

The Glorious Church Begins Locally—and Must Include You

Let me say this as gently and as lovingly as I can. If you are not an active member of a local church, you will miss God totally in this hour. Even ministers who do not function in and out of a local body will miss God's richest and best in the day we are living in.

The church is God's chosen entity to display His manifold wisdom to the rulers and principalities in the heavenlies (Eph. 3:10). If our national and regional events do not translate into local corporate authority, power, and holy living and character at a grass-roots level in our various spheres of influence, we are wasting our time. God is in the process of building strong local churches, and I believe that the greatest manifestation of God's glory and power will happen at a local level in this day. The Lord is looking for order, unity and maturity in His body, as well as collective movement and not so much individual movement. Whoever heard of an arm going through an open door without the rest of the body? Each member of the body exists for one another. Dear friends, we must understand that!

Jesus wants to reveal Himself in love and power through His local churches everywhere so His manifold wisdom can be displayed to the principalities and powers in heavenly places. The local church is important, and I will be so bold as to exclaim that the greatest eternal investment a believer can make is in his local assembly. The recent pandemic was an abhorrence to God's command to not forsake the assembling of local churches everywhere, and all the more as we see the Day approaching (see Heb. 10:25).

It is our living embodiment of Christ and His love and holy character that adorns the message of the gospel and makes it

beautiful and attractive, until it produces salvation in hearts everywhere. This is why Paul was so emphatic about living this gospel out on a local level first and removing people from the church who didn't (1 Cor. 5:1-5, 1 Tim. 1:20, Titus 3:10). Where are we seeing that today? It's clearly absent from modern church practice and protocol. It's why celebrity ministers are scandalized. Most of them have no local accountability.

The witness of our character is what will adorn the message that saves. This is how the world will know we are His disciples.

"By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love and unselfish concern for one another" (John 13:35, AMP).

This is also the reason Paul admonished Timothy to the importance of conduct and character in the local church. It is what adorns our doctrine and the truth that is in Jesus.

"These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:14-15 NKJV, author's emphasis).

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. We are to be the moral conscience of society and the prophetic voice of God to the world. If our conduct and character don't match our calling and the communication of our message, we give the world the opportunity to blaspheme and slander the church. This is what the aged Paul is telling young Timothy. Moreover, this must first be exemplified at the leadership level. Thus you have the high and noble character qualifications for elders and deacons given to local churches everywhere (1 Tim. 1, Titus 2). We have had many leadership scandals over the last few decades because we do not pay enough attention to

these character qualities. I will say it again: They are what adorn our doctrine and the message of the gospel.

Lock these verses into your spirit:

“Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, having the same love [toward one another], knit together in spirit, intent on one purpose [and living a life that reflects your faith and spreads the gospel—the good news regarding salvation through faith in Christ]. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit [through factional motives, or strife], but with [an attitude of] humility [being neither arrogant nor self-righteous], regard others as more important than yourselves. Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others” (Phil. 2:2-4, AMP).

Imagine if every believer lived like this in local colonies everywhere. It would add so much more glory to our churches.

I believe we are on our way, beloved, if we heed this message, because Jesus is coming back for a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that we should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). {eoa}

Bert Farias' books are forerunners to personal holiness, the move of God and the return of the Lord. They also combat the departure from the faith and turning away from the truth we are seeing in this hour. Bert's current passion is to promote a culture of the supernatural manifestations and ministries of the Holy Spirit in the church today and to pass it on to the next generation (Passing on the Move of God to the Next Generation). His newest release, now available on Kindle and on paperback, *The Supernatural Church of Love and Power*, is a simple blueprint for what the Lord Jesus is doing in His church today. Other materials/resources are available on his website, *Holy Fire Ministries*. You can also follow him personally on YouTube (*Holy Fire Ministries*), Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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