

“In Remembrance”

A thought from Pastor Gabe Skillo.

“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ”

I Timothy 4:1-6, 11



THE COUNTRY DECEPTION SHOULD THE SLOW-PACED FEEL OF COUNTRY LIVING DEFINE THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY?

I love the country. Life is just better in the country! The people are nicer; the traffic is not as crowded; the schedule seems easier, and, best of all, life seems to be at a slower pace. Many people live in the country because they want the slow-paced feel of the country. I know I do! Living in the country is great, but Christians need to be careful not to take the country mentality into their service for the Lord.

Just because we live in the country, it does not mean we need to serve God with that mentality. The slow-paced, non-committed and relaxed mindset really is much different than what God calls us to be. Just because a church is located in the country, it does not mean it can't do what churches in a bigger city would do. Bringing the slow-paced, non-committed country mentality into the country church really does seem to be a deception of satan.

Country living defined would be relaxed, slow-paced, and easy going. Again, I like the country feel. However, a group of Christians, as a local new testament church, should not be relaxed and slow-paced in their efforts to serve God and reach this world for Him. Every second, an average of 1.8 people die. Each year over 55,000,000 people die. These are real people who face an eternity with or without Christ. Some go to heaven, but, sadly, most go to hell not knowing Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Even though we live in the country, we should still have a sense of urgency to reach the lost and serve God through our local church. The church is a strong and effective team that Jesus Christ founded and designed. However, if that team wants to sit on the bench (pew), it won't win like it was intended to.

Imagine someone who is facing eternity without Christ asking you why you didn't tell, why you didn't reach out, why you didn't serve. Then, imagine telling them, "well, I lived in the country." It's just not a good enough reason to not serve God and not give it your all.

Think about this, Jesus and His disciples lived way more "country" than we do. They were true country folk. However, they daily exhausted themselves for the kingdom of God. If they did and they could, then the "country" excuse is not a very good one for us. EVERY single Bible character was way more "country" than we are. Without the conveniences of today, they had many chores, livestock to feed, crops to grow, countless things to build and maintain, family and children responsibilities, etc... but they still found ample time to serve the Lord. After all the modern conveniences of today, people still make excuse that they "can't" because they live in the country. However, after considering those in the Bible, that excuse doesn't seem to add up.

As a country church, we should still be committed, actively engaged, dedicated and organized. There is NOTHING in the Bible to support a thought that a church in the city should be different than a church in the country. Just because we enjoy living in a slow-paced community, we shouldn't be slow-paced for the Lord. We must be so careful that a "country" church does not equate to lazy, slothful, inactive and idle. Country people are hardworking people! Please accept my challenge to take the work ethic of country living into the church; however, leave the slow-paced mentality behind. There is so much to do and so many ways to serve. Consider these verses:

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” I Corinthians 15:58

“He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.” Proverbs 18:9

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love...” I Thessalonians 1:2-3a

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Ecclesiastes 9:10