

## "Church Leadership" (by Steve Bray)

*The following is a selected quotation from the book "Church Leadership",  
by: Steve Bray.*

*The complete book is available to download, FREE, in .pdf format, from the "free  
download" page of this web site. ("Church Leadership" .pdf format by Steve Bray.)  
Many thanks to Becky Hayes at ; <http://searchthewordfortruth.blogspot.com/> where I,  
just today, found this excellent book.*

*B.Keith Chadwell January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010*

### **Selected quotation:**

"Today is the day to enter into the kingdom of God where everyone lives by the Spirit of God. We enter in by dying to the old independent and self-sufficient way of life. Jesus instructed us to deny ourselves and lose our old form of life by taking His way of the cross. We find the fullness of His divine life when the old self-originated form of life is dead. (Matt. 16:25) The Lord has only promised to manifest His heavenly life within those who have responded to His instructions.

*He who has My commandments and keeps them {in this time of preparation  
for being filled with God's glory}, it is he who loves Me...and I will love him  
and manifest Myself to him {as an indwelling life of holy love}. (John 14:21)*

*And of His fullness we have all received {we all have access to this heavenly  
life through yielded faith}, and grace for grace. (John 1:16)*

If Jesus was still walking our streets and confronting "would-be" disciples, as He did in the first century, many of those in the church would discover they are not members of His body. They are not yet living by His Spirit.

The "tares" within the church are merely practicing a human religion. They have kept their minds on "earthly things" because they are still being led through life by their own desires. Although they may have given up gross sins to become respectable, they are still directing their own steps and trying to find life from the things of this world. The spiritual leaders of the church should be doing what Jesus did by making sure everyone knows what it means to be "fit for the kingdom of God."

*And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid*

*them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back {to the old self-directed form of life}, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:61-62)*

*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ {His way of dying to self-will}: whose end is destruction...who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship {our place of life} is in heaven... (Phil. 3:18-19)*

*If then you were raised with Christ {through the new birth}, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things of the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:1-3)*

The objective of the church is to lead every member into this life of promise. We share with Christ in His heavenly life, becoming like Him in this world, as we live through His eternal Spirit.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. (Eph. 1:3-4)*

## **Baptized into the Body**

*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:12-14)*

*That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us {sharing in the same life}, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory {the life of holy love} which You gave Me I have given them {providing access to the same heavenly life}, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one. (John 17:21-23)*

Spiritual leaders must communicate this critical lesson to every member of Christ's body if it is to function as the Lord intended. A cancer is introduced to the body when people are permitted to think they can live independently of God by directing their own steps through life. These foreign elements will eventually destroy the whole body. It

may still exist, but it will be like a body on a morgue table. Christ cannot live through it.

No one can come to this "unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man" (Eph. 4:13) until they have been taught how the Son lives in perfect harmony with His Father within the Trinity. Jesus came to show us how to share in this same eternal life. He emptied Himself of His own glory to live as a man. The Father then filled that empty vessel with the glory that resides within the Trinity. He chose to live as a mere vessel of His Father's life and will. In effect, perfect love chooses to lay down all rights to independence in order to remain in harmony with the divine will. The Son's willingness to lay down His own will and to live through the Father, which enabled Him to continue sharing in the eternal life of holy love, is what maintained the unity that exists within the Trinity.

The Son has now given His followers access to the same glory.

*"And the glory {the life of holy love} which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one." (John 17:22-23)*

Those who will lay down their own will to become one with God in His will can look to the Lord in faith to "fill" the temple of their body with this divine glory. This shared life within the Trinity is what enables every member of Christ's body to become "perfect in one" with both Him and each other.

*He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. (Eph. 4:10)*

*That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You... That the {perfect} love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:21, 26)*

*That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you... {may} know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:17, 19)"*

~~~ End of selected quotation ~~~

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