

GOD'S CHURCH IS EVERLASTING

1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27; Matthew 18:20

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: As everyone knows there are mega churches, large churches, medium sized churches, small churches, one room churches and then home churches. Most pastors "dream" of pastoring large churches but most start out in "small" churches. Both pastors and Churches forget that with God there are no large or small "Churches" for with God there is but ONE Church and it started at Pentecost and has not changed since.

It is not the building or the form of worship that makes the "true" Church. It is the "Presence" and the "Name" that make the Church. Wherever people (even two or three) are gathered together in the "Name" there is also the "Presence" and that constitutes the true assembly of believers, thus the Church. God does not ask whether it is a big Church or a little Church.

Every congregation should ask itself if it is truly interested in the same things as the people were while waiting at Pentecost who really were the first Church congregation - to honor the "Name" of Jesus and then to receive His Presence."

I. GOD CONTINUES THE HUMAN RACE BY REPETITION

1. From Adam and Eve to our present day the human race has continued, been perpetuated throughout the centuries by constant repetition in each generation. The human race simply repeats itself generation after generation.
2. We may not be exactly the same as grandchildren to Adam and Eve, but nevertheless, we are directly related to him as if we were his actual children.
3. We certainly are not the same people who lived when our country was discovered by Columbus, but we are related, we are of the human species. God has continued the human race by repeating each generation through procreation.

II. ISRAEL CONTINUES TO BE ISRAEL BY THE SAME CONCEPT

1. God started Israel with one man, Abraham.
 - The Israel of Moses' time was not the same as that of Abraham.
 - The Israel of David's time was not the same as that of Moses.
 - The Israel of Jesus' day was not the same as that of David.
 - The Israel of today is not the same as that of Jesus.
 - Nevertheless, it was the same God, the same covenant, the same relationship, the same intention and the same purpose, it was the SAME nation.
2. So it is with the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - The TRUE Church is as much a live today as it was the day it was started (Pentecost).
 - We are not the same people who made up the Church in the days of Wesley, Presley, Spurgeon and the other great preachers for each generation is a different group of people.
 - HOWEVER, it is the SAME Church today that comes down through the centuries from the day of Pentecost.
3. The Holy Spirit lives in the lives of people today and does what He did in the lives of the Apostles and the first century believers - the Church.

- The great names we remember who were great spiritual leaders of the past, who sowed, watered, and reaped, were but servants, just as we are and we obey the same Lord and are equipped by the same Holy Spirit.
 - We are part of the same Church founded by the Lord Jesus and continued by the mystery of the new birth.
4. There is no need to be concerned about traditional religious forms or to sing certain hymns or recite certain prayers, follow certain orders of service as did those of times past.
- The true Church is where God's people come together in the Name of Jesus to glorify Him and to honor His presence which will occur when two or three are gathered in HIS Name.
 - God is well able to do for us today all that He did in the days of the Apostles.
 - There is no blessing or privilege ever given by God that we cannot have today.

III. WHY ISN'T THE CHURCH EXPERIENCING ALL THAT GOD HAS FOR IT?

1. The Church has been told that things are different today than back in "those" days.
 - Church attendance is more of a social thing today.
 - Christianity is more of a form and ritual.
 - We cannot have or know what the early Church did and really it's not needed today.
2. WHO has the right to tell the Church that it is different from the first century Church?
 - Who has the right to tell the Church that the Holy Spirit has slowed down and the strong arm of God isn't as strong anymore.
 - Who has the right to say that the Word of God doesn't really mean what it says and adds, "This is what He was trying to say, or this is what it really means...?"
 - NO ONE has that right! Yet that is what has and is happening.
 - Any kind of teaching that shuts a person out from the privileges and promises of the Bible is wrong.
3. Another reason the Church is not experiencing all that God has for it is because of low spiritual enthusiasm and bad examples.
 - Gossip about "don't go there because there are some people who are not real Christians there.."
 - "...don't go there because the preacher preaches too long..."
 - Remember the 12 Disciples? Wasn't one of them a traitor - Judas? Were the rest of the Disciples bad also?
 - Remember the Church in Jerusalem where a husband and wife lied to the congregation about how much they sold their land for? What about the rest of the hundreds of the congregation, were they liars also?
 - Remember Paul and his friend Demas who left him and went back to doing the things of the world? Did Paul go back too?

There is not a Christian who has ever lived who didn't have a bad time and could have set a bad example for the others if what they did ever was made public.

 - Forgiveness and restoration is what the Gospel is all about.
 - What God has made clean, let none of us ever call unclean. Whatever the past life of any child of God may be, the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed it.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Church of today is the very same Church started on the Day of Pentecost.
 - The power, the provisions, the promises, the gifts that marked the early Church are still available.
2. The same potential is ours today. Spiritual power, Spiritual presence, etc. Don't miss out on God's best.