

## AFTERWORD

As different brothers and sisters in various parts of the world have read the first drafts of this book I have been privileged to receive some feedback. Perhaps surprisingly, most of the responses have been very positive. It seems that men and women all over the globe are hungering for just this kind of church experience. Countless numbers are unsatisfied with the current condition of Jesus' church and are searching for something much more eternal and spiritually edifying.

However, there seem to be a few who still have trouble with the idea of a complete liberty from human, institutional leadership. They seem to feel that there must be at least a little bit of positional authority in the body of Christ just in case things get out of control or to deal with a few special situations. The idea of a complete absence of any human authority figure seems to them to be unthinkable.

These assertions are usually supported by some of the Bible verses which we have already examined earlier in this writing. It was my hope that the explanations offered and the better translations of these verses already presented would have been adequate to assuage the hearts and minds of everyone who is genuinely interested in obeying the Lord in this question. However, since this is such an important issue, it seems good to touch again briefly on this subject here at the end of this book.

The practice of human, positional authority cannot be biblical for several essential reasons perhaps not yet fully clarified. Firstly, it violates the principle of Jesus being the unique life source of His body. Anything which might originate from another source, i.e. a human authority figure,

cannot produce anything of spiritual value. Instead, it is a serious mistake. It is an act which, although it might seem good, produces only wood, hay and stubble.

This fact is very important. This is an essential, unalterable principle. Only the "fountain of life" gives rise to the new creation. All other sources, no matter how good or right or "qualified" they may seem, are utterly rejected. They are impotent, being unable to generate anything truly spiritual or eternal.

Secondly, any exercise of mere positional authority violates the free will of the believers. Such authority works in a way which God never, ever works. Let us think about this together. Human or positional authority would only be necessary when someone is unwilling to obey the spiritual authority of Jesus flowing through His body. If someone will not obey God speaking to them through His word, His Spirit, other believers etc. then we might imagine that someone more tangible could give this person a little "push" in the right direction. They could apply some small earthly force to help this person do the right thing.

Yet this is something which God never does. If and when anyone is unwilling to obey, He never forces them. Jesus never, ever, makes anyone go one centimeter beyond where he or she is willing to go, even if it is for their own good. Even if someone is about to commit a serious sin, God does not rush down from heaven to make them stop. Think about this a moment. If God will not do something, should we be trying to do it in His place?

No amount of earthly pressure to try to make someone do anything, even if it is the will of God, will be of any eternal value. Even if we can persuade someone to obey, and to do something which is obviously right, if there is any resistance within them to this path, then they will gain no spiritual benefit. Any "obedience to God" which is not from the heart is useless. It will do nothing to transform them. Conversely, when the heart is open and ready to obey, positional authority is completely unnecessary.

Since the exercise of positional authority violates these two clear, essential, inviolable principles it cannot be

thought of as being from God. Therefore, we must readjust our thinking to conform to God's revealed will. We must not be held prisoners to common practice and teaching. Instead, we must understand any and all Bible verses only in ways which conform to absolute spiritual principles and also to the plain teachings of Jesus which we have examined in earlier chapters.

## GIVING

Another question which has arisen regarding the subject of living in the body of Christ together without human leadership is about giving. Many have been trained that they should give to an institution. They have been taught that they should give their "tithe" to the church where they attend. If now they have no "church" to which to give, what should they do?

Our response in this writing is not intended to be a complete essay on the subject of giving. It is not our purpose here to analyze the question of different kinds of offerings or how much we should tithe, etc.

The main thrust of this response is that we must learn how to follow the Holy Spirit in our giving. Just as He is to be the Lord of every other part of our lives, so too our giving of money, etc. should be led by Him. God will show us where and how to give. It might be to the poor. It might be to meet the needs of brethren around us. It might be to support someone who has given themselves to the work of the Lord. For example, someone might be in need of financial help who is working as a missionary or dedicating themselves to some spiritual work or other.

The tithe belongs to the house of God. But the house of God is people, not some kind of organization. It is the men and women who belong to Him who are His house. Therefore, giving to them *is* giving to God's house.

If we are part of some religious organization which has expenses such as building maintenance, electric bills, salaries for the workers, etc. then we have a responsibility to pay our part of the expenses. Just as the members of a

club have their dues to pay since they benefit from the structure and functions of that club, so too anyone who is benefitting from their participation in an organized group should be responsible for their part of the expenses.

However, perhaps we should be careful about calling this giving "to God." If we are merely paying our part, if it is ourselves who are benefitted, then we are simply giving to ourselves. Giving to God is a kind of giving from which we derive no benefit.

## LARGER MINISTRIES

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, it may be that some brothers or sisters have a very powerful gift for anointed ministry. Certainly these gifts are important and necessary for the whole body of Christ and even unbelievers.

However, one fact seems to stand out when speaking about such ministries. In the New Testament, both in the ministry of Jesus and of the apostles, no ministry was ever done as a show or spectacle. The use of powerful or more obvious spiritual gifts was never done with the thought of impressing others, drawing attention, or gaining fame or fortune.

When Jesus healed some folks, He specifically told them to be quiet about it (Mt 8:4, Lk 8:56). He did many of His miracles in secret. He even insisted that they tell no one that He was the Christ (Mt 16:20). Even when He healed publicly, He did not do so as a kind of spectacle or to draw attention to Himself. He made no effort to gain fame or followers by the use of His gifts. The apostles in the early church did not make a circus or show out of the ministries which God had given them. As God used them in the normal course of life, they used their gifts for HIS glory, not their own.

So this leads to the obvious conclusion that we too should not use our gifts in any way which glorifies ourselves. Perhaps we can sing well or preach. Possibly we have gifts of healings or miracles. We must constantly be

vigilant to use these gifts only in ways which glorify Jesus and not ourselves.

If and when we realize that we are becoming the center of attention or taking glory away from God, where it belongs, then we must repent before Him and look for ways to use our gifts which do not produce this ugly, natural result. Certainly the Lord has given His people gifts to use in ways which will further His wonderful and glorious purposes and His kingdom.

### **REAL CHURCH MAY NOT LOOK IMPRESSIVE**

As we learn to live in love with all our brothers and sisters, we may be excited by this new experience and the revelation which we are receiving. It may be because we are enthusiastic about a new experience of the body of Christ that we expect most other Christians will want to live this way also. We even might think that our small beginning would turn into something really impressive which will shake the world. Just like the early disciples, we might imagine that now is the time for Jesus to come and take command of His church and really make things happen. However, this may not be what really occurs.

Assuredly, as we obey our Lord, learning to meet around Him and in submission to Him, we will see His hand moving in power and many lives being transformed. However, this may never become something impressive in the eyes of the world or even other believers. Our experience may never reach such a zenith of popularity that the church in the whole world is instantly changed. Our way of serving the Lord and one another will probably never become universally popular. We should prepare our hearts for this.

There are several reasons for this. Firstly, God's ways are not usually showy. He Himself is humble and seeks to have communion with others who are humble also. God is not desiring to make some kind of big, impressive splash or show off His power and glory. His goal is to change men and women into His image. So, it is probable that when He

is in control of His church, the results are not going to be impressive in terms of world recognition, popularity, etc.

This may be perhaps compared to the first passover meal which God instituted. This was a holy, awesome repast. However, there was very little about it which might attract the natural man. Yes, there was roasted meat but it was probably without any seasoning, perhaps not even salt. Next there were herbs, but they were bitter and unattractive. To top it off there was a hard sort of bread without any yeast to make it more palatable.

Secondly, very many of God's children are not truly seeking to be pleasing to Him or to walk in intimacy with Him. It is sad but true that many people, who at one time or another actually received Christ, are not following Him with their whole heart today. While they may maintain some appearance of Christianity, i.e. going to church meetings once in a while or abstaining from a few grosser sins, their hearts are not captured by a daily intimacy with Jesus. Consequently, they will not be excited about the kind of church experience which we are recommending.

You see, God's ways have no appeal to the carnal man. He offers little to attract our flesh. The same is also true of the church experience which is led by and filled with Him. There will be very little which will draw carnal or infantile believers. There will not be a plethora of social events, entertainments and/or "support groups" to hold their attention. Only those who are serious about pleasing Jesus will be attracted. Therefore, this way of living out the life of Jesus with others will never be universally popular.

## TIME TOGETHER

One of the few things which we have to offer to God is our time. He doesn't need our human energy or efforts. But time is an essential element in the true church experience. In order to serve one another, love one another, build each other up in life, use our gifts and ministries, get to know others in the Spirit, etc. we must spend time with each other. There is simply no substitute in our search for

more reality in our church experience than spending time together with other believers. There is no other way in which the relationships needed to sustain the living church can be maintained or built up.

Here we find one of the most important keys to experiencing the real church. We must have time to spend together! Therefore, the availability of our time for God to use in these aforementioned pursuits is critical. This means that we must rearrange our priorities. We must not let other demands and pressures dominate us.

There is a lot of truth to the saying: "People make time for what is important to them." For example, if someone loves fishing, he will get up before dawn, stay up late at night and make many other sacrifices to be able to do what he loves. Where we invest our time reveals what is most important in our lives.

Many brothers and sisters are held prisoner by their businesses. They devote all their time and attention to them. Others are distracted from the work of the Lord by entertainments. Still others simply spend their time on the various necessities and demands of this life. However, each and every believer who desires to live in and experience a more living church experience must make spending time with other believers a priority. If they don't, very little of any eternal value will occur. If we do not devote time to being with each other, the real church will not be seen.

This time together might be simple fellowship. It might be praying together. It might be meetings, counselling or the use of various gifts and ministries. Exactly what we do together is not as important as the fact that we have our time available to be with one another.

Of course the other essential ingredient is that it must be Jesus who must be directing these occasions. Any time two or more believers succeed in entering into His presence together He will minister Himself to and through them, thereby edifying His own body. When we enter into Him together, we all will profit immensely.

Therefore, those who are serious about living Christ together will be people who seek to devote their time to

knowing Jesus intimately and serving His body daily. Without such a commitment of our time to the Lord, nothing of much eternal value will happen. The work of the Spirit among us will be severely retarded.

If and when our time is occupied with other pursuits, no matter how logical or justifiable they may seem from a human point of view, the true functioning of the church will be very limited. Believers who are seeking a more living expression of the body of Christ must rearrange their priorities so that their time is available for their Lord to use.

In the true expression of Jesus' body, there are no clergymen or women who will do all or most of the work. Here, everyone has a responsibility before God to love and serve. Consequently, the time we have available for God to use becomes critical. If we are a slave to something over which we have no control (many hours of employment for example) then during that time we are free in regards to the Lord's work. But during the times in which we are free from such demands then we must regard ourselves as the Lord's slave (I Cor 7:22).

*Other books by this same author:*

**FROM GLORY TO GLORY**  
**THY KINGDOM COME**  
**GENUINE SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY**  
**BABYLON**  
**ANTICHRIST**

Available from the publisher:

**"A GRAIN OF WHEAT" MINISTRIES**  
**P.O. BOX 644**  
**LEOMINSTER, MA 01453**

*or*

Contact the author directly:  
David W. Dyer  
davidwdyer@yahoo.com

*"A Grain of Wheat" Ministries is looking for book distributors in all parts of the world. If you are interested, please contact us for more information.*