

Intro_

As we gather together once again from our absence due to the Covid Virus, we look back on the circumstances that prevented us from meeting together as a whole as a time where our dedication and patience were tested. That, no matter if we did not meet here at the building we still fulfilled our obligation to the Lord as best as we could. For throughout our lives we will encounter obstacles and stumbling blocks in our attempt to fulfill our duties as Christians. This trying time may have prevented the congregation assembling physically, however, it did not prevent the faithful from fulfilling remaining steadfast in the Lord. [Matt. 18:20](#) records, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” We were not left without his presence; and we will never be without hearing His voice.

Destitute of Grace

There is a state of man from which he is not heard by God. [1Pet. 3:12](#), “For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.” No Christian wants to be in a position without the divine voice of reassurance, but that’s exactly what happened to King Saul. King Saul disobeyed the Lord’s command by partially fulfilling a divine charge. He also performed an offering not commanded, and thus spoke in place of God’s word. As a result, the kingdom was taken away from him. Before David was set on the throne, King Saul (in time of peril) looked to God for answers but the Lord did not respond to him. [1 Sam 28:6-7, 15-19](#). Saul was in a place void of God’s responses and confirmation. He had already cut off all familiar spirits in Israel and so, knowing that it was forbidden, he still went forward using a medium to affirm himself in his doings. The removal of the God’s Voice was clearly manifested in the removal of divine counsel through the prophet Samuel.

As with Saul, during a time of doctrinal crisis, church leaders found themselves in a situation where they found no answer from God to hold the Kingdom together by unifying it through universal obedience and judgment! Because of this, the entire church was allowed to choose whatever suited the individual to do led by his own conscience, as long as there was no talk of division.

For taking this hypocritical position, the Lord forsook them as they forsook him and abandoned the way of *conservative* righteousness. The Lord’s departure from them is manifested in the church’s want for prophetic revelation. [Amos 8:11-12](#), “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*.”

They look for confirmation and yet do not have it within the scriptures, so they conjure up ideas like necessary inferences and use human opinion to speak in God’s place. They do not have the voice of the Father! Instead, they have made their bed upon these manmade teachings promising life, yet they lead the people to darkness. The Lord charges Ezekiel to speak unto the false prophets about such practices in [Eze. 13:22-23](#), “Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life: Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

The Lord's deliverance from this critical moment is manifested in the preservation of a small remnant abiding in gospel truth. **Jude 1:1** "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:"

The Lie

Isa 28:14-18. We know how powerful a lie can be with its deception and influence. However, every word and deed will be measured in fairness and in righteousness. And it will be done using a simple line with a weight on the end of it, that is to say, "a plummet." Builders measure the straightness of building walls using a plummet, and God uses a "line" called truth, to manifest the crooked lies within the assembly. Peter predicted that false teachings would find their way into the church (2 Pet. 2: 1-2), and Paul predicted that an individual, followed by many others would sit in the church's seat of power undermining the authority of Christ (2Thess. 2: 9-12).

Church leaders abandoned God, they willingly deserted the Truth because they elevated their voice when the Lord's was not present; they avoid any confrontational text to remain in fellowship with one another no matter the difference and they are too prideful to look toward God for help. **Hos 5:11-15.** They have made their alliance with the reasoning of this world and with false divinations and lies and think that they can abide in these things in safety.

The Voice of Strangers

Denominationalism has preferred to respect the reputation of men. We do not! Jesus spoke of his genuine disciples as not listening to the voice of strangers **John 10:4-5** "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." The basic principles of theology are generally accepted throughout the religious realm with few exceptions. However, when it comes to dealing with the proper method of worship, there are far too many voices claiming they have the truth over the matter. This is where the genuine believer separates himself from those prone to following popular opinion. The only approved methods of introducing biblical practices are by direct command and an approved example. **Proverbs 16: 1-3** reads, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits. Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established."

It's totally out of character among conservative believers to disagree over doctrinal issues. However, in the case of prayer and edification of the church, even the so-called conservative churches disagree. We have only the voice of strangers to blame for this confusion. Not Jesus!

Conclusion_

Heb. 3: 7-11, "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)"

If you want to find this rest, you may by simply confessing Jesus as the son of God and being baptized for the remission of your sins.