

The Incomplete Reformation

The Protestant Reformation was an important awakening in the Church and its heroes brought about some very important and urgently needed reforms in the true Church of God such as the widespread preaching of the doctrines of grace and teachings about the gross errors of Catholicism. But why is it that the Reformation of the Church succeeded in reforming many Christian practices and doctrines but never succeeded in reforming the way that Christians “do church”? In other words, why is it that most churches have one or two people who “run the show” and do all the talking while everyone else sits and listens as if they were the audience of some kind of theatrical presentation. Who says that true believers are supposed to be doing this when they gather together? How do they conclude that the admonition in Hebrews 10:25 about not forsaking the assembling of the saints means that it is sufficient to merely assemble to hear a man give a speech and for them to sing a few songs upon command?

Why does everyone do church this way without ever thinking twice about what it is they are doing and why? Do they conduct their family gatherings this way? Don't families usually act like families when they congregate? Don't they eat together, share their joys and sorrows, help one another, offer advice and counsel - *actively communicating* and *participating* in the gatherings? Why shouldn't the family of God - the household of faith - be doing these things when they gather together? Why do they instead play Simon Says? Why do they sing songs to God while ignoring their brothers and sisters in Christ all around them? Do they think God is happy that they sing songs of worship and praise to Him when they don't even know the names of the people standing right next to them? Don't they read their Bibles? Don't they know they cannot say they love God if they don't love their brother? Don't they know that to worship God requires serving and ministering to their brothers and sisters in Christ not playing “Simon Says” with a paid religious professional?

1 John 3:14 “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”

1 John 4:20 “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

Don't they know that the best teaching environment is an *interactive*

environment where even those with no special training are given an opportunity to speak, share, and ask questions? Don't they know that a monologue is best suited for *indoctrination*, and not an optimal way of teaching since it does not allow others to correct errors or ask for clarification?

So again I ask "WHY are things the way they are?" ... Perhaps because:

1.

This is all that most people know about doing church.

2.

Just about everyone is doing church this way so this must be the right way to do church.

3.

Pastors never preach on "ecclesiology" (how to do church) so their congregations remain in the dark about the fact that they are doing church in a way that is unbiblical and unhealthy and unsatisfying for those who truly want to use their talents and gifts for the glory of God and the increase of His kingdom.

4.

Its easier to go to church for 1 hour and then go about your own business than spending time getting to know the saints and having to work on relationships with other sinners like yourself, be involved in other people's lives and be committed to helping others.

May God help you to break away from the church of the status quo and begin to worship Him in a manner that is more in harmony with scripture, so that your gifts will be fully utilized in the building up of Christ's church. And may the Good Lord direct you to a church that has serious-minded believers gathering in homes, preferably on the Lord's day but if not then, at least during the week as satellite groups, cells groups, home bible studies, home fellowships, etc. And don't be afraid to challenge your church leaders to examine why they do church the way they do. You never know... you might just start another Reformation, and be greatly blessed in the process.

brother RM Kane

<http://comingintheclouds.org>

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1 Corinthians 12:18 "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary"

3 John 1:2 "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

2 Thessalonians 1:3 "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;"

1 Thessalonians 4:9 "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."

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