

Why Do the Christians Rage?

Christians proclaim that the New Testament is their source and guidance for the Lord's direction in their lives. But yet, they nullify the word of God by their traditions. Let me give one example: THE PULPIT



Where in the New Testament is the pastor behind the pulpit revealed? Where in the New Testament is there evidence and practice of one person giving a sermon behind the pulpit when the saints gather together? Why do a majority of the saints get uptight or defensive when the centrality of pulpit preaching is questioned?

The pulpit has a complete monopoly on teaching by one person in the assembly. The saints think that the *pastor* alone has the solemn responsibility to administer God's word every Sunday while they sit as *spectators* in the pews silently. There are saints who believe that the teaching is to be done by *one person* only who is alone has *authority* over them. This *one person* must also have his credentials from some accredited Seminary to prove he is qualified to teach and take care of them.

How Much Teaching Do We Need?

Nowhere in the New Testament is there any *pastor* that has a monopoly over the others when it comes to teaching. In fact, there are Christians who have gone to traditional church who have listened to a teaching week after week and year after year. If we were to calculate, there are at least 52 Sundays in a year; this does not include the teaching done behind the pulpit on Wednesday evenings. So we have at least 104 teachings a year. Multiply that by how many times a person has attended the traditional church, say 15 years. That person has listened to at least 1,560 teachings within 15 years. Shouldn't that person by now qualify to teach others after so many years of sitting in the pew listening to the boss behind the pulpit?

*"For though **by this time you ought to be teachers**, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food," Heb. 5:12*

One Anothering

In the New Testament it is mentioned at least 58 times of "one another's" and nothing about one person leading upfront in the assembly with a teaching week after week. 1 Cor. 14 is the most comprehensive description of what happens when the body of Christ gathers together where participation is encouraged by everyone, and absent is a "*sermon*" given by one person.

There are saints who believe that if you take the *pastor* down from the pulpit and let the church be the church that we will end up with disorder and chaos. Rather, I believe that what we will end up with are saints who will now have to depend upon the Holy Spirit to take charge of the meeting. I don't see chaos, I think I would see complete silence because the saints have not been accustomed to gathering under the moving of the Holy Spirit but have been programmed to follow traditions that have no basis in Scripture. Read the following verse very carefully:

*“Then how is it, brethren? When you come together, **each one of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation.** Let all things be for building up.” -1Co 14:26*

What is the purpose of gathering together? Is the purpose to listen to a *sermon* by the same person week after week, year after year? Gathering today is not centered on Christ and what He is doing through His people during their daily lives, but around the pulpit with one man doing all the teaching as the other saints silently sit in their pews who won't even remember the sermon two weeks from now. The purpose of multiple participation is, *“let all things be done for the building up of the body.”*

Since the *normal* function of the body is by multiple participation (see 14:26 again), there won't be chaos when we remember to, *“let all things be done decently and in order”* (vs. 40)

In the early church there was great freedom and flexibility when they met together. They shared a meal, or rather a love feast, with one another. Today that is reduced to a piece of cracker and a tiny communion cup for the wine or grape juice and now called a “sacrament.”

Traditions

We have traded the blessing of multiple participation as described in 1 Cor. 14 for a meeting that revolves around the pulpit and the pastor who stands behind it. What has happened to us, saints? We have totally discarded and turned a deaf ear to 1 Cor. 14 and have settled for traditions that have developed over the centuries which has no warrant, and has also brought us to a place of turning a deaf ear to Christ himself. Jesus said this would happen as it happened in his day. He said, *“Do you do well to set aside the commandment of God, so that you may keep your own tradition?” “...making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have delivered. And you do many such things. (Mark 7:9,13)*

Let's look at some of these other traditions that have been created over the years as brother Rory has well noted.

- Like feeding the offering plate and tithing.
- An Institutionalized church service every week
- Watching a choir and calling it worship
- Fundraisers, raffle, auction, bake sale, food sales, Church sponsored businesses

- The Church Board
- "Membership" "voting member", or formalized "member" of a church assembly.
- CLERGY robes, vestments, formal church attire that distinguishes from others in the body of Christ.
- A "Worship Leader"
- Church record keeping of who gave an amount
- Elders submitting to a pastor as a form of church government
- The "church" instructed to: buy property, have a "building fund", or "building program".
- A programmed church "service". i.e.: prayer, 3 songs, offering, sermon, closing prayer.
- Positions of overseership. (Superintendents, Districts, Stakes, Wards, etc.)
- The "Sinner's Prayer" as a rote or liturgical response to the gospel.
- A "Song Service"
- A Church Choir
- "Spiritual Covering" by a pastor or hierarchy.
- "Church" referred to as the "Storehouse".
- Prayer or homage to Mary, any "saint", Rosary, or statue.
- A pulpit

And yet we continue to turn a deaf ear.

The Purchase of a Costly Sacred Building To Meet One Another



Not only do we have all these man-made traditions, we now have bound ourselves with overhead generated by the purchase and maintenance of a building, not to mention the salaries/benefits for various programs. Bills must be paid! How is this done? **THE LAW OF TITHING ON THE NEW TESTAMENT SAINT!** The pastor will have one of his staff purchase pledge or tithing envelopes which are especially made so the pastor knows if you are tithing or not. There are two great benefits to this system. The pastor will know who is tithing and you get to claim it on your taxes! Also don't forget those donations in the tape ministry envelopes!

It is crucial that the pastor keeps up with the maintenance of the building and the salaries for his staff as well as for himself. He is counting on you to tithe. Not a week will go by where we don't hear, "Will the ushers please come forward to receive our tithes and offerings." Where in the New Testament is the saint required to tithe? Another deaf ear turned away from Scripture.

We can always tell when the pastor is getting desperate when the people slack off from tithing – we will hear a *sermon* about giving. This *sermon* will always come with a "guilt trip" applied to your conscience. After all, "the Lord has prospered you," why are you holding back and "God certainly loves a cheerful giver." Some will charge you with robbing God by quoting Old

Testament passage such as Malachi 3:8 if you don't give your tithes and offerings. Remember?
“*Will the ushers please come forward to receive our tithes and offerings.*”

The man behind the pulpit needs your money to keep his building and to pay his staff and himself. I've always had this nagging question in my mind. If the pastor should ever have to sell the sacred building, does he share the money from the sale with the other saints? Who actually owns the building? There have been millions spent on sacred buildings and adding to them. Think for a moment, is this what Jesus wants? All the justification in the world will not bring a “yes” answer. The New Testament saints met in buildings, but there is never a hint nor is it implied that they ever “purchased” a building for the purpose of meeting together. All the millions that have been spent on buildings could have gone to help the poor and others in need. Jesus has no use for these buildings and will not even tell you to help purchase one.

These church structures are meeting places where it is nothing more than organized religion led by one man called the *pastor* within its four walls; where there is no flexibility and freedom of open participation by ALL its members (1 Cor. 14:26) for the uplifting of the body. The pulpit and the man behind it has suppressed the way Jesus wants his body to function.

Think about it. If Jesus were to physically walk this earth today, which “church” would you send Him to? (Not to mention that “church” is the wrong translation for *Ecclesia*. See: [“The Correct Meaning of Church”](#)) Would you send Him to the Baptist Church, the Pentecostal Church, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Methodist Church and so on where there is no discipline, even to the point of putting out someone known to be in blatant sin? Do we continue to associate with such people who call themselves a Christian? (see 1 Cor. 5). And if He did visit your church, would He be allowed to stand up front and teach? I most certainly think He would be allowed. Why He is not allowed to lead his saints when they assemble together in our time?

People don't know how to listen to the Lord Jesus because they are too busy letting their *pastor* do it. They depend on the *pastor* for a word of encouragement. They go to the *Sunday Service* hoping to hear from God for some situation they may find themselves in and this word will come from the *pastor*.

The Protestant Pastor is No Different than the Catholic Pastor



As the Catholic pastor is the mediator between the people and God, so is the Protestant pastor, and some will even say so! They all stand behind the pulpit, lording it over the people. (Mark 10:42,43) The pastor is considered our “*covering*.” This is another unbiblical concept. (see: [Who Is Your Covering?](#))

The pastor is also considered our “*covering*.” This is another unbiblical concept. (see: [Who Is Your Covering?](#)) In fact, there is no “pastor” in the New Testament over an assembly. Up until

the second century, the church had no official leadership by one person over the assembly! The assemblies in the first century were led by the headship of Christ. There was no hierarchy among them. However, everything done in the traditional church is centered around the pastor, his pulpit, and his sermon.

People, we need to seek Jesus and Him alone! If a person cannot survive outside the four walls of traditional church, then I must question how much a person relies on the system and its traditions rather than on Jesus alone for his source and strength. What if God were to destroy every denominational *sacred building* on the street corners where people meet to *hear the Lord* through a *sermon given by their pastor*? Would you survive? Could you survive after participating for years in a number of buildings where man-made traditions are practiced, where one person always gets the center stage behind a pulpit? Has he equipped you enough to lean on Jesus alone when someday it may really call for it?

Traditional effects

One of the effects of leaving traditional church will be depression. You have been told the lie that you cannot survive if you don't "*go to church*." You will even be told that you will fall away from Jesus if you don't "*go to church*." The *pastor* has a way of instilling fear in the sheep so that they will be afraid of everything different from traditional experience and under his thumb. Most pastors cannot afford losing "paying sheep". You will be criticized and called the "lone ranger" if you dare obey Jesus by walking away from the sacred building and all its traditions. You will be fortunate if you have at least two people calling on you out of concern, most people don't even get a call or a visit. This in itself should be very telling. You see, it seems life with one another can't exist on a daily basis outside the four walls of this sacred building where the pastor must be present. After "church service" is over, people go home until the following week where they will be united once again, grabbing a few minutes of actual conversation time with a few people before "Sunday School" and "Church Service" starts.

Can you survive? Does your spiritual life and walk with God depend upon you *going to church*? Yes, we all need one another, but how can we comfort others with the same comfort *we have received from God* if we have not learned to first seek Him and listen to Him and receive from Him? (2 Cor. 1:4) Instead, our emptiness is filled by *attending church*, filled with man-made traditions which nullify the word of God and quenches the Holy Spirit from moving upon His people. I have been through that depression and God has always come to the rescue in His time, and that by using other Christians in ways I did not think was possible! We always want things in our time, when God could be saying, "Wait, and just learn to lean on me, even in your trials." The Father always comes through, but not in our timing. God might give somebody that lonely path, but it's not so lonely because Jesus is always there. He promised to never leave us nor forsake us.

Can you survive with Jesus alone if this is what it came down to? Are you truly free in Christ or are you addicted to church traditions? Are you addicted to *rules* made by man of what time we should meet, when to sing, when to pray, when to sit and listen, and when to leave? If one is not sure, he has the *church bulletin* for the *order of service* for that Sunday. Are you truly free in Christ? Are all we allowed to do is listen to the voice of *one man*, week after week, sermon after

sermon as we sit there quietly? Is this what we see in 1 Corinthians 14? Is settling to hear about four hundred sermons a year enough or is it not enough? (Heb. 5:12) When are we going to start listening to the voice of Jesus? Can we survive without the *pastor* and the *man-made traditions*? What if the pastor was to do us a favor and step down, and all we had was one another (including the pastor)? Would **each one** of us have a psalm, a teaching, a song, a word of encouragement, etc., for the building up of the body? Is the Holy Spirit free to move within the body or is he restricted by a schedule and man-made traditions?

Why do the Christians rage? Because some of the sheep have dared to step outside the box and challenge the man-made traditions that nullify the word of God.

We can either walk with Jesus and all that it involves, or continue to walk in the false comfort of man-made traditions that have made us nothing but weak disciples with no voice. In the end, it is us who makes the choice.

“So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, by our spoken word or by our letter.” 2 Thess. 2:15