

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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House of Prayer?

“For mine house shall be called an house of PRAYER for all people”
Isaiah 56: 7

Is the local assembly of God’s gathered-together people the Lord’s house? If so, is it an house of prayer? Do the mourning pilgrims come seeking to beseech our Almighty God to bless us with His love and visitation to enable us to worship him in Spirit and in Truth?

“And (Jesus) said unto them, **It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves**” (Matt.21:13).

*In reference to the Pharisee and the publican, “**Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican**” (Luke 18:10).*

I have been told by the aged brethren among the Old Baptists that in years past the WHOLE congregation would bow the knee before the Almighty in a posture of prayer. And the brethren, as they were given a mind, would pray seeking God in behave of the needs of the church family and the ministry of the gospel. With weeping heard throughout the house as the SPIRIT would rain upon the hearts of the gathered assembly. The season would be as long as God determined, there was no hurry; God’s children had come to meet their God in a corporate manner to hear and see the demonstration of God’s Spirit among them.

Then when the singing would begin it would be with prepared hearts visited by God’s visitation to begging sinners. Oh, how worshipful it would be to come together to experience such blessed worship.

It appears today (my limited observation) that we go through such a stringent tradition of FIRST singing (for an half hour), and then a brother is called upon to open in prayer (often never asking the church if there are special needs to bring before the Lord), then after a brother prays as he is blessed to do, the preaching sequence is

announced and so the preaching proceeds. Following the preaching time, a song is usually called and a brother called upon for a closing prayer.

Our Lord Jesus DID NOT say his house was a house of SINGING and PREACHING? Although the singing of sound doctrine in the songs of Zion are a wonderful preparation for the heart and soul, as there are more than one hundred references to singing unto our God in the scriptures. For the reading and comment on the Holy Writ was part of the early worship activities and should be in the NT Church era as God raises up his ministers to preach and teach the gospel trusting God to grant us understanding through the gifts of the ministry as the Spirit gives utterance (Eph. 4:11-12).

Yet, where is the manifestation of the HOUSE of PRAYER? If we are admonished that “men ought to ALWAYS pray” (Luke 18:1). We are to “Pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17).

I am persuaded that our God loves the prayers of his people, as it demonstrates the attitude of the heart with an ultimate desire to rely on the Almighty character of our heavenly Father to bless us with His so sweet visitation in the assembly of the saints. Some might respond, why pray if God has ALL things predestined? Because HE COMMANDED US TO. Why would a man NOT want to pray to his loving Saviour and sovereign Lord? We are quick to pray at a meal for his bountiful food provision, yet slow to pray in the meeting house praising our God for his loving mercy and saving grace. Oh! Children of God, if God so be pleased may we be found on our knees before we even sing the first song, beseeching our God to CAUSE us to sing as weary pilgrims as well as rejoicing saints for what our Lord has done and has promised us in the realm of immortal heaven to come. May be known not only as a singing people, and a preaching people, but a PRAYING people!

I am NOT attempting to change a century of tradition among us; I am merely suggesting to seek God and see if He would have YOU make God's house a HOUSE OF PRAYER, as He named it.

October 1, 2007