

## A "NEW" COMMAND

John 13:34-35 (CEV) "*34 But I am giving you a new command. You must love each other, just as I have loved you. 35 If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples.*"

According to Jesus' command, we are to love one another. It is not a choice, or a feeling. It is a command. If He commanded us, then it is possible for us to do it. He lives in us, He is Love. Let His love flow. Why am I on this trend? Simply because, quite frankly, the Church is not the Church Jesus established.

Have you noticed that the Church is breaking rapidly into fragments? House ministries are growing. Small groups who are tired of the religion and politics of the so called "church world" are getting together to seek the Way, the Truth and the Life. Why is this happening? I am not against any one denomination or Church, but the reality is there!

When religious leaders get together, the first thing they talk about is how many people they have in their congregation, how much their church has grown. Who had the largest crowd at their last concert, crusade or conference.

How much has that congregation grown spiritually in the last five years? How many sick people have been healed? How many blind eyes have been opened? How many drug addicts have been delivered? How many of those salvations in that crusade are still following Jesus today?

Many are going to hell in a handbasket and the Church is recycling Christians! A recycled Christian is one who moves from one church to another to get a high or because the pastor said something that offended them. Here's a news item for you - it was not the Pastor that offended you - it most likely was the Holy Ghost convicting you!

Now, before you vilify me, this article does not apply to all Churches, or Church leaders. There are many wonderful churches and leaders who are performing how Jesus would have them do, but there are too many who do not match up to the criteria set by the Head of the Church.

Father of Pentecostalism and the man who launched the Azusa Street Revival William J Seymour 1870-1922 said "*When people run out of the love of God, they get to preaching dress, and meats, and doctrines of men*".... Does that sound familiar? Many denominations and churches feel that theirs is the only true way and everyone else is going to hell!

When we all face eternity, we will be faced with a couple of issues 1) What did we do with Jesus and the sacrifice He paid? and 2) As a Christian did you fulfill God's purpose for you being on this planet?

The answer to question 1 will determine where you spend eternity and the answer to question 2 will determine what reward (if any) you will receive from God.

Directly opposite to the "established" churches are other churches founded by men and women who do not belong to the religious establishment. They are not run by any board. The pastors are not subject to the deacons or any other man (or woman). They are simply churches and ministries founded from a heart of love and compassion. These men and women have been commissioned by Jesus in this day when the final harvest is being reaped to go out into all the earth and fulfill His commission that He gave so long ago to the early Church.

"Well what about accountability?" - What about it? They are accountable to the highest level - the God level. It is not our business what they do with finances or anything else. God holds them accountable. What we give, we give to God not to them! In the natural, Inland Revenue and the other branches of Government keeps them accountable! Look around! Any minister that was in it for greed is either no longer in ministry or ministers at a greatly reduced level!

If you are a minister reading this, watch out!

Back to the real Church of Christ and the wonderful men and women who are launching out at His word. Many of them started with very little or nothing, but through their giving and faithfulness God is and will reward them not only in the hereafter, but He is rewarding them now! Their churches and groups are on fire with the Glory of God. They are touching lives, delivering, healing, bringing hope where there is none.

Pastor, minister, what is your church/ministry like? Is your congregation large and dying (both physically and spiritually)? Is it the same thing week after week? Is the Holy Spirit alive and welcome? Now is the time to take the spiritual temperature of your ministry.

Revelation 3:15-17 CEV says "*15 I know everything you have done, and you are not cold or hot. I wish you were either one or the other. 16 But since you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spit you out of my mouth. 17 You claim to be rich and successful and to have everything you*

*need. But you don't know how bad off you are. You are pitiful, poor, blind, and naked"*

That is Jesus speaking!

This is also Jesus speaking in Luke 4:18-19 (The Message)

*God's Spirit is on me;*

*he's chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,*

*Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind,*

*To set the burdened and battered free, to announce, "This is God's year to act!"*