

A Final Word to our G2G Family

Dear G2G Family,

Having completed a brief series addressing some of our nation's current challenges and what we believe are biblical responses to these, I thought it necessary to offer one final word.

I sat in a prayer meeting perhaps 2 ½ to 3 years ago. At the end of the meeting a discussion began that was quite revealing. The pastors present began to comment about the congregation at G2G in contrast to their own experiences. As they did so they began to share their perspectives on what was, as they saw it, a true example of the Christian faith lived out among our flock. They were all so very appreciative of what they considered to be a flock that is exemplary in its expressions of Christian love and character. They remarked at the integrated nature of our family and what they longed to see in their own congregations. They were asking what it is that we do that brings about such love and oneness in our fellowship, as this is something that they long to see in theirs. I can only tell you that as the conversation progressed, I was brought to tears in thankfulness to my God for all of you. What these pastors had observed in your lives was a testimony to the glory of our God and your humble, yielded obedience to His truth. I can honestly say that I know what John felt when he wrote: **3Jn.3-4**- *For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.* Also, just as John, I would say to you: **3Jn.5-6a**- *Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, who have borne witness of your love before the church.* I had the opportunity to share with them that it has been my privilege to shepherd a flock that shows such love for God and one another, indeed for all. In these things I praise God for you.

Since that day that conversation has been repeated several times in different meetings with other pastors. I am telling you this for a few simple reasons. First, to commend you for your love for Christ and one another and also to encourage you that your faith has been noticed. Others have been watching in the local churches and they are thanking God for your example. In a sense there are local pastors who are hoping that their flocks will follow the flock at G2G as you follow Christ. I am so very blessed to shepherd this family and I find myself so encouraged in these conversations with other pastors. I believe that what Paul said to the Church at Thessalonica is true of our family as well: **1Thes.1:7-8**- *... so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.*

Your faith in Christ is spreading, people are watching and you are being used by God. We must remember that we are a 'city set on a hill,' and our light must continue to shine, that maybe others may see it and follow. I would say to you, if I am not being too forward, 'well done good and faithful servants,' and as Paul once said: **1Thes.4:9-10**- *But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more.*

I am writing these things in light of our present day and being fully aware of the climate of our nation and beyond. I would urge you to remember that we are often led to believe that we must choose

between certain limited options that are set before us. Satan is a master of this trade, and even Joshua fell prey to this thinking when he met the Captain of the Lord's hosts **Josh.5:13**- *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?"* Joshua felt that these were the only two options available. This the world constantly does to us. Yet, the response of the Lord is telling and vital for us all: **Josh.5:14a**- *So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come."*

He points out that these options that Joshua presented weren't all that there were. In fact, Joshua didn't consider that which was most important of all. It wasn't a matter of the sides of men but the will and purpose of God. What follows sets a clear path forward for the children of God. **Josh.5:14b-15**- *And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" Then the Commander of the LORD'S army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.*

This is a reminder to us that we are not to choose the sides that men offer us but to offer ourselves in the service of our God. This you have been doing, and in a manner that has caught the eye of many in the Body of Christ. I would urge you to continue to do so more and more. Serve your God, be light in the world, and bring Him glory. Always remembering that what you do is fully pleasing to our Lord.

Ps.133:1- *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

May the Lord richly bless you,
Pastor Mark