

General Topics :: The great tragedy of the Sunday morning service

The great tragedy of the Sunday morning service, on: 2018/5/2 16:25

I thought I would put my thoughts from the other thread together, might be useful for someone to flesh out some issues..
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The great tragedy of the Sunday morning service!

The most important crisis facing the Body of Christ is the Sunday morning service. It really helps to know a little bit about the history of the early church and what it looked like. For the most part it would be in houses or for special occasions if there was more than one house gathering in a town or city, they would come together in an open field, especially if someone like Paul was coming. The gathering was just that, and there was a meal. Breaking bread meant just that, it did not mean a communion wafer and a ritualized affair. People were actually together, hanging out, singing hymns, sharing, giving testimony, asking for prayer. This thing called "the church service," is something that morphed out of that. Bottom line, it really was not that complicated, the most important aspect of the gathering was that the Holy Spirit was there, Jesus was preeminent.

Can this be changed? Not in any meaningful way. I do believe however that the time is coming soon when the enemy will tear down every religious building in the world that will not bow down to him, only then I believe will the Body of Christ return to its roots, by necessity. If we were to take the pastor out of the average church in America, the congregation would be at a total loss. For centuries they have taken on the role of spectator and not participant and this has rendered them, for the most part, impotent and reliant upon "the guy at the front," and not the Holy Spirit.

Oh how I would love the problem that the Corinthian church had in their midst and Paul had to correct. Everybody had a tongue or a word or a spiritual song or a prophecy. Paul wrote and told them to limit it to two or three of this and two or three of that and let there be order in all of it. You can take a wild man, full of life, and tone down his behavior, but what can you do with a dead man? What would your church service look like if there were two or three tongues and then interpretations. Then two or three prophecies, then two or three songs initiated not by a "worship leader," as part of a practiced program but by the Holy Spirit Himself through the vessels of His choice. I think I am safe in assuming it may not look like anything you have ever seen, but there it is, laid out, in the Scriptures, directions from God how to conduct our Sunday gatherings.

Part of the problem is that the vast majority of churches not only do not practice the gifts but do not even believe in them, so there would be no chance of a reverting to 1 Cor 14. The very service itself for the most part, has a design that would make it impossible for most congregations to gather in a Biblical fashion (1 Cor 14) even if they wanted to. So we are talking about something very radical here, very primitive, something that would counter endless centuries of the traditions of man. It now seems like if we were to return to the order of worship that was first laid down for us, it would take a revolution to bring it to pass.

But let's suppose we do have a willing congregation. What would that look like? Well, some of us may remember the different kinds of professors at college. Some were great teachers and many were not. They all had qualifications, but clearly there were teachers that you could tell were called to their profession. The best professors always included the whole class. They elicited questions on whatever the subject at hand was and through those questions and the response of the class, we were taught. These classes were always invigorating and these teachers had a great skill at keeping the class on topic because in every class there were always left fielders who would ask unrelated questions. To me, this would be the gifting of an elder or teacher in a 1 Cor 14 setting, gifted by the Holy Spirit to do what secular institutions do all the time.

We have fleshed this out. We had a series of meetings in Missouri a few years ago. People came from all over the country. There were many pastors there. We had three days of meetings without any agenda at all. We would start around 8 or 9am, gathered around in a large circle and someone would open with a prayer and a Scripture. 12 hours later we would finish. Throughout the course of a day there would be singing, praying, sharing, testimony, laying on of hands and none of it was scheduled, the Holy Spirit was our leader. Now, if a group of men and women from varying backgrounds, mostly pastors (who can be the most difficult to deal with because they are used to being in charge) can yield and follow the leading of the Lord through His Holy Spirit for 12 hours, how easy would it be to have this kind of service on a Sunday morning?

orning for a few hours or however long it lasted? Not difficult. It is not about the degree of difficulty, it is about yielding and surrendering to the Holy Spirit and having Jesus preeminent in the meeting. Ultimately it is about obedience. Scripture is our touchstone, it is from Scripture that we stand or fall. How does your Sunday morning service compare to 1 Cor 14. Not at all? Why not?bro Frank

Re: The great tragedy of the Sunday morning service - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/5/2 19:17

Franks post otherwise re titled "How to shrink your congregation to only 20 people in weeks".

Troubling questions will arise.

1. Where will the spectators go?
2. Where do you put tithes and offerings when there is no building fund, no improvement projects, no light/water/gas/phone/internet/ or property taxes?
3. What do you do when God is silent that day and no one has anything to say?
4. What expectations are you putting on one another to conform to right doctrine? To godliness? To witnessing? To serving the community?
5. What do you do when some want to leave and start their own group?
6. Is 12hours a minimum for service time? Is it 4 hours? Or do we relegate a full day like a Sabbath to meeting, prayer, study, sharing and ministering to one another?
7. What If I want to go home and watch TV after an hour of listening to sister so and so droll on about her mean mom?

I personally think a reversion to this kind of setting would be a tremendous step forward in discipleship, but people are people; they are messy, sinful, stupid, problematic, full of themselves and yet our answer here is to 'give these people a place to be themselves'.

On the surface Frank what your propose is wonderful, dive anything deeper than 1 inch and you will encounter everything I said and much more.

The Church is not about display of gifts, its never been about what we all have to say to one another (though that's a part of it) its not about confessing our weaknesses (though that's a part of it), the Church is always been about Jesus living through us his divine purpose for us.

To me, when the Holy Spirit gets involved, some of it contains gift ministry, preaching and praying, but some of it is also the opportunity and challenge to love on a level that we only talk about (and that from a very safe distance).

By the way, when will we be taught the scriptures if we all just arrive with our own ideas about things?

Who will keep Jesus preeminent in the meeting? Is it an unwritten decorum or is it done by a leader?

Please don't interpret this as a wet blanket on the subject, but I hope a reality check and in my opinion why this sort of thing never moves past 'romantic idealism state'.

Re: - posted by CofG (), on: 2018/5/2 19:37

I recommend to all that a careful reading of 1 Corinthians will give anyone interested a worldwide reproducible plan of God to build His church focusing on the right foundation, Christ and Him crucified, the right "stones" for the structure, the right unifying cement of brotherly love and the cleanliness of the house of God respecting the undesired presence of sin. Into such a spiritual building, the presence of God is pleased to fall and dwell.

Likewise, the way of worship in that "building" is also fully described in this epistle.

We need to whole heartedly trust God's declaration of the church and its communal ways rather than strategizing. God has a plan, unfortunately, men develop strategies.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/5/2 19:44

Wow! It's really sad so many folks have to stereotype to make their point. I don't know if you've been living under a rock or listening to, to many self-righteous people. I personally know of many churches doing a wonderful job, of presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ. I will say this and you can air it out here, quit your Stereotyping unless you have a bsolute proof of what every church on this planet is doing. It's really sad that people let old slue foot work through them to stereotype people, because the church is THE PEOPLE, and I don't appreciate this because I'm one of these PEOPLE that make up the church. I've said all I have to say on this thread, I pray that God will soften the hearts of these folks that Stereotype all brothers and sisters in Christ.

Re: - posted by noone (), on: 2018/5/2 19:48

Glory and Grace. Your questions are legitimate WHEN AND IF you are comparing the body to what is called "church" in our day and time. Man has put forth a system and said THIS IS CHURCH when in all reality it is only the tip of the iceberg... partial truth imo. It can serve a purpose... the good... not the best.

Man has put a cement foundation on the definition of "church" when it should be tent pegs. Man has turned the gifts into salaried careers. The wind of the Spirit is not that.

Jesus only had 12 in His circle for His everyday life and theirs... Yes, he met on the lake shore, fields, synagogues on occasion in great numbers, but where the rubber met the road for daily life was in His circle of 12. So, your questions in the context of His small circle may not be such a big issue as one might expect. They operated as a family unit not a congregation gathering one day a week for a meeting.

Re: - posted by CofG (), on: 2018/5/2 20:13

Truly sorry if it sounds like I'm stereotyping. I used to live in the US and have a fairly broad experience to the churches here and I now live in Cambodia strengthening churches in villages around the country. Additionally I have traveled to many areas of the world doing the same work. You would be surprised at the continuity of the church traditions that have developed in the west and made their way east and south. Its a systemic problem which implies it is widespread but certainly does not imply it is universal. So, my comments are directed at the general and not the exceptional. When I survey the book of Acts and the Epistles and look at the churches I'm very familiar with, I see a discrepancy which I have come to conclude can be traced to tradition and a minimal presence of the Holy Spirit. Many of you who love the church and the bride would be sincerely saddened. I'm not trying to come off as judge or holier than thou, but rather as a very interested and concerned observer of what was and what is.

Re: Robert - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/5/2 20:41

Robert, I only come back to let you know, my comments were not directed towards you, sorry for the confusion.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/5/2 20:48

Brother Bill: Well, it seems my humor and sarcasm didn't get translated into my post. (I take it you meant me as far as stereotyping)

Sorry if it came off as a resistance to Frank's post.

I was hoping that in my questions you could see improvement in the Churches situation.

Answers...

1. You are able to help people step out of the spectator, silent in and out mentality.
2. Instead of buying a 3.5 million dollar building, the funds could actually go to help those in need.
3. Silence in teaching does not mean God is silent, it maybe prayer is the necessity, not teaching.
4. Prayer and dedication to worship, to Jesus as Lord gives God room to speak to hearts that would not hear him otherwise, the living room is a prime place for Jesus to speak to his people.
5. The body should be encouraged to start new groups, to branch out, to gather other believers and unsaved ones. Its a good thing to multiply.
6. It isn't time that matters, it's coming together to meet Jesus and find his love and the Church's love together. Whether it takes hours or all day or just an hour, the point is meeting Christ together. Time actually flies pretty fast when the Spirit of God is moving.
7. The cure for indifference and apathy is not 'getting out of here' its learning to bear one another burdens, in such a small group you get to practice that and feel what that means.

The questions I gave appear at the start-up of such a meeting, but they are answered in time as the mature believers relate in words and actions what it's like to live out your faith.

The morphing of a group from silence, indifference, worldliness, impatience to opening up to God and to one another comprises both gifting and burden bearing, it comprises teaching and counseling, caring and correcting. The gifts and word-ministry are for a purpose, they are not the end-all. Though in our modern assemblies it becomes the end-all, I don't see scripture as prioritizing the means above the ends.

What is the goal? Is it not living out the life of Jesus in every aspect of our personal lives? What is preaching for? It is for that purpose. What are the gifts for? They are for building up the body so that it can fully function as Jesus designed and purposed his people to live and enjoy him.

Along the way Brother Bill, we all stumble, we all blow it, we get mad, or discouraged or encounter unbelief in our selves, or cynicism, or doubts and fears. We encounter sins in others not just in our selves, we face battles with people who never had anyone battle with them in the spirit.

The ugliness of our carnal nature is eventually exposed and it's not pretty, so when it is exposed and we know it will eventually fall to our lot that MY sin and weaknesses are exposed...do I still want to be a part of something like that? With my whole heart I say YES. I want to be loved for who I really am, not what you all think I am.

This love is the bond, it makes for peace among believers where among unbelievers it makes for walls and justification/barrriers.

This is the heart of my post, it's not about what we see with our eyes and hear with our ears...the ugliness of humanity, it's our faith and love being worked out by being obedient to the word preached, prophesied and counseled into our hearts. This to me is golden.

Re: , on: 2018/5/2 21:15

Marvin, I wrote.....

"Can this be changed? Not in any meaningful way."

I don't have a romantic bone in my body Marvin nor am I naive, what I do have is the word of God. I Cor 14 is God speaking to His people, everything else is just noise. I don't consider you a wet blanket Marvin nor would it move me if you were, been around the block too many times for that. There are wet blankets and angry bitter little men but I have learned to ignore them. I agree, how to shrink your congregation would be a good alternative title :)Bro Frank

Re: , on: 2018/5/2 21:22

Robert, you write.....

"Many of you who love the church and the bride would be sincerely saddened. I'm not trying to come off as judge or holier than thou, but rather as a very interested and concerned observer of what was and what is."

Totally agree with that Robert, the problem is that there are some people who have no idea what you are talking about and have to resort to all that they know. Any time this subject comes up you will be criticized. The devil has no intention of the Body of Christ breaking out of their traditional boxes, after all, it was he who put them there. Religion versus reality. The God of this world has any number of critics lined up, but the God of all has His people everywhere, God bless you Robert.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2018/5/2 21:25

Oh The tragedy of a Christian who can't quit putting down the Pastor's who are preaching on Sunday morning.

Oh The tragedy of a brother who is such a blessing but can't stop sowing discord among the brethren who Pastor or attend a church building.

Oh The tragedy of a brother who wants all the church buildings to close down.

Oh the tragedy of this madness that never stops because a brother is possessed with a vendetta against others who do

It do it like he thinks it ought to be done.

Oh the tragedy that this will never stop....

Blessings to all...

Re: Marvin - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/5/2 22:00

Nope Marvin, wasn't you, but we're getting warmer. :-)

Re: rbanks - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/5/2 22:20

rbanks....that is probably "in my opinion" one of the top greatest post on SI since I've been a member. Thank You! and God Bless you for stepping up and telling the truth.

Re: , on: 2018/5/2 22:30

Rbanks, I have no vendetta against anyone. Most of my best friends are pastors. My post was comparing the Sunday morning service with 1 Cor 14. Maybe instead of drama, do you have an opinion on 1 Cor 14 and the direction that God gave us or do you simply want to attack the messenger? Either way is fine, I won't respond any further to accusation it is unbecoming and simply designed to derail a perfectly legitimate question. God bless you Rbanks.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2018/5/2 22:31

Brother Bill I have read a lot of your post on SI over the years and you have blessed me with your sincerity and wit...

I was just thinking a little earlier that if I ever drove through Texas again that I would love to meet up with brother Bill... maybe have breakfast or something...because I believe I would really enjoy the fellowship.

You are a blessing brother and thank you for being on SI

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/5/2 22:55

Brother Frank: I hope you read my post to Brother Bill, my questions were not framed to draw what you said into suspicion, but to let other try and extract from your own post the same answers I provided bill.

We are on the same page and I believe see the same things.

I don't believe you and I are on this discussion board verbalizing these issues for naught. I believe God is doing a work in the world and I believe we know in part and prophesy in part about such change.

I don't believe for a minute you are some naïve mole clawing away in the dark, there is a fuller more direct route to godly discipleship, teaching and body ministry that our current mode of assembly cannot fulfill. I believe the Spirit of God is directing us toward his will and purposes. May our hearts be ever acceptable to accomplish his will.

The realities of actual Holy Spirit ministry differ from our conceptions at the first. It's like when I train someone go out and street witness...the difference between what they thought it was going to be like and what it was like. Most are surprised to find out its far greater than they had ever hoped.

Re: , on: 2018/5/2 23:36

Marvin writes.....

"The realities of actual Holy Spirit ministry differ from our conceptions at the first. It's like when I train someone go out and street witness...the difference between what they thought it was going to be like and what it was like. Most are surprised to find out its far greater than they had ever hoped."

I agree with that brother. Had a young American man one time when I was in my hometown of Greenock in Scotland. They put him with me because he was a "street minister." Come to find out he had been used to doing puppet shows and such with his youth-group for American kids in American suburbs. When we got on the streets in Greenock, he was literally terrified. He was a decent kid but had just never really talked to people who were anti Gospel and who spoke back.

There was huge gulf between what he was doing in the States and what he was now doing in a hostile area, but the blessings of course are beyond what you could imagine. He was outside the box and God was using him.....bro Frank

Re: Testimony - posted by ThyKingCome (), on: 2018/5/3 11:38

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I thought this would be a good opportunity to share a bit of testimony here about what took place Monday night at our Men's group.

Our leadership team decided that we were going to have an "Afterglow" (time of waiting on the Lord, availing ourselves to Him in prayer, worship, and allowing 1 Corinthians 12-14 to be real among us.

Normally we have roughly 150-200 men in attendance on Monday Nights. We just completed a 10 week concentrated course through the Conquer Series, which specifically addresses the subject of lust and pornography among men. (I am sure there are other studies out there for women, but this is after all a Men's Group).

As we got started, I couldn't help but think about this forum, and Frank's heart and was wishing you could have been there brother Frank, I really believe you would have loved it!

Here is how it went down:

The Men's Pastor, one of the Elders and I met at 5:45 to discuss the evening and pray.

At 6:30 we went into a room with all of our group leaders (about 16 men) and continued in prayer for the evening asking God to move. While this was taking place, various men arrived early and moved chairs into a circle around the room, it's quite a large room and could seat roughly 200.

At 7:00 the pre-prayer ended and we joined everyone gathered in the main room, there were about 100 men in attendance, all seated in a circle around this very large room. Normally we have potluck style food for the men, but we had no food this night and encouraged the men to fast for the evening.

Our Men's pastor opened in prayer and began discussing what the night would be about. He talked about the importance of waiting on the Lord, letting Jesus be the Head of the meeting, and encouraged the men to be open to the gifts of the Spirit. He also emphasized heavily that we were there to hear from the Lord, and not man, and that it wasn't a time for someone to give a long Bible study that they had rehearsed or prepared.

Afterwards, he invited me up where he was, as so I could share something on my heart, which I had brought up in an earlier meeting.

I began with 1 Thessalonians 5:19 and reminded the men "Do not quench the Spirit". I told them that there were two ways we could quench the Spirit as we were gathered. 1) We could quench the Spirit by self-promotion and parading ourselves and drawing attention to ourselves, and 2) We could quench the Spirit by remaining silent when God is prompting us to contribute and speak or be involved with the meeting. I encouraged the men that they are "not spectators" and that Jesus wanted to manifest Himself in and through each of us, and to pray, be poised and ready to be used by the Lord.

So, the meeting began with my exhortation, which I would say was a word of prophecy because in 1 Corinthians it says "he that speaks prophecy speaks edification, exhortation and comfort to the hearers".

Following this we had two songs of musical worship while men praised the Lord in song.

After this, one of the Elders was moved to ask the men if anyone wanted to be prayed for to receive the Baptism of the Spirit. Men came forward, were anointed with oil and prayed over by this Elder, and several leading men around him.

While this was going on, I stood up and read from Ephesians 19 about the difference between the Baptism of repentance and the Baptism of the Spirit, and briefly explained what was taking place. About 10 men came forward for this. Following this, there were several spontaneous scriptures read, thanksgivings and praises.

After this, there were several words of knowledge given regarding specific situations men were in, and I will do my best to remember them:

- 1) One was regarding unforgiveness in men, who could not move forward, and needed to repent, and be prayed for (several men responded to this)
- 2) One was regarding anger and bitterness towards God, more men responded and were prayed for, confessing
- 3) One was a word that told men that they were to act on the prayer that was in their heart for someone in the room, and many men stood up, walked over to someone, knelt down and prayed something specific that God had placed on their hearts.

After this someone was moved to ask the men if anyone had a testimony of victory over sin as a result of the Conquer series, and three men shared what God had done in their lives and it was powerful – all were edified and Jesus was magnified.

This whole process took about two hours, and it felt like the blink of an eye.

We sensed the things were drawing to conclusion, so we had a final song, stood to our feet and ended.

Here are some thoughts and takeaways from this meeting.

– This happened. It really happened! In a large church (over 2000 people) in a Men's group on a Monday night with over 100 men present, seated in nice chairs, in an air-conditioned building (praise God!) –

– Many gifts were exercised, but not all. That's okay.

– Pastors and Elders were present leading, shepherding and ensuring the meeting was according to Scripture, but they were not the focus.

– I had the thought – I love this, and wish we could do this more – but I never had the thought, – I wish this was the new normal every Sunday morning. I think these types of meetings happen and occur, perhaps we just don't know about them because people aren't chronicling them as I have done here.

– I believe the early church operated like this because gatherings were small and conducive for this, but now we have several thousand people in our congregation, so this would not be feasible in one large gathering. That's why we gather collectively Sunday and share a facility that can hold us, and then we scatter in small groups throughout the week in homes and try and – be small, together.

– I wish it could have gone longer, and I felt a small inclination to almost force something to happen because I didn't want it to end, but the Lord showed me that was me, and not Him. – The Spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet.

– I was hoping for something really dramatic, like a man being raised from a wheelchair, or mighty rushing wind, but the Lord was present, Jesus was magnified and it was extremely edifying. Isn't that enough? It must be. There is a temptation to always – out do – each meeting, which presents another problem because we want that high, that emotion, that feeling and that experience like we had – that one time. Jesus is enough. He is greater than my need for an experience. His presence is the experience. His purposes and plans are far greater and wiser than my own.

– We will do this again, we typically do as a men's group at the conclusion of each study/session and also at our Annual retreat. It's always different, always precious, always impactful.

I hope this testimony encouraged someone!

All my love in the Lord Jesus,
-Kevin

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2018/5/3 11:54

Wonderful testimony brother Kevin!

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2018/5/3 12:08

Really really good Kevin-

I was wondering when you sang the worship songs how that got started- did someone have a guitar- was that part organized or did someone just start singing?

Re: - posted by ThyKingCome (), on: 2018/5/3 12:47

Hey brother Todd,

Really good question. Our men's pastor had some songs prepared beforehand and he had his guitar with him. He just sat there and waited for the Lord to move him.

One more thing, I realized I goofed and said Ephesians 19 earlier, haha. It's supposed to be Acts 19 when Paul was with the Ephesians.

-Kevin

Re: , on: 2018/5/3 13:39

Wonderful testimony brother, such a breath of fresh air, even on this thread, to hear your testimony. Glory be to God. God shall be found by those who seek Him, Amen!!!bro Frank

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2018/5/3 13:42

Ok one more question- did he pick songs that everyone knew without having the words in front of them?

Sorry for asking these questions of minutiae but I am curious how things like this work from a practical standpoint. I realize every situation is different.

Re: , on: 2018/5/3 13:44

Todd, not sure if you remember older Pentecostal churches when they they would have , usually an older woman, playing the piano or organ who seemed to know every hymn ever sung and if someone started a hymn she/he could accompany then as the rest of the congregation started. In the Welsh chapel in Moriah in the village of Lougher where the Welsh revival started, someone would begin to sing a song and then everyone would join in. Spontaneous and led by the Holy Spirit, no salaried "worship leaders," there :)bro Frank

Re: - posted by ThyKingCome (), on: 2018/5/3 14:41

No problem brother. I didn't even think of that! Yes, they were songs we have sung before or are somewhat known. Perhaps not all the men knew each one, but at least the majority. Now that I recall, I was facing away from the front, but there may have been words too. If there were no words, and all the songs were new or unknown, then that certainly makes it hard for others to join in.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2018/5/3 15:21

Frank-

Never experienced that but do recall aunts and uncles and grandparents gathered around a piano at family get togethers and singing old hymns. Precious memory for sure.

Re: The sign gifts have fallen into disuse., on: 2018/5/5 13:22

It is well for us to consider here that religious people are prone to select a favorite Bible doctrine or truth and to hold to that one truth at the expense of other basic tenets. We may overemphasize important truths so as to obscure other important truth which may actually disappear as a result. This is what I mean by a truth disappearing-it falls into disuse and therefore is easily forgotten. I would illustrate this.

Suppose there is one key on the piano that is not properly attached and it gives forth no sound when it is struck. The pianist is sure to be wincing when he strikes that key and nothing happens. If you would photograph the keyboard, that key would be in its proper place in the picture, but it will not produce any sound no matter how hard you touch it. That is an illustration of what I mean by a basic doctrine of the Christian faith that has fallen into disuse, so that it is not longer talked about or thought about or preached about. If you go to the book of discipline, the statement of doctrine, you will find it still in its place because it will say that we do firmly hold this truth.

But it no longer plays-it is no longer heard. It has no emphasis and no power because it is slurred over and forgotten. This is how a basic Bible truth may fall into disuse because certain doctrines have been overemphasized to the obscuring of others. Then, finally some prophet of God has to come and reassert the forgotten truths and reemphasize and trumpet them forth. That person be considered a heretic because that segment of Bible truth has been obscured for generations. But in the midst of grumbling, the prophet of God keeps persisting until the church awakes, readopts that truth, so that a sense of life comes as if it were raised from the dead. (A.W.Tozer)

Tozer is here speaking in profound terms. Luther would be an example of this, he did not invent a new doctrine when he announced that we are justified by faith alone and not of works. He rediscovered it and presented it to a church that had long ago forgotten this most fundamental and vital aspect of what it means to be saved. Many centuries before this most basic and fundamental truth was lost in religiosity and liturgy.

Century after century Christendom slowly drifted away, each generation losing something from the previous generation until they were totally adrift from the truth. Once they were totally adrift from the truth then more centuries past affirming and confirming their error. Then comes Luther and as he hammered that nail into the door, the whole of Christendom shook. A bloody revolution then ensued as the keepers of the error and the status quo fought with all of their might against this upstart priest of no account who was challenging their religion and their liturgy. I believe a similar revolution would have to take place in order to rediscover the truths of 1 Cor 14 and how we interact in gatherings. The sign gifts and their purpose of edifying the saints and the unsaved and the unlearned have fallen into disuse and have been forgotten.....bro Frank

Re: , on: 2018/5/7 12:17

This was a report I got from the piece I posted from another venue.....Bro Frank

To the glory of the LORD alone - we have been experiencing this participatory full church community and expression since 2008 - we would be ten years later this year! It is actually better experienced than ever described when we allow Holy Spirit to do His work on earth. When Jesus Christ said He will build His church, He sure knew what He was saying!

This can be done anywhere. The main and only requirement is to have the Holy Spirit in those so gathered together and for that Holy Spirit to be allowed to be among them when they meet. No single person or even a select group is required to guide and lead. Everyone can and should participate voluntarily and none is forced or compelled to do anything. It is beautiful to see the Father freely worshipped in Spirit and in Truth and see His community of brothers and sisters who desire to do His will emerge. The Spirit of God is so capable to lead and to add to the group as the Father wishes. As many as are led by the Spirit are the children of God. It has been an incredible experience and we have all been growing and maturing together in Him.

For example - two Sundays ago, we had such a strong move of His Spirit in our midst for two hours where He used the children to teach us the adults the word of God to resolve questions that the adults raised. It was so beautiful to see and I learn really at the feet of the Master as He used the little ones to bring His wisdom and understanding to us all. When He is allowed to be the real Head of His Body, He knows how to get every member to supply as needed. Those who desire to be His disciples must truly die to our selves and deny our selves before we can even take up our cross daily and then follow Him. Such meetings led solely by His Spirit facilitate the process of death to self beautifully with minimum collateral damage!