

united by His word

JULY²⁰²⁰

END TIMES

We are truly living in the last of the last days as a church. I want to note, the church is both universal and local. The local church is God's visible working model of the universal church and is made up of born-again people called "living stones".
(1st Peter 2:5)

We are living in the time period that Paul spoke of to Timothy, in **2nd Timothy 3:1**. **But know this**, or "come to grips with these certain facts which cannot be changed", **that in the last days (eschatos**, a study Of the last days) **perilous times** (Greek **CHALEPOS**-treacherous dangerous times) **will come**. The Greek text words this differently. "Grievous times will be at hand" when you see the phrase "will be at hand" it means it will affect you personally, it will touch your life; those personally connected to you. Take time to read **2nd Timothy 3:1-7** from the Amplified Bible. It captures the thoughts and message of the current condition the world is in.

We as the church, universally and locally, need to come together and look deeper into the Word of God; to get back to the original purpose of the church, prior to the start of denominations. Paul, being the author of the book of Ephesians was the first apostle to declare the stewardship and function of the church; the body of Christ on the earth. The church should be, on earth, the expression of Christ who is in heaven. **(Eph 1:9, 10, 11, 13)**

The original purpose of the church was to bring together one unit of believers who would promote the kingdom of God through the witness of the present day ministry of Jesus Christ on earth. By what Paul said in **1 Cor 1:10** "concerning the church". By speaking the same thing, having a uniform testimony and no divisions, dissensions. **Verse 10** having been joined together in the same mind and in the same opinion. **Verse 11** to avoid contentions, strife among you. This is where denominations were formed. Each denomination only allowed inside their group, people who were in full agreement with their biblical interpretation or should I say; their opinion. Paul said of the body of Christ in the earth **verse 13**; is Christ divided?

The fullness of the gospel is linked to the message of Christ; His witness, reaching the known world, especially the Gentile nations. We will never reach the world through our differences. When you say "opinion" to me, you're saying and believing something that might not be established by the Word.

Before denominations were established, Paul said in **1st Timothy 4:1**, **In the latter times...** Greek: "misleading spirits will cause some to depart from the faith." This tells me how dangerous different opinions or mindsets can be. It allows Satan the opportunity to inject his thoughts into our "opinion".

Instead of making a denomination the issue, we need to come together as a united church and re-define our differences of opinion. The next few months I will try to define what God has fully intended for the church and how it was supposed to reach the world. We don't want to be found in the same place as the Jewish nation by disqualifying themselves. **Romans 11:11**

Let us come together in obedience and humility, promoting the kingdom of God to a world that is in need of hope; His name is Jesus!

LOVE,
JANN T. BUTLER

