

"DID GOD JUST SEND THE CHURCH INTO THE WORLD" PART 1

“The Church is not the building. We are the Church!”

For years now we've either uttered those words or heard them uttered by countless numbers of Christians!

Hi I'm Rosalyn Hickman and I'm coming to you again today to share how I see the hand of God moving through the Coronavirus! Thank you for clicking in and again, as always I invite you to share with me how you see God's hand moving in the Coronavirus! You may do so by emailing me at CovenantKeypers@gmail.com.

OK, let's just jump right in and explore this statement: “We are the Church”

Not only is this statement true, but more importantly, it's biblical. Yes, it comes directly from the Word of God. Let me share a few scriptures with you:

We read in I Corinthians 6:19:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? And

A little further over in chapter 12 verse 27, Paul says this:

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Also, in the book of Romans chapter 12 verse 5 Paul again states:

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another.

There are many other references throughout the book of Acts. You may want to write these down to take a closer look at in your time with the Lord.

Specifically,

Acts 11:22 and 26, Acts 12:5, Acts 13:1 and of course throughout many of the epistles of Paul.

You will note that the Apostle Paul opened his epistles by addressing the saints as the church at a particular town. For sure he was not writing to a building but to saints who gathered on different days and at various hours to worship the true and living God.

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SO WHAT MAKES THE CHURCH THE CHURCH?

Well, the short answer would be because Jesus called us the church. And if Jesus called us the church then that's who we are, *the church!* He also called the church his bride: Which gives the church an even greater significance. But, let's look again at the Word of God for a more complete answer.

Please turn to Matthew 16:13 - 18 KJV. This is when Jesus Christ asked his disciples: who do men say that I am? Of course they gave him several answers. But finally, Peter gave the Lord the right answer.

So, let's read:

13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 and they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. **18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

So, in Peter answer we can clearly see what makes us the church is what we believe about Jesus Christ. Did you catch that as we read through those 4 verses. Jesus said upon this rock. Not Peter, but the Words that the Father revealed to Peter about Jesus.

Ladies, the building that we gather in is an inanimate structure made of brick and mortar and it does not have the propensity to believe. However, the building is formally and intentionally sanctified and designed for those who do believe to corporately meet to worship God. But keep in mind the Word of God is clear that the buildings where we worship is not the only place a believer can worship God. Let's look at a few scriptures.

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Let's look at Luke 7:35-50; This is the account when the woman with the alabaster box wet Jesus' feet with her tears and then wiped his feet with her hair. Luke 10:38-46 Neither she nor Jesus was in the temple or the church. They were ironically in a Pharisee's house.

Luke 10:38 -Another time we see worship away from the church was also in a home: Jesus was visiting his friends Lazarus, Mary and Martha. As Jesus taught, Mary sat at his feet listening intently. One more example we see is in John 4; this is when Jesus met the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Ironically enough it was Jesus' teaching on the true worshiper that opened the eyes of the Samaritan woman and in the process she believes on him and brought the whole town out to hear Jesus.

So the thing these scriptures seem to drive home is: worship can take place wherever and whenever Jesus is the focus. Jesus was the common denominator in each of these scriptures. The desire to hear Jesus and be with Jesus was not based on their geographical location. You might even say it was in spite of their geographical location. The Lord Jesus even said to the woman that the time was coming that they would not worship in that mountain or at Jerusalem. There of course are other passages of scripture that will support worship away from the temple or church building.

Now all of that being said, let's balance out this conversation with some reasons the building is so special to the people of God. In all the history of the church, the building where Christians meet with God has always been a sacred and necessary place. Of course we know that because of the intentional instructions for setting things in order and establishing elders in every city as seen in the book of Titus. Not only is it sacred and necessary for the people of God it is expected and commanded by God for the church to gather in the house we call church. In Hebrews 11:35: We are instructed not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together! That was not a suggestion but a command. That is why we see the people of God gathering each week to their respective church buildings to fellowship and to worship together. It is out of obedience to the Word of God. Even now during this coronavirus believers gather together in their respective homes to worship via the various technical devices available to them.

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Still able to see and hear the men of God proclaim the scriptures from behind as Pastors call it, the sacred desk, in the church building.

Another reason believers love to gather in the building is to do ministry. Again, it is not the only place where ministry takes place, but for sure it is the ordained launching-pad for all ministries. The building is home-base for equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry inside, outside and even to the ends of the earth! Not only is it a launching pad to send Believers out, but the building stands in a fixed location with open doors to protect, rescue, and serve those who are in need. And finally, the building has a distinct yet common purpose in the life of all of God's people and that purpose can never be replaced through segmented and fragmented connections: This distinction and common purpose is found in these three purviews: discipleship, accountability, and discipline. So, buildings are special to believers and God.

Now having presented the value of both the physical church building and those who believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God, I want to get to this. The danger for our culture is that we seem to be overly complacent in the building. It seems that we are more intentional about worship when we're inside the building than when we're away from the building? As the saying goes, floundering about like a fish out of the water. Why is that?

Do we only sense the presence of the Lord inside the 4 walls of the place we call church? Why do we struggle to connect with God in our homes, on our jobs, in the marketplace? Why do we feel out of place while at the same time, saying with conviction and certainty that we are the church!

The answer to this questions may vary somewhat from person to person: some may say it is because the Spirit of the Lord is in control when we are in our regular church services; others may say it is because the church building feels sanctified and is designed for worship; Still, others may feel it's because the people around us are experiencing the presence of the Lord and it's easier to join in with them.

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All of these may be good reasons why it's easier to worship in a building called the church, however, that should **not** be the reason we worship. Obviously, there is a bigger issue going on when believers feel disconnected from God when they are away from the church building.

When Jesus asked the disciples: Whom do men say I am? It wasn't because he didn't know what men were saying about him. He wanted to reveal who He was and who they (the disciples) believed he was. It was always Jesus' mission that the disciples and ultimately the world believe that he was sent from God and that he was God. John 17:21. Believing that Jesus was sent by God is huge! The church has work to do but when we narrow down our work to Sundays and Wednesdays inside the building, then we have misunderstood Jesus' Words: ***"Upon this rock I will build my church."***

God is in the process of building as in adding to the church daily such as should be saved. Buildings don't build people, people build people! And not just any people. The people who build are the people who believe what Peter said. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Worship and ministry is born out of our belief of who Jesus Christ is. It is an outward expression of an inward work of the Holy Spirit.

So, just saying we are the church has to yield fruits of righteousness. Believers are called to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Work while it is day for night cometh when no man can work. We cannot afford to become complacent in the building. Among other things, I see God's hand pushing us out of the building and testing our faith of endurance.

So, what should the church (called out ones) look like during this Pandemic? What does believing that Jesus is the Christ, the son of a living God have to do with our everyday life away from the building?

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We must be like Jesus when he walked among us, he said things like this. I must be about my Father's business; I came do the work of him who sent me; My meat is to do the will of the Father; I do always those things that pleases my Father; I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

So don't look at being away from the church as something missing but rather a move in the right direction to bring more sheaves into the building. We too must be about our Father's Business. He's building His Church through us. We plant, we water and our Father gives the increase. No one can come except the Father draws. He draws through the obedience of his people. So women, we must be careful to not minimize our purpose in God drawing all men to himself. It is my job as an older woman to make disciples of the younger women and to model what a Titus woman looks like. Women are a key component in the work of the building of the Church. Women of God have been given the awesome responsibility to marry, bear children, and keep the home and everything else falls in line after that.

These are ways we build up the kingdom of God as he has determined. We must say like Jesus, we must be about our Father's business. For such a time as this, we must work the works of Him who sent us while it's day! That is the reason the gates of hell will not prevail against the church. Because he has given the church assignments accompanied with the power and authority to get the job done. He has given us everything we need that pertains to this life and the power to live godly in this present evil world.

He will not allow us to remain complacent he will as the eagle, stir our nest and push us out of our comfort zones. It is the power of God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. We will not be overtaken by worldly distractions, pandemics, selfish ambitions or any other tactic of the enemies of the cross. Because we are the church, we are more than conquerors. So ladies, let's get busy being the church. Starting in your home every day, get up, and get going doing the things that God has plainly, clearly, and emphatically called us to do. I Timothy 5:14 14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

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Now, I know the world doesn't want to hear that. But he's not talking to the world and neither am I. He's talking to the called-out ones, the church, the people who believe that he was sent by God and that He is the Son of the Living God. Did I mention that Titus 2 is a mandate not a suggestion or even a strong recommendation. We called to teach the younger women what thus said the Lord. His way works for our good and his glory. I pause and ask you, is what the world doing working? I think not! Homes are broken, all kinds of abuse is rampant in our homes, man to woman, woman to woman, woman to children, children to parents, you name it. The homes are truly broken. What they need is godly husbands and godly wives who take their role serious enough to stand alone believing that the Word of God is true and the gates of hell will not prevail against the work of the church!

Because God has pushed us out of the building into the world with the gospel being preached over the many technical mediums, we also have more opportunities and more time on our hands to reach out and live out the gospel in our homes and in many other creative ways. Many will hear by way of Zoom, YouTube, Facebook, Vemeo, Instagram, etc., who have never heard and many will repent and come to know the Lord Jesus because of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

I pray you are not complaining or disgruntled. But excited that we can be a part of what could become a revival all over the World.

Well, that concludes my commentary on
"The building is not the church! We are the Church".

Push the book! Anybody Home, In Search of the Titus Woman. \$11.99 if you request it at covenantkeepers@gmail.com or you may purchase it on Amazon.