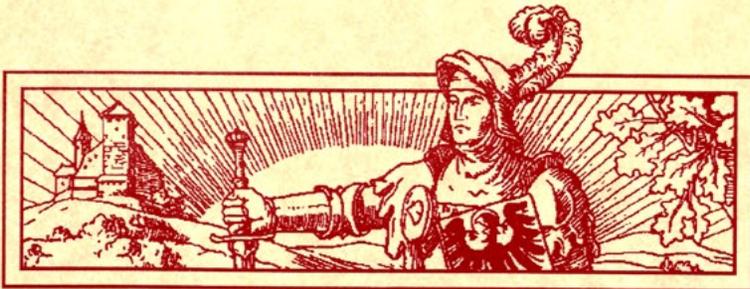


Check history and you'll find that we've been up and down the road of exciting religious "fixes" for so many years that the ditch is deeper than the Grand Canyon. And we are now WORSE off, not better off, according to the builders of the faulty building. We wait in vain, beating the rock again and again, as Moses did. For some reason we still expect God to eventually change His mind and make everything okay, in spite of our disobedience to His Commands and Ways.

Why don't we, regardless of the cost, go all the way back to the Principles that Jesus and the Apostles laid down about what a church really is?



True Hope for a New Millennium



*God's Heart's Desire for
His People!*

As always, if we can help you in any way, please contact the church here at
P.O. Box 68309, Indianapolis, IN 46268 USA.

www.JesusLifeTogether.com

Copyright © 1999 RealPeople@JesusLifeTogether.com

Copyright laws, as crazy as they are when we are talking about
God's Word, require us to say the following: This material is copyrighted
and may not be quoted and/or reproduced without its complete context
(the entire document) except by the author's permission. You may, however,
freely reproduce this in its entirety. And, of course, this publication is never
to be "sold" for any price (2 Corinthians 2:17, Matthew 10:8).

True Hope for a New Millennium

God's Heart's Desire for His People!

In December 1999, a well-known para-church organization produced and distributed to over 300,000 congregations, a video intended to warn and awaken followers of Jesus and call them to a more committed walk with God. While distributing the video was done with good intentions, it inadvertently revealed a much larger and more fatal issue. The writing that follows was distributed at the same time the video was released in order to help all who wear the name of Jesus to go far past being motivated, into being equipped and transformed.

Every honest person in christendom who is permitted to see behind the curtain of modern christianity and go backstage, can see it. We can see the problems. But will we be willing to go to the Highest Places for REAL solutions? Or will we, like the little Dutch boy, just put our finger in the dike like we have for so many generations? Let's go all the way Home for our Solution! It's in the Heart and Ways of the Messiah—the way HE lived and the Truths HE taught and deposited with His Apprentices. Right? J

On the following pages are some quotations from modern United States national leaders in the denominational world. These quotations were recorded on a video distributed recently to 300,000 religious organizations in the United States. The hope was that this video would be played on New Year's Eve, 1999 all over America. If it is listened to correctly, it will be quite an eye-opener for many. If one can avoid being dazzled by the faulty solutions at the end of the video—solutions that have been tried in every generation to no avail—then perhaps there will be many more hearts opened nationwide and worldwide to the radical need to start over God's Way. Perhaps then we'll be ready together, without fear of man, or addiction to "how we've always done it," to look for REAL solutions. The paradigm has been faulty for a long, long time. We know it—by its admitted fruit.

The amazing thing about these quotes below is what the leaders of the religious world admit about *their own congregations*. From Jack Hayford to Tony Evans to Crawford Loritts to Henry Blackaby to Anne Graham Lotz to Kay Arthur to Bill McCartney... person after person on this video ADMITS that the religious world is NOT affecting the world positively for Christ, but rather it is all failing terribly to represent Jesus well and change lives. The majority of millions "attending" modern congregations, with the Sunday morning service, program, clergy way of building...are falling apart. The "congregations" so often look good on the outside, but this way of building IS NOT WORKING, according to its leaders. The truth is, it has not and cannot "work" because it is not God's Way to build. There is no such animal in the Scriptures as the modern-day way almost all "have church." And clearly, by the testimony of its own nationally-known leaders, the gates of hell have prevailed against the religious world. Clearly, therefore, this cannot be the kind of church that Jesus said HE would build—though there are certainly many good Christians within.

It is *because* of these fine people, and their children, that we *must* reconsider how we are building in the local churches. It is for the sake of souls—the unsaved who wrongfully consider themselves church members, and the unsaved who do not—it is for them that we must rethink this thing we call "church." We must reconsider HOW

we have defined leadership, HOW we have defined church, and WHO we consider to be "church members" and "christians." There are answers, brothers and sisters, if we have the courage to embrace them! And it won't be in more programs, "ministries," better speeches, home groups, mass meetings for preaching or prayer or worship, and ecumenicalism. SO many things sound good and feel good, and in the right context could be Useful to God, but have instead borne the terrible fruit listed below. Good things are only 5% effective because they are done in the context of man-made church structures.

Check history and you'll find that we've been up and down those roads of exciting religious "fixes" for so many years that the ditch is deeper than the Grand Canyon. And we are now WORSE off, not better off, according to the builders of the faulty building. We wait in vain, beating the rock again and again, as Moses did. For some reason, we still expect God to eventually change His mind and make everything okay, in spite of disobedience to His Commands and Ways.

In any other endeavor of life would we expect things to change by utilizing the same "solutions" that had never produced lasting results in the past? If you were in high school and admitted you were 150 pounds overweight, and were also failing all of your schoolwork, what would you do? Would you keep on doing the same things you have always done, and expect anything to change? How foolish this would be! Could you change anything by talking about it more, or getting inspired by speeches about it? You know the truth. You would have to pay a price to DO something about it. David didn't conquer Goliath by holding a conference on the subject of Giant Killing.

Below you'll find some of these quotes from this video. Read them carefully and prayerfully. Understand how terrible the problem really is. Also understand that the "150 pounds of obesity and the failing grades" don't go away by doing the same things we've always done. A few exciting programs and sermons and even good things won't make these facts go away. How we build matters! After so many years of all of the hype and mass meetings and programs and para-church bonding organizations and prayer things and conferences and seminars, things are worse, not better. The programs and systems and gimmicks and big things are NOT serving God very

well, according to their very leaders. And our marriages and children worldwide are paying the price for man-made and faulty building techniques! When we build with bricks instead of stones, when we substitute externals and speeches and hierarchies and meetings for *true daily life and a Kingdom of priests*, the devil will take certain advantage of our poor building, and ravage the House.

Here is what the national leaders have said recently, about their own churches:

“America is a reflection of the condition of the people of God, the churches.”

“In a recent research study, out of 66 lifestyle categories, Christians are not demonstrably different than non-Christians in ANY of the 66 categories.”

“Christians have no credible moral voice in this nation.”

“For the first time in history, here in the western world, the divorce rate in the church is higher...HIGHER...than those that are not churched.”

“God looks into our churches and sees as much divorce in the people of God as He does in the world. God looks into our churches and sees as much abortion in the people of God as He does in the world. God looks into our churches and sees as much gambling in the people of God as He does in the world. And the surveys taken say the difference between the churches and the people of the world is not hardly recognizable.”

“When it comes to marriage and family, we have not done well.”

“80% of all young people raised in the church, faithfully attending church...80% of all of them, have left the church when they leave home.”

“We have substituted programs for prayer, and scheduled activities for the Spirit’s leading, and orthodoxy for obedience, and CEO’s for pastors and shepherds.”

“We are at a decisive moment. God must do a new thing in His Church.”

“We are at a crossroads, and have got to make serious changes in the churches. We stand on the critical moment of judgment or revival. We must decide if we’ll obey.”

“From a historical perspective, it seems certain that if the nation will see a revival, the church must first see a revival.”

“We have so entangled our lives with the affairs of this world, and we have made Christianity a show.”

As with the selection of “a king” to replace the organic Leadership of God, the cost of building man’s way is very, very high (1Sam. 8:4-20). Our version, though far from and even disobedient to the Scriptures, is to substitute for Jesus’ Headship our “ministries” and “missionaries” and “para-church” organizations and “services” and human systems and organizational charts. Even christendom’s modern leaders see that it has been a serious and obvious failure. The Lord has declared, “You know the tree by its fruit.”

And yet, by the end of the video, it seems apparent that most still don’t recognize that we’ve continued to try to find our solutions in the same old used-clothing barrel, generation after generation.

Why don’t we, instead, regardless of the cost, go all the way back to the Principles that Jesus and the Apostles laid down about what a Church really is? Acts 2:42-47 was NOT a cultural phenomenon, but rather 3,000 brand new Christians, led in God’s Way to have “Church,” in keeping with the simple Teachings of the Master. What were their priorities for living? Adding Christianity to their busy schedules, or “living, moving, and having their being in Christ,” each one “seeking first the Kingdom” every single day? You know the answer, right? J

“All the Believers were together, and had everything in common.”

“Confess your sins one to another and pray for one another, so you may be healed.”

“See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart.”

This is not about communal living, but about SELFLESS living, each one passionately “wrestling to present every man perfect in Christ.” How did they function with one another? As an audience on Sundays, with some program involvement thrown in during the week? OR, Daily, as a priesthood of believers? Were their “meetings” similar to today—preprogrammed and controlled by a man? OR was it, “When revelation comes to the second, LET THE FIRST

ONE SIT DOWN!”? Why? Because the Master said, “You are ALL just brothers.”

Oh, Family, there is SO much more to talk about regarding how Jesus and His hand-trained Apostles built the Church that the Master desires. As the Apostle Paul said, we need to know both “the unsearchable riches of Christ” *and* “the administration,” or “practical working out,” of the unsearchable riches, in order that, “Now, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the Principalities and Powers!” (Eph. 3). We can quench the Spirit and grieve Him with HOW we function, or we can participate with Him in His “ever-increasing Government”!

Know that the tragic state of affairs conveyed in the quotes from that video CAN BE DESTROYED, to the Praise of His Glory! Broken hearts and broken lives can be healed if we’ll build on His Foundation—if we’ll participate in “uprooting, tearing down, destroying, and overthrowing [all that is man-made] in order that He may build and plant”(Jer. 1:10).

I’ll conclude with an excerpt of some thoughts from some years ago, which speak a little more of finding our “Solution” in Jesus...

Freedom is Available

I saw a news documentary this evening, about a college professor and research scientist. He put an advertisement in a local newspaper asking for students. He offered to pay them \$15 per day if they would play a little game. Half would be prisoners in jail and the other half would be prison guards. There would be no physical abuse—only play-acting. The results were incredible. In just five days, all of the “guards” had become hostile tyrants, endlessly inventing deviant mind games to torture their “prisoners” with. And all of the prisoners (formerly strong, stable, intelligent, college students) were experiencing depression, hallucinations, and other manias. One by one, they literally crumbled emotionally and intellectually. They had *forgotten* that they were all (both guards and inmates) just college students playing a game. In FIVE DAYS! They were so mesmerized and intoxicated by their expected roles, and the “white collar expert/authority figure” that gave “credibility” to the happenings, that they

lost touch with what was real and became people they never wanted to become. In five days.

The Kingdom message may be obvious, but I’ll say it anyway. There are a TON of good people out there, earnestly desiring to be devoted to Jesus and to grow in intimacy and maturity and self-sacrifice with Him—that fail again and again and again. **They become people that they never intended to become.** They fail throughout their lives, either becoming comfortable with compromise, worldliness, religious rituals, and a seared conscience, or living in misery. WHY?!! It need not be this way.

God has Designed an environment that will help the frail human mind, and weak will, to Know Him and overcome sin. “*I will build my Church that the gates of hell cannot prevail against!*” Jesus, knowing our frail frame, birthed His Church to allow “common” Christian men and women to be Overcomers. And, of course, when I say the word “Church,” I certainly do NOT mean anything that can be “attended.” I mean what the Scriptures mean when that word is used. I mean what Jesus meant when He used that word. I mean deep relationships (which can NOT be “attended”!) where the Word of God is lived and applied in every man, woman, and child, DAILY! (Heb. 3:12-14; Acts 2:42-47). I refer to the “Church” that Jesus said HE would build where every man, woman, and child has “a HUNDRED mothers, brothers, and sisters, lands, possessions, persecutions, and after that, Life Eternal.” Nothing else is truly a Church. IF it is truly a Church, it **must** be characterized by *every* true member loving Jesus and knowing Him, while “bearing one another’s burdens, and so fulfilling the Law of Christ,” “confessing sins one to another,” “serving one another,” “loving one another,” and so many other powerful “vital signs” of a real Church. Anything else has lost, or will lose, its “Lampstand” and will not be considered a “Church” by Jesus, the Christ and Head.

IF it is a Church by God’s definition, the gates of hell cannot prevail any longer. We’ll not lose our teens to the world and the spirit of the age. We’ll not lose our men’s minds and energies to mammon and prestige. The list of victories is endless, WHEN the Church is really the Church rather than a pep rally to attend on Sunday. It will never be, when we desire to bring pleasure to Jesus, playing games with “perception management” by orchestrating the “perfect” show

on Sunday to excite and entertain, and perfect programs to get everyone's egos stroked so they won't leave. That's not a church, you know. Even if the songs are great and the "preaching" is "scriptural" and helpful, it cannot be considered a true Church simply because of these things. "Church" *must* be defined as GOD defines it (Mat. 16:18). Every member with a true supernatural experience "that flesh and blood did not reveal," but God the Father personally touched and revealed. And, (1Jn. 1:7) the way to have "fellowship" is not related to "attending" or "eating"—but it is all about "walking in the Light, together, as He is in the Light." If we're not letting others *inside* of us, and vice versa, we'll never know the Kingdom and its Benefits. It is, after all, "neither here nor there, but *within*."

If we are really functioning in God's Ways rather than the traditions of men that nullify the Word of God—if we're really, *really* the Body of Christ in a functional, daily way as He intends, then the "guard/prisoner" problem is solved! At last, normal people that honestly *want* to live for Jesus rather than for themselves can see their deepest problems rooted out and their greatest potentials realized. God *knows* how frail we are, and how *easily* we fall into the "guard/prisoner" insanity referred to above. The "expert/authority figures" in the workplace, and in government (or religious) schools frequently have the same hypnotic effect on us toward evil. "Bad company corrupts (even) *good* character!" OUR ENVIRONMENT MATTERS!! The average man (or woman) in the workplace, the average child in a government or religious school, or the average woman at home—all have far too little relationship, direction, and help in growing in depth of reality with Jesus and others. They are left to the world of peer pressure, greed, fear, lust, ambition, laziness, depression, and spiritual psychosis of every kind. They are in the false world of "guard/prisoner" that the world system has set up, and there is no defense—without Jesus in His Church, that the gates of hell cannot withstand. About five days is all the average person can be "big" enough to stay clear of "leaven" and the deceptive problems that follow. THAT'S why GOD said, "Admonish one another **DAILY**, as long as it's called 'Today,' so that **NONE** will become hardened and deceived."

It doesn't take long for any of us to get in a confused state (like the students mentioned above) concerning where we really are and who

we really are. Jesus knew we would desperately need God's Ways in **DAILY** *heart-rending* and *exposing* and *teaching* in the Church. That corrupting influence of bad company has happened, unchecked, to a **HUGE** percentage of christendom at this very hour.

Sure, there can and will be weaknesses and mistakes no matter what our situation, or how wonderful a real Church may be. But there is only one Place designed by God to give us the Resources to grow into the "full measure of the stature of Christ," "no longer infants tossed to and fro." And that is in **DAILY**, revealing relationships in a true Church—one that is defined by a revelation of Christ in every "member" (Mat. 16) and a connectedness in reality (1Cor. 12) to the Body of Christ in daily Life. Only there will we recover all of the ground that the enemy has meant to take from us when we **DO** make mistakes out of our ignorance or our flesh. *There*, in His Church, the gates of hell will **NOT** prevail.

So, What Do We Do When it Isn't That Way Where We Happen to Be?

What is our part when our environment is *not* a **DAILY** expression of the life of Christ, but rather attending some cool meetings and then going back and living in the world, disconnected from **DAILY** bonding and light-walking and self-sacrificing, burden-bearing in the Church? I can't make it any more complicated than this:

- 1) Pray fervently and fast to the Lord of the Harvest, both for laborers and for harvest. The more it matters to us, the clearer and more persistent we'll be. Be a worshipper in the secret place, and a worker on your knees.
- 2) Leave no stone unturned in laying down your life for others **NOW**, daily, nightly, "serving," "confessing your sins to one another," and doing all the "walking in the Light as He is in the Light" that can possibly be squeezed into your days and evenings. Then Leave the rest to Him.



So! We're all totally convinced now of how far out of hand things have gotten. Everyone in the know, including the leaders, is convinced of the serious need for change in the religious world. Even the good, exciting mega-places are filled with leaven, defying the Commands of our God. Now, let's consider that "a radical problem demands a radical solution"! And let's assume that this is not God's fault for not miraculously making "a silk purse out of a sow's ear." Rather, let's assume the bad fruit is *our responsibility*, because of our disobedience to His most basic Truths about what a Church really is. Now, for the sake of the Lamb of God and His little ones, and a world that deserves to see "how they love one another," let's go forward in obedience, by His Grace. "You are not your own; you were bought for a Price," is a *wonderful* privilege, and opportunity, today and everyday for the rest of your life. Expect nothing less, from yourself, your family, your church, and everyone you know who claim to be His! It'll be fun.

May we end together, as we began?

Every honest person in christendom who is permitted to see behind the curtain of modern christianity and go backstage, can see it. We can see the problems. But will we be willing to go to the Highest Places for *real* solutions? Or will we, like the little Dutch boy, just put our finger in the dike like we have for so many generations? Let's go all the way Home for our Solution! It's in the Heart and Ways of the Messiah—the way HE lived and the Truths HE taught and deposited with His Apprentices. Right? J