that) for me, as well as a place to receive the sacraments of communion, baptism and marriage. Other than these and a few other important purposes, I still find that my invisible church is ongoing throughout the week with various families and people who do not even attend my place of worship. There was never a moment I orchestrated this, but the needs of safe fellowship, accountability, and out reach shaped the formation of these relationships. I believe this is happening much more than we talk about.

(edit: I wanted to say that the church I attend is a fine place with great oversight and warm Christian people. My family participates there in various ways. My point about the invisible Church is not criticize normal churches, but to simply observe that real life isn't going to fit into a few hours of programs each week. Even a healthy church organization won't have the spiritual and social circumference to encompass all of Church. In fact, mature and secure "leadership" will understand this.)

MC

Re: Another perspective - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/5/18 0:00

Some great discussion everyone, really appreciate Josh's most recent thoughts here and they coincide with others.

Came across this earlier and hopefully it is appropriate to post here, permission wise.

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From David Ravenhill

We live in a day where pastors and other ministers are burning out at a faster rate than ever before. According to a recent report in Family News from Dr. James Dobson,

“Thousands of spiritual leaders are barely hanging on from day to day. Our surveys indicated that 80 percent of pastors and 84 percent of their spouses are discouraged or are dealing with depression. More than 40 percent of pastors and 47 percent of their spouses report that they are suffering from burnout, frantic schedules and unrealistic expectations. We estimate that approximately 1,500 pastors leave their assignments each month, due to moral failure, spiritual burnout or contention within their local congregations.”<sup>1</sup>

H. B. London, Jr. in an article entitled “Pastoral Pressure Takes Its Toll” quotes Southern California psychiatrist Richard Blackmon: “Pastors are the single most occupationally frustrated group in America.” Blackmon reported that 30 to 40 percent of religious leaders eventually drop out of the ministry while as many as 75 percent experience periods of stress so great that they consider quitting. The incidence of mental breakdown is so high that insurance companies

charge ministers four percent extra for coverage compared to employees of other businesses. The article states further that “the demand to be on call for a congregation 24 hours a day as personal confidant, marriage counselor, and crisis intervention puts church leaders in a constant whirlwind of stressful events.”<sup>2</sup>

A 1991 survey of pastors conducted by the Fuller Institute of Church Growth revealed these disturbing facts:

• 90% of pastors work more than 46 hours per week.

• 80% believe that pastoral ministry is affecting their families negatively.

• 33% say that being in ministry is clearly a hazard to their families.

• 75% have reported a significant crisis due to stress at least once in their ministry.

• 50% felt unable to meet the needs of the job.

• 90% felt that they were not adequately trained to cope with the ministry demands placed upon them.

• 40% reported a serious conflict with a parishioner at least once a month.

• 70% of pastors do not have someone they would consider a close friend.

• 37% have been involved in inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in the church.

• 70% have a lower self-image after they’ve pastored than before they started.

If this is the state of so many of the trained, professional pastors and other ministers in our churches, then what is the condition of those they serve? I believe that a survey of the non-ministerial people in our churches would reveal similar levels of discouragement, stress, and burnout.

#### Charisma or Character?

I am convinced that much of believer burnout (like “shooting stars”) at all levels stems from a lack of personal intimacy with God. We have become very professional. We have focused on the externals at the cost of a true inner life. A major problem in the Church today is that we emphasize charisma more than character. The Word of God teaches that the gifts of the Spirit—along with blessing and even authority—can be bestowed by the laying on of hands. However, there is not a single verse, either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, that says character can be imparted through the laying on of hands. Character can be forged in our lives only on the anvil of experience and with the hammer of obedience to God and His Word.

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This is excerpted from a larger article and don't want to leave things misconstrued as to where he may be going ... It seemed important enough to leave in the character aspect as it applies across everything. Just as well it was food for thought at the beginning to re-access just what many a pastor and his family is up against.

Took special note of just this;

Quote:

-----contention within their local congregations

Even here in a more open, less accountable (a deceptive ideal in actuality) setting as one can come and go as they please, write what they may and so forth. It is this issue of contention that rears its ugly head more than any other.

Re: - posted by wyattearp, on: 2006/5/18 0:56

Krispy

Let me offer your friends this sage advise from two great men of God that I have always used regarding where I should attend church.

"You have nothing to do but save souls, spend and be spent in this work" John Wesley.

Coupled with "Go to church where people are getting saved on a regular basis" Oswald J. Smith.

If you can find a soul winning church and you enter in to that work, friendly won't matter.

Re:, on: 2006/5/18 6:52

wyattearp (I love the name!)... that is great advice! I will pass that on.

Mike... those stats are alarming. I think one of the reasons that pastors feel the way they do is because the people they are over expect the pastor to do everything that scripture has commanded EVERY Christian to do. They expect the pastor to visit the sick, and the pastor to visit those in prison, and the pastor to do this and do that... when all along it was God's intention for EVERY Christian to do those things, and NOT sit back and let someone else do it for them. That's how we do it in our house churches that we have here. If someone is sick, I may go visit them, but usually someone else in the fellowship steps up and does it before I ever get a chance to. That's how it should be!

Krispy

Re: - posted by Scroggins (), on: 2006/5/18 11:32

AMEN BRO KRISPY!!!!

Every Christian should be a "Pastor" in action.

I think that one reason Pastors get so worn out is like stated before, lack of relationship with GOD on an intimate level. Being a Pastor has become way too professional.

Sometimes I see that Pastors (also like stated before) are the only ones to step up to the plate and are the only ones expected to.

They also see all of the things wrong with their congregations, which is very saddening.

Another thing that I feel is lost in all of this is the fact that GOD really is the one that is doing the work, not us. The only work we have to do (which sometimes is the hardest work we know) is to be totally open and usable for GOD. To do as he commands of us and asks of us. Go where HE says and do what HE says.

We have forgotten to trust the Lord with all things and all aspects of our lives.

Scroggins

General Topics :: Unfriendly Churches

Re:, on: 2006/5/18 14:19

Professional pastors... i know that scripture does set a precedence for a pastor to be paid. But why? So that he can have the time to study the scriptures. Thats not what it's turned into now-a-days. He spends more time steppin'-n-fetchin' than anything else.

Also, salaried pastors are at the mercy of the church board in many cases. The pastor feels intimidated to preach the WHOLE Word of God because he may upset someone on the board when he preaches about holiness. Say he preaches against being involved with the Masons... and low and behold there are a Mason or two on the board! He just put his families financial security on the line.

Earning your living as a Pastor is not forbidden in the Word, but it's also not a command either. There are deinitely some pitfalls.

None of the leaders in our house church network are paid anything. This frees us up to preach the whole counsel of God ... and if someone gets upset with me (as you can imagine some do now and then!) I dont care. It's not putting bread on my table.

Krispy

Re: Unfriendly Churches - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/5/18 15:04

I agree with josh.

I preached at a church in Maryland years ago called "the reformed episcopal" and it was like a catholic church. It was DEAD!!

I met a lady their who said she was a pentacostal christian, and God called her their to be a light! She was a better christian then me ;-) She had to be strong to survive their!

Jesus did give us power to raise the dead...didnt He? :-)

Re:, on: 2006/5/18 16:32

Quote:

-----and God called her their to be a light!

So you're saying God may call someone to do something that is contrary to His Word? I'm NOT saying we shouldn't befriend Catholics, or people of other faiths, and be a witness to them... but SCRIPTURE never once hints that we should join together with them in their religious system in order to win them. In fact, it very clearly commands us to do just the opposite. Observe:

2Co 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and **be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

Eph 5:11 And have **no fellowship** with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather **reprove them**.

Rom 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and offenses **contrary to the doctrine** which ye have learned; and **avoid** them.

You may question me using a scripture that says "unfruitful words of darkness" when referring to the Episcopale or Catholic churches... but believe me when I tell you there is nothing more dark in this world than a religion that is false and is leading countless millions to their doom.

No, God has not called any of us to be a part of false religions in order to win them. This woman you're referring to is a born again believer... I dont doubt that. But she is in disobedience to scripture.

Krispy

General Topics :: Unfriendly Churches

Re: - posted by brentw (), on: 2006/5/18 17:06

Krisp....I hear what your saying and you've got good scripture backing, but what about the moravians who sold themselves into slavery to win some??

I dont think this lady was joined to them...I believe she was "in the world but not of them".

Re:, on: 2006/5/19 10:02

Big difference between selling yourself into slavery in order to be a witness to slaves and owners, and joining together with a false religion. See, the reason God commands separation when it comes to spiritual matters is our safety. We can be so easily deceived, and if someone thinks they cant be then they should remember that pride comes before the fall.

Am I afraid of being deceived? As long as I obey scripture and commune with the Lord on a daily basis, then no. I'm not too concerned about it. But when we set aside His clear commands of scripture, then we open ourselves up to all sorts of attacks.

I'm not coming against this lady... just saying that she has a poor understanding of what God commands.

Krispy

Re: - posted by breadman (), on: 2006/5/19 13:20

Me and my wife and children attended a very good church in Georgia. We participated with feeding the poor, I taught Sunday School, paid our tithes there, I even went through that denominations schooling to get a one year diploma in Biblical Studies. A couple of years ago God blessed my wife and me with twins. After giving birth my wife went into a deep post partum depression. We were not able to go to church but a couple of the members visited and kept up with us. My wife attempted suicide and had to be put in a mental hospital for a little while. For about three months we were having all kinds of trouble, my wife was convinced I was chasing women, she would leave and take the kids, she stayed out of state for a month, then when she came home she was constantly kicking me out of the house for any little thing. I was praying a lot in those days and one night God showed me some things in prayer. The next day I was very excited and wanted to talk to my pastor. My pastor could not believe that God had spoken to me. I had been out of church for several months so for God to speak to me was just impossible in his eyes. After our disagreement as to whether God had actually spoken to me or not he told me that we needed to get back in his church where people loved us. What people? Only a couple of people had even kept up with us and we knew them outside of church. I asked him where he had been, he knew what a hard time we were having and he hadn't called in three months. I believe this is the difference between someone who gets paid to do the job and someone who is called by God to do the job. If one is called by God then there would be true love for the people God has given him. Instead, we feel betrayed by our church and our pastor.

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2006/5/19 13:48

Breadman,

Clearly you've been through a difficult trial, I was wondering if you could share with us how the Lord has brought you through this trial in His faithfulness? It would be a great encouragement for all.

Also, based on your description of events, what the pastor said and did (or didn't do) was not right and he will, as a shepherd, have to give account before God one day. However, I hope that you do not harbor anger or bitterness towards him.

In Christ,

Ron