

HOW RESILIENT ARE WE?

Houses of Light Church • May 16-17, 2020 • Pastor Netz Gómez

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. A very important question that we can ask ourselves at this time as a community is **how are we as a church when we cannot meet in the building?** Thank God for the buildings that we have been able to build over the years; It is a great blessing to have a place where we gather as a family and we have the facilities that allow us to teach children, youth and adults, counseling, the House of Prayer, the bookstore, etc.
- B. But an important question that arises here is: **if the church is strong enough to endure seasons that we are living and continue to progress in the plan that God has?** If this situation continued for 6 more months, what would be left of the church? How would you be

II. HOW IS A STRONG CHURCH BUILT? Pandemic-proof, recession-proof, even a government that opposes because Jesus said in **Mt. 16:18** ***"...on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not [g]prevail against it."*** The answer is in Eph. 4:10-16

v.10 *"He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill ALL THINGS."*

- A. Jesus came down to earth to save us, died and rose and ascended to the right hand of the Father above all to fill everything with His glory and for that...

v.11 *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,"*

- B. He gave the church leadership with certain gifts: **apostles** (lay foundations); **prophets** (give direction); **evangelists** (reach the lost); **shepherds** (take care of them); **teachers**. **All of these ministries are the manifestation of Christ and have a specific goal....**

v.12 *"for the equipping [train] of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [e]difying of the body of Christ,"*

- C. The responsibility and goal of this leadership is to train believers to do the work of God, that is, to serve to edify the Body of Christ. They are trained for that. The word **"work of the ministry"** first appears in **1 Chron. 9** speaking of those who served in the tabernacle who had initially been constituted by David and Samuel (**1 Chron. 9:22** - the priesthood / prophet and the king. /apostolic).

1 Chron. 9:13 *"and their brethren, heads of their fathers' houses—one thousand seven hundred and sixty. They were very able men for the work of the service of the house of God."*

- D. After all these years of attending church, are you trained to do God's work, that is, edify the church? What God wants is for all believers to build up the body of Christ because His purpose is that...

v.13 *"till we ALL come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;"*

E. In this dynamic of leaders who train ALL believers, the Father intends that we all come to...

1. The unity of faith: Believing the same; a faith that unites.

2. The full knowledge of the Son of God: Knowing Jesus, everything should lead us in this direction. Jn. 17: 3 ***"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."***

3. A perfect man (mature/just like Christ): To be like Him and no longer be...

v.14 ***"Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth"*** (NTV) "

F. The Father wants us all to mature, that is, we leave the spiritual childhood characterized by the lack of firmness in the doctrine and **this is the goal of leadership**. The danger is that there are false teachers who try to mislead them. They are people who try to deceive us with lies so skillful that they seem like the truth. The Father wants everyone of His children to be firm, foolproof. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE FRIENDSHIP GROUPS, THE INNER HEALING RETREATS; AFFIRMING YOUR STEPS; DISCIPLESHIP SCHOOL, CEMP.

G. There is a lot of deception in the world and within mainstream Christianity and Jesus said that this was also going to be a feature of the end time. Right now you can be deceived and not even realize it.

Mt. 24:4,5 y 11 ***"And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many... 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many"***

v.15 ***" but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ."***

H. The opposite of spiritual childhood is to follow the truth in love. If the characteristic of immaturity is instability, the distinctive feature of maturity is to follow the truth in love to grow in every way to be more like Jesus who is the head of the church.

I. Truth is the most effective antidote to protect us from lies and authentic truth produces love for God and for others. This is our goal at Houses of Light: Cultivate passion for Jesus and compassion for others.

v.16 ***"from whom the WHOLE body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."***

J. When we abide in Christ we connect with others and fulfill our role to help others develop as well, not only are the leaders or the pastor or the teachers but they all help others to grow. You grow when you give and build others.

K. More than 15 years ago, God allowed us to open Friendship Groups as a way to pastor the church beyond the building. Each of the believers is touched in

the retreats, consolidated in Affirming Your Steps; taught at the Discipleship School; and activated ministers in the Friendship Groups.

- L. **As a pastor I do not want to be the center, Christ must be the center of every home, ministry and Friendship Group.** The protagonists of this community are the leaders of the Friendship Groups and of the ministries because they are in contact with each other ready to respond to the need; But it is not only that you receive teachings but that when you are connected you place yourself in your place so that you do the same with others.
- M. **We each need to be being edified and edify others and then the entire body of believers is healthy and full of love.** In other words, each member becomes strong because it is not possible for a single man or group of men to do it but for all the members of the Body of Christ. When you grow something from the five ministries flows into you; not that you are already the famous minister but that something of the evangelist, prophetic or pastoral flows in you.

III. THIS MAKES US RESILIENT

- A. **Foundation** (who Christ is), **connection** (fellowship), **teaching, and training** are key.
- B. **One part is done by the leadership and the other part is each one of you. One can go to the meeting place and not connect with the body. Or one may not go to the building, as is this case and still remain connected.**
- C. **At this moment it is becoming evident if our Christianity has only consisted of going to the meeting place on Saturday or Sunday; • and if it has been so then at this moment our Christianity would be dissolving and we are losing interest.**

IV. PRACTICAL CALLS

- A. **OUR DAILY CONNECTION TO CHRIST** it is essential and this speaks of real devotional life. Jn. 15:4 *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me."* **We need to know Him in order to make Him known.**
- B. **OUR REAL CONNECTION TO OUR FAMILY** to impart to them the reality of **Christ**. Parents are the most effective for this. Unfortunately many of us are at home but we don't connect on an emotional level (talking, listening, etc.) and then a spiritual level (reading, praying, singing together). **It is time to have a family devotion.**
- C. **OUR CONNECTION TO THE BODY OF CHRIST.** No one is a Christian at his own expense, like some kind of Lone Ranger. Now that you have not been able to meet, how much did you need communion with the saints? On the other hand, when we are born again, we do have a desire to meet and we do not lose the connection with our brothers and leaders because we understand how much we need our brothers and leaders; that shows that we are born again. Have we remained connected to the body of Christ?
1 Jn. 3:14 " We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love [c]his brother abides in death."

V. CONCLUSION

- A. What we have been able to see these days is that Houses of Light by the grace of God is resistant; now how many would we be left if the restrictions lasted this 6 months?

Jer. 12:5 "If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, Then how can you contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, In which you trusted, they wearied you, Then how will you do in the [b]floodplain of the Jordan?"

- B. **The church of Christ is unstoppable, neither the government, nor the COVID, nor the lack of finances, or of being able to meet in a building can stop it.** If I hit a diamond with a hammer nothing happens to it unless it is false so it happens to the church. **Nothing can destroy the church. May we be so strong that we can feel the relief of adapting to the changes that come and that will come.**
- C. **If we call church when we meet and there is no meeting then the church has already been destroyed. The church is not the buildings but us. Jesus did not intend to be the buildings and meet us once a week. Dear church we must be united.**
- D. **The risen Christ; all authority has been given to me; follow me; I'm going to go through with you during this pandemic. God is leading us to something new. We do not want to return to Egypt where everything is known.**
- E. God is not going to give us something that is beyond what we can handle. **Phil. 4:13** Paul knew how to be content with whatever his situation was. **Our panic comes when we don't have everything I assure.** But if I get sick and I leave, that's fine. God promised me that if I first sought His kingdom everything else would be added to me. Jesus said don't worry about tomorrow, but the problem is with our wishes what we coveted; not only do we want daily bread but so many other things; the best until I die.
- F. God told the Levites; I will be his portion; that's better than any inheritance. We have our risen Christ. When they take everything from us; we still have Christ. My cup overflows because I have Him.

VI. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. **How far have we progressed in our relationship with Christ during this quarantine? Explain**
2. **How far have you progressed in your relationship with your family? Explain**
3. **How far have you progressed in your connection with church members?**