

A WORD ON WORSHIP

Review of Message from November 12, 2017

BY PASTOR ANDREW KICKERT, SUNRISE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Hear Sunday Sermons at www.SunriseTC.org

Ezekiel 36:26-28

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”



It is true that we cannot “have it our way” when it comes to church, but rather we must function in ways that are consistent with sound doctrine, and which are obedient to the principles and commands of Scripture, illustrated by apostolic practice. We have been given certain terms like elders and deacons, and we have seen how the early church functioned. But let us not err by concluding that being a New Testament church is primarily a matter of terms and forms. The essence of a New Testament church is more a matter of the heart.

The New Testament church is made up of those whose sins have been covered and atoned for by the shed blood of Jesus, and who now have hearts of flesh, rather than hearts of stone. The New Testament church is one in which the Spirit of God dwells, empowering Christians to play their unique role in the body of Christ so that our Lord now ministers to the world through His body, the church. We can use all the right terms and have all the right forms and traditions, but fail to be a New Testament church because we lack hearts that are filled with faith, hope, and love - not to mention many other attitudes that should characterize the Christian (like humility, servanthood, joy, and thanksgiving). This is why a church may not have all the right terminology or just the right forms, but may nevertheless manifest the life of Jesus.

A New Testament church manifests Christ to the world. Through the presence and power of Christ, the church ministers to itself and then to the world. Thus, the church is not just about principles and procedures, but about people, people who have come to faith in Jesus Christ, who have been joined to the church, and who are divinely indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit. A New Testament church has New Testament life and power. It not only carries on the work of Christ, it manifests His character. The heart of a New Testament Christian (and a New Testament church) is the work of God’s Spirit, the out-working of the New Covenant inaugurated by the shed blood of our Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary. It all begins with Jesus, just as it ends with Him. I pray that you have trusted in Him, and thus have become a part of His church.

Sunrise Community Church
Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst
EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.

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