

What Are We To Do? Choose Devotion!



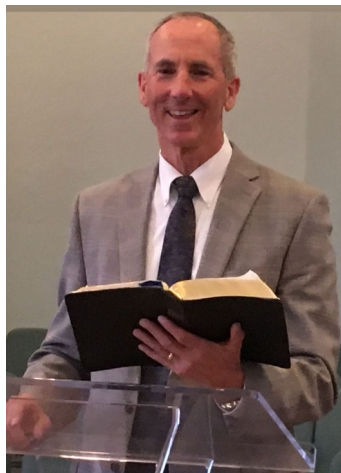
“... not MY will,
but THINE be done.”

Luke 22:42

Alaska Christian Ministry to Seafarers

Foreword

There are certain times when I feel led to pause from our weekly verse-by-verse study, and touch on a topic I think we all need to hear. The Fourth of July observance often seems to prompt such action, and that is the case in choosing to preach and write this message. Remembering the founding of our nation is an appropriate time to ask how this nation is doing? Is our national righteousness exalting the United States of America in God's eyes, or is our sin bringing reproach upon us? Most would agree that the latter is the case.



If that is the truth, what are we to do? How should we respond? Where should we focus our energies? This message is meant to answer those questions in a way suitable for today, and in a way that will be suitable until either the Lord calls us home by physical death or comes to gather us to Himself when the trumpet sounds! I pray your focus may remain clear and unobstructed for however many days remain—for now is the time of God's favor and now is the day of His salvation! (II Corinthians 6:2)

In His grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Redig". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "K" and a long, horizontal line extending to the right.

Kevin Redig

All Scripture quotes have been taken from either the NIV (1984 edition) or the NKJV (1982 edition).

Introduction

Before I start, a word to my patriotic friends. If you are looking forward to an endorsement of your patriotic views wrapped in the cloak of Biblical truth, you are going to be disappointed with this year's reflection. I am not going to go there because that is not what the church in general, and ours in particular, most needs to hear. I am of the opinion that our nation has collectively decided to jump off a cliff! If that is the case, then it is too late to turn things around.



Instead we need to be asking ourselves, what is the Church, of which Jesus is the head, to be doing on the way down and after we hit bottom? The answer to that question is most on my mind, and that answer is what I want to share with you. In the days ahead, I think we are going to need that answer.

Even if I am wrong, what I am suggesting is still going to be very much in line with the will of God for His church. So, let's get to it.

My objective in writing this booklet is very simple. I have two things in mind:

1. I want to answer a question I hear over and over. I want to do so as thoroughly as possible, and from a Biblical perspective.

2. I have a very specific outcome in mind for our church fellowship. (Actually, I think it would be a good one for every church fellowship—but I have a calling to one specific fellowship—and ours is always on my mind!) The outcome I have in mind could occur if we all respond to the content of the message and are all in unity thinking the same thing, looking at the future from the same perspective.

Should the outcome I have in mind occur, I would be blessed. More to the point, I think it would please our Lord and Savior greatly. So let's begin!

The Question!

I have been asked this question undoubtedly more than any other. When this question is asked, it is always with a sense of hurt, frustration, and longing:

What are we, as Christians, to do about the terrible decline in our nation?

Perhaps you don't agree we are in decline and think that I am overstating the situation. Perhaps you think that I am trying to make a political statement of some kind! This is not a political statement, and I don't want to argue or feel the need to defend this discussion. First of all, it is your question and not mine. I am not trying to convince you, but simply answer the question that is already on the minds of many.

Second, the very week I was preparing this message, the news was dominated by images of garishly made up individuals, marching to promote the transgender movement, and chanting: "*We are coming for your children!*" Then in the same week, there was the Minnesota pastor praying the *sparkle creed* during a church service—calling on the congregation to join with her in praying to a *non-binary* god!

I am not searching the web for isolated incidents in order to somehow prove we are in decline. I just picked two items that came to the fore this past week. There will be more examples next week ... and every week into the foreseeable future. It is obvious it is occurring, and for the most part, Bible-believing Christians are very unsettled by what is happening.

The answer to the question, "What should we do?" is very straight-forward and can be stated very succinctly, but in order for the answer to have the impact it needs to have, I must spend some time developing it so that you can see how I arrived at a clear Biblical answer. I trust you will bear with me.



Developing an Answer!

Wherever we turn in the Scriptures, we will come face to face with truth regarding God's expectations for His people. Take for example the first seven chapters of the Book of Isaiah. In no time at all, we would accumulate the following:

1. *Keep in mind the nature and character of God!*
(Isaiah 6) For He is holy, sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, loving, immutable ...
2. *Turn and come to the Lord, for in Him there is forgiveness—even for those whose sins are like scarlet!*
(Isaiah 1)

3. *We are to live in light of eternity!* (Isaiah 2) For the temporal will pass away, but the unseen truths of God's Word are eternal.
4. *God's grace is sufficient!* (Isaiah 5) His grace is sufficient! What more could He do for us than He has done and promised to do!
5. *The call on God's people is to stand firm in the faith!* (Isaiah 7) In fact, if we do not stand firm in the faith, we will not stand at all!

So, in answer to the question, "What should we be doing?" certainly, as those who seek to be guided by the Word of God, we should be doing all of the above—and much more besides! What I am saying is that the things we learn week in and week out must be part of the answer to this pressing question. I know you know that, for there are many examples of what happens if we fail to live by Biblical principles.

An Example

Right in the midst of the above chapters in Isaiah, we find the sad, sad story of King Ahaz. You can read about him in Isaiah Chapter 7 and II Chronicles 28. He turned in unbelief from the Word of God, let the world dictate terms to him, and brought the practices of the world into Israel's spiritual life. The outcome for him was a record of absolutely dismal spiritual leadership as the king of Israel! Further, we find at the end of his life he left no legacy at all—nothing.

Further, as the result of his leadership, he brought the judgment of God upon the nation. (Isaiah 8:6-8)
Whether it is Sodom and Gomorrah, or God's chosen people in the land of Israel, the same principle applies:

Righteousness exalts a nation, and sin is a reproach to any people.

Proverbs 14:34

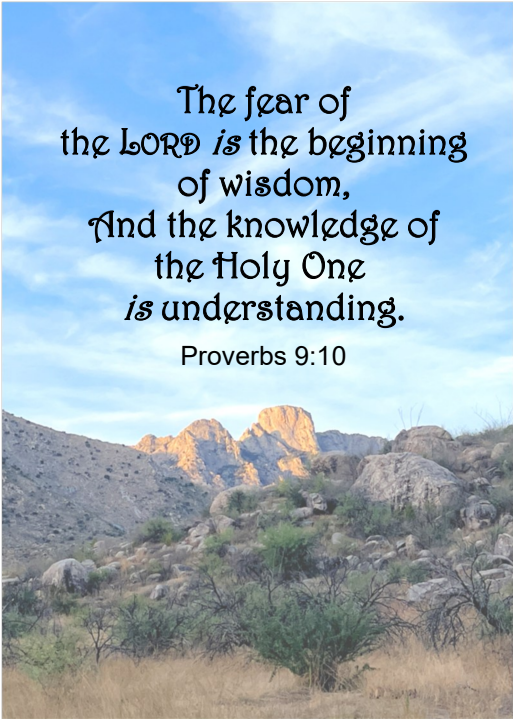
God will bring judgment upon sin. He has done so throughout human history. What are the people of God to do? Flee from the sin of this world, and come to Him in dependent trust! Here is what God told Isaiah as the above sad situation unfolded:

The Lord spoke to me with His strong hand upon me, warning me not to follow the way of this people. He said: "Do not call conspiracy everything that these people call conspiracy; do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it. The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, He is the one you are to fear, He is the one you are to dread, and He will be a sanctuary ..."

Isaiah 8:11-14

The Lesson for Us

No matter what is going on in the world around us, no matter how hurtful and discouraging we find it to be, the Lord is the One we are to regard as holy! He is the One we are to *fear*! And, to fear God is simply to have a healthy understanding of who He is as sovereign Creator of all things, a recognition of what He is like in terms of His attributes, and a respect for His capability to reach into this world at any time of His choosing!



The fear of
the LORD *is* the beginning
of wisdom,
And the knowledge of
the Holy One
is understanding.

Proverbs 9:10

Again, all the preceding are part of the answer to our question, although I realize it has likely not yet provided the comfort and focus you are seeking. So, let's move from the Old Testament illustration found in the Book of Isaiah, to our recent study of the *Prevailing Church!*

As you recall, when questioned about the identity of Jesus, Peter replied:

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God ..."

Matthew 16:16

To which Jesus replied:

"... on this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hades will not overcome it."

Matthew 16:18

It is upon this testimony—that Jesus is both the divine Son of God and the Savior of mankind—that Jesus is going to build a Church that will be able to overcome strongholds of spiritual darkness, wherever they might be found in this fallen world!



Let me briefly summarize what we have learned as we have studied the kind of Church—one that will *prevail against spiritual darkness*—that Jesus seeks to build:

- The *Prevailing Church* will bear witness to the person and work of Jesus Christ to the uttermost ends of the earth and, in the process, will develop disciples in all nations.
- Like Paul, the *Prevailing Church* will resolve:
... to know nothing but Jesus and Him crucified.

I Corinthians 2:2

The Gospel by which we are saved is centered in the truth that Jesus died for our sins and was buried, according to the Scriptures, and was raised again!

- This means that:

Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all ... We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

II Corinthians 5:14, 20

- We desire to be:

... to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing ...

II Corinthians 2:15

Who is up to such a task? Only those with a steadfast conviction in the sufficiency of the person and work of Christ and an unwavering commitment to the Gospel of Christ as the one thing with the power to save!

- The *Prevailing Church* constantly acts to exclude worldliness and to follow the example of Jesus in being the grain of wheat that fell to the ground and died that it might produce much fruit! (John 12:24)

There is much in the above that must be part of the answer to the question, “What are we to do?” But I know this is still not quite what you want. You don’t want me to take bits and pieces from what we cover and tell you: “Put it all together and there’s your answer!” You don’t want me to tell you that the answer lies in the teaching that we have accumulated over the course of the last ten years—although it does.

You want a straight answer to the question. You want me to tell you plainly: What we, as Christians, are to do about the terrible decline in our nation! To tell you the truth, I have been wanting to answer this for some time—to tell it to you straight—just as you have asked! But before I do, there is one last thing I must tell you!

A Temptation to Avoid

I am constantly tempted to take up causes. In fact, let me call them *crusades*! The reason, is that I have my own history. I spent my formative years in the military under the umbrella of “He who lives here reveres honor—honors duty!” Of course, my perspective has been further shaped by decades of Bible study. You can probably imagine how I feel about what I see in our nation and hear from our political leadership.

To make matters worse, many of you seek to nudge me to take up a variety of crusades! You want me to join certain groups, boycott certain businesses, and lead the church into taking up any number of worthy causes. In fact, over the course of the past few weeks, I have been exposed to powerful and persuasive messages from a number of well-known preachers of God’s Word. They all speak of Christians as an entity, an organization, and a voting bloc. They want this Christian entity to push back, take charge, and set wrongs to right!

And, I am so tempted!

Bud Light, the LA Dodgers, Target, Kohl's, the Toronto Blue Jays, Chick-fil-A, pronouns, et al. We read about over 50 human beings being shot over Memorial Day weekend, 11 killed in Chicago. Then there are flash mobs that loot, shoplifters who go unpunished, vicious criminals going about their evil with no fear of the law, schools in chaos, 50 vicious teens attacking two United States Marines, and perversion in our libraries and encouraged in our schools. We also hear of a national organization encouraging evil with this announcement: "Any reason for an abortion is a good reason. ..."



Oh, I am so tempted to take up a crusade—and try to lead you to follow! But here is the rest of the quote:

... What then of the boycotts of Bud Light, et al? These are a backlash only against the symptoms of THE problem, not THE problem itself. The Bible states THE problem:

For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their reasonings, and their senseless hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. For they exchanged the truth of God for falsehood ...

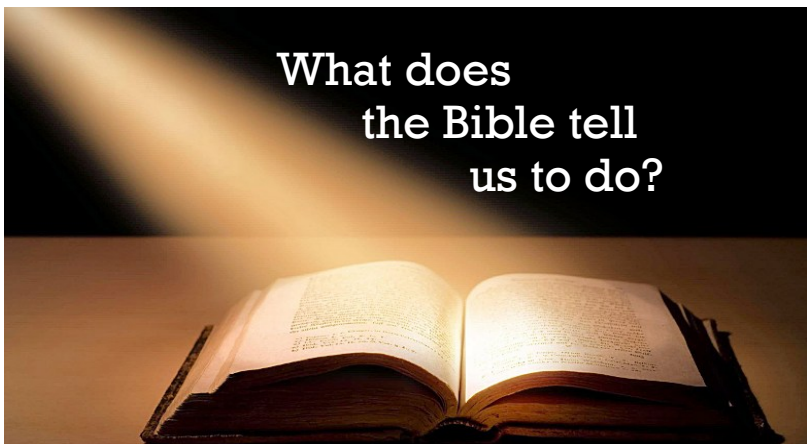
Romans 1:21-25

If boycotts run Bud Light et al out of business, THE problem remains ...

Halsey

I could marshal our forces as a church to do all kinds of things to push back against our culture, take our stand, make an issue of cultural things. We could start our own movement—or join someone else's! But the problem would remain.

Furthermore, try as I might, I can't find any guidance in the Bible, particularly in the New Testament letters as to crusades that Christians should undertake. Christians as a force to be reckoned with in terms of an entity or voting bloc are not depicted in God's Word. They were never told to band together and take action against the Roman empire, Greek philosophy, or the like. In fact, I am not the least surprised, as a student of God's ways, that *crusades* have been tried, found wanting, and assigned to the rubbish-heap of history!



As one who seeks to be guided by the Word of God and the Spirit of God, I am going to do everything I can to avoid the temptation to start any crusade. The Scriptures seem to place their emphasis on personal sanctification and the Church that Jesus is building—the Church that will prevail in snatching the lost out of enclaves of spiritual darkness and bringing them into the *kingdom of the dear Son!*

Are you grasping what I am saying? The Scriptures don't treat Christians as a collective entity that should seize power. Instead they start with a calling upon the individual.

What Does God Want in Each Life?

The Scriptures tell us that God wants for us:

- To grow in grace and knowledge
- To be partakers in Christ—faithful until the end
- To be mature sons and daughters—conformed to the image and likeness of our Savior
- To walk worthy of who and what we are in Christ
- To fix our eyes on Jesus
- To be holy as our God is holy

And, of course, these are just highlights. There is so much more.

As we do these things, some will be great politicians, military leaders, missionaries, teachers, statesmen, musicians, scientists ... all leaving a lasting legacy to the glory of God. You know the names: Wilbur Wilberforce, Henry Martin, Hudson Taylor, George Muller, Fanny Crosby, Cameron Townsend—one day your name might be added to the list. If not, no matter, you can still run for office, attend school board meetings, speak out against evil as led of the Lord, and have a dramatic impact down through your extended family!

Historically, Christians have been responsible for starting orphanages, starting hospitals, schools, translating the Bible, and the list goes on and on. I can't tell you what you, as an individual should do in the face of our decline, other than grow spiritually and act as the Lord leads personally—not collectively, but personally.

What Does God Want for His Church?

Then there is the Church to consider. What is the Church to do in the face of our cultural decline? If you have been following my development, then you know the answer is not in crusades of any kind. We must resist that temptation, for the Church is not a political movement or a voting bloc. The Church is a body of which Christ is the head, temporarily behind enemy lines in order to engage in a great rescue operation. We have very, very clear orders from our Head and Commander in Chief—the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Church is to be a holy and blameless Bride, who:

- Bears witness to her Savior
- Is the pillar and foundation of the truth
- Makes disciples of all nations
- Implores others to be reconciled to God

I want to distill it all down. I want to give you one answer to your question from which everything else can be developed. This is the one thing that will determine whether we *sink or swim!* After all this discussion, we can answer the question:

What are we, as Christians, to do about the terrible decline in our nation?

The answer is one word, Devotion! It is devotion to one object: *Our Lord and Savior.* There you have the answer!



Devotion to our Lord and Savior

Devotion is love for the will of God, which is simply to follow the example of our Savior!

“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.”

Matthew 26:39

As I told you, the question I am asked more than any other is: What are we to do? As long as I am in pastoral ministry, whenever you ask this question, the one word answer you are going to get from me is going to be: devotion! I don't care to what extent the world falls apart, devotion is the answer. Should you care to ask, I will tell you that devotion is love for the will of God!

Having said that, of course, begs some further questions. For example, what is the will of God and what does devotion look like? Let me try to develop a reasonably comprehensive answer.

Devotion Is Love for the Will of God!

Devotion starts with some simple soul-searching! We need to start by asking ourselves some very difficult questions:

Whose agenda am I caught up in, whose voice do I hear, at whose feet am I sitting and listening, where do I spend my time, my thought life, my resources? Do I know and care about what God is doing and what He wants, or are my plans all that matter and am I too busy with them to engage in anything else?

This soul searching is really a matter of time and mental concentration! Are we willing to spend time in the Word in order to be confronted with truth and the voice of the

Holy Spirit? Are we willing to spend time in prayer that we might allow the Lord to speak to us? The Holy Spirit wants our full attention. He is not going to shout over the voices of this world in order to make Himself heard. On the contrary, He speaks in a *still small voice* when He has our complete attention! (I Kings 19:12)

Devotion, which I remind you is love for the will of God, is characterized by the actions on our part described in the following pages.

Hearing HIS voice. The first step is learning to distrust self and hear His voice! This takes time to develop, but is so very necessary. Consider Moses! In Exodus Chapter 2, he killed an Egyptian slave master and had to run for his life. This is what he was thinking at the time:

Moses thought his own people would realize that God was using him by killing an Egyptian.

Acts 7:25

Moses saw the suffering of his people, felt God's calling on his life, and did his best to get the *ball rolling* by killing an Egyptian. How did that work out? God was nowhere in Moses' plan, his own people rejected him, and he had to run for his life! That is what following self gets you—wasted years! Moses was 40 years old when this happened, and he was set aside until he was 80 before God met him in the burning bush. At that time God told him:



"So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring My people the Israelites out of Egypt."

Exodus 3:10

God's way is not to kill a minion—the Egyptian soldier. God's way is to go right to the top—Pharaoh. And, it is not in Moses' timing, but in God's timing! God's ways are so much better than man's—so much better than that which comes from the source of self!

Developing dependent obedience. Devotion is characterized by continuing on in dependent obedience no matter how many follow. Do you remember Gideon's army? He started out with 32,000 and God whittled it down to 300. Gideon showed his devotion by being as obedient with 300 following him as he was with a group a hundred times larger. What does it take to do this? It requires knowing that, if it is God's plan, He will be with us and He will strengthen us!

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13

Remember, our context is one of seeking to understand what the church is to do in the face of declining culture. Our summary answer is simply to continue in *Devotion to our Savior*, which is to love the will of God! We know that His will includes obedience to His command to be witnesses to the Gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth! This is to hold out the Gospel to the lost with whom we rub shoulders, and then help those who are saved to grow to spiritual maturity. This is to be caught up in God's great rescue operation of the human race which is otherwise on the *broad road* headed to eternal damnation!

God promised to be with Joshua as they moved into the promised land, and He promises to be with us even unto

the end of the age as we are building the kind of Church that will prevail against spiritual darkness. Nowhere in any of this does it say anything about changing the culture or gaining political power! Rather, we are to be *rescuing the perishing* out of the culture!

In the midst of this great rescue operation, God promises that He will *never leave nor forsake us!* (Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 28:20) Notice, that the promise is not to the one who can give the most withering description of our nation's failing nor with the one who finds the greatest example of moral laxity. Rather, the Lord is with the one who can step into the gap, be used of the Lord to reach the lost and grow the saved, while the world is crashing down around him or her.

The world is *going to hell*, and it has been to one degree or another since the fall of man, and it will continue to do so until God reaches in and acts in creating a new heavens and new earth! In the meantime, we know what is on His mind: That none should perish but all come to repentance! (II Peter 3:9) So, what is God's will? It is making disciples—reaching the lost and growing the saved!



Being single-minded. Devotion is characterized by single-mindedness!

Fix your eyes upon Jesus, the captain and perfecter of our faith who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2

Where are our eyes to be fixed? They are not to be fixed on cultural trends, but on our Lord and Savior! What was the joy set before Him? The joy was that lost were going to be saved. So, in our devotion, let's stay focused on Him and what He is about!

Shunning idols. Devotion is characterized by keeping one's self from idols—of all kinds!

"Do not learn the ways of the nations ... the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter. Like a scarecrow in a melon patch ..."

Jeremiah 10:2-5

Let me be very clear regarding the issue of idols. In our day, we are way too sophisticated for idols made of wood and stone, but we are deeply engaged in idolatry. It is just that the idolatry of our day consists of erroneous ideas! The idolatry of our day is to worship at the alter of climate change, same-sex marriage, the LGQBT agenda, and Critical Race Theory!

If you end up in the Lake of Fire, it isn't going to make a hill of beans difference whether you cut your carbon footprint or not! Any Christian who has been caught up in any of the above, or become fearful because of any of the above, has been moved away from a pure devotion to his or her Lord and Savior!

Counting our blessings. Devotion is a response to growing into a right understanding of the blessings that are ours in Christ! In short, God's grace is meant to prompt our growth towards a devoted heart. Start with the truth of I Corinthians 1:30:

It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

I Corinthians 1:30

Faith in Christ leads to a new birth as a child of God and an immediate position of perfect righteousness, perfect holiness, and a transfer from Satan's dominion to the kingdom of Jesus Christ! Add to that the truth of every spiritual blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:3) and the knowledge that we are sons of God and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16-17)! Now, I ask you, if you sell your soul to the world, will it give you anything like this?

As the immensity of God's plan of salvation becomes reality in our souls—and the vanity of the world becomes equally clear—is it any wonder that we move towards a condition where:

My soul has found a resting place in Christ alone, and simple devotion to Him, which is a love for His will!

When the above is the case, you will find God's people looking for, and sensitive to, what He is doing.

You will always find that where this devotedness is, there is neither an imitation of what others have done, nor is there looking for countenance or support from others—but a course of action quite original and singular, yet eminently effective, not only in answer to the heart's devotion, but for the glory of the Lord and service of people generally.

Stoney

Read the VCC Vision statement! It is a quite original and singular focus for a church fellowship that is the result of the Lord's leading and unique to our fellowship and the field of harvest in which we are to labor!

For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10



We think we understand the works which He has prepared for us to do! Now, in devotion, we seek to avail ourselves of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in order to accomplish those works!

Remembering our example. Jerusalem was a mess in Jesus' day! The glorious feast of the Passover had become a time of intrigue, scheming, duplicity, conspiracy, and the murder of the innocent while freeing the guilty! *And yet, Jesus sees the desperate situation as an opportunity, in His devotion to the Father, to do the one thing more needed than anything else—redeem lost mankind!*

Do we see Jesus complaining about societal trends? Do we see him rendered ineffectual by discouragement? Why do you suppose that might be? Could it be that He was devoted to the will of the Father and its eternal ramifications, so that everything else was just so much noise? What an example for us! Do you suppose that when we *have been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun ...* that we are going to still be dominating over the cultural aberrations of 2023? I don't think so!

Devotion Is Not Going to be Popular

Devotion to the will of God is never going to be popular in the organized church, for it is a response to the question, "*Who is on the Lord's side?*" I know that it is a shocking statement, but I think it is easy to prove.

- **In Bible times.** In Moses' day, upon his return from spending time with the Lord, he found the following:

Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control ... Exodus 32:25

After smashing the idol the people had made, Moses called out:

"Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come to me."

Exodus 32:26



You would have thought the entire community would have responded, but, alas, only the Levites responded. Less than a tenth of the people stepped forward to align themselves with the Lord! Devotion is a rare commodity among God's people!

- **And even today.** Is it any different in our day? If the Lord were to call to the church in America today to come alongside His purposes—and He is doing so always—would the churches across our land leave all of this world behind and align with Him? Or, would they be too caught up in seeking to gain market share, entertain the masses, and accommodate the culture in order to hear His voice?

I pray, and I ask you to join me in prayer, that we align ourselves in devotion to Him by loving His will above all else!

Devotion is Our Coping Mechanism

Devotion to Jesus is the best possible *coping mechanism* for the day in which we live!

It is so common for people to tell me how angry they get watching the news. My suggestion is to turn it off and pursue devotion to Christ instead! Here's why:



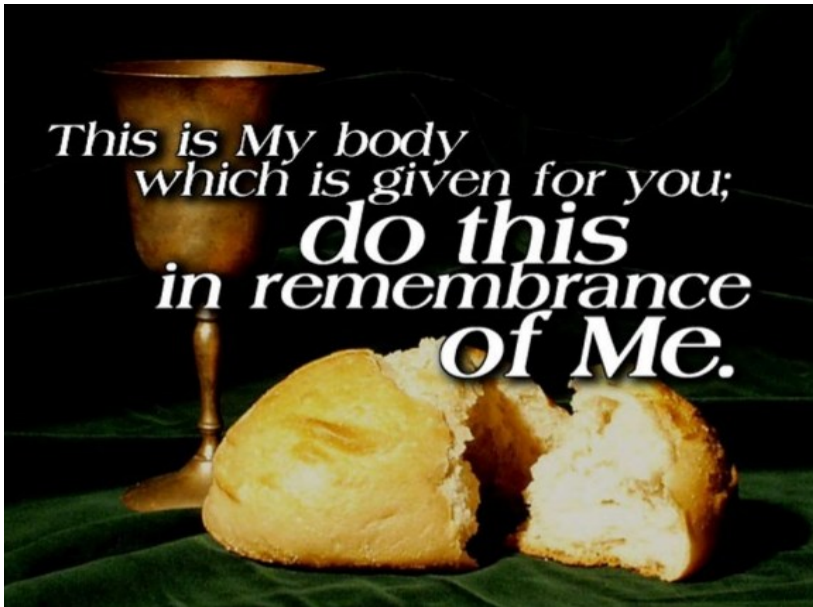
- From eternity, Christ and I were ordained for each other. (Ephesians 1:4-6)
- We are inseparable; we belong to each other. (Ephesians 2:4-6)
- As the Father loves the Son, so the Son loves me. (John 15:9)
- I am an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ. (Romans 8:17)
- I am steadfastly occupied with what the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are doing in me and for me. (Romans 8:26-39)

That is how I handle the noise of the world around me. I am not blissfully ignorant, pretending it doesn't matter, or that there are no consequences. It is just that I have learned to properly value those things that matter the most!

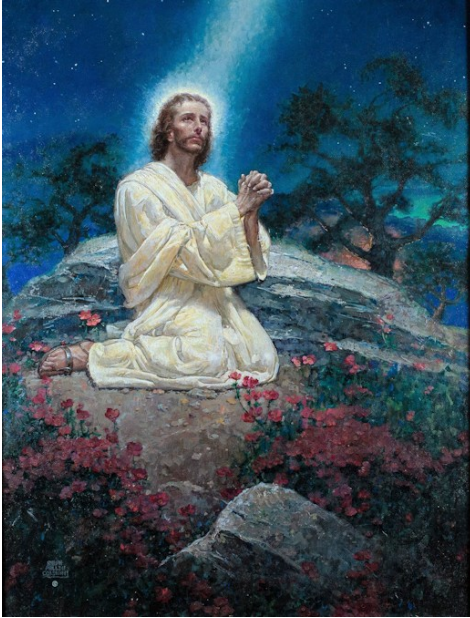
Connecting the Communion Remembrance

One final closing point that stands out in Jesus' establishment of the Communion remembrance:

The Lord Jesus on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me. ...This cup is the New Covenant in My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. I Corinthians 11:23-26



Now answer this: Does our Communion remembrance focus on taking up a crusade against our culture? Is that what it is to prompt every time we return for a time of focused remembrance? Or, does the Communion remembrance prepare us to, in devotion, stand alone in His love, proclaiming a message of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone, and then grow to maturity those who respond?



Which is it? I ask, will our Lord find devotion when He comes? Will he find in us the kind of devotion His Son demonstrated?

"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will."

Matthew 26:39

Will He find love for the will of God?

Do you see it? What we find at the cross when all is stripped away is the love of Jesus for the will of the Father! What will He find in our lives, no matter the circumstances? We can do no better than following the example of Jesus in loving the will of the Father in simple devotion!

In Closing

I told you at the very beginning that I wanted to do two things.

- First, I wanted to answer a common question, and I have spent all of this booklet seeking to do just that.
- Then, I also had a specific outcome in mind. I am going to let the words of another describe that outcome in a succinct and powerful way, for it echoes my heart for our fellowship as well:

But what I long for now is a thorough sinking of all questions and a rejoicing together in hearing the Bridegroom's voice and going on together in the light of His blessed countenance. We shall then measure one another, not by our views of any particular question, but by our appreciation of the Person of Christ and our devotion to His cause. C.H. Mackintosh

There is so much today that seeks to divide us! The above makes clear what should unite us: *Appreciation of the Person of Christ and our devotion to His cause.*



Allow me to close in prayer for all of us!

Heavenly Father,

It is not that we don't care about what we see happening in our nation, for we care deeply! Might we have the courage and reliance on Your strength to take up whatever individual calling you might have for each of us to push back against the darkness that is growing and expanding in our land.

But as the Church, Your heavenly Bride, might we not falter or be confused, but in steadfast devotion pursue our calling to reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ and promote the growth of those who respond. Father, let nothing dissuade us no matter what comes—that we would be found faithfully laboring when the trumpet sounds and you call us to yourself! That is our whole plea today—might we be a prevailing church devoted to Your will, to your glory, which ultimately will lead to our blessing. For we desire to be firmly on the Lord's side! And let all God's people say, "Amen!"



Publications written and produced by

Vistoso Community Church

1200 E. Rancho Vistoso Blvd., Oro Valley, AZ 85755 ☎ 520 825-0652

Website: www.vistoso.org