

Whose church is this?

When speaking to my friends, I might say something like, "My church is... (fill in the blank) ". We might say to one another, "Our church likes to... (fill in the blank) ".

So the question arises, is it my church, or your church, or our church, or God's church? Like everything else in Christianity, it is a paradox; because the church is in fact all of the above. It is mine, it is ours, but ultimately it is God's. Therefore, we must ask, in what direction should the church be moving? The direction in which I think it should be moving? The direction in which you think it should be moving? Should it be moving at all? Should it be moving backward toward a day which we might remember with fondness; a heyday so to speak? Or should it be moving forward, into places where it has never been before, which places may not immediately be recognized? Let's think about the idea of movement for a moment...

In my personal life, I try to follow God, not presuming where He will take me (how do you suppose I got out to Franklin in the first place!?). What do you experience as you follow God? Do you follow, presuming movement and change? Or do you find that He likes to keep you just as you are and just where you are; content as it were, with the status quo? Here's some bad news for any that may think that way... there is no status quo with God.

We are always moving; and the movement will be forward, or backward; for nothing ever really stands still. Contentment with the status quo of our Christian character is actually negative growth. Contentment with our personal holiness is actually negative growth. Contentment with the level to which we are "transformed by the renewing of our minds"(Romans12:2) is actually negative growth. Contentment with the degree to which we are "conformed to the image of His Son"(Romans8:29) is actually negative growth.

Our goal is to press forward, always eager to change. The apostle Paul expressed it this way,

"Brothers, I do not count myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, as many as are mature, let us think this way; and if in anything you think otherwise, even this God will reveal to you" (Phil3:13-15).

The above does not apply to the individual saint of God only, but also to the Body of Christ; to the church... and it is God's church after all. That being the case, we never, ever really know what change will look like, but change is ordained of God, even in the church. Look around. Look at your kids. Look in the mirror, and think about it. All new life is change... all growth is change... even refreshment is change.... All else is stagnation and decline.

Pastor