

IS THE CHURCH IN NEED OF CLEANSING ?

“Make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise” John 2:16

The book, *Church on the Rock(s)*, reaches out to those who struggle with today’s church. The book clearly shows what Jesus intended His church to be in contrast as to what it all too often is today.

A BIBLICAL CHURCH

Jesus is in control.
Jesus is lifted up.
The Spirit’s power is present.
Transformations take place.
Prayers are being answered.
Spiritual ministries are multiple.
The elders hear God’s voice.
Life is united and harmonious.
The message brings conviction.
Godliness is evident.

A MAN-MADE CHURCH

Man dominates.
The body is scattered and divided.
Only a form of godliness exists.
Conversions are not seen.
Prayer is only a formality.
Ministry is a one-man show.
Biblical eldership is ignored.
Division and strife are evident.
The message makes no impact.
Worldly conformity is tolerated.

A Good Tree Produces Good Fruit

Church on the Rock(s) is a generic book and does not place one denomination above the other. It does, however, emphasize that the church needs to return to being the church that Jesus intended her to be. When that takes place we will see the following results:

The Headship of Christ means that Jesus will be in control.
Jesus, being lifted up, means that we will be drawn together as one in Christ.
The Spirit’s power will make the Church a mysterious body.
Lives will be transformed when Christ’s message is preached.
Answers to prayer will reveal Christ’s presence in our midst.
Ministries of the Spirit will be Jesus’ gifts to the church (Ephesians 4; Romans 12).
Elders will meet God’s requirements and will hear His voice.
Life, unity, and harmony will come when Jesus is our Lord.
Conviction comes through proclamation of the Word and the presence of the Spirit.
Godliness in our walk will reveal what the Church is meant to produce.

Testing the Spirit

“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (I John 4:1).

In relation to the church today, we must ask some of the following questions:

Are they giving us freedom of insight...or doctrinal legislation?
Are they motivated by the love of Christ...or the love of money?
Are they promoting Christ’s kingdom...or their own?
Are their elders godly examples...or merely position holders?
Are they structured after God’s design...or by human methods?

The spiritual conflicts we often face do not come from outside the church but from wrong insights and neglect of remaining close to God’s Word.

Jesus warned us against the Pharisees for upholding their dead religious system and that the tradition of their fathers were more important than the explicit truth within the Word of God.

Following the hireling	(John 10:13):	Is it biblical to hire “outside” pastors?
Serving two Masters	(Matt. 6:24):	Under whose authority do they stand?
Storing up riches on earth	(Matt. 6:19):	How much wealth is in the church?
Promoting human exaltation	(Matt. 23:17):	What titles do they give to the clergy?
Seeking God’s kingdom	(Matt. 6:33):	On what do they spend most money?
Ministering of all believers	(Matt. 4:19):	Why do they have clergy and laity?
Making disciples	(Matt. 28:19):	Are they nurturing us into spiritual maturity?

Faith Leading to Works

Preaching salvation for the soul but having no standards for Godly living is an incomplete concept of salvation. Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell everything he had and then to come and follow Him. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught the importance of obedience as a condition of belonging to Him.

Some preachers like to boast about the souls they have won but how incomplete is the restoring of the soul if it is not lived out in the body? Speaking more about living out the Christian life will lead to spiritual growth and a productive life for the believer.

Many are Hurting

Today we see thousands of people leaving the churches. Many are sincere believers who are disillusioned with the deadness of their church. The shallowness of preaching, wrongful use of money, neglect of reverence in music, and plain worldliness within the church is upsetting many.

Who would have thought that we would degrade the Gospel by singing repetitious love songs to Jesus, by hiring church staff for money and by spending millions on temple building. In the meantime, are we ignoring the real needy among us, the cry of the millions that still haven’t heard, and neglecting the maturity of the saints?

What has gone wrong? Why have we despised the teachings of God’s Word in regard to church formation? Is there still any hope? What can we do? You will read more about this in the book, *Church on the Rock(s)*.

Note: Richard Oostra is the author of the book *Church on the Rock(s)*, available at www.RichardOostra.com

