

Tradition or Truth? The Church

When we placed faith in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, we were baptized, immersed into a family (I Cor 12:12,18,27). We now share life in common with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Jo 14:23) as well as with all other believers in Christ (I Cor 12:12,20,26). This family is our place to "be". We experience a change in beingness - once we were _____, now we are _____. Also, there is a change in belongingness - we belong to Christ (I Cor 3:23) and to all who belong to Him. We are each connected at the core to Christ in whom are all the contents necessary for God's family (II Pet 1:3,4).

As a result of embracing the traditions of man instead of the truth of God we fail to recognize who we really are. We do not understand the Life we share in common that is far from common. We copy the world and its systems for organization and practice rather than being animated and empowered by Christ and His compelling love. We often end up becoming man made organizations of sovereign selves where self interest remains the basis of our reality. Fear continues to be a dominant motive force and since fear is a force for separation and death we rarely experience the love-conditioned family life that God intends for all who are in Christ.

The primary threat to the church (in any age) is not liberalism, legalism or cultural relativism. It is not Arminianism or Calvinism. It isn't liturgical or free worship. Of all the problems that threatened the churches in Revelation 2 and 3, only one caused Jesus to say, "I will spit you out of my mouth!" That one? **MEDIOCRITY! COMMONNESS! LUKEWARMNESS!** The unenthusiastic, half-hearted, self-preserving, Laodician type of organization or "club" whose members may share some goals in common but never their lives in common. There is communication of information but there's little or no communion or true self-disclosure. There are more consumers than contributors. More contractual ("until unhappiness do us part") than covenantal ("as long as we both shall live") relations. Most of the "service" is self-service yet we wonder why so much of it is bland, predictable, and boring.

Man-centered, natural, self-interested organizations are common - anybody can create them! Christ-centered, spiritual, truth focused communities or families are uncommon - only God can create them! He is simply looking for some of His children to live by His "say so" - His truth - and cooperate with His operation of creating a family who dares to say, "on earth as it is in heaven!"

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 **GREETINGS** 

As you can see (below right) we are planning our Florida conference for 2018. We will be meeting (and sleeping!) in Gainesville this year (instead of Alachua), but other than that things will be pretty much the same. Teaching sessions, meals together, fellowship throughout designed to glorify God and edify the Body of Christ. Whether you are alumni or joining us for the first time, we look forward to your unique contribution to the weekend.

2017 has been full of so many opportunities to share the liberating awareness of Christ in us, our hope of glory! In local churches, retreat settings, living rooms and one on one counseling your personal, financial, and prayerful support has made such things possible. In this month of Thanksgiving, we are giving thanks for each of you and your participation in this adventure with us.

2018...? Who knows but God Himself! We are continuing to trust Him as we have for nearly 30 years now to open doors, provide support, and make a righteous way to bear witness to His saving Life. He has promised us in Philippians 4:19 to "supply all our needs according to His riches in Christ". Thank you for being agents of "His riches" to us!

NOVEMBER

3-5 Waverly, OH (740-947-8004)
12,19,26 CCF
14 Alachua Study

DECEMBER 5th **Ocala Bible Study **NOTE CHANGE

JANUARY

11-14 San Antonio, TX (210-478-0618)

FEBRUARY

16-18 Florida Retreat (see below)

 **2018 Florida Retreat** 

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February 16 - 18, 2018 - Gainesville, Florida

\$50 deposit due by January 20, 2018

- \$305 Couple - (meals and room)
- \$250 Single - 1 to room (meals and room)
- \$165 Single - 2 to room (meals and room)
- \$75 conference and meals (no room)

(for further details call 386-418-0913
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