

The Gospel Herald

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

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by

Donald E. Martin, Sr.

***“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;
and all these things shall be added unto you.”***

Matt 6:33

Dear Brethren and Sisters called into a lively hope in Christ Jesus: We are observing more and more of the decline of Church assembly attendance and this is not just among the denominations of “so-called” Christians but is also quite evident among those which in times past had given a profession of the belief in the absolute sovereignty of God.

As a believer in Christ for over 44 years, and a pastor/elder for over 34 years, I have seen a rapid decline in worship meeting attendance among those who have professed a belief in Christ. I have heard the following excuses time and time again.

“I was away visiting my grandchildren (strange that it was on designated meeting Sundays), “I attended a friends Birthday party,” “I overslept,” “I didn’t have anything appropriate to wear”, “I was running low on gas,” on and on go the excuses. WHERE IN THIS WORLD ARE OUR PRIORITIES?

If we profess a belief and hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is it a mega inconvenience to make a “Once a month worship meeting”? (which I personally would rather meet some where weekly for divine worship among the assembly of God’s people). There is no valid reason why a person continually is absent from designated Church assembly meeting apart from health issues which can often beset us. I simply and merely ask “what are our hearts’ desires in regard to worship attendance?”

I ask you to sincerely consider the following admonitions of our Lord Jesus Christ toward we who profess to be believers, “For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; And he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10: 35-38).

Now I ask, as a professing born again believer in Jesus Christ, “who is your TRUE FAMILY?” Lest I be deceived, I am persuaded that our Lord Jesus Christ has indicated that a believer’s true family, after being ushered into the kingdom of our God by Spiritual birth, are made up of those who also have been made heirs of grace through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

For we which have been born of Gods Spirit have become part of the spiritual family of God by “spiritual birth” which supersedes that of the natural family aspect. For we who believe have become “new creatures in Christ;” behold old things have past away and behold ALL things become new” (II Corin. 5:17).

Now, I ask a very serious question, “To whom do we desire to be among in regard to our priority relationships:” Our natural family which often is at odds with what we have been made to believe and endorse as TRUTH, or among those of whom have been born of that Spirit above and made citizens of the kingdom of God with whom we shall spend eternity?

Some might say, “Oh! Bro. Don, you are so hard hearted and have not love for your natural family!” No. No. It’s the fact that my love for my natural family is not equal to the love one has for Christ’s Spiritual church family. For our natural family (unless born again of Christ Spirit) shall ONLY be a temporal relationship in this world of sin and woe. Therefore, our love for Christ and his church (believers in Christ) should surpass that of the natural and our heartfelt desire should be to be among those of that common faith of Jesus Christ given to all that are heirs of free and sovereign grace.

I have been among many factions of Baptists (Old and New) and many other so-called Christian assemblies, observing that people on the most part ONLY attend worship meetings when it is CONVENIENT!

Some will say unto me, “well, Brother, you just don’t have any compassion for your children.” Let me respond to that ridiculous statement: I love my children, yet if they give NO EVIDENCE of Spiritual life and a belief in Christ, we are at odds one against the other. For can two walk together unless they be in one accord? For what fellowship light with darkness? You see dear ones, it’s not a matter of whether one loves their unregenerate natural family, it’s a matter of Spiritual life and eternity.

You see, when we are transformed from this life into that realm of eternity, our natural family members of which are not elect heirs of our Gods sovereign love and grace “shall be remembered no more.” For in heaven there shall be NO TEARS, NO SORROW, NO GRIEF, over those of this past natural life. So, in saying all of this, where should our priorities be? Should it not be among our spiritual family of whom God has been pleased to seek and to save and join us in heavens glory? I think so; therefore, we should seek to meet, fellowship and enjoy the sweet gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ at

every occasion, should we not? Is this not what our Lord Jesus was saying in those verses quoted above?

I honestly believe God's children sincerely need to examine their priorities and do as the apostle admonished and "Make your calling and election sure."

In my own experience. I have a desire to be among those called of God into his divine spiritual kingdom and enjoy the occasions of divine worship, singing Gods praises and being under the "FULL GOSPEL" of a sovereign, Almighty and unlimited God who alone sitteth in heaven and does all things according to the good pleasure of his will. May we who have been called into such glorious hope desire with every fiber of our being to be among the sweet fellowship of Gods called out heritage to enjoy a little taste of that heavenly kingdom of which we have been made partakers.

Respectfully submitted, by Christ's merits alone I remain,

January 3, 2015