

Topical

Just Jesus

Colossians 1:15-23, John 5:31-47

Topical vs. Expository/VbV

The whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27)

Sometimes things I want to share, but am not led to at the time.

The surety of the Word

Today: What are we here for?

"The point of a system is what it does" - Jack Posobiec, political commentator, former intelligence officer

Church - not a building. The people!

2 Corinthians 6:16 NKJV - And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among [them]. I will be their God, And they shall be My people."

That God desires to dwell WITHIN his people

The church is the term for his people

And when His people gather together - we've called it church

- The church born, Pentecost, 50 days from passover (crucifixion)
- Holy Spirit comes, tongues of fire
- Peter preaches repentance
- Thousands saved - when they hear the gospel in their own language

Sadly, we now call the building the church!

Even the dead ones. Even the empty ones.

Acts 17:24-28c NKJV - "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their

dwelling, "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; "for in Him we live and move and have our being, ...

We're the church...and when the church comes together, what's it together for?

Take a step back

5 Spokes of healthy Christian life

1. Evangelism
2. Bible Study
3. Prayer
4. Fellowship
5. Worship/Song

These things should be a part of what the corporate church does.

But Sunday is not the only day it should be a part of the believer's life

What's a good way to tell someone is alive?

1. *Pulse*
2. *Breathing*
3. *Pupil dilation*
4. *Conscious*
5. *Hungry & thirsty!*

If my kids didn't ask for food or drink, I'd be worried!

When we get sick, we lose our appetite...

**Imagine you only ate, drank, talked, breathed, one day a week.
You wouldn't be alive!**

But if you were somehow still alive, would you still be living?

So the gathering of believers (we'll call it church of *the* church)

Is a time when we get together to do those things

But is it just to "do" those things?

Sadly for many churches and churched...it is

It's just a song

It's just a nice message about living a better life

But what it's supposed to be about - is Jesus.

I know that sounds obvious.

I'm not playing with the semantics of language.

If we've met Jesus. We've been changed.

We've been resurrected.

It's a living faith. With the living God.

And that can't be contained in one day a week.

The point is - we aren't meant to come to church FOR a song

For a message (even a good one)

For fellowship (even genuine loving fellowship)

We're meant to come to spend time with Jesus

And all of those things - flow from that

Come out of that

Exist to facilitate just that...

You and I personally meeting with Jesus, together.

Hebrews 10:24-25 NKJV - And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as [is] the manner of some, but exhorting [one another], and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

(real push in Christianity in the past 10-15 years to redefine all the words.

"Gathering" instead of service "Christ follower" instead of Christian.

I get it, but I think the focus is on the wrong thing
the word instead of the why

Why are people disillusioned? Why do people give up on church?

Why do people leave the faith? Deconstruct? Seek out religious rote

and ritual? Because we've missed the point. We've forgotten what

we're here for. What it's all about.

Jesus. Again, I know that sounds obvious. But I don't think it is anymore.

- When you walk into a building for church. And something's missing.
- When you're busy about doing service. But it's wearisome.
- When people have small talk but don't get to know each other.
- When the message talks about being good but your left with a spiritual task.
- When you sing a song but the main lyric isn't about God or if it is, you haven't felt like you've come face to face with Him singing
- When the prayer sounds holy - but heaven hasn't shown up.

[Pray]

Colossians 1:15-23 NKJV - He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased [the Father that] in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

John 5:31-47 NKJV - "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. "There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. "You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. "Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. "He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish--the very works that I do--bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. "And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. "But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life."I do not receive honor from men. "But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. "How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that [comes]

from the only God? "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is [one] who accuses you--Moses, in whom you trust. "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

John 21:25 NKJV - And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

It's about Jesus. All of it. Everything.

- History - HIS story
- All of it. Everything points to Him.
- The Bible - gives us everything we need to know Him, and know what He's done and what He will do.
- Where we've been and where we're going

Even history. We've tried to get away from BC and AD and call it "common era"
But there's nothing common about it

Jesus came at the right time in human history that the gospel would spread everywhere

What's happened in the 2,000 years since the birth of the church?

Revelation 2:4 NKJV - "Nevertheless I have [this] against you, that you have left your first love.

The church, the Bride of Christ, has left her first love.
And most of the time, when a spouse leaves their love, it's for another's arms.

We live in a lukewarm church age.

Things that sound nice. Sound Christian. But they're not.
They've been spoiled by the world.

We've got the Bible. The gospel has gone just about everywhere. But somehow it's not good enough for us anymore.

The church is afraid to preach it. The people don't want to hear it.

2 Timothy 4:3-4 NKJV - For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, [because] they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn [their] ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

LEAVE THE TRUTH FOR ... FABLES

Fairy tales!

“So called science”

And sadly, to doctrines of demons

1 Timothy 4:1-11 NKJV - Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, [and commanding] to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God [is] good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. This [is] a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For to this [end] we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is [the] Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. These things command and teach.

That “new” Doctrine, that thing your denomination teaches, that pet thing your pastor always preaches on, that teaching that you’re afraid to analyze -

Where does it take you?

Is it to Jesus? Or is it to someone or something else?

Does it make you dependent on God?

Or dependent on works?

Water baptism

Thief on the cross wasn't, but he was promised salvation

Ethiopian eunuch - saw a puddle, got baptized there

Baptism doesn't save you. But if you're saved, you'll get baptized as soon as you can.

It's the breathing thing again...if you're alive, you're going to breathe. You're going to get hungry.

Pumping air in a dead body doesn't mean they're breathing
 Forcing food down your throat doesn't mean you're eating

**Doctrines must take into account the entirety of scripture
 You cannot cherry pick.**

As soon as you cherry pick, you're seeking to make it into something it's not

Calvinism, Arminianism and the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV - All Scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Be a Berean - search the scriptures daily to see if it's true!

Leaving church with 10 points on how to be better
 I'm sure they're fantastic and right on
 But is the point of the points - something for you to do?
 Or is it for you to rely on Jesus?

Being positive! No, better to mourn!
 Positive != God
 Negative != bad

We must not be fake. It's OK to be hurt. It's ok to not be positive and say, you know what, my situation is awful, I need to repent. Not cover it up with the work of being positive only.

Huge deal on Restructuring of the church, size of churches, who leads, etc.

Ephesians 4:11-16 NKJV - And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ-- from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

I get it. The church has messed up.

You've been burned. So have I.

But decisions cannot be made by majority (take a look in acts with Matthias)

The Moses model, the pastor with elders, works
 But elders in charge and hiring and firing pastors - it's not a business
 He's not a CEO

The pastor needs to lead. The board needs to help. The body needs to be fed.

**Here's the problem. Church is meant to be a family.
 The major qualifications for pastors? Families in order.**

God, Wife, Kids, Church

Not to be rude, but in a way, I won't care if you're in heaven but my kids aren't.
 They're my priority.
 But, I want you there too, of course!

The point I'm making is - church is family.

Church voting?

My kids don't get a vote on what I do, unless it's getting ice cream.

God leads me. I lead my family.

But my family is involved

Wife is the neck that turns the head.

**But we've turned church into something it's not.
 Not because what the Bible prescribes is wrong.
 But because we've not let Jesus lead the church.
 And we've not treated the church like spiritual family.**

It's not a new problem...

Philippians 2:19-21 NKJV - But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

Jeremiah 23:1, 3-4 NKJV - "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the LORD. ... "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be

fruitful and increase. "I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking," says the LORD.

Close with this...

Have you met Jesus?

If you truly have, he'll naturally become the priority of your life - but it will take effort at times

When you come to church... Is it primarily to follow Jesus?

Are you truly his disciple...When you learn, is it from Him?

Do the messages we listen to, do the teachers and pastors we trust, actually bring us to Jesus? Or bring us to them?

When we sing, is it actually to Him?

When we evangelize, is it because we're following His prompting?

Is it because we know he's already at work in their life?

When we get into study, or a doctrine, do we consider it's fruit?

Does it lead us to love God more and love others more?

Does it align with the entirety of scripture and who God is in light of it?

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Or does it become the basis of our salvation, apart from the finished work of the cross?

When we give advice, do we ask what the Lord has been speaking to them about?

Who we seek first...

Who we worship...

What we believe...

What we give...

What the answer always is...

Needs to be...

Just Jesus.