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Stuff that matters to Wayne

Biblical Church Revealed During Break from Brick and Mortar

Posted on November 01,2016 by admin

A letter written to my friend that I felt was worthy of sharing to the world as well:

Now brace yourself for the rest since you asked! Interestingly, about this time last year we made a decision to pull out of church-church. It's a long story and had nothing to do with personality conflicts or even really theology, but it started with the fact that we could not find in the Bible any justification for Christmas and Easter but instead only proof that they were both pagan rituals brought into the church. When this was brought up it was immediately shut down. It started to make us really wonder because those outside of the church also shut us down in the same way. So it was observed that the unbelievers and the church were in agreement that Christmas and Easter were a good thing - and this is highly troubling if you think about it because the world should be pretty much against all things Christian (except for our good works). Satan is the prince of this world. So why was Satan's folks and the church in full agreement about Easter? Even though perfect historical facts prove them to be based in paganism? So that was the start of my questioning about the church-church. For me, on a personal level, and at every church I've attended I've been quite troubled by the following:

- existence of known and habitual sinning within the body of Christ (without rebuke or correction and ultimately excommunication - which is a clear directive in the Bible)
- a very serious lack of Bible understanding individually
- programmatic rituals which are not bad by themselves but when coupled with the above provide a perfect framework to spiritual death within the church (a feeling of godliness without the power)
- the fact that churches meet in buildings called 'churches' and people, especially Koreans, will say 'Do you go to church?' which has an implied meaning of 'Do you believe that Jesus is Lord and have you received him as your Savior and live your life for Him?' the two questions of which - as you well know - often have no correlation within the church-church
- the fact that 'churches' provide all their financial data, and the data of their members directly to the tax authorities strictly for a worldly benefit (tax numbers and tax benefits). See this post here as well about that.
- the bizarre reality of how people will drive all over their city commuting to 'churches' when their own backyards are spiritual graveyards and are ripe for the meeting of the believers together
- and more

In addition to the above challenges with the church-system, I have also personally and very deeply struggled with the lack of teachings about and help towards those struggling with (and yes these are all biblical sins) the following sins:

- homosexuality
- fornication
- divorce
- pornography

And you can run a few quick tests to confirm: 1. When was the last time you heard a preacher educating about how the sin of homosexuality works (spiritually) and how we are supposed to help homosexuals?

Have you ever heard a preacher preaching about how we should reach out to these lost and hurting children of God? 2. When have you heard anyone preaching to/teaching a pre-married couple about the need to abstain from sexual interactions until the covenant is legal? Have you ever heard them preach/teach that perhaps it's not even wise to do the worldly version of dating? 3. When have you heard anyone try to stop someone in their congregation from divorcing? Although I haven't heard of it I'm sure there is a good chance this occurs regularly, but, when have you ever heard of a pastor boldly trying to stop them from committing adultery by re-marrying? Not ever once have I heard of a pastor doing this yet Jesus Himself said this:

Every one who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery Luke 16:18).

4. When has anyone preached about how to help a pornography-addict, set up a course, etc? Or have they just preached empty statistics about how many Christians are addicted to it? You see? A form of godliness without the power. This was a big part of my struggle and even began to seriously bother my conscience as God opened my eyes. A religious ritual void of the life-changing power of the Spirit is what I was seeing in so many traditional congregations around me. In summary - a massive hypocritical lifestyle that stinks in the sight of God. And that is just a piece of my spiritual situation. There is another challenge I have with the church-church and that is that the pastors are doing the five-fold ministry by themselves. We have pastors who are supposed to shepherd the flock, but where are the apostles, the prophets and the evangelists? And the proof of something being amiss in the way it's going for the poor pastors around town is that pretty much every pastor I know is either stressed, sick, having marriage and family problems or all of the above. Seriously. I joke not. Yes, I've heard the argument that Satan is attacking them more, but I've started to shy away from that one over the last few years, although I don't deny that Satan hates pastors. The great news is that after pulling myself and the family out of the church-church for a while, and dedicating that time to home Bible studies with other couples and families and our kids, things massively started to change including, but not limited to:

- a greater hunger for the Word of God
- a greater hunger for and revelation of truth in general (ie. Christmas, Easter, flat earth versus globe earth, evolution vs creation, satanic influence in the school system, etc, etc, etc).
- a much better understanding of the world around me such as world events
- a much closer relationship with my direct family
- an improved relationship with the unsaved members of my family and their circle
- an increased excitement towards the things of God including holiness, righteousness, wisdom, hard work, diligence, etc, etc)
- an increased confidence that God is with us individually, inside of us
- an increased confidence that God is capable Himself, without the church-church to sustain our very life and stamp His seal of approval on me directly with His Spirit
- an increased hunger to find others who are like-minded and hungry for God
- an increased intimacy with the brothers and sisters we have found who love the Lord in a similar way
- an increased desire to do the will of God instead of my own will or the will of others around me
- more of God, less of us.

In short, we have been transformed through the experience. We are daily seeking to build the small fellowship we have but we are not willing to compromise on the above for the vain benefit of telling someone which authorized church-church we are part of. We find no basis in the Bible for this and so we are not going down that road again. However, don't misunderstand and think that we are 'outside of the church'. It's quite the opposite. We ARE the church now. We are actually doing the stuff we see in the Bible and God is bringing (quite quickly) other believers around to share this with. It's good. And hopefully something here was encouraging to your faith. I expect that God will do a mighty thing in your life and the life of your new wife. Be strong in the Lord and faint not. Seek the Lord and ye shall find Him. Knock and the door shall be opened. Blessings to you, brother!

