

CHURCH TURMOIL

The Role of the Remnant

Discussion

During a recent Southview Elders meeting, the Holy Spirit led us to realize that God had brought to the new Elder ministry everyone who had been through the time of trial and testing Southview witnessed these past few years. Elder Diane Atkison observed it first and pointed out to the other Elders that "we're the remnant" God is choosing to use in this new ministry and in leading the spiritual direction of the church at Southview. As the days have passed and I've continued to pray and seek God's direction for us as Elders and for the local church the realization that we are a remnant began to penetrate all the Lord was showing me.

I've now come to realize that not only are the Elders a remnant God is now using, but so is the majority of today's membership at Southview. Indeed, we don't need to think long to be able to see and know the number of us who have belonged to this church for the last three years -- to as many as twenty years or more. Those of us who still remain after the very difficult of time of trial and testing God has led Southview through are the remnant that through His grace has been preserved for such a time as this.

If that's so, then what is the role of the remnant? Is a remnant simply a scrap of leftover fabric to be used to patch garments, or is it something else? The Bible is replete with examples of "remnant theology", how God has protected and then used a remnant of people. All we need consider are even a few of these in order to learn a lot about what God has in store for us. Noah, Joseph in Egypt, Moses, the 7,000 Jews in Elijah's time who refused to worship Baal, are just a few of the examples of God's use of a remnant. Paul even wrote in Romans 11:5 that "There is a remnant according to the election of grace." What then does God do with each remnant, what precepts can we see from looking at these examples that may shed some light on what God now has in store for Southview?

When I consider all of these examples I see one common thread -- that God used each remnant He protected as the nucleus to start a new community, to begin a new work. Each remnant became the foundation to form a new community devoted to God and His redemptive work.

I also see that he used the remnant to bring deliverance from an impending judgment or destruction. They became a witness to God's great grace and His continuing work of world redemption. Serving as a lighthouse in the midst of a dark and sinful world.

I can see from what God has shown me these past couple of weeks that we are a remnant -- the Elders as a body, and the church at Southview. He has led us through a great time of trial and tribulation in order to create the very remnant He required in order to begin a new work. It's exciting and yet humbling at the same time to think that God has been working in each of our lives to accomplish His specific will. We don't yet know what lies ahead, but we know this - God IS leading us. Now we need to pray we'll have the courage, strength and determination to follow. Could it be that He's already told us our purpose for being a remnant; to be the nucleus of building a new community of faith, to be a lighthouse for Jesus and the Gospel, to deliver people from coming judgment, to have a role in literally proclaiming the Gospel to the whole world - all from the remnant at Southview? Could it be?...Let's pray and seek God's face and see where He leads us. Being a remnant -- now that's working in the Kingdom of God -- what a blessing, what an honor.

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