

So You Call THIS Church?

Text for the back of the book:

WARNING: This book is dangerous if you are a modern-day 'Pharisee'!

Have you tried “church” and found that it’s not what can be clearly seen in the Bible? Welcome to church in the 21st century! The modern-day churches are usually perceived as the model of what church is supposed to be, but the truth is, most of them are far away from the biblical model of what the church is actually supposed to look like. Get ready for an exposure of the modern-day church and a down-to-earth look at what the church looks like in the Bible!

Table Of Contents

Introduction

Chapter One: The Original Church

Chapter Two: Biblical Illiteracy

Chapter Three: The Tithe

Chapter Four: The Lord’s Supper

Chapter Five: Tongues

Chapter Six: Fasting

Chapter Seven: Denominations

Chapter Eight: Miscellaneous Untruths

Introduction

I have a hard time believing that Jesus is pleased with the direction of the modern-day church in America. What is usually perceived as the “church” is, in reality, nothing more than a glorified social club where people who profess to be Christians are simply using the name of Jesus to promote their own agendas. I stopped using the term “Christian” a couple of years ago because of this very reason. After all, anyone can call themselves a “Christian”, but it takes real dedication to the Savior to be a Christ-follower.

The purpose of this book is not to destroy the faith of the few that actually care about representing Jesus well, but rather, to highlight the unbiblical practices that are so often a part of our worship experience and explore the possibilities that the Bible tells us that we should have. We will work through many of the ways that the devil has corrupted the church in this country in modern times, and in so doing, I hope that you are able to really grasp the heart of God toward His church. Let's get started

Chapter One:

The Original Church

I heard a story about the church in the modern-day era compared to the church of Acts that is VERY true. The church in the book of Acts prayed ten days, preached ten minutes, and 3,000 people got saved. Now, we pray ten minutes, preach ten days, and nobody gets saved. And that is one of the major problems in the church today: we ALL need to humble ourselves and pray.

I can plainly remember the Wednesday night prayer meeting at the little Baptist church that I attended as a new Christ-follower. Miss Leona would fill out the name of the person who was mentioned for prayer on the prayer letter, and then that prayer letter would be passed around to the entire congregation, and each would sign it individually, informing the person that they were remembered in prayer that service. At the end of the service, all of them were collected and mailed to the individual mentioned, and we would break up into groups of three or four and, taking turns, we would all pray for everyone that we had mentioned that service.

I also remember the men's prayer meeting every Sunday morning before the Sunday school service. Even then prayer was losing its importance (there were rarely more than three or four men, besides the preacher, that attended). But those early prayer meetings helped shape me into the dedicated Christ-follower that I am today.

Now that we have identified one of the problems, we need to see what the biblical solution is. Simply put, the church is not in the position to return to prayer because she's spoiled. THERE! I said it! What am I talking about? The church in the Western world has no concept of need. Padded seats to sit on, a climate controlled building to worship in (protected from the elements), and even, in most cases, a vehicle in which to enjoy the leisurely ten or fifteen minute ride to the church. Meanwhile our brothers and sisters in most of the world are walking, sometimes for hours in all different weather conditions, to gather together and worship, often outdoors, all the while risking many of the same afflictions as are described in the Bible. These people truly understand the importance of prayer, because it's only because of prayer that they are able to withstand the hard life they live and continue to exist. And most of them are some of the most joyous and content people on the planet, because they know that their future is secure with Jesus Christ no matter how hard this life is.

So, what can you, as an individual, do to combat the laziness in the church today? You can begin by being an example of what a dedicated Christ-follower should look like. If you are serious about change happening in the church, you need to examine your own life and begin the process of becoming more Christ-like.

A good way to start this is to saturate yourself with BPP (Bible, Prayer, and Praise). You need to get into a regular habit of studying and reading the Word of God, and you need to be consistent with this. You also need to consistently pray and ask God for direction in your life, as well as petitioning Jesus for others' needs. The third thing that you need to do is praise Jesus every single day, whatever form that takes. Listen to a worship song, sing to the Lord, or even just hum the tune to your favorite hymn. The Bible says that God inhabits the praises of His people, so this is easily one of the most important things that we can do.

Another thing that you can do is begin to show up for church a few minutes early, not to talk to your friends, but to pray for that particular service to go well. I completely understand that sometimes this just isn't possible, ESPECIALLY when you have small children. But you can pray for the service on your way to church, even with a family. In fact, you can begin to establish the habit of praying as a family for the service on your way to church. This will be an excellent opportunity to teach your children the importance of always praying for the services. And don't forget to pray for your pastor, as well.

Another thing that will motivate an attitude of prayer is a realization that most people that you know are going to end up going to hell. Ask the Lord Jesus to give you a new understanding of, not just the horrors of hell, but the unending length of eternity, and you will quickly find a new burden to tell people about Jesus that you have never had before.

The last thing that I would recommend is that you begin to cultivate an attitude of gratitude for everything that Jesus has provided for you and your family, most of all salvation. Really allow the magnitude of what Jesus has done to permeate your entire life and being, and realize that love is the only reason that you are not going to hell. That one realization alone will change you, IF you allow it to. I pray that you will.

Chapter Two:

Biblical Illiteracy

I want to begin to work through some of the lies that the church has been perpetrating on the congregations that she is responsible for, but first, let's address the reason why this has even been possible.

The entire problem starts, persists, and ends with one thing: biblical illiteracy. I can see multiple reasons why this is a persistent issue with the congregations. Number one, it is easier to control the ignorant than people who have a modicum of knowledge and sense. Am I saying that the church is intentionally trying to keep the people who attend ignorant in order to maintain control over them? Not necessarily, but I AM saying that the devil is the ultimate puppet master who is more than happy to see the church

deceived and the family of God destroyed from within, particularly with such a willing audience. What do I mean by that?

Point number two, the church is willfully ignorant because she is lazy. We have already touched on the fact that BPP requires dedication to our Savior, and most people are not willing to expend the energy, time, and effort necessary to be more than a Sunday Christian. Sad but true. As I researched for this book, I found that the average time spent reading the Bible daily was thirty minutes per day, which surprised me. But the statistic that goes with that is that only eleven percent of people actually read their Bibles that much. And we could easily get into the weeds by simply considering how many of that eleven percent of people are doing that out of a sense of duty and NOT from a pure heart. We're not going there.

The final reason that I want us to look at is the fact that this pattern of ignorance has been ingrained in the church (leadership AND congregation) for centuries. There was a momentary pause in this during the Protestant reformation, but the church soon fell back into old habits, and so continues with the same patterns of ignorance that the reformation tried to break. The only difference between then and now is that then the church was actively trying to keep the people in darkness. Now, the problem is not the church trying to control the people, but rather, laziness in the church. We are going to have to answer for that, each individual for themselves. I have determined in my heart that I will do whatever I can to be able to say that I have fulfilled my calling. How about you?

Chapter Three:

The Tithe

This is probably one of the most common reasons that non-believers give for not attending church: All they want is your money. The problem is, with many churches (not all, but many) this is absolutely the truth. And very few pastors will admit that the tithe is not even in the New Testament.

I understand how a biblically illiterate person can be fooled into believing this lie about the tithe, but I find it difficult to believe that the average pastor, who should be well-versed in all things that have to do with the faith, can be ignorant of this fact. The tithe is from the Old Testament and was given to the nation of Israel at Mt. Sinai. It was never intended for the church to observe. And there are multiple tithes that the Israelites were called to give, as well. They were called to give ten percent of their increase

(crops, livestock, etc.) for the purpose of supporting the priests, and every three years a tithe was taken for the priests as well as being given to feed the widow, the orphan, and the stranger within Israel.

Numbers 18:24 (KJV)

“[24] But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.”

Deuteronomy 14:28-29 (KJV)

“[28] At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:

[29] and the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.”

Another ten percent was given for the express purpose of learning to fear the LORD God.

Deuteronomy 14:22-27 (KJV)

[22] Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

[23] And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

[24] And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set His name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

[25] then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:

[26] and thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,

[27] and the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.”

Keep in mind that all of this was for the children of Israel, NOT the church. All of this is during the period of the law, which we are no longer bound to, because Jesus nailed the law to His cross, according to Colossians 2:14. Let’s look at that scripture.

Colossians 2:14 (KJV)

“[14] blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross;”

I repeat, if you are saved, you are not subject to the law, according to 1 Timothy 1:8-11. Let’s look at that.

1 Timothy 1:8-11 (KJV)

“[8] But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

[9] knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

[10] for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

[11] according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.”

Since we are made righteous by the blood of Christ, we’re not subject to the law. And since the tithe is part of the law it DOES NOT apply to the church. So what are we, as

the church, supposed to do? Are we not required to give anything at all now? Let's see what the apostle Paul said.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 (KJV)

"[6] But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

[7] Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

Verse six makes it clear that you can't out give God. And Paul, in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, clearly established the principle of gathering the offering on the first day of the week. Let's look at that scripture.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (KJV)

"[1] Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

[2] Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

Verse two also clearly lays out the principle of giving as God has blessed, NOT a set amount.

So, there's one lie that we have debunked now. When other lies have been sold to an unsuspecting body of believers in the church? Let's see what we can uncover as we dig deeper.

Chapter Four:

The Lord's Supper

Patience is a virtue that is DEFINITELY lacking in the church today. We often get upset when we are required to wait for anything. I've often said that we live in a microwave society with a Crock-pot God, because He rarely gets in a hurry to do anything. There ARE occasions where miracles and healings happen instantaneously, but those are the exception rather than the rule. Overall, patience is required in order to see God move.

You may be asking yourself, what does patience have to do with the Lord's supper? Everything, when you get right down to it. Think about the last time that you participated in this sacrament. It was only a few minutes long at the end of the service (no fellowship), and, truth be told, many of you got upset because the delay meant that you didn't get to your favorite restaurant and your preferred table before it was taken. A little cracker and a little miniature cup of grape juice is passed out to every person, and then the preacher reads a little from the Bible, prays, and then everyone eats the cracker at the same time. This is repeated for the cup of grape juice, and then the service ends. There are some variations to this, I'm sure, but the overall setting is the same. My question is, is this biblical? Are we doing it the way that the Lord Jesus intended?

There WAS no Lord's Supper before Jesus, so we have no Old Testament references to look back on. However, the New Testament provides much that we can (and SHOULD) learn from. For example, we can learn much from the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 about what the biblical example of the Lord's supper was supposed to be. Let's look at that scripture text.

1 Corinthians 11:20-22 (KJV)

"[20] When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.

[21] For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

[22] What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."

This is actually a two-for-one passage, because it is not only a rebuke to the Corinthian church, but it also informs us of how the early church remembered and performed the sacrament of the Lord's supper. They actually gathered and had a full meal together. It was never intended to be a drunken feast, as Paul teaches here, but neither was it intended to be a simple one bite, one sip affair, either.

I believe that this sacrament is intended to be a joyous remembrance of what Jesus has done for us, as well. The night that Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Lord's supper, He and His disciples sang a hymn afterwards. I believe that we need to return to this, because if not for the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross, no one would ever be saved. Yes, it was a very somber and sad thing that He went through, but it was all done out of His great love for us. And He knew beforehand the suffering that He would endure, yet He still chose to sing praise before that. Let's look at the verse of scripture that tells us about this.

Mark 14:26 (KJV)

"[26] And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."

This happened right after Jesus and the disciples had eaten the Passover meal and just prior to the prayer and subsequent betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus did not do anything whatsoever while He was on the earth that is recorded in scripture

that is not profitable for us to learn from. I believe that we can use this as an example, along with Paul's words in 1 Corinthians, to begin to celebrate the sacrament of the remembrance of the Lord's supper the way that Jesus intended for us to do.

Now, I am well aware of the fact that many congregations are unable to gather together for a meal, for a variety of different reasons: lack of finances, lack of facilities, etc. In those cases, I can completely understand the continuation of the traditional ways of doing the Lord's supper. But for larger congregations, the time has arrived for revamping the way that we go about doing things. So how do we do that?

We begin with completely doing away with the traditional thinking (I'm talking about the little wafers and the grape juice, along with the somber attitude, as though we are at a funeral). Yes, we need to conduct ourselves properly and not be flippant about all of this, but we are supposed to be a joyous, set-apart people who are filled with the joy of the Lord.

The next thing that we need to do is begin to gather together to celebrate what the Lord Jesus has done for us, with no other purpose. I am speaking to the larger congregations that can do this. I have attended many Baptist churches, and many fellowships in said churches, so I know that Baptists can definitely have a great fellowship. Most larger congregations (whether Baptist or whatever denominational banner they meet under) can handle church-wide fellowships. There is no reason why the larger congregations can't meet in their fellowship halls for a meal and singing quarterly (or however often they partake of the Lord's supper) and institute a new tradition, EXCEPT for tradition (and stubbornness).

So my recommendation, if you are reading this book and agree with me that this is very much needed, is to start this process (however it looks for you) with much prayer. Before you ever talk to anyone else about this, pray on it. Ask God to open the door for you to speak to your pastor about it, and then be bold as God leads. Always keep prayer number one for this reason: Prayer is your lifeline that will keep you from going under. So the question becomes, are you going to "buck the system" and at least consider this, or simply continue the status quo?

Chapter Five:

Tongues

I want to talk now about a subject that I am sure is going to stir up a lot of emotions in a lot of people, and that is, the gift of tongues. I have heard both sides of the argument, but the Bible's opinion is the only one that matters. So, first I want to look at man's opinions (both sides), and then I want to share the Bible's opinion on this topic.

First, there is the cessationist point of view. This view holds that the miraculous gifts (tongues, prophecy, healings, and miracles) all ceased with the closing of the canon of scripture. This view is held by Calvinists and much of the church at large. There are varying degrees of this (some believe that God has completely stopped doing anything miraculous at all, while others believe that He CAN still do it, but usually doesn't). As previously stated, this is the view of the majority in the churches today (at least in America).

The continuationist view holds to the position that all of the gifts of the Spirit, including tongues, have continued to the present and will continue until the return of Jesus at the moment of the rapture.

Now, let's look at the Bible's opinion and see if either of the two previous opinions are scriptural. Let's look at a verse of scripture.

Hebrews 13:8 (KJV)

“[8] Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and forever.”

This verse tells us plainly that Jesus never changes. So, can we gather from this that tongues (which is the topic being considered) have ceased? The answer would appear to be no, but we need to examine this question further.

If you are a cessationist reading this book, I want to ask you a couple of questions. Number one, why did God give the gifts, only to take them back later? The gifts of God, according to scripture, are not going to be taken away once they are given. Let's look at that scripture.

Romans 11:29 (KJV)

“[29] For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

Let's take a look at the definition of the Greek word that here is translated as “repentance”.

Strong's Number - G278

Greek: ἀμεταμέλητος

Transliteration: ametamelētos

Pronunciation: am-et-am-el'-ay-tos

Definition: From G1 (as a negative particle) and a presumed derivative of G3338; irrevocable: - without repentance not to be repented of.

KJV Usage: without repentance (1x), not to be repented of (1x).

Occurs: 2

In verses: 2

From this definition we can see that God will never take any of the gifts from us. Second question is, if this verse is true (and if even one verse is untrue, we need to throw the entire book out), how can you, in good conscience, say that some of the gifts have ceased?

I understand how this has become such a hot-button topic, but when you think through the biblical arguments, there really is no way around the facts. The Bible itself tells us that the gifts are still in operation today.

So, why is there such opposition to the gifts, especially the gift of tongues? I believe that there are primarily three reasons for the opposition that we see today.

Number one, there are so many bad examples of the use of tongues. Many of the televangelists get before an audience and just, literally, get stupid with the gift of tongues. Couple this with the example that almost every Pentecostal and Charismatic church sets, and it's no wonder why most people are against the gift of tongues. All of this would be fixed if they simply followed the rules set out by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14, ESPECIALLY verse 28. Let's look at that verse.

1 Corinthians 14:28 (KJV)

"[28] But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God."

Do you see what I meant by the statement that if the rules were followed, most people would be, at most, apathetic to the gift of tongues instead of hostile?

The second reason why the gift of tongues is opposed so strongly is a lack of faith. Faith is necessary in order to embrace this, or any, of the so-called "sign gifts". Faith is the building block on which our entire relationship with Jesus is built. Again, let's look at this in scripture.

Hebrews 11:6 (KJV)

"[6] But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Can you see that faith is necessary, and that a LACK of faith is the cause of much unbelief? That, coupled with pride, almost guarantees that the gift of tongues is not well thought of. Why do I include pride in the equation? Because pride is necessarily present in most, if not all, of the people who oppose the gift of tongues. They say that they would never babble incoherently for anyone, not even God. They believe (wrongly) that the gift is, at best, a self-deluding figment of the imagination. However, pride is, quite possibly, the devil's favorite weapon, for numerous reasons. Here's a short list.

- The devil fell because of pride.
- It's very effective on man.

- It's an easily implemented weapon.
- It blinds the individual to the reality that they are in.

The third and final reason is tied directly to the second one, and that is, a severe lack of understanding about the purposes of this gift. There are three purposes for the gift of tongues:

- 1) To demonstrate to the Jewish believers that Jesus is the Messiah and that the Holy Spirit had been poured out in power on the believers.
- 2) To demonstrate to the Jewish believers that salvation has now been extended to the Gentiles. (The first two were fulfilled during the writing of the biblical canon.)
- 3) To serve as an effective way for the believers to edify themselves. This gift is useful for building up ministers in order for them to be as effective as possible, as well as increasing faith in every believer who has this gift.

You can see from this that tongues are still active in the church, despite being a very controversial gift. So, if you have been given the gift of tongues, are you going to allow man's opinions to dictate the use of it? Heaven forbid.

Chapter Six:

Fasting

Next, we are going to tackle the issue of fasting. I have found that most Christ-followers don't even think about fasting, and for those who do, most do not understand the purpose of fasting. So, let's start with the definition of fasting.

Fasting can be defined as the temporary stoppage of any pleasurable activity for the purpose of dissipating idolatry and bringing the flesh into alignment and subjection to the spirit. That's just a fancy way of saying that you are showing your flesh that you are in control, NOT the other way around.

Jesus told His followers that they would fast when He told the disciples of John and the Pharisees that they couldn't fast while He was with them, but that they would once He was gone. Let's look at that scripture.

Luke 5:34 (KJV)

"[34] And He said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the Bridegroom is with them?"

He also told them how to fast. Let's look at that scripture.

Matthew 6:16-18 (KJV)

"[16] Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

[17] But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

[18] that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”

These scriptures show us how we are supposed to go about the process of fasting. They specifically tell us some things that we are to do, along with specific instructions on things that we are not to do. Now, let’s consider some specific things that we are supposed to take into consideration before we begin to fast. There are a couple of things that we need to determine beforehand.

- The length of the fast.
- The type of fast that you are doing.

There are numerous different lengths that you need to consider. Below is a list of lengths, as well as the rating of the fast lengths that need to be considered.

- 12 hour fast – perfect for the beginner.
- 24 hour fast – for the beginner to the intermediate.
- 3 day fast – for the intermediate.
- 7 day fast – for the intermediate to the experienced.
- 10 day fast – for the intermediate to the experienced.
- 21 day fast – for the experienced only.
- 40 day fast – for the experienced only.

Now, let’s talk about the many different things that we can fast from. I recently stirred a hornet’s nest by saying that a fast could consist of things besides food, but I stand by that assertion, because it’s true. It requires one of two things to make the assumption that a fast must consist of only food. Either

- 1) a complete misunderstanding of the purpose of fasting, or
- 2) a Pharisaical spirit.

Now, let’s look at a short list of possible items to fast.

- TV
- Social media
- Books and magazines
- Movies
- YouTube
- Food

You will need to evaluate your life and determine the many different factors involved with giving up each of these items. Example: If you work construction, a water only fast would probably not work for you. But a liquid only fast WOULD work, because you would still be getting the nourishment your body needs from the variety of different liquids. (This was how I was able to continue to work full time in extreme weather conditions while fasting.) The ultimate decision of what your fast consists of (both what you need to give up AND the length of time) should be left to the Lord.

There are certain situations that can only be resolved with fasting.

Mark 9:29 (KJV)

“[29] And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.”

We can see the importance of fasting in a believer's life, but, unfortunately, this is a topic that I personally have very rarely heard any teaching on from the pulpit. I recently put together a study guide on spiritual warfare that had one section devoted to fasting, and in that study guide I made a statement about fasting in which I said that fasting is quite possibly the most effective weapon for spiritual warfare while also being the most ignored weapon in our arsenal. Fasting enables the spirit to overcome the temptations and desires of the flesh while simultaneously overcoming all of the weaknesses that so often hinder us in our walk. Fasting is the ultimate weapon in our combat arsenal against the devil.

If reading this chapter of this book has stirred a desire in your heart to begin fasting, don't hesitate to do so. Use the guidelines that I have put forth as a baseline, and seek the Lord Jesus in every aspect of your fast, but don't allow fear of failure or anything

else to derail you. And, lastly, remember that a fast without prayer is just a fancy diet. Now, in the words of the old Nike commercial, “Just Do It!”

Chapter Seven:

Denominations

Now I want to address the issue of denominational separation and the division that it causes. I can understand to a degree why there are different denominations, but the degree to which some people take their own agendas within said denominations is absolutely mind boggling to me. There are some denominations that say that if you are not a member of their denomination then you are not saved. They honestly believe this, and there are two possible reasons why they are so easily deceived into believing this.

- Pride – They have an unhealthy desire to be elevated above others.
- Biblical illiteracy -- They honestly don't know that faith in Jesus is the only way that anyone gets into heaven.

For most of the denominations, the split from others happened over what most would say is secondary issues, such as matters of baptism or eschatology (the study of the end times). The issue of secondary matters is addressed directly by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians. The Corinthians were dividing over who they had been saved and baptized under, and Paul explains to them that they are being foolish with their disputes. Let's look at the scripture passage that speaks of this.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 (KJV)

“[10] Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

[11] For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

[12] Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

[13] Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

Here Paul openly says that his desire is to see no divisions among the brethren. You may say that they were divided over foolish issues, while your denominational divisions are much more important. But are they really? When it comes right down to it, are they?

I think oftentimes that the church in foreign countries that sees such persecutions and martyrdom is, in reality, far better off than the American church, precisely because of the persecutions. They have no time to argue about "secondary" issues, because they know that their redeemer lives and that's all that matters. I heard a preacher say years ago that if persecution was the solution to the apathy in the church, then, he said, Lord, send persecution to the church. But he rightly prayed that it would start with him. This is my prayer now.

You know that the denominational division breaks the heart of Jesus, because He prayed for all of us in John seventeen to be one, just as He and His Father are one. Let's take a look at that scripture.

John 17:20-21 (KJV)

"[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."

The prayer that Jesus prayed was not for any particular group, but rather, for unity within the body of Christ. So why is it then such a hot-button topic to discuss different denominations coming together in unity with one another? I'll tell you why, and the problem is summed up in one word: pride. This, coupled with the laziness that prevents them from studying out the scriptures for themselves to find the truth, is single-handedly responsible for the development of all of the different denominations. So, are you going to begin to study out the scriptures to get to the real truth in all of this?

Chapter Eight:

Miscellaneous Untruths

In this final chapter, I want to address a few miscellaneous untruths that will not, by themselves, span an entire chapter. The best way to address these issues is in the following format.

- The issue of female pastors. This issue is addressed by the apostle Paul in two different letters: in 1 Corinthians 14 and again in 1 Timothy 2. In the first passage in 1 Corinthians, Paul tells them that the women should be quiet in the church, but in 1 Timothy he directly mentions that he doesn't want a woman to have authority over a man.

1 Timothy 2:12 (KJV)

"[12] But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

In this day and age, this issue is particularly abhorrent for most women, because they are not only independent, but liberated, and they see biblical submission to a man as a particular insult to their independence. They refuse to acknowledge that the Bible was written for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil, and until they admit this truth, and the truth that God's ways are best, they will continue to struggle mightily with all of the problems that being a liberated woman brings.

- The issue of the pastors usually lying by omission. They preach on topics of their choice but rarely (if ever) tell their congregations that they need to become Bereans and search the scriptures for themselves. Let's look at the verse of scripture that tells us about this.

Acts 17:11 (KJV)

"[11] These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

- The story of the widow's mite gets taken out of context and twisted for financial gain. Let's look at that scripture.

Mark 12:42-44 (KJV)

[42] And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

[43] And He called unto him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

[44] for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

This story is almost always taken out of context, and the widow is made out to be a prime example of someone giving to the kingdom of God until it hurts, with this supposedly being the honorable thing to do. But when this is taken in context, the real truth comes out. Jesus is not as pleased with this as the preachers who take this out of context want you to think. Let's look at the verses that come directly before this.

Mark 12:38-40 (KJV)

[38] And He said unto them in His doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

[39] and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

[40] which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation."

Notice that He is condemning the scribes for greed and even says in verse 40 that they "devour widows' houses". And immediately after the story of the widow's mite, Jesus begins to tell the disciples about the coming destruction of the temple. So we can see from the context that Jesus was NOT pleased with the way that it went.

I think that you can see that the church overall (note that I am NOT naming anyone specifically) has been lying about various topics for years. I hope that this book has helped you to see the importance of studying the scriptures for yourself. And now I want to pray for you.

Lord Jesus, I come before Your throne of grace with a grateful heart and I just want to proclaim You as God and Lord of all. Just reach down now and touch us with the touch that only You can, and fill us with Your truth. Touch every single person who is reading this book and change them to be what You want them to be. Above all else, Lord Jesus, be magnified and glorified, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Biography

Roger Lindsey graduated from Ira High School in 1992, and the year before that, began to experience real life with Jesus Christ as his Master. He walked away from the faith after several years of faithful service, only to return to his first love after many years of living his own way. He married Merinda Smith for the second time in 2021, and they currently live and minister in Rockport, Texas.