

A Word of Warning

Rebuilding of the church

This chapter taken from the book *When Faith Came* by Franklin Whittenburg © 1998-2006

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Most of my studies have been on the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and I really, really, wanted to stay on just that, but there is also some bad news that must be addressed also. I don't like to confront problems in the church without first explaining those problems and then presenting the Biblical solution, which is why the rest of this book is written. This chapter on warning is just one chapter in a much larger book. Judge this information with spiritual discernment.

To start with, forget about denominations, there are only two churches in existence today, a true church and a false church. This may surprise everybody, but the true church has already been operating in one accord silently inside all denominations including the “cell churches” preparing for the coming of Christ. This has always been the case. Even in Paul's day there was a hidden remnant of God's people working behind the scene in one accord that religion never saw until it was time for God to use them.

But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Romans 11:4,5 KJV).

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel (Luke 1:80 KJV).

Even Paul as a leader in the church, seemed to know nothing about some of these people of God in a city where he was sent to preach.

Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city (Acts 18:9,10 KJV).

Even though the “cell / small” group church movement is rapidly growing, I also hear of a quiet exodus of Christians coming out of this “cell / small” group movement also that have been spiritually abused by the church leadership. Something that I hear in these people that are coming out of the “cell church” movement is they are all seeing the same thing and they are in one accord. I am going to address some of those concerns in this chapter. I do think certain types of house group meetings are biblical and I have had wonderful fellowship with other Christians in small house groups. The disciples even broke bread from house to house (Acts 2:46 KJV). I know many wonderful people that

are still participating in small groups at home, and I do miss the fellowship. I don't know if they are still willingly embracing cells now or if they are locked in a cell (group) and do not have the key to get out. At one time, I attended the "school of leaders" and I had even started my own cell / small group, so I know that many in the individual cell / small groups do have a true desire to minister to people. The people in small groups can get together and do much good for the communities in which they live. But what I am seeing is the cell / small groups today is they are becoming the "comforter" instead of the Holy Spirit.

It is not the personal cell / small group individuals that I am questioning with this study, it is the structure and the "equipping / discipleship" programs of the ones that are trying to rule over them in the church and their possible motives. Many other people have pointed concerns out as these cell groups have split other congregations. I had a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as I explained in my testimony before cell groups came to the congregation I attended. I didn't forsake that personal relationship with Jesus or my own personal Bible study when I joined the small group movement. One concern I have is the Bible plainly states that it is God and not us that assembles the body together. To claim that the body of Christ has been defective until the cell / small group structure came along is to deny that God was able to accomplish that task through out the history of the church.

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand (2 Corinthians 1:21-24 KJV).

I do not disagree with all of the cell church doctrine, but as a builder, my concerns are more with the structure of this "new paradigm" church movement. When you start stacking small groups on top of each other, (first generation, second generation, third generation, etc), I think there is a problem, which I will address here. Is the "new paradigm" movement preaching an old gospel in a new way, or is it preaching a *new* gospel a new way?

As I read the book on cell churches (*Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church* by Ralph Neighbour, Jr.) and understood more how they operate, some questions and concerns arose which I will address here. The hour is late and it has become too dark for many churches to see and they have been blinded, but their ears can still hear a voice in the darkness.

Ok, let's start from the beginning. Why has there always been such turmoil in the world associated with religion? Why have millions of people died through out history in the name of God in war after war? What has Satan, many religions past and present, secret organizations and societies, governments, and most of mankind been pursuing from the beginning? The POWER of GOD!!! Why can they never seem to attain it? The answer is very simple. They want to CONTROL the power of God. What they fail to realize is the power of God is freely given but with one condition. God remains in control of His power and uses it only through us as vessels for His purpose and His Glory. A Christian doesn't use the Holy Spirit to do service for God, the Holy Spirit uses them!

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (James 4:2,3 KJV).

For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:5-7 KJV).

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28 KJV).

What many people today are trying to do is rebuild the church in a new model called "Cell Churches". To understand why the "cell model" (also called "small groups, life groups, watch groups, share groups, etc." which I will prove later, because many small groups deny that they are really cell groups), cannot be the structure for the true church I will have to give you a crash course in temple building. At one church that I attended, they had a program called Network that was designed to teach you your spiritual gift and to get you plugged into ministry. Because of my experience as a carpenter and the way I could fix things, they told me I had the "spirit of craftsmanship". The church thought that the best way I could be used in the church was in helping to build stages and props for church programs. This supposedly was my God ordained calling and purpose according to the Network class. Even though my trade is a carpenter, I still have some understanding of building temples. The most Holy place in the tabernacle in the wilderness and the Ark of the Covenant were both built out of wood overlaid with gold.

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:9-11 KJV).

I believe that many forget that the New Testament temple is not just the church as a body, but also the physical body of each individual believer in Jesus Christ. While everybody today is focused on the uniting of the body, I want to go back and focus on the individual believer as a temple of God in this book.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (1 Corinthians 3:16,17 KJV).

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price:

therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:19,20 KJV).

In the Old Testament temple the ark of the testimony, which had the tables of stones (Ten Commandments) in it, was behind the veil in the most Holy place. The ark of the testimony was in the oracle in the most Holy place where God would speak to man.

And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims (1 Kings 8:6 KJV).

In the New Testament, the believer's physical body is a temple of God and the believer's heart is the most Holy place where God dwells.

Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart (2 Corinthians 3:3 KJV).

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (2 Corinthians 6:16 KJV).

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; (Acts 17:24 KJV).

If the believer's physical body is also God's temple and the believer's heart is the most Holy place where the ark of the testimony carrying the New Testament is located, then the oracle of the temple should correspond to your mouth.

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10,11 KJV).

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe (Hebrews 5:12,13 KJV).

As we can see by these scriptures not only the church as a body, but each individual believer is also the New Testament temple in this world. Jesus Christ is our High Priest, and the believer ministers to this world out of a physical body, which the Bible says is God's temple. Christians refer to this doctrine as the "priesthood of the believer".

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: (1 Peter 2:9 KJV).

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (Revelation 1:5,6 KJV).

Therefore seeing WE have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:1-7 KJV).

The cell group claims that they also believe in the priesthood of the believer and that is what they are doing in the cell groups by “equipping” the people to minister to the nations, but what they will not tell you is the same “priesthood of the believer” doctrine also secures the believer direct access to the throne of God and not through some “spiritual father” or “one set man”. But what I have just shared about the individual believer becoming the personal temple of God and being indwelt with the power of God personally cannot be attained in the “cell / small” group church movement. They believe this kind of power comes only when the believers are in a “small group” setting in perfect unity or in a corporate worship or celebration setting in unity like the upper room at Pentecost. But what happened at Pentecost were many individual baptisms at once.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:3,4 KJV).

As stated in the cell church guidebook, the advocates of the small group structure believe that the only way that a disciple can truly experience the full power of God is in a group setting, not individually. Apparently the power for ministry only shows up when “we get it right”.

“There is no place under heaven for spiritual gifts to be properly developed than in a cell group. It is there, and nowhere else, that Christians can be taught to appreciate, desire, and exercise spiritual gifts. The cell group is the channel of power. It is the gateway to enter into the supernatural, the entrance to every believer discovering the

power of God to heal, to deliver, and to provide growth.” No matter how wonderful a theological position may seem, the heart of changing values is not theology but the practical application of it in experience. The valid church is only peripherally experienced in a P.B.D. setting. It requires the people of God to gather themselves as God intended before the setting for the experience will allow His fullness to flow. Page 74,75 (**Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church** by Ralph Neighbour, Jr.)

In the Bible we find the exact opposite! Peter never needed a small group with him to accomplish God’s purpose. In the book of Acts we find Peter telling all the other saints to “get out of the room” while he raised Tabitha from the dead!

But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive (Acts 9:40,41 KJV).

If the true power of ministry comes only in a small group setting why didn’t Peter gather all the other saints around Tabitha to pray for her resurrection? Even Paul referred to himself as coming in the “fullness of the blessing of the gospel” personally in Romans 15:28,29 and not corporately.

When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ (Romans 15:28,29 KJV).

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead (Colossians 2:9-12 KJV).

When the Lord called Paul into ministry, why did he send him to the wilderness of Arabia to be “equipped” for ministry and not usher him into a “small house group” to help him perfect his spiritual gifts thru other apostles? Leaders equipping leaders?

To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times

past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me (Galatians 1:15-24 KJV).

Why does the Bible say that each true believer is given a ministering spirit (angels) if true ministry can only flow through a cell / small group structure? Why do we even need the Holy Spirit or a personal ministering spirit if it is cell groups that “equip” us for ministry?

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? (Hebrews 1:13,14 KJV).

For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee (Acts 27:23,24 KJV).

The reason that I am sharing this is not to attack the people in cell / small groups, on the contrary, I want to see them walking in a full personal relationship with God! I was a cell group leader at one time and I had a good cell group leader that sincerely wanted to serve God and I think they have also left the movement. The Bible speaks of God indwelling the church body as a whole (Ephesians 2:20-22), which is where I agree with the cell church doctrine. Where I disagree, is that the cell church model is that self-proclaimed true church body structure, as I will explain later.

And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-22 KJV).

I think now many pastors that are focusing on building churches with small groups are looking for quantity instead of quality and forgetting that individual believers are also the temples of God.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Corinthians 6:19 KJV).

The reason why religion has to reject the “priesthood of the believer” doctrine also is because if each individual had access to God directly, and each believer was considered a priest of God, and could be filled with the Glory and power of God individually, then all Christians would be on a level field and God would not be a respecter of persons. Each member of the body would have equally important roles to play in the body. The church leadership could not then control the congregation. The congregation would have to then be controlled by God, which should bring unity with a pastor that is hearing from God also. This “priesthood of each believer” doctrine would place Jesus as the head and High Priest of the church and the mediator between God and man, instead of the pastor, priest, rabbi, apostle, prophet, etc. The sheep could hear the voice of Jesus also (John 10). The

main reason for the Protestant Reformation and its split from the Catholic Church was to have the freedom to have a personal relationship with Jesus! One of the things the Bible says God hates besides “sowing discord among the brethren” is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate (Revelation 2:15 KJV).

What is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans? Nicolaitans is made up from two Greek words “nikos” meaning “to conquer” and “laos” means “the people” or “laity” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance). How would that doctrine apply to today’s church? Nicolaitians today would take a congregation of believers that were brothers and sisters in Christ and were all equal members of the body of Christ with each given important but different spiritual gifts and separate them into “clergy” and “laity”. They then would place the church leadership (clergy) on a higher position in the body of Christ than the other members of the body (laity). They then would set themselves up as the head of the church instead of Jesus Christ and would rule over the rest of the body. Do you know any Nicolaitian churches today?

But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness (1 Corinthians 12:20-23 KJV).

Now back to the temple of your body. How is the temple of the body built? When someone presents the Gospel to another person that the Holy Spirit is drawing and they first believe in Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of the temple is laid at that point. 1 Corinthians chapter 3 explains this building process in more detail. The Bible says,

For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God, which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:9-11 KJV).

As you can see by this verse, the believer in Christ is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ the cornerstone. The Word of God is like stones placed in the temple. The apostles and prophets brought the Word of God. The Word of God brings the truth to light, and then the Spirit of God brings the truth to pass in the believer’s life.

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (2 Timothy 1:10 KJV)

What happens when someone receives his or her first deep revelation of spiritual truth, another stone in the temple is placed. The Bible says that God builds line upon line and precept upon precept (Isaiah 28:9-12 KJV). When the believer grows in spiritual understanding then more stones are laid in that temple. What many in the church do today though, when they first get a spiritual revelation out of the scriptures, is they immediately think that God has called them to preach. They will then go start a church or join a seminary and place some sort of man's religion on top of what the Holy Spirit is revealing them out of the scripture. They will then go into ministry or preaching without a firm understanding of the big picture. That is why you have so many denominations out of one truth. What many fail to realize is a temple is not ready for service until it is FINISHED. When the temple is finished then it is dedicated and the Glory of God fills the temple and it was now ready to minister to the people. Please read the chapter "The Christian Experience: From Seed to Saint" for a deeper study of completing the temple.

In fact the Lord's Prayer (also called the Apostles prayer) was basically a shorter version of the same prayer that Solomon prayed when dedicating the temple (1 Kings 8). It was a temple dedication prayer. In the Old Testament God sanctified the temple, in the New Testament God sanctifies the believer.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen (Matthew 6:9 KJV).

And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel (1 Kings 9:3-5 KJV).

Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually (2 Chronicles 7:15,16 KJV).

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11 KJV).

If the believer's physical body is a temple of God then the kingdom of God should come to the temple. Even today, many churches like the Pharisees are trying to get the church organized in unity to bring the kingdom of God to earth, but Jesus said each believer could already have the kingdom of God within them personally. When you pray

“thy kingdom come” in the Lord’s Prayer that was taught to the disciples, you are actually calling for the Shekinah Glory of God to fill the temple. Please read the chapter “Understanding the Kingdom”.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:20,21 KJV).

For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power (1 Corinthians 4:20 KJV).

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17 KJV).

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:6,7 KJV).

Please read the chapter “The Perfecting of the Saints” and “The Christian Experience: From Seed to Saint” for a deeper study of the completion process of the believer (temple), which is the true purpose of the five-fold ministry and not authoritarianism. In the body of Christ as a whole each believer is also considered a living stone to help build the body, but the believers (living stones) are also not built together in a pyramid structured church, as I will explain now.

No matter how you try to present it, the "cell church" model will always be a pyramid. It starts at the top with the senior pastor over zone pastors, over zone supervisors, over shepherd groups, over cell leaders called (Fathers). This exact same model can be seen in the Catholic Church where you have the Pope over cardinals, over archbishops, over bishops, over priests called (Fathers). In 1994 the Lutherans of course spotted this easily and voiced their concerns about the structure of the cell group when it started to gain some popularity. But even to this day, the Catholic Church has not changed their doctrine, the cell church has not changed their doctrine, and those same concerns are still valid today. What has changed today, 12 years later, is the Lutherans are also now embracing the same cell / small group model with all other Protestant denominations!

That is not only peculiar but down right bizarre! If you want to do more research about this end-time church growth movement, the website www.intotruth.org has done much more detailed research into these “new paradigm” cell churches and Joel’s Army movements.

You may be saying, “If the cell church model works at getting members, building communities, and growing churches, what is wrong with that”? The pyramid structure is strictly a worldly type of building structure. The Egyptians (which Egypt also is a type of the world in Bible terminology) used the pyramid model as well as many other civilizations.

All pyramid designs carry an inherent structural flaw unless the pyramid is built to just one size with no plans to grow larger. This structural flaw makes the pyramid design

unsuitable for building a church. Using the pyramid model, no one will ever be able to truly complete the temple and thus bring the power of God and immortality to the earth because the foundation of the temple is always shifting, as I will explain. It doesn't have a "cornerstone" because the MEMBERS are the foundation. In the Bible, the Glory of God did not fill the temple until it was FINISHED and a pyramid design when applied to an organization is always growing until everyone in the world is either a submitted member or destroyed. The personal temple of the Christian's body CAN be completed though to walk in the power of God and immortality.

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:9,10 KJV).

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:7 KJV).

In ancient civilizations, the dead kings, pharaohs, and royalty were placed inside these pyramid structures with carefully prepared bodies with the belief that they would be resurrected in the body and need their worldly possessions in an afterlife. One thing that the world keeps finding when they open these old pyramid structures though is dead kings, pharaohs, and royalty! The tomb of Jesus Christ was empty after His resurrection. Jesus was not buried in a pyramid structure but a garden tomb. This shows that the power to resurrect someone from the dead didn't come from any structure or organization that has been structured like a pyramid. As we saw earlier, God through Peter raised Tabitha from the dead after telling every one to "get out of the room" (Acts 9:40,41 KJV). Whenever someone was resurrected from the dead in the Bible, it was done by one person operating in the power of God, not church members coming together in small groups or some secret priests with some special ritual. When Joseph commanded that his bones be brought out of Egypt, it represented a bodily resurrection out of the world (Exodus 13:18,19 KJV). Joseph knew that the embalming process of Egypt and burial rituals could not resurrect him from the dead, nor can getting all of mankind into unity. Where did this resurrection power come from then? Please read the chapters "Understanding Eternal Life".

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11 KJV).

By reading Acts 17:24 also we know that God doesn't dwell in a temple made with hands. By this we can conclude that no earthly structure built by man whether it is pyramids, temples, shrines, cathedrals, lodges, church buildings, etc. cannot be the source of resurrection power. But can an organization of men in unity ever attain this kind of resurrection power? I want to now take a closer look at the "cell/small" group structure and the power of unity of men. If you step back and look at the "cell/small" group church in it's simplest form, you can see a pyramid structured organization built by Egyptian (worldly) builders that has placed "Christian" religion in the center as the "core belief" and rallying point. Apparently the belief is that a pyramid-structured organization can

give life to a dead religion because the cell church advocates are claiming that they are bringing new life through small groups to “dying” churches. Once again I want to show how the cell / small group structure relates to the pyramid.

The "cell church" model is built with the cell groups under leadership, which in turn are under leadership, until you reach the top leader, which we will call the "capstone" of the pyramid, which sits on the top. He is the "eye" which sees the vision for every cell church that is under him. This is called the "One Set Man" doctrine. The new cell groups are at the foundation of the pyramid until they divide then the next generation is on the bottom and their "parent" cell group is lifted one level higher. In fact cell / small groups refer to themselves as first generation (Fathers), second generation (young men), third generation (children) etc. As the cell groups divide and re-divide, the foundation gets wider and wider. This in turn lifts the leadership higher and higher toward heaven and above the lower cells. Since you are constantly adding to the foundation of the pyramid, then you cannot have a "cornerstone" because the foundation is always moving and growing.

This is the same model that the men tried to reach Heaven building the Tower of Babel. They were in common unity (community) and working together and if God had not intervened and stopped the building, then the Bible says:

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined (vision casting) to do (Genesis 11:4-6 KJV).

This is the awesome power that building a pyramid structure combined with man's imagination seems to achieve. At Pentecost you had the disciples in the “unity of the faith” and the power of God fell upon them from heaven, but at the Tower of Babel you had man in the “unity of the purpose” and the power of man rose up from the earth. To build a pyramid, all a person has to do is go out with one vision and get many people that are “purpose driven” to embrace that one vision. Have you ever heard of **vision casting**? If you are a pastor and are reading this and you don't have a vision from God for your church then the book (***Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church*** by Ralph Neighbour, Jr. **page 365,**) will teach you how to prepare one.....

“After you have determined whether or not the cell church is for you, begin to put the vision into words. A vision represents a challenging picture of what the church and its members can be. It paints a picture of a possible and desirable future. The key leaders of the church should do this together. A vision statement should include these characteristics:

- No longer than three sentences
- Transferable
- Includes all believers in its execution
- A timeline of five to ten years

Simple enough for an eight-year-old to memorize.

Once the vision is established, it will require persistent and enthusiastic communication to “sell” it through the ranks of the church members so it will be embraced with commitment”. (Quotation marks his) (*Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church* by Ralph Neighbour, Jr. page 365,).

By getting everyone in the church community to focus on bringing to pass the vision of the “One Set Man” brings tremendous power. This is why many people and "cell churches" use this pyramid style of structure, because it can push the church leadership to staggering heights with or without God.

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; (2 Corinthians 10:4,5 KJV).

If any pastor reads this then please don't do like many other pastors and turn outside your congregation for the vision for the congregation. That is what Saul did when he went to the witch at Endor when he wasn't getting direction from God. Because Saul did that instead of going to God directly, his kingdom was taken away! Instead turn to the inside of the congregation for direction. Those people sitting in the pews are not as blind as you might think. You may just have a David, Samuel, or Nathan sitting in the congregation that God has given direction also.

Many congregations also love the “cell church” model because they like having many “spiritual leaders” above them to be accountable to instead of God. But even though this style of pyramid structure can grow these "cell churches" to eventually overtake the whole world (which I believe they will), this still is not the true church model that is spoken of in the Bible.

The true church model is the exact opposite of the "cell church" model because the true church has the leadership on the BOTTOM as the foundation supporting the people and not sitting on the top. The true leadership is the "cornerstone", not the "capstone"!

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22 KJV).

As the Bible plainly teaches, in the true church model, the apostles and prophets in the church are on the BOTTOM supporting the people and not sitting on top of the congregation. That is why the Bible says that the apostles were placed *first* in the church after Jesus Christ the cornerstone, as the foundation stones on the very bottom and the prophets second, being placed on top of the apostles, and teachers third, being placed on top of the prophets.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: (Matthew 20:25-27 KJV).

Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand (2 Corinthians 1:23,24 KJV).

Advocates of the pyramid structure sometimes will try to say that their pyramid is built upside down and therefore the leadership is also on the bottom supporting the congregation. That is deceiving because they also believe and claim that the "anointing" for ministry flows from the top leadership DOWN which is the Old Testament priestly model. Some claim that this is what is represented with the "star of David" which is a pyramid overlaid with an inverted pyramid. But what I want to show in this study is the church is not built like any pyramid.

There is another major flaw with the pyramid "cell church" model that many people are getting ready to turn their whole life, natural and spiritual over to. If the cell groups were to forsake the "cell church" movement then the leadership would collapse for its foundation would be gone. This is why unity in the cell groups is so vital to the leadership of the "cell church" model. If one person in the cell is not fully in one accord with the other members of the cell in its purpose, then that person is considered a virus to the cell and can only make the cell sick until they are either submitted to the purpose or removed. The power of the cell church structure comes from unity of cell members and their submission to authority. They call it "common unity" or "community". The cell church doesn't need the members to walk in victory through Jesus to complete its mission; it needs the members walking in unity of the vision. The cell church is not concerned about the unity of the true faith (Jude 3), but the unity of all faiths.

I believe unity is important in the church as I discussed earlier. Jesus prayed for unity in the church and that is also part of the purpose of the five-fold ministry. What many do not realize is the five-fold ministry has already worked just like God had designed it to bring the true church into one accord behind the religious scene while the world is focused on building a Global Church. As you can see by the story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:6), just because man is in one accord and "unity of purpose" does not necessarily mean it's "of God".

With the true church model that has Jesus Christ and his Word that was once delivered to the saints by the apostles and prophets, as the foundation that is supporting the people, then the only way for the true church to collapse is for Jesus to forsake the church or man to scatter God. The true church has Jesus Christ as the foundation and not people professing Jesus. I prefer a church model that is built on the ROCK that can't be moved and not on the people that can!

The thing about this also is the "new thing" doctrine, which they call a "new paradigm" that is driving this "cell church" movement is just another term for "New World Order" or "New Age" for short. Look up the word "paradigm" in your dictionary. A lot of these cell

churches sing about the rapture (pre-tribulation) in their hymnals, but they are quickly submitting to the "Kingdom / Dominion" theology doctrine in an effort to remain in "one accord". Churches that claim to believe in the rapture are dropping the rapture doctrine like a hot potato to be a part of this movement. Please read the section in this chapter on the "Pre-tribulation Rapture". As you get deeper into this movement, the churches will stop teaching end time prophecy doctrine altogether, and even quit discussing doctrine because "doctrine causes division", which is the only real danger to the "cell church" movement. The reason why the "cell church" movement can accomplish this unity even with differing doctrines is because they get everybody to rally behind the same "core beliefs". Anybody that disputes the validity of the cell church movement is accused of "sowing discord among the brethren", but instead the cell churches are themselves the very ones that have split and divided many churches that has changed over to that model! While proudly proclaiming unity, the cell church has at the same time been purposefully scattering the flocks!

I also want to address a movement called "Joel's Army" that follows closely with the "cell church" movement. This doctrine has been refuted many times by many Christians in studies you can find on the Internet, but I just want to address this briefly because they pose a great danger to the true Christian. This is very important! Until Jesus returns, the Christian carries the Gospel of Peace (peace with yourself and peace with God).

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Romans 10:15 KJV).

Only one problem, when you are at peace with yourself and at peace with God then you are at war with the world system (Matthew 10:34). Christians do battle and war and are considered soldiers, but our battle is against spiritual wickedness in high places, not other Christians or any physical person. Jesus said,

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16 KJV).

And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village (Luke 9:53-56 KJV).

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)(2 Corinthians 10:3,4 KJV)

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, (2 Tim 2:24 KJV).

The purpose behind this "Joel's Army" movement is for "the church" to take the world for Jesus (fulfilling the Great Commission) and present all nations to him as a spotless bride when he comes to rule and reign for a thousand years. Sounds like a very noble cause for the church to pursue doesn't it? Only one problem with this "new thing" doctrine, when Jesus comes back to rule and reign for a thousand years (millennium kingdom), the Bible says that He is not looking for a world that has been conquered by a Global Church Army (Joel's army) working in common unity to present to Him. On the contrary, when Jesus returns to set up the millennial kingdom, He is coming with a sword looking for a fight and the armies of heaven come WITH Him. They are not on the earth waiting for Him! If the church is on the earth as "Elijah" and pointing the Jews to the temple when Jesus returns, then these prophecies could not be fulfilled.

And the armies, which were in heaven, followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it HE should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: (Revelation 19:14 KJV).

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage (Jude 14-16 KJV).

As you can see by this scripture, it is Jesus himself that smites the nations at His return and not the CHURCH! Jesus Himself rules the nations with a rod of iron. In spite of this, I believe the cell churches will accomplish what the crusades failed to, the domination of this world by "the church". The Bible speaks of a battle that is called Armageddon that Jesus fights BEFORE He sets his throne to rule over the earth for a thousand years.

What Jesus is looking for BEFORE he sets up his millennial reign and a thousand years of peace, is a rebuilt temple, complete with Davidic worship services (celebration services) and a false Messiah ruling a world that a Global Church has conquered in the name of Jesus. With the nations already conquered by the "cell church" movement, the only ones left for Jesus and the armies of heaven to fight when He returns are the "cell churches" and they're "One Set Man"! This movement even claims that they are the "Elijah Church" that will usher in the coming of the Messiah. This prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist when he pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God. Jesus even said:

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come (Malachi 4:5,6). He that hath ears to hear, let him hear (Matthew 11:13-15 KJV).

The Bible speaks of the coming of Jesus Christ for the church is preceded by a voice from heaven and by a trumpet, not a prophet!!!!

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 KJV).

As you can see by this verse, the church meets Jesus in the air, not on the Temple Mount, when He returns for His church.

Many in the cell churches today also believe when the cell gets in perfect unity, then "the Christ" incarnates the cell and it can now minister to the world (Matthew 18:19,20 KJV). Anyone or any cell / small group can now claim that "the Christ" has incarnated them and they have now become "Christ". What you have in this theology makes a perfect stage for one person to rise and to sit on the top of this pyramid and declare that "the Christ" has incarnated him and he has become "the Christ". This is perfect for a "cell church" movement that is looking for the second coming of the Messiah. They can also claim to be "the Elijah Church" and point the Jews toward this "One Set Man", supposedly fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi 4:5,6 KJV.

This is simple to understand. Let me explain. The Jews are looking for the first coming of Messiah to rule and reign for a thousand years. This "One Set Man" could fulfill both prophecies at one time. With this "ushering in the Messiah" doctrine that many Protestant churches today are embracing, you could easily have both "the church" and the Jews, worshipping the same man as "the Christ" when he appears. Many Baptist, Pentecostal, and Charismatic churches that embrace this doctrine claim they also believe in the "rapture". One main problem with this "Elijah Church" doctrine is, the Jews are NOT looking for Jesus to come in the air, but "suddenly to His temple" (Malachi 3:1 KJV).

For the church to claim that they are the "Elijah" of the prophecy of Malachi and still believe in the rapture cannot be possible! When the church is "caught up" into the air, how is the church going to then have time to point the Jews to Jesus? They have to do that today, before they are "caught up" in the air. But witnessing to the Jews today would still be the same mission of the church for the past 2000 years, not some new "Elijah" ministry!

Many Christians through out history have truly pointed the Jewish people to Jesus and many Jews have become Christians, but what is strange is the church has never considered herself "Elijah" until now. I guess if you can build a new end time church, then you can call it whatever you want. A wise man once said, "one may build a church, but it won't be Christ's church".

There maybe an appearing of Elijah before Jesus comes to rule for a thousand years but according to rapture doctrine, the church is with Jesus when He returns and not on earth pointing the Jews to Him. Some believe that one of the two end time witnesses

during the tribulation period is Elijah, but these two witnesses will have already have finished their ministry and been caught up to heaven (Revelation 11:12 KJV) by the time Jesus returns to the temple. Their ministry is to confront a false Messiah and an apostate church, not to declare the coming of the Messiah. The Bible says that a false church and the Jews will already be worshipping a false Messiah in the temple when Jesus returns. Through out the history of the true church and even today, when a Jew accepts Jesus Christ as the Messiah, they are then agreeing that it was John the Baptist that was the "Elijah that was to come" and declare the Messiah. They are not looking for a new "Elijah" to come and declare the Messiah to them again, because they already know Him!

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear (Matthew 11:12-14 KJV).

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life (1 John 5:20 KJV).

In all of history, to achieve this massive conquering of the nations for Christ and to fulfill this prophecy, the "cell church" model is the only thing that has the capability to do this. It is sweeping across the world at a record pace, drawing in all denominations and picking up speed as it grows. Its rallying cry is "common unity" or "community". Most people believe that it will be fully in place in 3 to 5 years. I believe you have less than 2.

Remember that the cell church grows exponentially. The larger it grows, the faster it grows. Only one problem with this goal, the Bible speaks of a falling away (2 Thessalonians 2:3 KJV) in the end and not a huge worldwide end time harvest. When Jesus returns, is He looking for a unified Global Church or a "scattered elect"? As the cell church movement sweeps across the world you should start seeing many more "church" victories around the world as the world is being conquered by "the church". Religious authority around the world will start taking center stage as they unite.

For years people that study end time prophecy were always looking for the Jews to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and the Pope and the Catholic Church to take over and then sit in the temple. For this reason, many people have accused the Pope of being the antichrist. This was because the Catholic Church was the only "church structure" in existence that was large enough to possibly fulfill this prophecy of a Global Church that could subdue the earth. As the world was focused on the Catholic Church and on the Jews rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, the Global Church that CAN fulfill this prophecy has been growing out of the Protestant denominations that were the very same ones that were accusing the Catholics of the very same thing! The "cell church" movement you see sweeping across the world today, will embrace the Catholic Church and all Protestant denominations or any religion that is not in "one accord" and submitted to their authority and purpose.

This movement already has cell-tracking software that the cell church leadership can use to track everything in the disciple's life. It especially has a place to gather information on any of the disciple's unbelieving family or friends. This is very important!

You must remember that an unbeliever to the "new paradigm" movement is anyone that does not believe in the "new paradigm" cell church movement itself, because the movement claims it is "the corporate Christ".

Jesus said: ***He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad (Matthew 12:30 KJV).***

If you claim to believe in Jesus Christ and are not in one accord with the "cell church" movement, then you are considered an unbeliever also and a hindrance (laggard). Many believe that you can embrace any faith you want as long as you are in the unity of purpose, but they will force you from the congregation if you are not in one accord with their purpose. I believe the Catholics called what the cell churches are doing "excommunication". They consider themselves "the end time church" that is anointed by God to fulfill the Great Commission. To resist their authority, is to resist the authority of God himself, because it was God himself that has placed them in authority over you. They take that claim of authority over all in the church through Romans 13:1-6.

I do agree that submitting to GODLY authority is Biblical, but as I will explain, I don't believe that the cell church leadership is that self-proclaimed or anointed "Godly" authority.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing (Romans 13:1-6 KJV).

The Bible says that God will send many to hell for submitting to false prophets and teachers claiming church authority. The "cell church" leadership has already prepared your doctrine for you. Your only responsibility to the church and God is to submit to the spiritual leaders in authority above you and embrace and fulfill their vision.

Anyone that believes in Jesus, but does not submit to the "cell church" movement and "new paradigm" doctrine is accused of having a spirit of rebellion against God's authority. Therefore by rejecting this movement you are considered by the church to be demon oppressed and in need of deliverance, because the Bible says that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15:23). Sound familiar (Inquisition)(Salem Witch Trials).

You have to understand, the "cell church" thinks that they are bringing back Jesus by finishing His work on the earth by subduing the world for Him. They believe that until the church subdues the earth, then Jesus CANNOT come back. They use this verse to justify that conclusion (Acts 3:19-21 KJV). In their mind, if you resist them, then you are actually keeping their Savior from coming back to earth. Many churches today are trying

to take the inheritance by force instead of waiting on the fulfillment of the promise by God.

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force (Matthew 11:12 KJV).

The elect will always be a hindrance (laggards) until they are taken out of the way. Jesus warned that the time will come when they will kill you, thinking their doing God's service (John 16:2). This movement will eventually come to every local congregation. According to the Bible, the only one that can defeat this global end time "church" is Jesus Christ at the battle of Armageddon.

This "cell church" movement also makes a nice platform for someone to rise to power on, especially if they can do signs and wonders. This is important! This movement cannot be stopped only briefly hindered because it was prophesied to come to pass. The reason I am giving this information is not to attack the cell /small group churches, but so you can understand the cell church movement. They are already preparing to bring the fight to you; you do not have to take the fight to them. The battle will eventually come straight to your door. Every doctrine that I have presented in this book I hope will help explain things so you can put on the armor of God to stand in that day, but as I said before, I can only give you words, only God can give you understanding of those words.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness (not breast plate of judgment); And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Ephesians 6:10-18 KJV).

All those that are still looking for Jesus to come in the clouds should start preparing also. I believe the stage is already set. The end time players are now taking their places. Well, you know the rest of the story....

Embracing All Faiths?

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, ONE FAITH, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4:4-6 KJV).

Today, many different faiths are all coming together and using the cell / small group model for unity. Is it Biblical for the true Christian to embrace every other person from differing religions as “brethren” if they claim the name of Jesus Christ? Are all religions that claim the name of Christ walking in the victory of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? The Bible has a perfect example of this! If your pastor tells you that all that claim the name of Jesus in their denominations and ministries are your “Christian brethren”, then they do not care if you are walking in the unity of the true faith, as long as you are walking in the unity of the vision. There is a tremendous difference between “unity of the faith (Christianity)” and “unity of all faiths (New World Order)”! The Bible plainly teaches that there are people not walking in Christian victory that do ministry in Jesus name and they are not “Christians”. The Bible speaks of “wolves in sheeps clothing”.

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? (Acts 19:13-15 KJV).

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:22,23 KJV).

For example, I could not call another person my “Christian” brother if they denied the Holy Ghost as a person of the Trinity when the Bible plainly presents the Holy Ghost as a person that interacts with the Christian and not just an “active force of God”.

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus (Acts 13:2-4 KJV).

Rebuilding the Levitical Priesthood

Some in many churches today are also trying to rebuild the Levitical priesthood. As you rebuild the Levitical priesthood with a new "High Priest" or Senior Pastor. You must restore the veil of the temple and the only access into the holiest is by the "High Priest" or as the "cell church" calls him the "One Set Man". As you advance in the plan to rebuild the tabernacle and grow the "cell leadership" you will start hearing about members in the church who have been through the leadership training and have made the transition to

"spiritual leaders" or "spiritual parents". When this training is completed, their own "spiritual leaders" and the church then anoints them for service. From that time on, they will be "spiritual fathers" and their disciples will be their "spiritual children". They will then have the responsibility of directing and equipping the disciples for serving God just like they were disciplined and equipped by their leader. They will replace a personal relationship with Jesus Christ with a "small group" relationship. I do agree that the body of Christ does have many members that the Christian is in relationship with, but each believer still has a personal relationship with Jesus first. Jesus called his disciple's "brethren" not children. In Acts 1:16 Peter refers to the disciples as men and brethren, not fathers and children.

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry (Acts 1:15-17 KJV).

Many churches claim that their church does "small groups" not "cell groups". Is there a difference? I will just list some things out of the cell group handbook that you can compare your church small groups too. At one time, I attended the cell / small group school of leaders classes and had started teaching a new cell / small group which we called "life groups" before I was called out and left that congregation. I spent 2 years being slowly indoctrinated with others into the cell church movement. I did enjoy the many friends though. When Ralph Neighbour Jr. came to the congregation I was attending and explained the cell church vision, I was in the congregation agreeing to it with everyone else. I thought that this was a unique idea and it might be what God could be planning to do in the end to reach the people. It sounded so good, but yet I still sensed something wrong, so I took the advice of the church and read the book. When I actually read the book, I started seeing things that just didn't seem right, like the "equipping" process, which I want to address briefly. The book that I read was ***Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church*** by Ralph Neighbour, Jr. The "equipping" process is a four-part process laid out on **page 333**.

- 1) Spiritual Formation Weekend
- 2) Encounter God Retreat
- 3) Touching Hearts Weekend
- 4) Cell Leaders Intern Retreat

I have one question. Is this the true Biblical model for the true church to operate? The author, Ralph Neighbor Jr. answered that question better than I could!

"The above equipping system has been developed over many years of trial and error. You don't have to make the same mistakes I did. The wheel is already invented. Start with the above taxonomy and begin equipping your leaders". **Page 342: Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church** by Ralph Neighbour, Jr.

I personally do not believe that the true church model was “developed over many years of trial and error” or “it came about through many mistakes”. According to this, it was Ralph Neighbour Jr. that “invented the wheel”, not “Jesus Christ”. Even though many pastors embrace this “equipping” idea wholeheartedly as the “gospel” there are still some of us that believe that God’s plan for the church has always been perfect, but many pastors just have not understood it. Ralph Neighbor, Jr. continues:

“I spent years developing the above models that equip believers and usher them into ministry. To monitor their effectiveness, I served as a senior pastor in Houston and then as a senior associate pastor in Singapore. I rebuilt each module over and over, refining them as they were tested. I did this not to sell materials, but to provide working models of key principles for the next generation. My desire was that my work would serve as a platform for others, who would internalize and adapt the structure to fit their cultures and the Christians who would be equipped”. **Page 342: *Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church*** by Ralph Neighbour, Jr.

I have been accused of having the spirit of rebellion and “sowing discord among the brethren” by church members for even remotely questioning that this small group “equipping” doctrine is not ordained by God. In actuality, I am even agreeing with Ralph Neighbour Jr. on three important points he makes about the source of the “equipping” doctrine that these very same churches are submitting too! It is the cell / small group pastors that are embracing this “equipping” doctrine that are in error. They are claiming this is from God, even when the man that has developed it is claiming that it is the result of his own personal work! That is how totally ridiculous this has gotten. After reading the book, I actually believe Ralph Neighbour, Jr. when he states:

“I spent years developing the above models that equip believers and usher them into ministry.

. “I rebuilt each module over and over, refining them as they were tested”.

“My desire was that my work would serve as a platform for others, who would internalize and adapt the structure to fit their cultures and the Christians who would be equipped”. **Page 342: *Where Do We Go From Here? A Guidebook for the Cell Group Church*** by Ralph Neighbour, Jr.

How has these cell church pastors gotten so off track? The answer is very simple. You simply change the definition of one word. In Ephesians 4:12, you change the word “perfecting” to “equipping”. By changing that one word, you take the ministry of the Holy Ghost through the five-fold ministry and replace it with your own “equipping” system that has been established through much “trial and error” as you “rebuild each model over and over”. The Bible says the real one that “equips” and “anoints” the Christian for ministry is the Holy Spirit. Please read the chapter “The Perfecting of the Saints”.

But the anointing which ye have received of HIM abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him (1 John 2:27 KJV).

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; (2 Corinthians 1:21 KJV).

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 4:11 KJV).

The Bible teaches that there are leadership roles in the church and people in authority, which is understood. Every believer has a purpose in the body and all Christians understand that, but they need to know exactly where they stand and what authority they do have in the church to avoid abuse by false leadership.

To start with to understand your security in the church, you have to understand the difference between belonging to the church and belonging to a local congregation. You are baptized into the true church when you are saved, but you “join” a local congregation for fellowship and service. The local church was never intended to be a "home church". It is just the place where the Lord places you for earthly service. Jesus said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). The real church is in heaven and on the earth as strangers and pilgrims. Many are calling this “cell church” model the World Church because it’s consuming all denominations. I will show you the true "home church".

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel (Hebrews 12:22-24 KJV).

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, (Ephesians 3:14 KJV).

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: (Ephesians 5:20 KJV)

The Bible says that I am a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth (Hebrews 11:13). God promises that the Christian shall inherit the earth and rule from New Jerusalem, so right now I am just sojourning in the land of promise, like Abraham, while I dwell on the earth.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place, which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Hebrews 11:8-10 KJV).

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (Romans 4:13,14 KJV).

As the world and the church today are focused on Israel and an earthly Jerusalem, I, like Abraham am focused on a heavenly Jerusalem.

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid (Hagar), the other by a freewoman (Sara). But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now (Galatians 4:22-29 KJV).

This is my "spiritual newbirth" place. *"But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26 KJV).*

And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there (Psalms 87:5,6 KJV)

This is why even if you leave a local congregation or ministry when they change over to cell / small groups and they strike your name from their roll, I tell you most assuredly "WHEN THE ROLL IS CALLED UP YONDER I'II BE THERE"! The roll of the true church is written in heaven not on earth, so there is not any Pope, pastor, apostle, prophet, cardinal, archbishop or anybody else that can throw or "excommunicate" you out of the true church. They can throw you out of the congregation though.

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,

and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel (Hebrews 12:22-24 KJV).

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out (John 6:37 KJV).

Which brings me to another doctrine that many churches have embraced that I believe is in error and that is the "covering doctrine". Please see the study "the Covering Doctrine" for further study.

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