

THE STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT AND THE MINISTRIES

We are contrasting the government of the church with the ministries of the church. In most churches the government is also the ministry and visa versa but that need not be the normal. The reason is because these are two separate functions. Someone who is in the government may certainly also minister but his ministry is outside of government. His authority to minister is related to his calling, his anointing and his function in the body of Christ and not because he is an elder or an elder who is functioning as a "pastor". Mixing the government with the ministry, where the ministry must have the permission of the government before it may minister, is outside the concept of "body". The government of the church has no function during ministry unless something goes wrong or gets out of order. Ministry has no function in the government even though someone who ministers may also be an elder. The operations are in two separate realms and for two separate purposes and ideally function at different times.

The church government functions to promote unity, protection, corporate goals, economic balance, purpose, direction and to maintain an atmosphere of peace and harmony and order. The "government" may function at any time of day or night. Ministries function for the edification and instruction and maturity of the saints so they will all grow into the ministries. This will provide a continuous continuity of ministries. If one ministry is transferred or called to a new work there is another ministry ready to function. It is beyond the function of government to edify and mature the saints until they all come to the unity of the faith and the full knowledge of the Son of God. It is beyond the function of ministries to pay the bills and maintain order and harmony in the assembly.

Then how did this mixture between government and ministries get established so that neither one is done very well? In church history this is difficult to discover but we can get an understanding from the way other hierarchial systems evolved. For example with corporations and factories.

Before the industrial revolution the small businesses were run by the person that owned them. He managed on a day to day basis and did the buying, the receiving, the stocking, the selling and the banking. He may have had employees but he had total control of the operation. The employees "helped" the owner and only made minor decisions.

After the industrial revolution began, the management problems multiplied so that many decisions had to be delegated to employees. However, there had to be a control system to co-ordinate the various departments of research and development, purchasing, shipping, receiving, bookkeeping, manufacturing, scheduling and sales.

The system that was chosen was called vertical integration. This means the president was at the top with the vice presidents from each department under him. The supervisors were under the vice presidents with the production managers under the supervisors etc until we come down to the man who sweeps the floor or guards the gate. Each department was run as it's own small business but the communication between departments was only through vice presidents. With this system quality control became a departmental problem and was not easily corrected because the communication was not on department to department basis but had to go through top

management who was concerned with their own problems. For example: If there was a quality problem, the problem may be traced to a certain supplier. The solution then would be the decision of the purchasing department and not the assembly department. In the hierarchal system, to change a supplier meant they had to labor down through the various levels of vice-presidents and managers and finally to purchasing. By that time 1000s of defective products were shipped out.

Even if the customer reported quality problems to the president, the system could not respond very quickly because of the problem of communicating down vertically through the various channels. The U.S. manufacturing and auto production system was crippled by an obsolete structure that worked on a limited basis as long as the business was relatively small. However, when business grew to the size of General Motors or Ford the system was too awkward to control the quality of the finished product.

When the Japanese started to manufacture products for the world market they knew they could not sell shoddy products. They wanted to hire an American who could explain our system. They hired Edwards Demming, who was trained as a philosopher, to design a system of management and controls. However, by this time Demming already saw that the American system was obsolete and was no longer an effective management tool. He saw that to produce a quality product, where the quality was not just luck, a totally new system had to be created.

By this time the problems between management and the labor unions had become so adversarial that production was always being affected by controversy and work stoppage. Labor and management had become enemies. Demming set out to discover why. He saw that the whole system had failed because it was totally obsolete for the modern manufacturing age. It had to be redesigned from the top down and from the ground up. The adversarial element had to be designed out of the successful structure.

Instead of the vertical integration, he designed a horizontal integrated system where labor and management both formed a team. Both worked toward one end and that was to turn out a quality product at the least possible cost so that everyone could participate in the extra profit. This created a motivating factor for the workers to get involved in the quality of the product because they would directly benefit. There was a reward motive.

When this system was put into use, the quality of the Japanese cars immediately improved so there was a noticeable difference between them and the American cars. The Japanese soon commanded a large portion of the American market and dominated the foreign market. That ended the status quo for the American industry forever. They had to do something immediately. By this time the faulty system had been established for so long that no one wanted to change or knew how to change so drastically. However, it had to change or the American automobile market would collapse. After several years the unions finally agreed that if they were going to save their jobs the change would have to be permitted. At the present time the quality of the American cars is as good as the Japanese.

The application to the church is this; As long as there is a vertical integration of "management" or government or ministries in the church, the church cannot operate like "a body". It may operate

like an obsolete factory. The church has been functioning like a hierarchy and not like a body. The "pastor" is at the top and manages from a position of "leadership". He may have a sports pastor or a music pastor, or an educational pastor, or even an evangelistic pastor and a youth pastor but the structure is the same as General Motors or Ford.

The question we are presenting is this; Will the present system permit us to be involved in this next move and restoration of God? If not what changes are necessary to provide the "new wineskins" for the next wave so that we are not left with an archaic system that is too awkward to include what God is doing and saying. What changes are essential for us to participate? Suppose we just sit and wait to see what God does? That would assume that the responsibility for change and the new wineskins is wholly up to God. If we take responsibility for preparing the "new wineskins", maybe God will use us to begin to fill them. God will use those who are ready and then waiting for the new wine.

Did God just randomly choose 120 disciples on the day of Pentecost to pour out His Spirit or did He choose those who were in the upper room preparing? Jesus gave instruction to about 500 but only 120 were ready and waiting. The same thing happened in 1905 when the Pentecostal movement began. Were the 120 predestined for that time or were 500 predestined but only 120 were ready and waiting? All were predestined but 380 were doing something else.

The purpose of these studies will be so we can understand the system we are part of at the present. If we don't understand the system we are presently in how will we understand how we operate in this system or escape from this system? Obviously there are numerous defects in the present system because the church we see is not the church of scripture. My thesis is that the present system does not promote the church of scripture but rather cripples the church. For that reason the whole structure needs to be reinvented. We will not improve the future results without improving the process by which the results are obtained. The old system and the old process will only re-establish the status quo.

Everybody is speaking about a last days revival and many are saying it has already begun. There is a large awakening in the Spanish countries but the structure hasn't changed. There appears to be new wine but will it survive in the old wineskins? David said he is having as many as 100 new people in a meeting but they come a few times and they are gone. What are they looking for? It is obvious that they are dissatisfied or they wouldn't be moving around. Maybe they are looking for the new wineskins.

Let us assume that our present result could be rated as a "2" but our goal is to function as a "10" in the future. How do we get from here to there? Not with the same system that is holding us at a "2". We must improve the whole process. We can't just focus on the end we want to achieve but we must focus upon the means to achieve the end. That is the process.

Our company recently help redesign the electrical system for a chicken processing plant that set out to increase production by 300 %. They were already working as many hours as was possible and still allow enough time for sterilization and cleaning. It was obvious that the whole process had to be changed. Just deciding that they could sell 300 % more chickens was not the solution.

They had to change the building, the equipment, the electrical system, the number of workers, the supply of chickens, the transportation of chickens into the plant and the packaged chickens out of the plant. The sales force had to be redesigned and customers had to be committed. It was a 3 year process that required very much planning. Even the way they did things had to be redesigned because the present system could not adjust to 300 % increase in product. Since there was no facility to keep 80,000 live chickens, a system had to be coordinated so the live chickens arrived just in time and the processed chickens were shipped just in time. It was all quite complicated.

Now the church is talking about a great revival where multitudes will be saved and come into the church. It is already happening in the Spanish countries. Still it seems so naive to assume that the present system is all we need to assimilate this multitude. Some think all we need is bigger buildings to house more people but the system to maintain the multitude will break down or the people will be lost or both.

When Carlos Anacondia preached in Argentina a few years ago about 80,000 souls responded and came forward for salvation and deliverance. About two years later I asked Marcos Dermendyisff how many of the souls they were able to assimilate into the existing churches he said "We lost just about all of them".

Housing 80,000 chickens is not the same as processing 80,000 chickens a day. In most assemblies today they are just housing people but are not processing the people. All people, who have vision, want to do a good job. They have potential and many want to do the will of God and fulfill the purpose for which they were saved. However, each one has to be trained, motivated, disciplined and developed toward that purpose. The system that we have now cripples development and maintains the childhood of the believer. It houses people in the status quo but does not develop people into their potential.

In the 1950's kind of factories the union and the management were adversarial. Now it is clear why no change could take place, everybody was fighting everybody lest someone would gain the advantage.

The "management" of the church is in somewhat the same situation. If a ministry develops among the "laity" the "pastor" is threatened and wants to know "who do you think you are? Just sit down, I will tell you when to stand". The "pastor" takes an adversarial position toward the developing members. In some churches the board of "elders" take an adversarial position against the "pastor" and visa versa. None of this is the church functioning on the basis of "body" but the church functioning on the basis of "management and labor. The "labor" provides the tithes for the "management" and the "management" provides a sermon for the "labor". A church hierarchy with the "pastor" as leader is not on the basis of body but on the basis of business of the 1950's. As long as the business is small, the president of the company has to do everything and the workers "help" him. However, when the business grows more people must be brought into the decision making process. In the "management" type of church the growth is limited by what one man or one man with a few helpers can accomplish. In the body type of church there is no limit because our Head is not limited and an infinite number can be added to the Head. As the church expands more elders are added so that the government grows with the number of believers. If 10 believers

require 1 elder then 100 believers may require 4 elders. 200 believers may need to meet in 2 groups of 100. This system is flexible and will accommodate any amount of growth. In two groups of 100 there is now room for twice as many ministries as one group of 200. If the groups are kept at 50 there would be 4 times as many ministries needed.

Static growth in the believers is the weakest form of church possible. Continuous growth in the believers is the most powerful system we can have. We have assumed that the systematic teaching of doctrines and the preaching of "messages" is the way to cause growth in the church. It is assumed that once the church is informed, it will then "do" what it heard. Everybody who has been around very long knows that is not reality but fantasy. How can we discern if we are improving and moving forward or remaining static? Are we closer to the goal now than last year? We should empower every member to take control of his contribution and maximize his function. There have been far too many barriers to creativity. God is a creator and to be God-like we must be creative. If the growth periods of the church are (first) **Listen** (second) **learn** (third) **help** (fourth) **lead**, we may judge our growth advancement. If after many years we are still just listening we are in static growth. We, therefore, must redesign the core structure to promote creativity and ministry in the function of each member. The excuse today is; I didn't think I am called to minister or to help or to lead. Or, I think I am learning but there is no opportunity in this church. If you have learned, there is certainly a place where you can help. It is by helping that we learn to lead. If you are too learned to help, you are too learned to lead.

In the system we have now the "guy at the top" sets the vision and the strategy and then tries to regulate and **micro-manage** the details of the whole church to reach that goal. The church sits while the "guy at the top" kills himself trying to guide a giant that is static and has no idea where the manager is trying to move them. In many churches that I visited the congregation is kept in the dark about what is happening and where we are going. The theory is if they don't know they won't complain and try to move out ahead of the group or second guess the management. "I am the guy at the top and I am in charge" is not on the basis of body that is being guided by the Head. The nations have that kind of leadership but it cannot be that way among the churches. MAR 10:42 And calling them to Himself, Jesus *said to them, "**You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them.**" MAR 10:43 "But it is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; MAR 10:44 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. This is on the basis of the Kingdom where the "leader" is servant of all. This is the principle of body. There is only "one guy at the top" and He is seated on the throne of heaven. Everybody is serving Him, some one way and some another. DAN 7:13 "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. DAN 7:14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, **That all the peoples, nations, and {men of every} language Might serve Him.** His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

In the body type church there must be relationship and communication so the whole body can move together and is aware of what is happening. Each member must have the authority to impart life to their function and bring it up to the 21st century. In the same way that the factory worker

today cannot function in the same way he did at the turn of the century, the church worker must begin to function according to the body. Each member must have the authority to follow the instruction of the Head in the carrying out of his function. We must leave room for each one "to be taught of God" as the New Covenant promises. Of course each member must function within the harmony of the whole body and not against the body and not in an adversarial way. In the hierarchical type church, where there is no distinction between government and ministry, no member can function in ministry that does not first get the permission of the leadership. In the body type church the guidance and anointing of the Holy Spirit is enough.

The big problem is that some are so zealous to participate that they "minister" foolishness in the flesh. How can we correct that big problem? That is the function of government. This is the situation that is spoken into in 1 Corinthians. Of course there will be mistakes made and offenses will come but that is still the function of the body. We can't paralyze the body so it can't function at all just so a few will not be offended. Those who have been hurt or offended will recover but if the body is comatose there will be no function. However, continuous improvement is the most powerful system for the development of the body. That suggests that nobody begins mature so there must be accommodations made for mistakes. A factory or business that never improves will soon close. Many churches have closed but they don't know it because the door is still open and the preacher preaches each Sunday.

In the body type church every member is absolutely essential, otherwise there would be no point in them being there. Every member is connected to the other members and every member has a function. This is clear through the picture given of a natural body and the spiritual body in 1 Cor 12 and Rom. 12: 3-8.

In addition to that there is another picture given that is just as valid but the application is quite different. That is the picture of "sheep" and "shepherd". Neither of these pictures can be taken too far or they will turn into error. In the body, the mouth eats for the whole body but in the sheep-shepherd picture each sheep must individually eat or it will starve. The shepherd's responsibility is to lead the sheep to still waters and to green pastures. In the body the members are connected so one member cannot stray away and get lost. In the sheep-shepherd picture the sheep are ignorant and are continually straying and getting hurt. The shepherd must be alert 24 hours a day or a thief or robber will break through and steal the sheep. The lion or the bear will always be hungry and must be fought off. The responsibility for the safety and welfare of the sheep is wholly upon the shepherd and the sheep have no responsibility. In the picture given of the field or the tower food and fellowship are not the main focus.

If we mix the concept of body with the concept of sheep and shepherd we have a body where the "pastor" is head and is responsible to feed the whole body and drive off the wild beasts and force the members to green pastures and twist their tails until they lay down beside the still waters. He must guard the church door so that no false prophets come in and disturb the sheep. The shepherding movement over emphasized the sheep-shepherd type and under emphasized the body type. The opposite can also happen when we emphasize the "body".

While both pictures are valid and very important to understanding the harmony between the

government of the church and the ministries of the church, neither are completely accurate in describing the relationship between the government and the ministries. Many past and grievous mistakes have been made because the partial pictures were taken as the complete picture. There is also the picture of building a tower, of planting a field, of harvesting a field and of fishing for men. Then there is the picture of building the city of God, the army of God, the Kingdom of God, the house, the temple and the tabernacle of God. Feeding His sheep and fighting the enemy are both valid but are only one view into the city of God which has 12 gates and 12 viewpoints. If we spend all our time fighting the enemy, we will have no time to feed the sheep and the sheep we are fighting to protect will only survive long enough to die of hunger. We can spend all our time feeding the sheep and build nothing or harvest nothing. On the other hand we can spend all our time building a place to house sheep that are starving and dying of thirst.

In that same way we have a partial picture of the church "as His body". This is a beautiful picture but it is still just a partial picture. When we try to get the same unity in the church that we see in our physical bodies there are a multitude of problems. Does that mean that all our work has failed? No! It means that the picture is incomplete and just a partial view of the whole plan of God. If we stretch it too far it will turn into error.

If we try to apply the government of the church and the ministries of the church into these various pictures we will see that in one case the government may fit and in another the ministries may fit. However, neither will fit in all cases. That should be a warning that none of the pictures are complete and should be taught with much caution. While we may share that the government will decide where the sheep will go and what they will eat, we may also share that the sheep need constant attention, healing, encouragement, a time to rest, a time to eat and a time to drink and someone to hunt the lost sheep.

We might also share that the army is directed by the government of army officers but the wounded still need healing. There is room for both government and for ministry but there must also be a balance. In a building there must be designers and there must be workers. This is not a conflict and there should not be adversarial positions. Both are necessary. When the assembly comes together to worship, praise and learn, both government and ministry may be present but the ministry of one "member" to another is primary. The focus is upon a team or body rather than upon government. 1 Cor 14:26 shows that all may participate. However, in actual practice this kind of meeting sometimes turns out to be a disaster because of the immaturity of the "ministers". For that reason we have scrapped the whole idea of body ministry because of strange and confusing "ministry". It is safer to pattern the church after the sheep-shepherd concept where the "pastor" controls the sheep by government and makes them lie down so they don't cause trouble.

We have focused upon the scriptures as "theory" that doesn't work in actual practice. "Yes, it says that but we tried it and it didn't work. In fact it was a big mess"! We wouldn't admit it but we see the scriptures as a theory that may have worked one time, when people walked bare foot and rode on donkeys but in the 20th century it is not a provable reality in actual practice. If we approached the scriptures as absolute reality and totally workable, we would at least attempt to bring them into our experience. As long as we approach the scriptures as theory we will not arrive at the Kingdom reality. In fact, if the scriptures are just theory there need not be Kingdom reality, just

Kingdom theory. We can preach the "doctrine of the Kingdom" without it affecting our life at all. The Kingdom must become personal reality before it can become a corporate reality. Until it becomes a personal reality, it will remain a theory.

The discipleship movement set out to teach each disciple "what the bible said to do" but it didn't work because it substituted teaching for the personal contact with God who teaches and is the source of all ministry. Teaching can inform but it cannot impart. Men can inform but only God can impart. Just having information about how ministry works leads to fleshly activity but when God imparts grace, gifts and wisdom it leads to spiritual ministry. God imparts vision with the grace and the gifts while man may impart desire for grace and gifts. **We are not saying** one is right and the other is wrong but that we need to be aware of our limitation to inspire the gifts etc. to work.

How then can we encourage believers to take that step into the government or the ministries or into both? We may ask "Did you have a grace or a gift that once worked in your life but is now static?" What happened that it did not develop? Did God move on? Was there no opportunity to develop your gift or grace? Have you meditated on what God has said to you about your calling? What is God currently saying to you? Are you actively seeking the scriptural possibility of your calling? Are the scriptures just a theory to you or are they ultimate reality? Is your gift and grace really needed in the assembly and would it edify and strengthen the believers? Is your "ministry" adversarial or is it harmonious? Have you rethought why you do what you do and how you could do it better. Would your function be more fully accepted if it was improved and developed? Have you tried to liberate more creativity in your function?

There is a false concept in the church that if I try to be more creative in my function that means that I will be in the flesh. Of course that is possible but it need not be that way. God is always creative but He is never in the flesh. One realm of the Kingdom is self-law with self-motivation. That means that we motivate ourselves through discipline. For example; If God has called us to teach the scriptures, our function will depend upon whether we search and study the scriptures and pray for understanding of confusing verses. Many times it is the confusing verses that tie the thoughts together and give them continuity. If we are called to teach the scriptures it means being able to share from Genesis to Revelation and not just a verse here and there. It is essential that we can see that what God purposed in Genesis 1 & 2 is perfectly fulfilled in Revelation 21 & 22 and the scriptures in between is how God is bringing it about. Without strict discipline and personal motivation there will be no real results. God doesn't just zap us with scriptural understanding and knowledge. He gives us grace and anoints us to seek and to search but the discipline is our responsibility.

Creativity begins when we can say "The Bible says that I can do this. Then why don't I try to do it? First I need to see if there are requirements and conditions. Have I met them? If I have then I will step out and begin". For example; the Bible says that we will do greater works. That is a Bible fact! Is that theory or is it reality? How will I ever know if I don't step out and try"? Surely the church must be challenged to seek for scriptural possibility. If the scriptures are not just theory, they present a definite possibility of greater works.

If the scriptures were a vital reality in our experience it would make the church revolutionary. Is

the church designed to be revolutionary? The early church was! What is the purpose of liberating people from the kingdom of darkness? It is not just so they won't go to hell but so that they might achieve excellence in the kingdom of God! Not so they can become static in a pew in the sleeping church. There should be an internal motivation coming from the New Covenant within to fulfil the calling and bring joy to God's heart. We are not trying to motivate people to excellence by some external hype about rewards and crowns in eternity. Even though that is all true, the motivation to achieve can be counterfeit and inspired by men rather than through vision and the anointing of power by the Holy Spirit. If the Bible says it, why can't I do it, should be the motivation.

What we are presenting is not rethinking or reinventing church government but reinventing the church itself. We can pay the bills and maintain order and harmony in a grave yard but the church must become a functioning, revolutionary power in the world. While we all appreciate the ministry of Benny Hinn, the Bible says these signs shall follow those who believe. It is either true or it isn't! If it is true then all who believe should be doing signs and wonders. We dismiss that by saying "Yes, but that is a special calling". We render the scriptures of no effect by our excuses and unbelief. Reinventing the church may be as simple as just getting the church to believe and act upon what the scriptures say. After all, all things are possible to him that believes. You can ask for anything in My name and I will do it.

Achieving to the "Kingdom principles" means attaining to a certain quality and manner of life. This means how we do what we do. How we treat others and how we respond to others as they mistreat us. If we never faithfully meditate upon or consider the Kingdom way of doing things and reacting to things, we will just continue in our old habit patterns. Even while speaking of freedom, we are still bound. We speak of liberation while we are still bound by chains of custom and tradition. There is not only life from above but there is the quality of life that we are living, the density of life and the usage of the life we have received.

If we could eliminate the waste in our life we could increase our effectiveness by 25% immediately. People who have no time for spiritual exercise and growth will find that the greatest amount of their free time is about totally wasted. Even though they have eternal life, the quality of the life they are living is far below the revolutionary life of the revolutionary church.

Backward looking technology tries to compare present technology with where we were 30 years ago. While it shows tremendous advancement, the comparison is irrelevant if we see what the need will be in just 5 more years. The church is evaluated the same way. We compare what the church is today compared with the church 30 years ago before the Charismatic Movement. Looking back there has been tremendous change. That is irrelevant if we understood what the need will be in another 5 years. Is it possible that there must be a complete upheaval in the present system to accommodate the next move of God?. If we compare the church today with the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21 & 22 all other comparisons are irrelevant. We need to ask ourselves if the present system is adequate to prepare the saints to be included in the transparency and purity of the New Jerusalem or even if it is adequate to prepare for ruling with Christ in the millennial government.

If we searched for the source of the problem we would see that the basic flaw of the present

system is held in the mind of men. The mind is shaped by tradition, culture, custom and what is taught and by what we accept as normal. We break out of our mind set by revelation and vision. The welfare mentality of the current system cripples progress and the incentive to change. "We are doing O.K. the way we are and we are satisfied". Like the political welfare system it eliminates the reward motive. **We want to pick up our check for resting rather than for working.**

The manufacturing plant today recognizes that centralization of invention and development does not promote revolutionary products. That individual free enterprise and invention promotes new concepts and radical ideas. Large companies buy up smaller free enterprise companies to obtain their new concepts and ideas but then tend to centralize new invention and development. Bill Gates would have been crippled by a large corporation in his invention and development. I.B.M. tried to take over Microsoft many times to obtain their ideas even though the research and development departments of I.B.M. were much larger and had many more years of experience.

Centralization in the church has tended to hold to obsolete ideas and programs that have been used in the past and has regulated the current guidance of the Holy Spirit out of the mainstream of church activity. The fear is that the believers will get weird leadings and "minister" in the flesh. It happens! Even in the pulpit!

The church government may set and promote the basic goals of the corporate group but it cannot legislate the implementation of the process of reaching those goals. The implementation of the basic functions must be inspired by the ministries. Still the ministries cannot appoint the individual functions but inspire members to seek God for their function. Church government must function in one realm while the church ministries function in another. When the government within the church becomes bureaucratic it tends to stagnate growth, development, inspiration and creativity of the ministries and the members. When the guidance ministries become bureaucratic they have the same effect upon individual ministries.

Every citizen of the Kingdom must function in the basics of the Kingdom. The Kingdom means a lifetime of learning, change, correction and discipline. No one can minister Kingdom truth who is ignorant of the Kingdom and how and why it works. The Kingdom is pragmatic and not romantic or just theological or idealistic. Kingdom pragmatism means that the Kingdom is defined and understood by the practical application of Kingdom truth as lived out in the experience of the individual and corporate group. In other words the Kingdom is seen and understood by personal testimony. If it works, show us how it works in your life. We are not interested in Kingdom theories or speculation. Is it practical and will it work for me?

For the Kingdom to be practical, the citizen of the Kingdom must be taught of God and disciplined by God and never cease to learn. The citizen must be taught of God and he must learn everyday in order to break out of a life of spiritual poverty and stagnate growth. Being taught by the indwelling Holy Spirit on a moment by moment basis is the only way it will be practical. The dull greyness or darkness that invades the mentality of the status quo Christian is well known.

The welfare state mentality has produced a counter culture of welfare recipients who know no other way of life. The same has happened in the church. The "leadership" has taken responsibility

for all the areas of church function and personal commitment and said in effect "we will do it for you" in return for a salary. We will do your studying and praying and all you need to do is show up for the meetings and pay your tithe. In effect the church has become a counter culture. Or a culture that is counter or in opposition to the Kingdom culture. In that case the "leadership's" supposed function is **opposite to the principles of the Kingdom of God** yet is accepted in the church as normal. That has produced a counterculture of spiritual poverty.

Any welfare cripples personal strength because it undermines personal activity and responsibility and dignity. In the civil government people have learned to rely on the government to provide what they haven't earned. The welfare Christian does not need to exert himself to hear from God. All he has to do is show up for the meeting and someone will tell him what God is saying. There is a false compassion that encourages people to relax and let us do it for you. We don't want to offend you by insisting that you become more productive and effective in the church.

On the other hand, the Kingdom will command you to strengthen your self and help others. The King will command you "feed My sheep". The King will command you "keep My commandments". The King will command you "Come down from that tree because I am going to eat in your house tonight". This false compassion and "sickly love" will fail to inform you of the Kingdom requirements to save your feelings but that will rob you of the eternal blessing. The welfare mentality applies for a check instead of applying for a job. Don't preach the requirements. Just preach that all the promises are mine and I am entitled to all the blessing because my Father owns it all. Are you applying for a job in the church? No! My inheritance is already laid up for me in heaven so why should I work? I will vote for the president that promises me the most welfare.

The purpose of the church (the government and the ministries) is to prepare a people for a new civilization, within an absolute Kingdom government and under God's sovereign King. In this civilization if you don't work you don't eat. Where is the love of God in that? If God really loved me He wouldn't make me work! That is the welfare mentality that must be purged from the consciousness and vocabulary of the church.

Personal strength is the heritage of every child of God. You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. EPH 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; it is out of personal strength that we develop perseverance and steadfastness and Kingdom character. When Paul experienced physical weakness, he was strengthened by power in the inner man so that when he was weak physically, he was strong spiritually.

We tend to evaluate Christians by what we think is "average". We say he is a good average Christian. That means we would grade them as a "C". Somewhere in the middle. There are multitudes of "Average Christians" out there who are average when we compare them to the majority. However, when we compare them to the Kingdom Christian we see they are not average but sub-Christian or even pre-Christian. We don't lack "average Christians". There are plenty of them. What we need now is to raise up "exceptional Christians" who are overcomers. These "exceptional Christians" in the church are just "average Christians" in the Kingdom. We can identify the "exceptional Christian" because he says "I can because God says I can and it is God's

plan for the church". He sees in the scriptures the personal opportunity to excel and overcome.

Perseverance, integrity, steadfastness and faithfulness is much more important than I.Q. Good character is valued higher than I.Q. in the Kingdom. I.Q. is man's way of evaluating how intelligent a person is based upon how widespread his knowledge is. God can use Kingdom character much better than He can use intellectual achievement. God can impart wisdom to a person of low I.Q. and he will be much wiser than the intelligent. Unlearned doesn't mean stupid. The disciples were ignorant and unlearned fishermen but God imparted enough wisdom to begin a revolutionary church. Being "unlearned" is no excuse for not serving God.

Another excuse is; I can't serve God because of my defects. There will always be a crisis between **who you are** and **who you are becoming**. We must begin to function because of who we are becoming and not remain static because of who we are. God is at work in me. Therefore, I can begin to serve Him. I am not perfect but God is perfecting me and will perfect me much more and a lot faster as I step out to serve Him. There is a lie that has invaded the church that promotes the doctrine of "Personal poverty and spiritual weakness". This promotes the habit of doing nothing because I am not ready yet.

Some develop the habit of work while others develop the habit of rest without working. God first worked for six days and then He rested. Some want to rest for six days and then collect their welfare check on Sunday. Any work will beat rest before you work. It is good to rest after you work. You only develop personal dignity and respect when you work and provide for yourself and your family. You only develop personal dignity in the church when you contribute to the well being of the church. Any job in the church can serve as an entrance level work by which you may advance into "ministry". Working in any job in the church is a step toward success. Doing nothing is a step toward failure.

In our culture in America the concept of work was always acceptable over idleness or laziness. It was always better to save than to be in debt. It was always more normal to have peace over war or order over chaos or safety over violence. That culture seems to be changing. If we don't stand for what is scriptural and right and the Kingdom principles we will, in effect, give approval to the opposite. That is how the culture changes even though the Kingdom principles never change. The Kingdom absolutes have been fixed from all eternity yet the church is in constant change. God's purpose is for the church to change to reflect the absolutes of the Kingdom instead of the unrestricted morals and goals of the world.

HEB 5:12 For though by this time **you ought to be teachers**, you have need again for **someone to teach you** the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. The Greek infers "that after so long a time" you "**all**" should be teachers of the Christian basics. 2TI 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, **these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also**. 1TI 3:2 An overseer, (an elder who administrates) then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, **able to teach**,

All leaders are "teachers" even if they have difficulty with words. Leaders can be teachers without

words. Those who expect their words to carry more weight than their life cannot effectively teach. Each life will reflect the persons ultimate values. Any leader who is teaching about the perfection of the bride but is not personally preparing himself is teaching nothing. His action show us getting ready to meet the bridegroom is not important. When the worship leaders begin the worship it is a signal for all believers to worship and praise God. I have been in many meetings where the "leaders" stand and really don't participate in the praise and worship. This is teaching the assembly that praise and worship is not important and we are just waiting for the time to pass so we can begin something really important, like taking up the collection. If the leaders later teach on the subject of praise and worship their words will mean nothing because they have already taught with their life that it is not important.

The church life is lived in a bond with people. That means more than a greeting on Sunday. This bonding is the responsibility of every believer. This is the principle of "BODY". We may have **believers** without "**bonding**" but we can't have a "**body**" without **bonding**. Believers in transit cannot bond, therefore in that case, the doctrine of "body" is just a theory. These people are teaching with their lives that "body" is not important. Those who are too busy to help people or get involved in the various ministries of the church are teaching that involvement is not important. "Leaders" that stand aloof from the congregation and are too busy to spend time with the "members" are teaching with their lives that the body is just a "theory". When we see leaders leaving immediately after a meeting without taking time to fellowship with the members they are teaching with their lives that kind fellowship is not important. This exposes their true priorities.

Every day we have hundreds of options we can follow. What we do will reflect our ultimate values. We may play, shop, read, eat, rest, do work around the house, watch T.V. or rent a video. Most of what we do **will not make us effective Christians**. We develop habits that predetermine what we will do and what options we will choose. It takes a lot of discipline to break old habit patterns. Neither the government of the church or the ministries of the church can choose your options or determine what you will do with your life. The Kingdom church is a free society where each believer must take responsibility for his own life and for his own contribution to the society. If you don't want to participate you may be excused but everyone needs to know there is a price to pay for inactivity as well as a price to pay for involvement. There are consequences to doing nothing. Church involvement is like a mountain set before us. Every mountain must have an upside as well as a downside and both sides have valleys. Moses went up Mt. Sinai 7 times and he came down 7 times. On the mountain top he was in the presence of God and in the valley he was in the presence of rebellious and contrary people, but both were necessary.

Most people, who have any insight into their own mortality, believe they are weak and of little value to the Kingdom. That is because they evaluate their ability by their weaknesses rather than by their strengths. All of us who are citizens of the Kingdom are powerful. This is a scriptural fact. However, in each one of us there is a tension between our strengths and our weaknesses. If we don't **recognize our strengths**, we will **surrender to our weaknesses**. If all we can see is our weaknesses, we will give in to the lie that we are of no use to the church.

A "strong person" is not a person with no weaknesses. He is a person that functions within his strengths. The opposite of personal strength is "I am a victim of society. I cannot function as a

citizen because "I am a victim". My defence for being weak is that society has made me weak. It is not my fault. Since I am weak you must pay me for doing nothing because you owe me".

This kind of logic is similar to the man who was 100 lbs. overweight, drank a quart of whisky a day, and who refused to exercise and insisted that this sickness is his doctors fault.

Personal strength is defined by "FAITH". Weak people have no faith even though they say they believe. For the weak person, all problems are larger than he can handle. He considers himself to be a victim of someone else's actions. Can this personality flaw be changed so he can become a strong person? Yes! However, the person must advance in faith. He can do that by actively learning. You will discover that a strong person is always actively learning. A weak person is too weak to put forth any effort to learn. How many street people do we ever see on T.V. who are sitting around studying or advancing their education while they have the time? They have chosen to fail regardless of who they blame. The strong person chooses to succeed and refuses to fail. Integrity and perseverance is the result of what you believe. For the Christian, what we believe must be fastened upon the word of God and not upon some undermining, defeating sociological reasoning that some people are just victims of the society.

One of our goals is to build up "a community of citizens of the Kingdom who know their strengths and who will not let their weaknesses stop them". For everyone in the assembly who is weak in some area there will be someone else who has strength in that area. This includes the government as well as the ministries and all the members. Just because you have an anointing to minister doesn't mean you have no weaknesses. Not one of us is adequate in ourselves but require the other members of the body functioning, so that corporately we become adequate. 2CO 3:5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as {coming} from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 2CO 3:6 who also made us adequate {as} servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. What we lack because of personal weakness can be supported and anointed by the Holy Spirit. However, if we never get involved we will never know what we could have done with the support of the Holy Spirit.

If we have real Kingdom quality in our life, that quality will supersede the defects in our life and permit us to be effective. If our ministry reflects the quality that God has strengthened within us, our defects will be of no effect. There is no point of ministering or exalting our defects. Most people will recognize the quality in your life as much as they recognize the quality of clothing or of an automobile. Quality has its own dimension and power. While we can not "invent" some quality that we can assign to the Kingdom of God, we can recognize quality when we see it.

One of the defects that modern society promotes and recommends is this "quality" of individualism. If you are a free thinker and stand alone as an individual and don't conform to anyone's standards, you are respected even if these things are actual defects.

In the church we leave our individuality in order to function as a team or as a body. One of the perversions that we can see in this orgy called sports is the individualism of many sports figures. They will not conform to any standards but their own which are constantly changing. One guy paints and colors himself up with wild and unpredictable colors. This is supposed to make a

statement that he will not conform to anybody's ideas of what is acceptable or normal. He is rebelling against the society that has accepted his perverted actions as normal for this society. This guy wants to prove he is a drop out from that kind of society.

In the ministries, we are **not** looking for or expecting a cookie cutter minister who just reflects the rest of the assembly and ministers just like everybody else. We don't require uniforms so everyone looks alike. We can have a personal anointing and ministry that is uniquely ours but is not individualist as something operating outside the realms of body or that conflicts with the body. We want to accept variety because it is by variety that different members are edified. Even if I am not edified in a certain sharing, I can rejoice because others are. Even though all members of the body are different, each one can minister his grace or gift so that all are edified. However, when "an individual" ministers his individualism there will be an odor present that will not smell of the body or of the Spirit but will have "the odor of flesh".

Most of us have heard of "liberation theology". Most good doctrines can be driven into error by over-emphasis. All of us want and need liberation from what ever binds us or from what we have carried from the former life. However, that is not as simple as someone casting out your former manner of life. Some liberation comes to us when we are involved in active church life. As we receive liberation it will improve our relationships which will enhance our involvement with others. This will lead to more liberation which will improve our relationships and our ministry to others which will lead to more liberation from selfishness and self-centeredness. All this leads to more personal discipline and more discipline will lead to more liberation. Without personal involvement in the activities of the church life, many will not receive the necessary liberation to prepare for the coming of the Lord.