

Comments from folks regarding Discernment Year issues

Joan O'Connell – 11/6.2016

What about that covenant?

Do we need it? Is it functioning more to [we-them] the [community-guests-the rest of the Kingdom on earth] than it is to "hold us together?" Is the thing that God did/continues to do among us a function of that covenant or a function of His work in our hearts and among us, by the power of His H.S.?

Is/was the covenant of God or of man?

"Give my life fully for God and live as a member of The Word of God..." What's that mean, actually?

Suppose we didn't have a covenant. Or we said, "Hm. That was then; this is now."

What then?

Thank you,

Joan OC

PS-YES!!! to Ruth Dahl's encouragement that we stay calm. Trust. Believe. Pray. Follow.

"HE started it!"

John Whiting – 11/7/2016

I was reminded of the "bulwark" prophecies from the 1970s or early 80s. You probably remember them: a series of several prophecies (4 or 5?) stating that The Word of God would protect many people from something like a tsunami of evil, and that the bulwark would be not a massive wall, but, rather, something like a hedge, in which the interlocked branches would be our personal relationships. I hadn't thought about these prophecies in a long while, but they came to mind almost immediately when I asked God for input about direction for the community.

I didn't sense God saying anything specific about the prophecies, but it seems to me that we need to strengthen our relationships if we're going to become that bulwark. Given the current strength of the forces of secular relativism, it seems to me that we might have to face that tsunami of evil pretty soon.

It also struck me that we'll probably be a stronger bulwark if we're allied somehow with The Sword of the Spirit – and this was before Mike Gladieux's sharing at the prayer meeting. I'm not sure what to make of Mike's sharing: parts of it resonated strongly with me, and other parts didn't. While I think partnership of some sort with The Sword of the Spirit would be very desirable, I think the philosophy underlying The Word of God is very different from that

underlying the SOS. I think our looser, decentralized approach is from God; and I doubt God wants us to give it up. I think we ought to be cautious about giving up too much of our identity; but we ought to be open to God's surprises, too.

I got a kick out of Pat O'Connell's sharing about God having plans for even little embryos in the womb. He's absolutely right, of course. It crossed my mind, though, that if a little embryo were to hear God's plans for him or her, the embryo wouldn't understand them. Even a teenager would probably misinterpret what he or she would hear. I think The Word of God may be in a similar situation. We can understand generalities about what God offers us, but we're probably not ready to understand many of the specifics. I've heard that the type of lamp referred to in the passage "Your word is a lamp to my feet" shed its light for only a very short distance – enough for only a step or two. I wouldn't be surprised if that's the way God reveals his plans for us, although he might well give us some sort of large, less detailed vision, as well – so that we'll point ourselves in the right direction. I think the bulwark prophecies are part of such a vision and that we ought to pay attention to them, even if we don't know how they fit into the larger picture of things.

Keith Dwyer – 11/7/2016

Wow, Mike's vision is very specific and directive! Ruth and I have begun to prayerfully reflect upon and discuss it. We were struck by the fact that for this to happen there would have to be significant movement from The Word of Life position (you can join US) and what Marsha suggested (they can join US). This gap can only be closed by some sincere disclosure of what really happened to precipitate the split (to this day I have no idea), ownership and appropriate repentance on the part of the leaders involved, etc. Maybe this 'scab' has to be pulled off in order to pour on the 'hydrogen peroxide' that is needed to heal the infection.

Judy Lucchetti – 11/6/2016

I know that the Lord makes all things new but looking back to the beginning, we started because some people got together and prayed. No teaching or planned talks just prayer then came prophesy and then when there were people who knew nothing of the Lord, teachings evolved. I think that we need to pray, worship mostly (maybe to make up in a way for all those of the world that don't) He is deserving of our praise, intercession to make up a small part as guided by the Spirit. I think we should be praying more for our needs, outreaches that individuals are in and county, country and societal needs but mostly spending time together worshipping because He is Lord. We could just pray in our churches (I asked the Lord about that) but we as many churches coming together are like mini-Hosannas. We can love each other from many different churches which is a big witness to anyone who sees us.

Also as part of this, I think we should spend more time telling of the works of the Lord... the ways Jesus is teaching us or leading us to others. We need to hear more from each other to be

more of a family. We also don't pray over each other enough. We used to be able to go to the back of the room and find someone who is willing to pray for anyone who asks at any time. I don't feel it is that easily worked into the schedule of the meeting.

I felt our calling was to pray together even if only 5 people showed up. The number doesn't matter. Many people have felt lead into an outreach. For some of us our outreach may be our own children and grandchildren who I feel were put to the side and hurt by our mandatory attendance at prayer meetings. We may not make it to every meeting but that is OK if that is what Jesus is calling us to.

This is what I thought the Lord was telling me, use your discernment.

Hi Phil,

Carol Magill re history & mission

Thank you very much for undertaking this difficult task. You gave a thorough, objective, overview.

I know it must have been very difficult to prepare; but I'm sure it was helpful for the folks worried about "covenant breaking". ...

I sympathize with those folks, but in reality, there were SO many somewhat confusing adjustments to the original covenant (that you described so well).

That is, people could be very justified taking the "clause" about it not being "not necessarily a life long commitment" seriously, because of CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES that affect what the individual is able to do. Plus the nuances of what each new tweaking of the covenant were confusing

(I personally fall into that category; unexpected demands on my time arose unexpectedly, with great frequency in my life;)

I do agree with your analysis at the end of the "WHY" and the good things that came from the conflict. We are flawed humans and have to learn to agree to disagree and part peacefully... wishing the other well.

I don't find myself in the group worried about scandal of covenant breaking

I think "ALLIED" COULD have worked ..how ever.... maybe NOT... because some of the "intown issues" would still have to be worked out, and these were thorny.

Eg (I move into personal opinion here....could be very wrong), but I think we were intrinsically off base in the areas of "authority; the understanding of women; taking on more pastorally that we were equipped for; and the "emphasis on one MISSION--that of forming charismatic christian communities to the exclusion of other important things...

This last thing was sort of a subtle pitfall: people became de-personalized...that is saw their value in terms of how valuable they were to the MISSION. there was a sort of percieved "skimming off the most talented or grooming people for certain needed slots."

I heard a pastor I really respect say one time, that, when thinking about mission or "call", it is a temptation to use people as a means to an end... but in the eyes of GOD each individual is an "END" in itself. Individuals finding themselves in God is more important than a "mission". Perhaps we lost sight of that...

Any way, thank you again for giving that talk. It did help in providing objectivity to move forward.
carol Magill