

—The Centrality of Christ—

Don Rumble

God's intent in establishing His order at the end of Church age is to center everything in, gather everything unto, and sum everything up in His Son, the Lord Jesus. Everything will be gathered around Christ; He is the center of the purpose of God.

In view of that Divine Order which was to mark the completion of the ages, when He should make everything...center in Him. (Eph. 1:10) Twentieth Century New Testament

Men may try to escape the reality of who Jesus is in this life; but in the end they will face the inescapable truth of His centrality and lordship in the universe. Preparation for that day is found in walking under His sovereign rule today. *The Father is dealing with us to give the place to His Son in our hearts that He has given Him in the universe!* To the degree that Jesus is central in our lives, we are in harmony with the purpose of God.

For some church groups, their building is central to their existence. For others, perhaps it is their choir, youth ministry, social programs or political activism. Still others gather around the preaching of sound biblical truth by a gifted and eloquent leader(s). However, what has not sprung from Christ (His leading) is but dead works done in His Name. What is of Him will stand for eternity; what is not will be shaken. At issue is not how successful an assembly may appear, but how much of their activity springs from God's initiative and expresses His heart.

As we view the Church, some of what we see on the spiritual landscape is the effort of leaders who have caught a vision of God's intention. However, in failing to wait for Him to bring it to pass by His Spirit through His people, they try to implement it by stirring the Church to action in various directions that seem appropriate to them. The results fall short of what God intends, producing sects, "apostolic franchise systems" and para-church organizations. It all boils down to this: Christian leadership has not been patient to wait for God to arise and establish what He promised. Instead, men have brought forth *their interpretations* of His plans. But God is not building men's interpretations of His objective. He wants nothing less than His own heart's desire expressed on the earth. That is more grand than any one man or group of men can grasp or implement. The purpose of God is bigger than our vision! No matter how mature we might be.

How are we to build the Church in anticipation of where God is going if His purpose is beyond what we now see? Because many do not deal with this crucial question, they establish ministries that meet apparent, immediate needs. Such activity may look and even be successful for a season but, in the long run, is unable to adapt and embrace the continuing revelation of God's full intent.

How then are we to build in God's house? *We must establish the centrality of Jesus into the lives of God's people!* The implications of this are evident. Money, ministry, marriage, career – none of these are to be central. *Everything* must recede back into the shadows giving Him His rightful place in our midst. Jesus...center stage! Let all eyes be focused on Him; it is "His show"! When we gather together corporately, we must learn to gather to Him. Leadership must learn that we are not the "main event"; He is! If He does not give us something to say, then let us be silent. May we not speak simply because everyone expects us to. Let us speak only because we have the word of the Lord in our mouths.

Leadership must train God's people to hear *His* voice better. We do the flock no service when we preach truth from the Scriptures when God is not anointing us to do so. At that point, we are informing their minds, not feeding their spirits. When we equate intellectual knowledge with spiritual food, we lay a foundation for spiritual pride in the Church.

Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies. (1Co. 8:1)

The biggest cause of division in the Church is pride. A primary cause of pride is that we gather around knowledge more than the person of the Lord Jesus. And when we minister saying, "This is a fresh word from the Lord", when it is not, we train God's people to hear *our* voice, not His. Thus we muddy the waters. Then when God decides to move in new ways, the people are not conditioned to move at His command. They have been conditioned to hear us. However innocently we do it, we gather people unto ourselves and not unto Him. Then, working with those who respond to us, we implement our interpretations of what we see in the Scriptures. But,

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. (Ps. 127:1)

How many times has God wanted to speak through someone in a meeting who was not a (the) leader? But because that was not the "normal" way of doing things, God was silenced. Until there is deep repentance among the leadership in God's house, we will continue to promote division. The problem surpasses whether or not we have correct building methodology or proper church structure. *It is that man has wielded control in*

God's house. The Church is out of order. It is not in harmony with the economy that exists in heaven. God has a view to establish a people on earth who are a testimony of the order and economy of heaven. Part of our problem is that we do not trust the Holy Spirit to accomplish His mission. He was not kept in heaven to establish order there. He has been poured out upon us to bring the order and reality of heaven into the earth through the revelation of Jesus in our midst.

Are we contributing to His goal of building a house where He Himself is the central focus of the people we serve? Or are we building “a name” for ourselves? Let us consider these things as we arise and build in harmony with Him.

All Scripture quotes are from the NKJV

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