

1500 The Unrecognizable Church

A few weeks ago, I spoke to you about the Unrecognizable Savior. Purportedly, even Mary was unable to recognize her son on the cross because of the savagery of the Roman beating. Is it any wonder Jesus asked His Father to “let this cup pass from me”? Mary Magdalene did not recognize the resurrected Jesus at the tomb. She thought He was the gardener – until He spoke to her. Then, she recognized her Good Shepherd’s voice and knew He had risen. On the road to Emmaus, two disciples did not recognize Him. Even today, people do not identify the Savior and Lord. Some don’t “see” Him, and others refuse to acknowledge Him.

Another painful reality is the perceived unimportance of the American Church. I wonder how many American Pastors and Preachers stepped into their pulpits on Easter Sunday, 2024, and renounced the current administration’s proclamation of the Transgender Visibility Day that coincided with Resurrection Sunday. If trends continue, most did not because they didn’t want to “get political.” This was not political. It was spiritual. It was an obvious satanic assault on the Son of God. Since preachers won’t speak out, neither will the church members. We go along to get along silently, giving our permission for Satan to infiltrate the nation.

Over the years in ministry, I have watched church members treat their walk with Christ as an afterthought. They were busy making a living, entertaining themselves, and raising their families, so church ministry went to the back burner. Their children needed to play sports on Sunday to fit in with their peers and for the off chance they might get an athletic scholarship. Serving Christ wholeheartedly was not part of the plan. Most simply wanted a “passing grade” with Jesus and did the minimum to coast by. Here’s a frightening passage:

²¹“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’¹

When the church disengages from the fight against evil, it becomes irrelevant and unrecognizable to the cause of Christ. He doesn’t know us. We proved that we have low regard for the value and function of our churches when we shut them down during the COVID extravaganza. Ninety percent of churches were willing to close their doors unconditionally for an unspecified period of time at the government’s bidding, putting men above God. Unquestioning church members were happy to “ZOOM” their church services in the convenience of their homes. No fighting with the kids to get ready for services, no worries about getting dressed or even watching it live. We could watch it later on OUR schedule if the church worship time conflicted with sleeping in and a late brunch. Ah, sweet relief!

I was on a conference call with a host of Ministers and the Oklahoma Governor to discuss the COVID issue and its effects on the state and our congregations. Numerous times in the interview, the host asked the Governor to declare churches “essential” like he had with bars and Home Depot. He would not make that declaration. Though he was a pastor’s son and presumably a practicing Christian, church and church ministry were not important to him.

We have drifted so far from God that we do not prioritize Him. Jesus said, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.”² If we are devoted imitators of Christ, the Father’s will becomes our source of life and priority. Yet too often, like water, we seek the path of least resistance and just “go with the flow” instead of deciding to do God’s will.

I realize we did not know what to expect at the beginning of our COVID experience. Churches tried to protect their members because the lying MSM told us we were in deathly danger. So they closed up, unsure when they would reopen. Once we began uncovering the truth, we had a choice: reopen or continue with the demonic

¹ Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV)

² John 4:34 (NKJV)

destruction of our churches. I know some churches that remained closed for over a year out of fear. Many of those churches are out of business now.

The big problem is that church people refuse to deal with things contrary to God's will, even when we know we have been lied to. We don't want to go through all the fuss of finding the truth; we would rather put our minds in neutral and do what we are told when we are told and not think for ourselves. Of course, this is right out of George Orwell's "1984." One example is a church's Board of Directors who asked a physician who was a church member if they should wear masks. The doctor said, "No. A mask is only good for keeping your fingers out of your mouth." Like good little robots, the Board forcibly required their members to wear masks, threatening their staff with job termination. It's because Big Brother said so.

Churches have given up their role as the conscience of their communities, and now, our society lacks principles. Good has become evil and evil, good (Isaiah 5:20). The "go along to get along" compromise signals God's adversary that we are disinterested in right and wrong. We are more concerned about our ease and entertainment than our unalienable rights and children's future.

Thomas Paine allegedly encountered an innkeeper in the days before our War for Independence. The merchant wanted to avoid trouble and felt justified in letting his daughter's generation deal with the issues. Paine took the opposite stance and said, "If there must be trouble, let it be in my day so that my child may live in peace." That's a Christian viewpoint.

The preachers and churchmen of the Revolution period saw defending our lives and property as fitting God's will. He expects us to be good stewards of our unalienable rights. American churches stood in the gap for the nation when Great Britain used intimidation to force the colonies into unlimited submission to the government.

Pastor Jonas Clark and Deacon John Parker led the Minutemen in the Battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775. A few citizen soldiers took the field against an overwhelming force of British Regulars. Pastor Clark assured John Hancock and Samuel Adams that his churchmen had been trained for the conflict and were willing to die in the shadow of the church house for liberty.

Our patriot leaders believed God would only bless a defensive war. As the two armies faced off, John Parker encouraged his Minutemen not to shoot first. He said, "Stand your ground, don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here." That day, the nations heard the "shot heard around the world."

The early church was essential to the cause of Christ. Without it, all creation would have been in darkness. Through sacrificial efforts, the gospel went throughout the world (Romans 1:8; 10:18). The churches of the Reformation and post-Reformation accepted the challenge and took the word of God to the New World at great personal cost. Many American churches took up the cause of liberty and rebelled against the tyrant king. The churches of those eras proved essential to the cause of Christ.

I pray God will send a Spirit of revival to our land and awaken the sleeping giant that is the church. I pray He will remind us of our Co-Mission with Him to carry the gospel worldwide and turn people's hearts to Him with His pure and simple message. I pray He will make the American Church recognizable again.

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