

Discipleship 4

FELLOWSHIP the body in union

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Growing Up In Christ

It is God's plan that every disciple partake in Jesus' ministry!

Jesus is the living "head of the church" for all believers. He has designed a way for us to follow him, even as the original twelve disciples followed him. They walked at his side, discoursed with him, and were both witnesses and partakers of his spiritual ministry. They new his voice; saw his power; and marveled at his wisdom. They new him! By contrast I fear that few nominal Christians are able to say they know him. Yes they have heard about him, but do they know him? Perhaps the greatest thing to be revealed in the "gospel" is that we not only may know him, but have fellowship with him and partake in his nature and his mission and calling. To reveal the rule and authority of God to the principalities and powers arrayed in the heavens. (The domain of Lucifer and his Angels) "For this reason the Son of God was manifested, that he should destroy the works of the Devil." - - John 3:8 - - We worship what we know. We know him. He called us to have fellowship with Him. We hear His voice; we see what He shows us in the Word and what he reveals in the place of his dominion.

As we gather as believers in a place of meeting can we say that we leave that meeting, knowing him better? Can we say that we have heard his voice, felt his presence, or were empowered by his touch?

Ministry Edifies, Strengthens, and Blesses

It would be good for unbelieving eyes to see what things can and do happen in a place of meeting. For in such times of fellowship God can make his glorious presence known; lift people out of their fears and oppression; bring joy and healing; restore broken hearts and broken relationships and save peoples souls. Church liturgy, put together in a time far past, perhaps following shortly after the kind of glorious kind of fellowship described above may have had good intentions.

Liturgical forms no doubt hoped to preserve some of the truth or glory of those earlier days. Maybe they wished to insure the manifestation of God's presence and to provide a platform to disciple those who needed to under stand the truth of Christ's eternal ministry. But God can not be bottled and preserved! For He is alive and powerful, acting always in the NOW, never in the THEN. The Bible shows that God's presence can not be captured and preserved. The Israelites of Old tried to do so, but when God's Glory departed it was gone they were left with a lifeless idol. The temple remained the glory was gone. The brazen serpent remained but the manifestation of its power was gone. God's continued glory and fellowship with us is determined by the hearts of those who gather to worship him. With passing years catechism remained but the glory had been lost. The ritual remained and the liturgical trappings remained but the presence of God vanished. Ritual happens, I believe, when men try to duplicate a behavior which once brought forth the glory of God through faith. Elements that remained were vainly held and became a substitution for God's presence.

"Ministry" became the focus of a very small body of liturgical experts, called the priesthood or the clergy, when it was always to be the domain of every believer. Just as God wishes each believer to be a ministering priest, he wishes us to become a true worshiper. What is this true worshiper and what is worshipping the Father in Spirit and in Truth? (John 4:23) God is always looking for True Worshipers.

He looks at the hearts he does not regard the man with the religious uniform over a common person whose heart is open. He does not favor a cathedral over a location which has been made ready on the inside of us. As Jesus told the woman at the well of Samaria, it is not where you worship, not this mountain or another mountain, but what and how we worship. He said to her that some do not know what they are even worshipping but the truth is that salvation is connected to worship, it is through the foundation of the Jews. The time was coming, Jesus explained, when men and women would worship the Most High God in Spirit. Those who do not have this Spirit can not have the revelation of God of which Jesus spoke.

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