

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Where have all the good churches gone?

Where have all the good churches gone?, on: 2013/9/15 10:14

It seems that there are fewer and fewer local churches that adhere to sound doctrine anymore, atleast in my area. Could this be the fulfillment from 2 Timothy 2:3 and 1 Timothy 4:1? Visiting local churches has been tedious and stressful. When you visit one you can all most bet you visited all.

<http://www.newswithviews.com/religion/religion26.htm>

Re: Where have all the good churches gone? - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2013/9/15 10:23

Paul thought highly of the church in Corinth, yet they were full of the worst type of problems. It still didn't keep him from calling them saints. Perhaps you need to do the same, and start looking at your local churches with the eyes of faith instead of how things "seem."

Re: , on: 2013/9/15 11:18

Agree...but doesn't change the fact that God told them to separate themselves. So it sounds like your are saying, look the other way as long as you look through eyes of faith? Okay so forget what Timothy said...

Re: , on: 2013/9/15 11:19

Jesus gives a good overview of the churches in Revelation. Luther was none to enamored of the Catholic church. The anabaptists could not in good conscience stay within a denomination that practised infant baptism. The confessing church of Germany could not remain part of the state church. My cousin's presbyterian church in ohio could not stay within a system that would ordain homosexual ministers.

Times and ages are fluid. Each time, each state is different and one must be moved and led by the Holy Spirit. The times and the seasons change, often the wineskin is changed to receive new wine. As always, the best advice is to be found from the Lord, stay close and hear what the Spirit says to the churches and then act.....bro Frank

Re: Where have all the good churches gone? - posted by narrowpath, on: 2013/9/15 16:56

This is what many here have at SI have experienced. I have been to many churches in my area. Now we found one 30 miles away. There is definitely a dearth of the word of God in America, Europe, and many other places.

Paul cared after the Corinthians as an apostle, that is a different story.

Why should someone join a church that teaches false doctrine and engages in unbiblical practices?

You can be lead astray and shipwreck in your faith. You can become a partaker of other peoples sins. I know good Christian friends who I tried to make aware of the errors around them and they cannot hear me any more but think I am strange. This is painful.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2013/9/15 17:32

Good Churches? the people are the Church, so it's the peoples fault if the good Churches are gone.

Re: , on: 2013/9/15 18:06

MrBillPro....good point. I think I will use that as a quote! :)

Re: , on: 2013/9/15 18:12

Narrowpath...others think I am strange too! I am confident we will find one soon. I may not be in a local church, but thankful that we are able to gather with other believers a few times a month in fellowship.

Re: , on: 2013/9/15 18:13

Appolus..always enjoy your input its always seasoned with wisdom and salt!

Re: Where have all the good churches gone? - posted by turn, on: 2013/9/15 18:37

Worship music abounds. False assurances of salvation abound. Calls to repentance, faith, love, good works and obedience to God do not abound and are often deliberately suppressed.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/9/15 18:46

2 Timothy 3
Amplified Bible (AMP)

3 But understand this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress and trouble .

2 For people will be lovers of self and self-centered, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing), disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy and profane.

3 without natural affection (callous and inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); slanderers (false accusers, troublemakers), intemperate and loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, haters of good.

4 treacherous , rash, inflated with self-conceit. lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God.

5 For they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it . Avoid such people .

6 For among them are those who worm their way into homes and captivate silly and weak-natured and spiritually dwarfed women, loaded down with sins swayed and led away by various evil desires and seductive impulses.

7 ; they are forever inquiring and getting information, but are never able to arrive at a recognition and knowledge of the Truth.

Re: Where have all the good churches gone? - posted by RogerB (), on: 2013/9/15 21:46

The internet sermons are shallow and often go near the solution but not into the solution. I attend a church that meets after the first in a rented building. Looking at a bulletin from the first church, I see we had the same message. I'm sure you have seen or heard this as well. sermons.com is doing the preaching

Re: Where have all the good churches gone? - posted by RogerB (), on: 2013/9/15 21:47

The internet sermons are shallow and often go near the solution but not into the solution. I attend a church that meets after the first in a rented building. Looking at a bulletin from the first church, I see we had the same message. I'm sure you have seen or heard this as well. sermons.com is doing the preaching

Re: - posted by rjennings (), on: 2013/9/15 22:49

I completely appreciate the frustration over the lack of biblical Christianity being promoted in today's modern churches and we must be very careful not to fall into the trap ourselves. The lies are so subtle and sound so attractive. I remember introducing the Rob Bell Nooma videos to my church and believed them to be edifying and biblically sound until I watched Bullhorn. Even though there were some parts of it that I could identify with it didn't sit well with me. I then prayerfully started evaluating the content of all the Nooma videos I owned and realized that although Bible verses were shared and much of the traditional Christian language was the same it possessed a different meaning and I became keenly aware that the Gospel was no longer the Gospel and biblical truths were subtly being redefined and I had to ask the pastor and the church to forgive me.

This was at the peak of Rob Bell's popularity and although my eyes had been opened others were not. I was asked to share at our monthly men's prayer breakfast in which the leader proudly proclaimed he had a copy of the latest Nooma video and couldn't wait for us to see it. It was one of the more difficult things for me to do but I proceeded to unveil what I believed God had shown me about the path Rob Bell was on and cautioned us to be discerning. I would like to tell you that my response was completely favorable but it wasn't and I left the meeting questioning myself but felt that I had done the right thing. It obviously wasn't long until Rob released his Velvet Elvis book and my suspicions were realized.

I was asked by my pastor to lead Bible study at our church on Wednesday nights before Christmas last year for 3 weeks and the pastor would then take over again. During the first meeting I leveraged the Christmas story to challenge us on how much of what we believe is truly biblical and why it matters. I continued down that trek to further expose false doctrine and some promoting it. My wife confessed she wanted to stay home knowing this was a potential mine field I was venturing into. I did have one outburst in a meeting but when I challenged the person to show me in scripture where I was wrong they stopped.

I know that it is difficult to take a stand for truth when it appears we are in the minority but I must give praise to God there is a growing awareness by some that Christianity as it is promoted in many churches is lacking. The 3 weeks is drifting towards 10 months now and the study group is stronger than ever.

God continues to show me that if the truth of the Bible is proclaimed that He will support His Word. One of the greatest moves of God I've witnessed was in a series of meetings on the Ten Commandments where the pastor was apologetic from the very beginning, that it was Old Testament and the series would be considered legalistic and some may leave the church but he felt it was something he must do. He did a phenomenal job in preaching the first sermon and I told him so but said laughingly "you won't grow a church preaching like that". God proved me wrong. We were a very small congregation but 2 people got saved the very first service and by the end of the series the church was packed and within 6 months we were moving into a new facility.

God may choose to move us to a new fellowship where the truth is preached but I'm firmly convinced that He is capable of springing truth forth from our desert places if many of us will pray for truth and stand for truth as opportunity arises.

Blessings

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2013/9/15 23:32

There are still a lot of good Churches out there, if you feel your in a bad one, maybe it's not the Church, remember, sometimes God doesn't change your situation, because he's trying to change your heart.

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2013/9/16 12:25

I must agree with MrBillPro-

I know lots of excellent churches that are uncompromising in their message and on fire for The Lord.

In our fellowship yesterday the message was from Revelations 12,

Quote:
-----they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

Focus this week was on conquering by the Blood of The Lamb.

The word of their testimony and that they loved not their lives unto the death will be the message over the next 2 weeks.

The points were that by the precious blood of Christ the Lamb His followers can overcome -

1. Sins Control (His blood saves from sin, yes. However, it will also deliver us from habits and its power/grip to live holy in this life)
2. Broken Relationships (God with man, husbands with wives, families, friendships, ethnic groups, ... all of the destroyed relationships can be healed by submitting them to the healing, cleansing blood of the Lamb of God).
3. Death's Power (Death is a an enemy with its stinger removed. It loses in the end and we who follow the Lamb overcome it by His blood!)

That did not come from some compromised web site. That came from The Holy Spirit.

That is just an example. I know many, many places where a true saving, healing, empowering Gospel of The Lamb was preached yesterday. A message that emphasized the blood of Christ, the empowering of the Holy Spirit, and our call to take that saving message to the unsaved.

There are many great churches out there. I suspect it may involve going outside what is a "comfort zone" for many people though.

Perhaps that is the lesson God is showing many. Leave what you have known and is comfortable. Jump onto a roller coaster ride of faith with Him through life.

We win! We overcome! All by the Blood of The Lamb!

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2013/9/16 15:43

One thing is certain in all of this: It benefits believers to be a physical part of the Body of Christ.

While so much criticism of modern churches is often highly justified, it would help us to remember that even the Church of Laodicea was still a "church." That doesn't mean it was a legal organization in the way that modern churches organize (modeled often after corporate business structures or the local laws). However, it was an organization (or, perhaps more accurately, a living organism). The church of the Laodiceans needed to repent because the entity had become corrupt.

Yet, even with this corruption of the Gospel and lukewarm condition, they were not yet "spewed" from the mouth of Christ. Who knows when the Laodiceans would be spewed? Who knows how long they had been in this condition? Unfortunately, we are only left with the call from Christ for them to repent. Yet, they were still called a "Church" in all of this...and the Lord extended a promise to those individuals who overcome (as such promises were made to all organizations).

Unfortunately, many churches today are, more or less, indoctrination centers. They share the "truths" that are sectarian and dogmatically sectarian. Believers who enter such churches yet might not believe precisely the same in non-essential matters are not extended the full hand of fellowship or "membership."

I truly believe that this is part of the reason why many congregations are not given messages of repentance. The congregations themselves are filled with adherents who already comply with the doctrinal prerequisites for membership. They already believe what they are "supposed" to believe about specific list of doctrines (the "We Believe" list in the Church constitution or website). With such compliance, the Sunday morning/evening services are filled with individuals who already adhere to the measuring stick of proper doctrinal beliefs. Why tell them to "repent?"

Moreover, there are some believers who could never find a "good church" because they will never find one that fits the mental mold of what such individuals have in mind (in terms of doctrine). Each of us hold to our specific set of beliefs that we have gathered from much prayer and study of God's Word. Since we can't find an institutional congregation that aligns in every way (or even in a predominance of ways) to what we "see" or perceive from the Word of God, we steer clear of them.

I suppose that "non-essentials" often have a way of becoming "essentials" when it comes to our beliefs and our views of

others. I know individuals who believe a specific doctrinal "truths" who will question the validity of the salvation of anyone with a different view -- on matters that have been disputed among believers for hundreds of years.

Likewise, there are believers involved in churches that almost encourage sin and a "casual" estimation of God given the manner in which those shepherds almost encourage a lukewarm attitude. Those pastors and leaders take an opposite view of doctrine. Not only do they not focus upon non-essentials, but they also refuse to take positions on those things that ARE essential. They focus on "love" -- and not the Biblical view of divine love. Their churches are based upon a fleshly, human view of "love" based upon "value." It completely forgets the notion of God's justice or even rebuke. After all, God rebukes and disciplines those that He loves.

I think that the purpose of a Church is well-established in Hebrews chapter 10. In verses 24 and 25, we read, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

In other words, we are supposed to "provoke unto love and to good works" and "exhort others" as we see the day approaching.

As Brother Ravenhill often said, "the Church has lost sight of the Judgement." I think that this is the key in a good local church. Are we focusing on the pure and simple Gospel?

- The universe and all that is in it was created by God.
- Mankind was created in the image of God and for his purpose.
- Mankind was given a free will and exerted that free will to follow whatever it wants.
- Mankind is racing toward judgment day.
- Jesus is the only hope for men facing judgment.
- Repentance of our own selfish free will is a reflection of those who believe in and love God.
- Not only is Jesus the "hope" for exploration from the penalty of that day, but He is approachable and cares for each one of us with the purest form of love that has ever existed.

In my experience, the institutional churches that meander from these pure and simple truths are those established by earthly constitutions, hierarchy, concrete, bricks and mortar. They aren't founded upon the true testament of Christ Jesus. Instead, they lull followers into a slumber that is very difficult to awaken from.

I am grateful for places like SermonIndex that can provide encouragement and fellowship over the internet. However, I think that it is imperative for believers to seek physical encouragement as well. We need to encourage, exhort and provoke one another in Christ over something other than just a monitor and keyboard. If we can't "find" a church, perhaps we should begin one in our homes or apartments?

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2013/9/16 15:55

I wish I could say there is at least one decently solid church near my home. A while back I was attending a church near my home which was affiliated with EV Free churches and Southern Baptists. It seemed like an okay church to me at first. The lead pastor liked reaching out to the community by doing giveaways on the church building parking lot. But sadly, he was opposed to sharing the gospel with the people who came for the giveaways (the old, 'show love and preach with your actions only, not your words').

One day I overheard one of the members making plans to drink beer with the pastor at a baseball game. I asked the pastor and he admitted to it and said there is nothing wrong with it (please, no debates on the issue of drinking). And that was the best church I was able to find nearby.

The majority of churches in my neighborhood are apostate in one form or another, some approving homosexual marriage and clergy, others preaching the prosperity gospel, others very liberal, etc. I currently attend a Calvary Chapel which takes me around 15 minutes to drive to, which is good compared to others who have to drive much farther for church.

We are indeed living in some tough times. My heart goes out to those who cannot find a fellowship nearby where they can find spiritual safety and encouragement. Hang in there brothers and sisters. Cling to Jesus as tightly as possible and He will see you through this tough time in your walk. Keep praying and getting in His Word and you will continue to grow in the midst of your wilderness.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2013/9/17 5:48

I've not been in the forum much the last couple years. But it concerns me that though I've not, I see some of the same old broken records playing. It's sad really. If you have a problem with the local churches available in your area, then do something besides grumble about it self righteously online. If everything around you is dead then God has called you to raise those to life around you and to start a church. If you don't or can't, then you are probably what the apostle referred to as "doubly dead."

If you aren't part of the solution you are part of the problem. Stop playing prophet online and go change some lives already.

Re: , on: 2013/9/17 7:17

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Knowing that there is a lack of genuine desire to glorify God in our lives as we observe and comprehend others around us who take the name of Christ is of necessity a disturbing reality. If we were not disturbed we would be in a hard place because we would have no discernment at all. Then we could just go along with the worldliness of many churches and have no concerns whatsoever. As it is in the UK and the USA things are very difficult spiritually and have been getting much worse over the past 15 years or so.

Do you really believe that everyone has the authority to just start a church? This would lead to complete chaos and more cults than you could shake a stick at. The abuse of believers would rocket to unimaginable proportions and the name of the Lord would be impugned in every place. You cannot begin from a place of concern for the Lord's name and then end up destroying His name in the minds of men by acting presumptuously. It doesn't work that way. Neither is it a requirement to be a prophet in order to understand these things. It simply requires a love of the Father and a desire to honour the Lord.

The grief which many believers feel in this day is real and ought not to be taken lightly.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2013/9/17 7:38

Quote:

-----Do you really believe that everyone has the authority to just start a church?

If you were the last Christian on earth, what would you do?

Seeing then that this essentially how "reformer" and few others on this forum feels, that there are essentially no churches of which they can attend in their locality due to reasons x, y, and z, then they most certainly have this "authority," and if what they say is indeed fact, then I cannot hope but feel that they are obligated to do so. The fact that they never do is indicative of deep psychological and spiritual problems in their lives, and this should not be taken lightly.

If what they say is true and they don't start a church in their locality, then I cannot take their laments, some of which have been several years in the making, in any way serious. Their public laments on Sermon Index, and general lack of corresponding action in real life, is a terrible form of narcissism. Many make such posts on forums like this because they will receive the occasional amen. So they keep making them over and over again, and feeling all the more spiritual for doing so. They like to be liked, so they come on here to be liked. And some even go so far as, whenever Greg hosts his conferences, to flock to such in order to further be seen and heard and reaffirmed in such a manner. The one conference I went to, as blessed as I was to fellowship with many truly awesome brethren, I could not help but notice some of the peo

ple who were practically screaming for attention and trying to put themselves into positions of prominence. They had motives beyond just coming to be refreshed and renewed.

If what "reformer" is saying is true, then my question would simply be this: What would Leonard Ravenhill do if he were in your situation? Can you really imagine Leonard Ravenhill banging away on his keyboard, logging hundreds and thousands of posts on Sermon Index, lamenting the spiritual conditions of the "church" around him leaving him no place to go for fellowship?

People need to stop playing prophet.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2013/9/17 9:33

Here's an idea for some of us. Instead of beating on God's sheep for not being able, in good conscience, to fellowship in apostate churches, how about we pray for them and encourage them in the Lord? How about we pray that God would send one or two Christians their way with whom they could fellowship?

Re: Enter into God's JOY - posted by roadsign (), on: 2013/9/17 9:46

We can easily get bogged down in this "slough of dependency" over the modern church, but the Lord is rejoicing because people are entering his kingdom. I post two BBC documentaries about Amish turning to Christ. Note that BBC has no desire to profess Christ "but they are doing it in spite of themselves. We agree with Paul: "the important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I REJOICE. Yes, I will continue to REJOICE." Phil 1:18

If you belong to the Lord, you will find yourselves entering His JOY as you watch these videos. And you will also find yourselves seeing beyond the suffering and rejoicing with the joy of these people:

A Secret Life http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtNXvE_rLoE

Trouble in Amish Paradise http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jp_dWkwwyT4

Note, these titles were created by those who have not entered into His joy, or they "d make titles like: "Joy in Amish Country!" "Amish find the Joy of the Lord!"

Slithering around in the slough of despondency can feel quite self-righteous. But it is a place of defilement. When we invite others into the bog, they become defiled too. This is NOT our calling! In fact, this is rebellion against the Lord's commands, and it is a rejection of what he has given us through his death and resurrection. Christ died that we may enter into his JOY - that our JOY may be complete, full. (see Jn 15:10-12)

Let's admit, there is far more cause to REJOICE in our day than there was in Paul's day "because the kingdom of heaven has grown much since then! We, like the psalmists, can REJOICE in a covenant keeping God and the indisputable fact that he is fulfilling his promises "no matter how dark we feel.

A prayer for us all:

May we "enter the joy of the master" Matt. 25:23

May we "Rejoice in the Lord" who relentlessly loves humanity, who forgives and restores sinners- and who REJOICES over every lost sinner who is reconciled to him.

From these videos you can see that God's JOY within is infectious!
It's our testimony.

Diane

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2013/10/1 20:35

There is no value in encouraging people to stay in a "system" that is entirely flesh-focused and almost entirely apostate. There is not one single phrase in the New Testament that would indicate we are to stay with such a group. Jesus says, "I wish that you were hot or cold." If you truly are hot--HOT!--then perhaps you could stay in such a church and either you would ignite others or they would throw you out fast. But for most Christians, only stay if there are people there that truly love Christ and are seeking to stay on the highway of holiness. Otherwise, go out but don't stay alone. I'll say it again: Don't Stay Alone! You will get as lukewarm as all the rest. Believe me, I have tried it before. Do whatever it takes to connect with some godly people. Drive to another state once a month and stay overnight with some saints and spend all of your free time telling people in your area about the Lord. God will keep you alive then. We tried both ways. One is death, the other is life. And always be willing to move.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2013/10/1 20:37

Quote:
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If you aren't part of the solution you are part of the problem. Stop playing prophet online and go change some lives already.

I totally agree with this, brother!

Sounds a little different than what you posted earlier.

Re: - posted by onemite, on: 2013/10/2 2:32

Well this thread is certainly encouraging! :) I'm not being sarcastic. I really find it encouraging to know that it's not only me who is struggling to find a church in my city.

I have often wondered if the "good churches are gone" or if I have just matured a bit as a Christian, and can now see more error than I use to.

I have sat in church services hungry to just sing to the Lord amid others who loved Him, but become overcome by the feeling of being caught up in a heartwarming television Christmas Special, indulging in a nostalgic sing-a-long without really worshipping the God of the bible.

Whether I am becoming aware of the condition of the institution called church or cynicism in my heart, I believe it is a work of God calling me to something deeper. He calls me out of all that is not of Himself. God is refining me as He is all of His children.

May we all answer His call with boldness and humility. May we learn to be patient with those who we don't agree with, and pray the Lord give us wisdom to keep the balance to know what and how much error to bear with and when to separate all while keeping a pure heart.

I'm sorry that so many of you, like myself, are not finding a church devoted to Jesus, but I do know that God is able. He is able to bring us together for fellowship. We may have to wait and we may have to pray. We may have to let Him have His way in our own hearts before it happens but I am certain that the Church belongs to God. Just as He was able to bring the Israelites together from where they were scattered, He is able to raise up a purified people who honor His Name and He is able to bring us scattered ones into fellowship with one another.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/2 8:09

RE: ///I've not been in the forum much the last couple years. But it concerns me that though I've not, I see some of the same old broken records playing. It's sad really. If you have a problem with the local churches available in your area, then do something besides grumble about it self righteously online. If everything around you is dead then God has called you to raise those to life around you and to start a church. If you don't or can't, then you are probably what the apostle referred to as "doubly dead."

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This needs to be placed on the great quotes list.

Re: , on: 2013/10/2 10:47

If you can't find fellowship, make it! Lead someone to Christ and begin your fellowship with them. Strengthen and encourage the weak and faltering and enjoy fellowship with them.

What you are failing to understand Reformer is that God does not deliver to you on a silver platter an "Ephesus like" fellowship (they were chastised for leaving their first love, by the way). But God, wants to work through you and me to extend His kingdom. We are not down here to necessarily be in a great fellowship, but rather to do His will (and fellowship with Him). If you open your eyes and notice the person on your right and left everyday, you will have plenty of opportunity to "do His will" and in doing His will, you will come into fellowship.

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2013/10/2 12:39

Just-in stated

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and

Quote:
-----If you aren't part of the solution you are part of the problem. Stop playing prophet online and go change some lives already.

Agreed guys.

I have noticed exactly the same things. Some folks never getting out of the ditch and continuing to wallow there year, after year, after year, after year.

No shame in a person falling in a ditch. Life happens to everyone. However, staying there is for years IS the fault of the person refusing to leave it.

If you can't find a church that lives up to your expectations then I suppose you could take comfort from the fact that you would not be able to fellowship in any of the churches Paul founded. DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?

MANY POSTERS ON SI COULD NEVER FELLOWSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES PAUL FOUNDED!

Read Revelations chapters 2 & 3. Some who posted on this thread would immediately leave those churches as "apostate". They aren't perfect but neither are you darling!

Jesus called those churches "golden". They had issues to fix... because there were people like you in them! If you have people you have problems until we are all in the next world.

Quit whining about how bad you have it. Get your eyes off yourself. Go and make a difference in peoples lives!

I know some think that sounds unloving. However, it is not loving to leave folks in a ditch!

Re: , on: 2013/10/2 12:44

Yes, Solomon. We need to realize those who are not sick do not need a Physician. So, we can denigrate the sick or bring the Doctor to them. Our choice. Never seen a doctor withhold care from a patient and just scold them.

Re: - posted by onemite, on: 2013/10/2 18:09

"Here's an idea for some of us. Instead of beating on God's sheep for not being able, in good conscience, to fellowship in apostate churches, how about we pray for them and encourage them in the Lord? How about we pray that God would send one or two Christians their way with whom they could fellowship?"- Oracio

I think that's a great idea. I'm with you.

Re: , on: 2013/10/2 18:52

There is a great difference between those who are sick and those who don't think they need a Physician. I too, could not fellowship with those who have no need for Christ - (lip service, but heart is far from Him).

Some of my best fellowship has been with those who are broken and hurting.