

There are endless variations on the "theme" of the Gospel. If we prayed and believed, God would give us all the details---He has much work to be done--ask Him--you'll find out!

But why this way? Why all these small groups? Because Jesus did it this way---and so did the church in the Bible. This is the way the church worked in the Bible---by example and by doctrine.

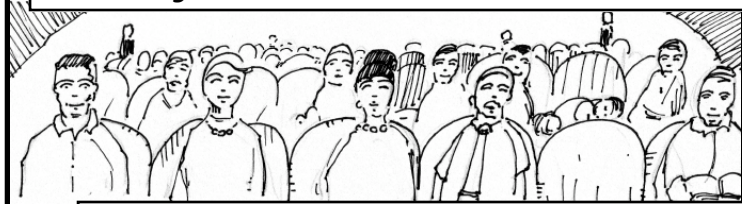
Small groups working together---this is called apostleship....

"By whom we have received grace and apostleship....."(Romans 1:5)

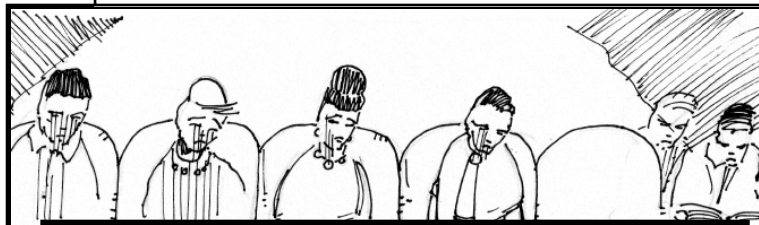
(Statistic: The word "pastor" is used once in the entire new testament---the word "apostle" close to 300 times!! Study your Bible!!)

20

"How much time this week have you put into prayer--into study of the Word---and how much time spent watching television---?"



"How much time have you spent, serving the things of this world--and not serving our Lord?"



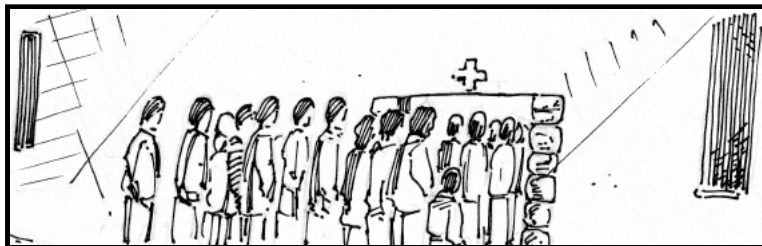
5

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

(James 1:22-25)

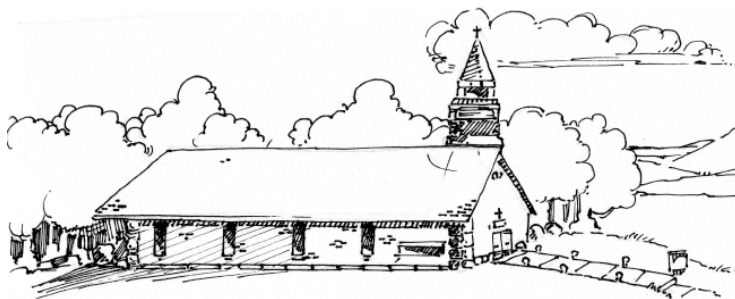
WHAT IF.....In our precious time together, we did the Gospel---instead of just talking about it. WHAT IF.....we focused our time, effort and money on the Gospel---trying to give everyone, every opportunity to do some part. We all could be involved (the Gospel is big---and it is needed everywhere!). It would be direct, effective--and very, very obedient to the Bible.

8



Because after the repentance---the "sheep" file out---all gone home---separate---back to the world--alone.

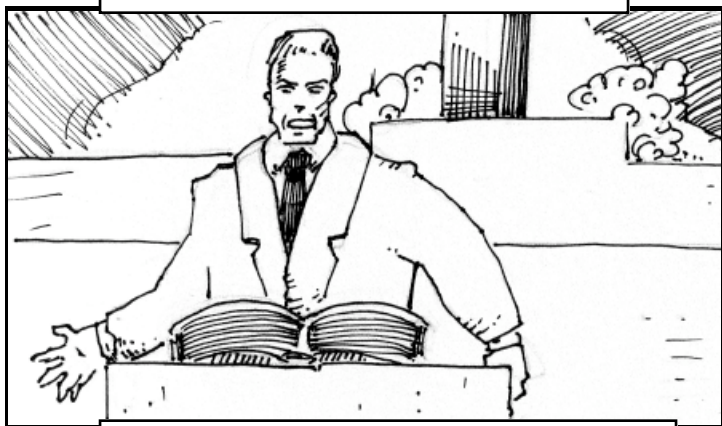
And the building we've worked so hard to build sits idle and empty.



What devil has devised this tradition!! Do we realize that the traditional format of church operation was invented in the dark ages? (study history!!) Do we realize that this format of church meeting is based on the old covenant? (study your Bible!!) This format defines ministry, authority, and function--it's BIG!!

7

A good and true message! A message of repentance from dead works.....!



"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14)

A message of encouragement to serve God. The new testament is full of this exhortation. But one thing lacking! **OPPORTUNITY!!**

"Here's my phone number--call me if you need anything. We want you to work with us---to serve God with us"



WHAT IF....We had the final goal of faith-- which is to believe that anyone who believes and accepts Jesus as Lord, could join with us---and do everything that we do---as a brother or sister in the Lord---an equal.

Jesus found a demon possessed man---healed him--- and released him to be a preacher to 10 cities (Mark 5:1-20). Jesus met another man who was persecuting Christians one day, and through some obedient believers--released him to "straitway" preach the Gospel (Acts chapter 9: 1-20---by the way his name was Paul!). Jesus gave us a perfect example of "how to be the church". Oh certainly we will never do it perfectly as He did, but--WHAT IF we did all we could to strive toward His high example-?

But WHAT IF.....next Sunday.....instead of the tradition---the format---the shepherd and the sheep.....WHAT IF.....



A small group of folks from the church, hijacked the church bus---drove downtown to the homeless shelter, and picked up a few of the residents therein.....!

"Can I mend your shirt, sir?"



WHAT IF.....we simply showed them who Jesus is--- by doing the Gospel---the way that Jesus did it.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."
(James 1:27)