

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Jim Cymbala Whatever happened to the prayer meeting?**Jim Cymbala Whatever happened to the prayer meeting? - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/5/25 20:15**

Whatever Happened To The Prayer Meeting?

By Jim Cymbala

Recently I was discussing the need of our churches to return to simple prayer with a leading pastor of a large church in an area of the country where "super" churches abound. He told me that in his entire area the prayer meeting had become virtually extinct and mere lip service was being paid to the power of prayer. This was a painfully accurate picture even among churches which were models of "success" in their denomination because of their large memberships and busy programs. He honestly confessed that time was made for visiting speakers who will help "mature us," Gospel concerts, youth nights, fellowship nights, etc., but no prominent place at all given so the church collectively could seek God with all their hearts.

He very perceptively, and yet ashamedly, pointed out that he knew the main reason why most churches (including his own) did not schedule and advertise a true prayer meeting! Why? Because it would never "draw" the people and the turnout would be pitiful!

How would those embarrassed pastors explain their large auditoriums being mostly empty on prayer meeting night as a handful of hungry people waited on God "when the very night before many hundreds had attended a Gospel concert or heard a famous Christian speaker? Imagine this if you can "God cannot "draw" crowds by Himself! There has just got to be talk, entertainment, or human activity of some kind or else the church folks usually just are not interested!

Many other respected men I know confirm this sad truth "churches desire teaching about God, music about God, correct doctrines about God" but prolonged spiritual contact and fellowship with the real living God of the Universe is not popular in Christ's own Church! We have fulfilled the very Scriptures that so many are vehemently denying could ever be applied to this church era of "success," supposed maturity and large numbers.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20).

Imagine Christ Himself outside the door of His Church's heart asking for entrance so that He could commune with those for whom He died! How meaningful is all this preaching, teaching and Bible study if it does not give churches a desire and appetite for God Himself? What good is having the evangelist and teacher visit if when they leave the church is still bankrupt as to prayer?

Ministry in any form that becomes the focal point and not merely a guide to actual communion with the life-changing Savior is nothing more than a subtle form of spiritual idolatry. We have become engrossed with words about God along with an over-adulation of men and women the Lord uses "but God Himself is being neglected. The ministry of any man, no matter how anointed by God, can only create hunger and stir the heart. God has never relinquished His place and desire to be the great Companion and Strength of our souls.

Ministry that does not lead us to Christ directly in new depths of prayer and heart revelations of the Lord is not only a failure, but extremely dangerous. Multitudes will travel distances or even pay money to hear "Christian ministries" yet not cross the street to wait a few hours in the Presence of One who is supposedly the answer to all our needs.

We must quickly be delivered from the delusion that someone always has to be talking, teaching, "sharing" or singing; that to keep the crowd interested we have got to keep things "moving" lest there be a lull where God might actually draw us out of ourselves into real spiritual communion. Jesus Christ is not a truth, a doctrinal formula or a sermon for our mind to analyze and enjoy. The Lord is the Divine Person who over and again calls and even pleads with men not to merely hear about Him but most importantly, to "come to Him."

The false religion of His earthly days is resurfacing again today in the same old "doctrinally pure and soundly scriptural" disguise "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life" (John 5:39-40). Men study diligently His Word and

yet somehow never come to know Him personally in vital spiritual union!

Let us evaluate the real prospects for a revival of the prayer meeting. According to Paul, it is possible to bring the Church back to God's priorities.

"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men" (1 Tim. 2:1).

True Revival Means Prayer First!

Whether in preparation for a fresh, powerful move of the Spirit or whether as a sign of an ongoing present revival of the Spirit the prayer meeting will be paramount in the life of the Church. Hungry, sincere seekers of God will pour out their heart's desire to Him in corporate prayer. Worship and praise will spontaneously ascend from the spirits of men and women who have seen Him who is invisible.

"And if My people who are called by My Name will humble themselves and pray" (2 Chr. 7:14), along with countless other Scriptures prove what we already know by spiritual instinct the prayer for revival must precede the actual revival! That fact is elementary and must be so by the very nature of God and His Word. Will God endue with power churches that are so unconcerned and carnal they will not even pray together? In fact, He has sworn to withhold His choicest gifts and graces from a people who remain remote from Him in their pride and self-sufficiency. "Asking, seeking and knocking" (Matt. 7:7), are the only biblical grounds a church can stand on if it expects God to work those wonderful works which will bring glory to His Name.

During the course of an ongoing and present revival, the prayer life of the church will intensify and be liberated by God into even deeper areas of intercession for men without Christ. New depths of the spiritual worship the Father seeks will be ignited by the fire of the Holy Spirit. The Bible clearly records and all of church history confirms that a church revived and "on fire" will burn brightly in prayer and supplication.

Can a prayerless church claim a great "renewal" or revival from the Holy Ghost? Every honest Christian knows that a mark of God's Spirit in us is that wonderful spirit of prayer which He bestows so that we can affect situations and souls through a powerful laying hold of God in faith.

God Visits the Church That Prays

The history of the Church in the book of Acts proves that the secret of dynamic power, glorious witness and the very direction of important Church affairs all came from God responding to a people who prayed and waited in His Presence!

Cults like the Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses can experience only intellectual study, but the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ can make contact with heaven and expect God to intervene on their behalf. When has God ever failed to visit a church that truly prayed?

Do we fully realize the implications and indictment that this command from God makes? The Church of Christ was not born in a teaching seminar or evangelistic outreach but in a simple prayer meeting! Divine power that later shook the kingdom of darkness was not bestowed during an intellectual study of important doctrines but rather as hungry men and women waited with open hearts for God to come in all His fullness. The true Christian faith is not essentially or primarily a "teaching" religion although study and instruction are important features of the spiritual walk.

God's priority list has remained unchanged regardless of what the latest fad or emphasis might be in religious circles. We can make up any formula we want for what we call "success" but God's heart cry and command echoes down through the ages: "...I want the men in every place to pray lifting up holy hands without wrath and dissension" (1 Tim. 2:8).

Time for God

I am asking how many churches do you know about where time is taken, plenty of time, to wait on God and pour out the deep desires and petitions of the heart? Take your city or town. How many evangelical, fundamentalist, charismatic or other churches have a night devoted solely to prayer?

We all claim we believe in the Bible. Many argue vehemently that theirs is the true "New Testament Church" with nothing but sound and orthodox doctrine. Others point to charismatic manifestations, "deep" teaching or large memberships as the sign that all is well. But how can a church be truly "New Testament" or even truly Christian if they have willingly neglected God's "first of all" priority?

We teach about prayer; we sell books on prayer; and ministers extol the "power of prayer." We have prayer symposiums and seminars, a well publicized "National Day of Prayer" observance, even prayer manuals with all the relevant Scriptures clearly outlined. But the sad fact is that in both "super" churches and smaller churches alike, the prayer meeting has almost become extinct! We do everything together but pray!

The Christian church that was born with power in a simple time of waiting on God has now forgotten its very origin and life power. Why are not whole evenings simply devoted to talking to God and waiting expectantly for Him to fulfill the many promises He has given us? What good is it to hold orthodox doctrine when God Himself has become so unpopular that our churches do not take time to commune with and receive from Him?

How about the church you attend? A simple but critical question: Is there a real prayer meeting? Is there a regular and important night each week when all the church gathers to practice the most elementary command "First of all, I urge entreaties and prayer." The Lord did not say, "First of all, teach" or "First of all, study" but rather to put prayer first so that all our teaching, study and activity would be blessed and anointed by heaven.

If God is as great as we say, why do we not prove it by making time with Him our first church priority? We only deceive ourselves when our services have to resemble hyper "pep rallies" with something always going on just to keep shallow meetings "interesting." There has got to be more to fellowship with Christ than mere intellectual excursions into the meaning of words and phrases.

It is ludicrous to try to "talk up" revival or claim some great spiritual renewal when the very pulse beat of the Holy Spirit's power among us cannot be found in our churches. It is also pure fantasy for us to claim we even want God to do new and great things among us when we do not even talk to Him. If the Apostle Paul pastored a church in our city or town, you know what meeting he would stress, "first of all." Why do others not feel the same way today? Does anyone not want God for Himself anymore?

Our churches have nights for teaching on sure ways to "grow in the Lord," Gospel concerts and social gatherings of every kind. I am sure these all have their place but where is God's "first of all" priority? Almost all our teaching and preaching ends up with mere knowledge about God but how few want to "follow on to know the Lord" (Hos. 6:3) in an actual and real communion with the Living One! Church calendars are filled with everything but time for God's people to quiet their spirits in His Presence and wait for fresh infillings of power and love.

Coming Home

No matter what fantasies we need to be rudely awakened from, it is surely worth it so that our churches can become the vibrant "houses of prayer" in which God will be glorified. The prayer meeting "barometer" is the real measurement of where our congregations are in God and we must face that though it lead us to a deep humbling and confession of sin and failure.

What kind or brand of Christians are we producing if there is little or no appetite for God? Think of the Divine power available and even promised to us if we would but pray together to God. If only a small percentage want to really seek God then we must admit a wrong turn has been made somewhere or someplace.

No matter what the attendance is for Sunday services, a prayerless, aloof church cannot be what Christ had in mind for His Bride. He has called us to Himself and not just to attendance at human controlled gatherings which rarely let us get to the very heart of the problem. Most of our minds are already overloaded with "teaching truths" about God, but how far do our hearts and lives lag behind in Christlikeness and power! The need of the hour is for the church to pray.

Nobody knows how to pray. We all struggle and fumble along, for prayer is both the highest and most difficult of all spiritual practices. But God will help us if we just give Him a chance. "And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26).

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That kind of prayer meeting involves risk. Satan will be stirred up to opposition in many ways when God's people really pray. But what are our options? We have to come to the place that we must have God and real prayer or what is the sense of going on?

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (Jas. 4:8).

The Holy Spirit can and will take the whole congregation into realms of intercessory prayer along with deep heart worship and adoration of the High and Holy One.

The Holy Spirit can and will do more transformation of lives in five minutes while His people besiege heaven than is of ten done by fifty programmed little meetings which never strike deep into the heart of man.

"And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the Word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:24, 31).

It is not too late for any church. We can still have God Himself as our Portion! He is the One who woos and draws us to Himself; to experiences in prayer that go beyond our wildest dreams. See if God will not vindicate and honor those who cry to Him. Let us return "first of all" to our rightful place of privilege and power in the Presence of the Lord.

Re: Jim Cymbala Whatever happened to the prayer meeting? - posted by emma02 (), on: 2019/5/26 10:58

Am highly edified

Re: Jim Cymbala Whatever happened to the prayer meeting? - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/5/26 16:06

Yet ministers who do not spend two hours a day in prayer are not worth a dime a dozen, degrees or no degrees.

Leonard Ravenhill, Why Revival Tarries

The Cinderella of the church of today is the prayer meeting. This handmaid of the Lord is unloved and unwooed because she is not dripping with the pearls of intellectualism, nor glamorous with the silks of philosophy; neither is she enchanting with the tiara of psychology.

Leonard Ravenhill, Why Revival Tarries

There are many meetings of discussion among pastors and leaders but few prayer meetings. It seems that these pastors and leaders have more faith in their intellectual and organizational ability than faith in God through prayer, and the power of the Holy Spirit to get things done.

Re: - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/5/26 17:03

May it start with us.. Perhaps prayer meetings are now in the homes but really need to be in the church.

I am blessed to be retired and am in more prayer meetings now than ever before.. A Lot of them are outside the church.. Let there be a revival of prayer lord and Lord Start with us.. In JESUS name.For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them. - King James Version (1611) -

In Christ

Frannie

Re: Jim Cymbala Whatever happened to the prayer meeting?, on: 2019/6/1 8:24

To those who sincerely have "ears to hear" that which the Spirit says to the (true) church, now - as has always been the case and will never change...

It is interesting the man purporting this supposedly stern warning is, himself, the leader of a "super church," one also busy with concerts, programs, etc., who routinely gathers a large following in a beautiful setting and makes sure to get all dressed up for the occasions, nicely, too. What is the reason he, along with the other "leading pastors" and "respected men" continue to settle for running these well-oiled machines, rather than being willing to stop contributing to the problem and, quite literally, feeding off of them? "The show must go on!" He mentions the admission of his colleagues who say they cannot draw people unless there is something more interesting than waiting on the Lord in prayer to offer. Is there but

t one of them who is willing to apply the brakes, lead by humble, repentant example and stay on his own knees until God makes clear His will about the way to walk out a life of faithful discipleship and service? Please, do let me know if you are aware of any "leading pastors" and "respected men" like that around, currently...

The problem is painfully simple: these "churches" and "ministries" are not built on the foundation which is Christ Jesus alone. "According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 3:10-11 NASB Even if some may have, originally, at some point back in time, started with the living Christ, they have lost their focus and way. I'm reminded of the Galatians, whom Paul recognized as having "begun in the Spirit"; yet, were seeking "perfection" in the flesh. (Galatians 3:3 NASB) Worse yet, I'm quite sure there are many who preach the gospel out of impure motives, reminding me of Paul's reflection about such practices in passages such as Philippians 1:15-17 NASB.

Humbly, yet with bold confidence - born of many years of steadfast prayer and a mind set on the Holy Spirit (Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Romans 8:5-6 NASB) and obedient faith in the Son of God (John 15:4-5, 8-10; Galatians 2:20 NASB)- I submit to any and all who are truly willing to listen, there is little if any of the Living God to be found in these environments, along with most "local churches," which thrive on self-serving, inwardly focused activities and teachings. People must be willing to realize Jesus doesn't necessarily or only stand outside the door of these institutions, knowing and hoping they will answer. He waits outside the door of any and all who have ever been truly born of His Spirit, sealed with the Promise and deposit of the Father, ready to fill, empower and guide the faithful who actually answer with obedient faith!

The true church, the one body of the Lord Jesus the Christ, is made up of living stones. (1 Peter 2:4-10 NASB) Stop presuming you'll find truly spiritual, humbly submitted, obedient vessels inside the established, recognized walls and halls of the popular models of religious activity. Stay on your own knees - patiently, quietly and without a presumed expectation or agenda. Let the Living God first truly transform you; then, develop, gift, and show you your place and function in the body. (Romans 12:1-16 NASB)

Although God led me away from the dangerously suffocating confines of unspiritual congregations many years ago, He has faithfully grown and matured me as I've learned the painful, hard lessons of discipline and obedience by simply picking up my cross, obeying as He leads, abiding and walking by His Spirit. (Hebrews 12:1-11 NASB) By His mercies and grace, I share with you - with a clear conscience and truthfully - He Who called and has chosen me to know and serve Him has allowed me to experience the full joy and power to save of His kingdom within, which Jesus promises to those who abide and obey God's commandments. (again, John 15:4-5, 8-1; along with Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:19-20 NASB). Sadly, there are few who are willing to let that be enough, allowing God Himself to connect and bind together those of us who are willing to do things His way. It takes time, mind you, and will not always lead to immediately obvious, expected, "traditional" indicators of "church" life; but, does lead to eternal life and will result, in His time, in a revived version of the apostolic church He began so long ago. Amen and amen!

Will you heed the call to pray, asking God to strip away all but Himself in your heart and life?! Will you do this, even without an organized prayer meeting to attend? Will you humbly listen, ready to obey, even if heeding the Lord's voice is not convenient, doesn't fit into your already programmed way of doing things or causes you much disciplining pain and sorrow, leaving you no choice but to utterly repent? Will you do this, even if it causes you to be questioned, mocked, criticized, shunned, and left without approval of those around you?!

You don't need to keep up with the latest sermons, articles and books put out by "leading pastors" and "respected men" of this generation to find the things God is actually saying and doing. According to the posting Frannie has submitted to us, here, they admit they have settled for sticking with messages and activities which will appeal to people and draw them to keep attending - whether there is Truth and Spirit in that type of "worship" or not! You don't need to keep attending conferences or lining up to hear the latest traveling/visiting speaker, who will tickle ears with appealing presentations, happily collecting a "love offering" or "honorarium" for doing so. You don't need to (and shouldn't) keep focusing on choosing camps and aligning yourself with recognizable, "named," "popular," "best selling," "award-winning" figures on the religious landscape, as this is an indication of - AT BEST - carnality and immaturity. (1 Corinthians 1:10-13+3:1-9 NASB) Worse yet, I assure you in many cases, a more dangerous reality applies to their persuasions and the resulting condition of those who follow along...(Matthew 7:15-23; 1 Timothy 6:3-5+20-21; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; all of 2 Peter 2; Revelation 2:14-17+20-23+3:15-22 NASB)

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The Spirit of God is still ready to fill hearts and minds, guide us into all truth and show us the way Jesus needs to purify, build up and lead His body to carry out His will. Hallelujah and amen! (see 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31 through to the end of chapter 14; Ephesians 4:1-16 NASB)

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/6/1 9:28

Brother Kurt,

Are you in fellowship with other believers?

I agree with you on many of the points that you are making concerning the modern day church, but to criticize Jim Cymbala, who has honestly sought to meet with other pastors to address these problems is somewhat disturbing to me.

God is not calling us to be lone rangers, but to discern the Body of Christ in which we are a part of. We need one another, and we need to come together in unity in corporate prayer, seeking God, and praying that His Kingdom would come and His will would be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Re: , on: 2019/6/1 11:44

Hello Mike - grace, mercy, truth and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be multiplied with you!

It is ironic you just now replied, for which I am thankful, as I was just re-reading your offering from Ravenhill, thinking I may reply or even reach out further to you. The point made, in that quotation you reference, is well taken and relevant.

God is most certainly calling us to discern the Truth, as well as those who actually are walking in Him. This must begin, of course, with our own ability to be certain we ourselves, individually, have truly been born anew, baptized into and are able to drink of the same Spirit as all who are Sealed by God must do (1 Corinthians 12:1-2 NASB) Then, we must heed the call of Romans 12:1-13 NASB in order to let God transform and perfect us - individually and as His Church. As we do, He will most certainly lead those who know and worship Him, in Spirit and truth, to be formed into the more healthfully functioning body He intends to build up. (again, as in my posting, I refer to 1 Corinthians 12:4-31, as well as Ephesians 4:1-16 NASB)

Furthermore, as the apostle relates in 1 John 5:1-4 NASB, those who love God (be clear this is exemplified by obedience to Him, as Jesus also emphasized in John 15:10 NASB) also love His other children.

Although you do not know me, personally, I pray you will trust my heart is for unity of the body; that is, unity of the Spirit (again, Ephesians 4:3-5 NASB)- not simply those who gather and claim it is because they believe in God and claim the name of Jesus. (Romans 8:9,14,16 NASB) The PRAYER Jesus offered, in John 17:20-23) is the honest and pure desire of my heart, having been placed and ripened there by the Living Father Himself. Hallelujah and amen, truly!

Over the years I have been known by the Lord, learning to walk strictly by His Spirit - PRAYING continually in it, attentively and obeying His commandments - I have witnessed and encountered much opposition, dissension, quenching of His Spirit, fleshly pride, etc. from those who are content to participate in humanly-energized programs and activities (again, echoing Cymbala's very own report) - rather than adhering to simple and pure devotion to Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:3 NASB) There is also a lot of false or fake spirituality on display, in attempts to cover up a lack of the knowledge of God, as well as impure motives such as greed, manipulative influence and control, idolatry and more.

Now, while I would never advocate choosing self-willed, unspiritual, reactionary attempts to become a "Lone Ranger," as is the popular label, I have experienced and observed the way the Lord does separate and work in the lives of saints for His reasons and in His timing. Even the Scriptures and New Testament give us some examples, showing us there are times those who stand with Him will either be driven out or must separate themselves unto the Lord, for a time, allowing God Himself to protect, train, teach, strengthen, purify and prepare them for His will in their lives and the greater body of the Lord.

By His mercies and grace, Mike, I have responded by faith to the specific, clear guidance of the Holy Spirit, Who has put me in a place of a certain amount of isolation, over much of my time in the Lord. It was not always this way; and, I know, will not continue to be such - hallelujah! Additionally, through the years, I have been blessed by some interactions with saints, allowing God to use this vessel and the gifts He's given me, in the Spirit, for our mutual benefit and encouragement. He also led me, directly by His guidance, to marry, very much without my planning or seeking this on my own, and have

a son - which before it happened seemed like an incredibly unlikely occurrence.

Mike, I'd be most glad and blessed, sincerely, to share more details with you - even join you in PRAYER together! If you have genuine openness to this, as opposed to simply dropping a generalized comment in the forum, it would allow sharing of more background, context and testimony to the fruit and workings of God in my life, which may better serve to help you understand my perspective, as well as offer more insight into the reason the Lord has me write some of the things I do.

Location and distance don't matter, in this modern age, allowing two or more to "gather" and know Christ is able to be in their midst. I find the forum has its limitations, to be sure, and genuinely welcome more substantial, active fellowship and interactions with those who mutually desire the fullness of Christ and, as you put it, want to see ONLY HIS WILL be done - amen!

The only reason I joined this forum was in response to the Spirit's guidance, Who is slowly but surely leading to active relationships with others - for God's glory and purposes. I hold the vision in my spirit and heart to see God knit together His true body. Meanwhile, I wait upon the Lord - again, continually PRAYING in His Spirit - only posting if clearly and urgently compelled by the Spirit's promptings. It is not my desire to merely jump into discussions and debates, for the sake of it, offering opinions and adding to the tremendous amount of superfluous banter which seems to take place.

So, Mike, I welcome you to contact me; or, let me know if it is acceptable to contact you, more directly. My email address is in my profile. Additionally, I would happily provide you with my phone number, welcoming your call anytime (I'm not busy, right now, in fact - almost 9am Pacific time in California). There are also apps which allow messaging, if you prefer that method, which one brother I met here introduced to me.

Mike, if you truly love God, I love you! Whether or not your experiences and perspective, to this point, happen to allow for trusting someone in my situation is actually at the center of the Father's will and genuinely seeks the unity for the Spirit among the saints, you may let me know. Hopefully, you will be willing to dialogue and PRAY about all of this, moving forward.

Re: Jim Cymbala Whatever happened to the prayer meeting? - posted by PastorSteve2 (), on: 2019/6/4 18:40

Great word. Blessed and challenged.

In His Grace,
Steve

Re: , on: 2019/6/4 21:15

Coincidentally, Mike has also posted a thread, "Ministry to the Lord" by Watchman Nee, in which Nee expressed the following, which seems well related to this discussion on the severe lack of prayer and some of the symptoms found among many in this age:

Quote:
-----To come into the presence of God and kneel before Him for an hour demands all the strength we possess. We have to be violent to hold that ground. **But everyone who serves the Lord knows the preciousness of such times, the sweetness of waking at midnight and spending an hour in prayer, or waking very early in the morning and getting up for an hour of prayer before the final sleep of the night. The passage we ' have quoted emphasises not only our need to draw near to God; it also speaks of **standing before Him to minister. Today we always want to be moving on; we cannot stand still. There are, so many things claiming our attention that we are perpetually on the go. We cannot stop for a moment. **But a spiritual person knows how to stand still. **He can stand before God till God makes His will known. He can stand and await orders. **You who are leaders need to particularly consider this. **Can you be persuaded to call a halt and not move for a little while? That is what is referred to here: "stand and minister unto me." Don't you think that a servant should await his master's orders before seeking to serve him? The Sin of presumption **If we have to advertise our ministry and use great effort to promote it, then it is obvious that it does not spring from prayer in the presence of God. **Spiritual work is God's work, and when God works, man does not need to expend so much effort that he sweats over it. Ministry that is "unto me" is in the inner sanctuary, in the hidden place, not in the outer court, exposed to public view. **People may think we are doing nothing, but service to God in the Holy Place far transcends service to the people in the outer court. Ministry Without Sweat. (note from Kurt, here: this last paragraph of lines again

calls to mind and echos the message of Psalm 127:1-2 NASB)

Let us ask ourselves: Does our work minister to our satisfaction or to the Lord's? I fear that when we have worked for the Lord, we are often thoroughly satisfied before He is satisfied. We are often quite happy with our work when He has found no joy in it. **Blessed are they who can differentiate between ministry to sinners or saints, and ministry to Him. **Such discernment is not easily acquired. **Often it is only by much drastic dealing that we learn the difference between ministry to the Lord Himself and ministry to the House.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/6/5 11:50

While I am on the same page with Jim Cymbala in some cases it's a pendulum swing from the previous manner of Church-going.

I came from Churches that had meetings
Sunday AM/PM; Sunday Pm prayer meeting
Wednesday PM adults
Thursday Womens
Friday/Saturday Am Mens
Wednesday Youth
Saturday Teens
Tuesday home groups

This was common 15 years ago. A family could easily attend at least 5 meetings a week without difficulty.

Then someone said "we go to church too much, we need to be with our families and friends to impact the world we live in".

Then came the Wednesday 1 hr meeting, the cancellation of Sunday PM and Sunday prayer meeting, the Tuesday home groups shrank in numbers, mens meetings are once a month at best, womens meetings on the book of James seeme to die out. (for whatever reason Women like the book of James)

It seemed, (and I make no validation of this idea) that we went to church too much and it was time to stop, so we did.

Carnality is the result of worldliness invading a Christian's life. Maybe our break from our 'activities' is revealing what we truly are? Or created that worldly spirit in us that keeps us from 'activities'. Or both?

In every case, inaction has turned to our hurt.

Everything from inaction to 'ministering to the Lord' to our inaction to engage a fellowship of believers.

But, there is this sense I get from the Spirit of God, that God is not interested in restoring any old wineskin Church-modes or traditions.

In my mind...as far as I understand the mind of the Lord.

Pentecostalism is on it's way out, Being filled with the Spirit is staying.

Charismania is on it's way out, being gifted to love and serve is staying.

Reformed Church Traditions are on the way out, reformed theology is staying.

And I could add more, but God never ceases to take his people through cultures, stages, times and seasons and all of them are that meeting place where God in man meets the man without God and invites him to meet God.

We are being sold a bill of bad goods, we are being tricked and deceived...we are being told in numerous ways "the sinners out there do not want your Jesus, they hate your God and if you try they will persecute and kill you".

God is all the time working on sinners, preparing them, convicting them, revealing truth to them, and we are to be God's witness to them of what it is to know and love God.

Satan loves to raise up the hateful, the abominable, the evil report and to march his giants out in full battle armor to scare the people of God away from a promised inheritance..."Ps 2, the heathen are our inheritance".

This time is no different than any other time, our God remains the same, his promises remain and his faithfulness is ever lasting.

Re: - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/6/10 20:18

Brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ.

I am an intercessor for the LORD. I believe prayer is important.. Individual and corporately. If the enemy can get brother s and sisters to criticize others he has you..

We are to love our brothers and sister..

John 17:

1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

These are RED Letter words in my bible.. I stand on this to be alone and pray and with other believers. I know the LORD moves in UNITY..

Psa 133

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

2It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;
3As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

These are not my words but the LORDS... He said it I believe it..

On the opposite side the enemy loves disunity and criticism of others.. I know I judge myself every day because I have a lot to learn and can take the meat and spit out the bones because I am a work in progress.. The enemy loves to cause division like a python..

I will continue to pray alone and also with others for Prayer changes things.. Maybe the most important thing is prayer will change me..

Matthew 18:19 (KJV)

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven

Blessings to you all.

In Christ

Sister Frannie