

THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST

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July 5, 2010

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Most all Christians know that the Church was birthed on the Day of Pentecost but where is that Church today? Has it disappeared like all the churches during the first few centuries? We have a history of many of these churches, e.g., one of my favorites—the Church of Antioch. But where are they today? What happened to them and why? These are questions we must answer if we are to go forward as the Church of the Seventh Church Age—the Last Day Church.

Tonight the Spirit of the Lord came upon me strongly and I felt so heartbroken—almost to the point of wanting to die as I was reminded of just how far away from the Church of Pentecost most churches have become today. I often think about the Apostles Paul and John who both ministered at the Church of Antioch in their day. They labored many years and I'm sure they saw fruit from their labor both during their lifetimes and after; however, somewhere along the way their

legacies were not upheld—these churches of Asia are no longer in existence today.

In more contemporary times, what about the churches of this past century—where are they today? I think back to the '70s and '80s when I attended Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, and got to know the Osteens and to minister and to be involved with missions. In those days, that was probably the greatest church in the world. By that I mean that the moving of the Spirit occurred in every single service and we regularly saw 50-100+ people saved during almost every service. Sure, that church still exists today but it's not the same and although I've not attended Lakewood in over 20 years I suspect that the difference is the Holy Spirit—like most contemporary churches He's no longer in charge of that church.

There is a tremendous amount of pressure being applied to churches and ministries today to conform to more contemporary times. I recently received an email from a pastor that's been heavily involved with James Dobson's ministry, *Focus on the Family*, informing me that Dr. Dobson was forced out of this ministry because they want to go a new way and appeal to more people. This is occurring because of the incorrect *rationale* that compromise is beneficial to the Kingdom of God. In fact, many Christians today erroneously believe that the Kingdom of God is a

democracy and God makes decisions based on what's popular or politically correct. Many ministries begin substituting the ways of the world to attract people; however, the Lord told Evelyn many years ago that "anything you compromise to get you will eventually lose."

The main reason this has occurred, of course, is because of the devil—he encourages compromise and a watering down of the Word of God because he knows that the Spirit and the Word agree and if he can get a church or ministry off the Word then the Spirit cannot abide there. He's been very successful in this endeavor and even has encouraged the use of one particular new translation of the Bible that is not only a poor and inaccurate translation but is definitely *New Age* in content yet we observe this version gaining more and more usage in Pentecostal churches as well. What blindness!

Our local newspaper here has a section every Saturday on religion and even I am amazed by the articles that appear each week continuing to demonstrate the *nonsense* that is occurring in so many "churches" today. The most recent example (I can't call it a fad because I don't think it is; it's just another example of the continued compromise and destruction of Christian principles and the Word) has to do with animals. Many churches are now allowing people to bring their animals to church and even to baptize their pets!

And they are quick to say that they believe animals should be treated as importantly as humans.

The title of an article from July 3, 2010, is, “Churches paying heed to human-animal issues.” Some quotes from the article: “We know from the Bible that God created animals, he cares about them intimately and he wants us to care about them ... During a time when people increasingly treat pets as family members, animal advocates are gaining ground in religious circles.”

“Some religious leaders welcome pets to worship services, memorialize them at death and discuss them as spiritual beings without distinction from humanity – the most controversial ideology and one that is not accepted by mainstream religious faiths. Emerson Theological Institute, a “new thought” college based in Oakland, Calif., has started to ordain animal chaplains ... some Jewish rabbis celebrate a dog’s coming of age with a “bark mitzvah” ... Kris Haley of Phoenix, an ordained animal chaplain, says, “I think they are all expressions of the divine... we all have a divine spark within us.” The approach is becoming more popular.”

Well, many of these people may think that animals and man are no different in God’s sight and they may believe that animals “have a spark of the Divine” but what does the Bible say?

Many churches today have compromised the Spirit of God completely out of the church and that's why there is no anointing and no changed lives. God doesn't change—He's still using the same Gospel Jesus and the early Apostles and other Five-fold ministers preached 2000 years ago. You cannot "update" the Gospel; you cannot compromise the Blood of Jesus. All churches do when they compromise their youth group, for example, by bringing in Christian rap, magic, or other things that are from the world or the devil is that they only accelerate the spirit of the world and the god of this world into their midst. The Holy Spirit will not stay where He is not wanted and His plan is not being followed—He becomes grieved and leaves.

I don't think we've ever lived in a time when there was more sin, unbelief, and lack of anointing in the churches in America and, unfortunately, the churches of America continue to export this *type* Christianity and these false gospels to the rest of the world and is one main reason why the churches in America are under judgment.

There is only one solution to the dilemma we face spiritually—the Church of America must return to the *first* love—the Lord Jesus Christ and to once again submit to His Holy Spirit and the Word of God. We must take seriously Paul's words to Timothy:

“Preach the Word ...” ■ 2 Timothy 4:2

He didn't exhort Timothy to preach what was popular or politically correct to appeal to the masses but the Word! Then, if we return to the Word the Holy Spirit will once again be in agreement with our churches and He will be able to “confirm the Word with signs following.”

This week as we celebrate America's independence I want to encourage you to pray for the churches of America rather than simply for our nation because as the churches of America go so goes the nation. We need a return to the Word, the Spirit and holiness in our churches before the nation can be brought to repentance. IF the average church in America today would return to the Lord and be like the Church of Pentecost then we would see the tremendous revival in our country that many ministries have prophesied for years. I'm not confident that this will ever occur but it's only repentance that can bring change and the message of the false prophets is the same as in the Bible—“peace, prosperity, God loves you, etc.” so there is no need to change. Please pray for the churches of America this week. Maranatha.