

General Topics :: The Fellowship Of The Outsiders

The Fellowship Of The Outsiders, on: 2005/4/6 9:03

Hey everyone...

I received this article in my email this morning (and there is no copyright on this as far as I have been able to tell). I find it to be very moving, and very grassroots/back to basics... which for those of you who have taken the time to get to know me, know that this is what I love most of all. On forums like this, many love to show off their intellect and knowledge... and I too am prone to this. But the gospel is simple, and the Bible is not that hard to understand. Oh sure, there are some fuzzy areas... dispensationalism comes to mind. But the truth of the Word of God has been made simple. And we all need to come back to that truth, and follow the simple carpenter / teacher who spoke in gardens and hillsides, and not in ivory palaces behind crystal pulpits.

*I consider myself to be a proud card carrying member of the **Fellowship Of The Outsiders**.*

For those who have ears to hear...

Krispy

The following is by Pastor Buddy Smith
Grace Baptist Church,
Malanda, Queensland, Australia

The Fellowship Of The Outsiders

I have finally found the perfect pastor's fellowship.

I do not say this lightly.

For over forty years I have been looking for a group of godly men who would serve as mentors to young preachers, who would consistently display a deep humility, who would teach and preach the Word without fear or favour. I have longed for a fellowship of preachers who would resist the fleshly allurements of Hollywood and Nashville, who despised the politics of denominationalism, who saw through the cheap fads and gimmicks of the "Super Preachers." I searched high and low for a group of pastors who were in the orbit of One Man, and Him alone! I wanted to keep company with brethren who were genuine Christian scholars and believed every Word from God without question.

Well, I finally found them. It has been a long search. Admittedly, among the numerous pastors' fellowships that I have sampled, I found some of the qualities I longed for. But not all. Some came close to my criteria, but the wheels always fell off just when they were needed the most.

Let me tell you about this fellowship. No, it doesn't have a name. They have never bothered to choose one. I suspect they have been too busy with more important things. The pastors in this fellowship don't have any of the modern conveniences we have. Not one has a computer. None of them owns a car. They don't even have electricity, so there's no television or radio where they live. They have never been to a pastor's conference, or an evangelistic crusade. None of them has a degree in theology. In fact, none of these pastors have even been to Bible College. They never heard of 40 Days of Purpose, (and I didn't tell them). CCM is unknown to them. I suppose the thing that impressed me the most was the fact that they didn't even have the complete Bible.

I guess we would call these their limitations.

But let me tell you about their pastoral work.

1. They stick to the job. For years and years, they have kept right on feeding their flocks. Not one of them has ever looked for a larger pastorate. They know the meaning of the word "abide."

2. They pastor in an environment of almost universal darkness. Oh, there is a little gleam of light here and there and the fellowship in the light they have. They just keep on pastoring, though the night deepens.
3. They avoid deceptive methods of multiplying their flock. They breed for strength, not show. They grow their own flock through prayer, good pasture, and a lot of hard work.
4. They are thorough in their shepherding, and they know their sheep. They find and fold and feed and fleece their own flock.
5. They are diligent and vigilant in their oversight of the flock God has given them. They are ever so protective of their sheep. No wolf is going to snatch even one little lamb from their flocks, ever!
6. These are no hirelings! No roaring lion will ever frighten them away. I have seen a score of lion skins hanging on their walls. These are faithful shepherds.
7. I am especially impressed with their knowledge of the Scriptures. One only has to tell them some truth from God and they immediately relate it to the truths they already know. Such agility of heart is very rare, even among pastors!
8. And you ought to see how they receive God's Word when He sees fit to reveal more of Himself to them! It is this response that finally convinced me that this is the perfect pastors' fellowship.

I have been on mission fields where the pastors did not have all the Bible, and I have seen their delight in having more of it translated into their language. But these pastors amaze me at their responsiveness to the new things they receive from God. They immediately imitate the Bereans of Acts 17:11 and begin searching the Scriptures they know by heart to see if these things are so. They go to great lengths to verify the accuracy of the things they learn from God.

(I must admit I watched very carefully to see how they would treat any new Word from the Lord. We have all observed the responses of preachers to the Word of the Lord, and we all know how they tend to treat any unfamiliar doctrine. Well, these pastors surprise me beyond measure. They show no trace of a critical, sceptical approach to the Word of God. They do not even form a committee to establish the veracity of the text. They do not consult the resident German rationalist in the seminary. They do not analyze the text for grammatical errors. They do not search the Vatican library for variant readings. They do not take a crash course from modernists on textual criticism. They just believe the Word from the Lord and act on it. Immediately!)

9. And then they rejoice over the wonderful truths God reveals to them! So much so that they can not keep quiet about it. The things they get from God change their preaching. They have to tell everybody they meet. And their excitement is contagious. Many are provoked to worship through the preaching of these godly pastors. You can see why I think I have found the perfect pastor's fellowship.

I expect you want to know where it meets, and who they are, and when the next fellowship meeting is so you can come and see for yourself.

Well, I must confess, my first contact with them was through my favourite historian, Dr. Luke. He told me about them in his first book, his gospel. They are the first pastors in the New Testament. They are the faithful shepherds of Luke chapter 2 (verses 8-20.) These are the pastors who stayed by their flocks when the world was darkening. These are the pastors who abode with them, not forsaking them for the comforts of home and hearth. These are the pastors who watched sleeplessly for the good of their sheep. These are the pastors who feared the Lord and revered His Word, and like Abraham, staggered not at the promise of God. These are the pastors who showed true Christian scholarship in believing the Word uncritically and demonstrated this faith in immediate pursuit of the Truth it revealed. These are the pastors who preached the Word to any and all and did it worshipfully. And hearts were touched.

I have finally found the pastor's fellowship I need. This is my crowd! Luther wrote that it was his crowd, and Spurgeon praised them in a sermon preached in 1865.

Of course, there was another fellowship of preachers in those early gospel accounts. They were the Sceptical Scribes Society and their parish was in Jerusalem. They were the lifeless experts on the Law and the Prophets. They believed not a word they copied. Oh, they could split hairs with the best, and they had learned from their teachers how to sit in judgment.

ent on the Word of God. They were professionals, and studiously avoided allowing the Word to sit in judgment on them. When the wise men came seeking the King of Kings, the Sceptical Scribes knew where He was, but had no interest in seeking Him.

And so today, pastors are faced with a vital choice to make. We may do the rounds in Jerusalem (wherever that is for each of us) with the intelligentsia and the experts. Or we may seek membership in that other fellowship. I suspect it is the same fellowship that is mentioned in Hebrews 13:12-16. Peter Connolly once called it the "fellowship of the outsiders." That's probably as good a name as any.

I wonder, how many pastors down through the centuries have quietly withdrawn from the Jerusalem fellowship and joined the unnamed fellowship of the scholarly shepherds of the Judean hills?

I know one that did.

Re: The Fellowship Of The Outsiders, on: 2005/4/6 10:26

Did anyone besides me think this was excellent? Just wondering...

Krispy

Re: - posted by inotof (), on: 2005/4/6 16:10

I'm printing this...hope that's Kosher. It's very good, and very encouraging for, especially for someone who is just getting his proverbial Pastor's feet wet. Thanks for sharing Krispy

Re:, on: 2005/4/6 16:17

Quote:
-----I'm printing this...hope that's Kosher. It's very good, and very encouraging for, especially for someone who is just getting his proverbial Pastor's feet wet. Thanks for sharing Krispy

No problem, bro... like I said, there is no copyright on this. I sent it to a bunch of people today.

Krispy

Re: The Fellowship Of The Outsiders - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/4/6 16:21

Truly wonderful brother!
Thanks for this Steve, nothing to be added here.