

God Is Shaking the Church

The rumbling we hear will continue until all we see is Him.

I am not ashamed to be a Christian. But today, because of recent scandals in the church, some people are more likely to trust a bartender than a preacher. They are questioning the established church because they see its failures. So when I am asked if I am a Christian, I feel the need to clarify that I am a “follower of Jesus Christ.”

I am tired of religious labels. Our identity must be in the person of Jesus and not in a label—whether it is one others have given us or one we have given ourselves. Denominations and church groups are fine, unless people start seeing those organizations instead of Christ.

My wife, Joyce, once had a vision of a row of prison cells with a hallway between them. The Lord unlocked the doors, but when the people came out of the cells they crossed the hall and entered other cells instead of following Him.

This is happening everywhere today. Spiritually unsatisfied people are moving from one religious system, denomination or church movement to another, hoping to find the right place. The new location is often an environment similar to the old one but with new titles, lingo and experiences. But it is not a place of freedom.

The Lord is bringing a mighty shaking to man-made religious structures in this hour. He is beckoning us to be free. He does not want anyone or anything to interfere with His personal guidance for each one of His children.

In other words, He desires for us to be in the world, but not of it. Our divine mandate is not to establish churches but to establish people in a relationship with Him.

I like the way The Message describes the shaking we are experiencing: “‘One last shaking, from top to bottom, stem to stern.’ The phrase ‘one last shaking’ means ‘a thorough housecleaning, getting rid of all the historical and religious junk so that the unshakable essentials stand clear and uncluttered’” (Heb. 12:26-27).

We have seen various movements and church systems come and go through the years, and at best they were inadequate in producing lasting spiritual fruit. We have institutions that have done little to impart to, empower or release God’s people so that we can have genuine impact for the kingdom of God.

We have the apostolic movement, the prophetic movement, the emergent movement and the house-church movement today. None of these are necessarily wrong, but often they point to men or methods rather than Jesus.

These organizations often become destiny stealers rather than destiny enablers. They captivate people within the four walls of a building instead of empowering them for service in the harvest fields. Deception, fear and unhealthy authority structures pull people into a man-centered movement to fulfill leader’s agenda.

The shaking we are experiencing today is a move of God, who wants to live and move and have His being through His people. He wants to change the world through us!

When we become free from systematic controls and false “coverings,” Jesus can rule and reign within us and guide us into all truth.

Jesus said, “‘My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me’” (John 10:27, NKJV). If we listen to His voice, it doesn’t matter what denomination we belong to. It is not about a system; it is about Him.

The rumbling we hear will continue until all we see is Him. Then we will begin to present His kingdom to the world. His power and love will pour out of us as we allow Him to use us to bring about His purposes—so let’s embrace the shaking and discover His freedom today.

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