**BUILDING GOVERNMENT RESPECT - *BUILDING INFLUENCE***

No Respect – no influence – no salvation of souls – no spiritual fruit.

*The salvation of souls rests with the believers* not the unbelievers.

**1a. An Almost Forgotten Principle**

The historic principle is that the success of the local church *rests* with unbelievers.

If unbelievers of the surrounding neighborhood do not respect, value and desire the activities of the local church, no evangelistic fruit will result.

Example: the integrity/respect Billy Graham had. He was God’s greatest spokesman over all 6000 years of world history. Naturally there were many who attempted to criticize him. But finally all those critics admitted that they could find no fault with Billy Graham or the way he operated his ministry. (Dan. 6:5)

In unconscious ways the Holy Spirit draws unbelievers to churches where there is strong evidence that God is at work. If unbelievers do not see this spiritual phenomenon taking place in a local church they will not come.

Programs, music, preaching, camps, all will be to no avail.

*The one and only way to large scale evangelism and church planting is for local churches to have a wide positive relationship, reputation and influence in the community.*

Would you like to share some comments in this regard?

**1b.** **Building Respect**

1 Divine Omniscient Ruler, long before the church you created families.

2 Divine Omniscient Ruler, long before the church you created communities.

3 Your interest, Divine Omniscient Ruler, was to have influence and reputation in communities!!

4 Divine Omniscient Ruler, we read of your constant desire and honor in the community during the 40 years in the wilderness.

5 Grant our local churches this same vision. Your vision!

6 Grant our local churches to build respect in their communities.

7 Grant our local churches understanding to know that they will be blessed when their community is blessed; and that you will withhold their blessing if their community is not blessed. Jer. 29:7

**2a. Abraham Built Respect**

Abraham and his large community were living in tents. Heb. 11:9

* Sort of like a Gypsy leader.
* All others lived in solid houses.
* Abraham lived an isolated life.
* Abraham had separated himself from the unbelievers around him.

Abraham was highly successful, but he was very humble.

And Abraham built great respect. Gen 23:3

Abraham had tremendous esteem and influence among the local leaders.

*Abraham spoke unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and an alien among you: sell me some property.*

*The people of Heth answered Abraham, saying, listen to us, my lord: you are a mighty prince among us: Buy what you want.*

There was value in Abraham’s lifestyle and the people honored him and respected him.

Such respect had a great and powerful influence for the Gospel. *(see also 1Sam 2:26 & Lk 2:52.)*

**2b. Father God from Eternity to Eternity**

Like Abraham many of our pastors and their church communities live quiet/humble/meek isolated lives. We know this is excellent – we know you commanded us to do so! *1Pe 3:4  … let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

But Father God from Eternity to Eternity, as denominational leaders we seek your face.

Do our quiet/humble/meek church communities of believers instill the respect/honor/influence that You desire them to in our communities?

Father God from Eternity to Eternity, we discover from the above that our quiet/humble/meek lifestyles should be lived PUBLICLY!!!

Only with such PUBLICITY is your name glorified!

Only as our local churches build a high level of respect will influence pervade those living around us.

Oh Father God from Eternity to Eternity, in desperation we as denominational leaders beg for a fresh outburst of such power and grace.

**3a. Jesus was recognized and respected.**

On many occasions the people recognized and revered and respected him.

*For Jesus taught them as one having authority, Mat 7:29*

One secular leader made this obvious. He said *“I also am a man set under authority”. Luk 7:8*

*Jesus spoke in the temple and the common people heard him gladly. Mar 12:37*

*When Jesus returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him. Luk 8:40*

People loved to hear Jesus teaching about God and the Bible. They did not only come for miracles.

**3b.** **Imitating Jesus**

1 How many of our pastors are truly mesmerized with You, Jesus?

2 Jesus, how many pastors pray at sunset as you prayed?

3 Jesus, how many pastors speak with authority?

4 How many pastors can honestly say that their members gladly hear them?

5 How many pastors can honestly say that the unbelievers are thrilled with their message?

6 Lord Jesus, we need you. You constantly used object lessons and stories in your messages.

7 Teach our pastors to follow the example of New Testament preaching.

8 Lord Jesus, enable our pastors to present “The Good News” as you presented it.

9 Lord Jesus we bleed for the lack of souls that we should be touching.

10 Lord Jesus touch us, we pray, that we may touch others

**4a. Successful Respectable Believers Convert Secular Leaders**

The apostles also had the same results as Jesus; *the people gladly received his word Act 2:41*

* Thousands became believers and were Born-Again.

Of further significance is that the Holy Spirit specifically used successful, respected believers to convert *secular leaders*. *Act 8:27 -  And Philip arose and went to a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,*

*Act 13:7 -  Sergius Paulus the deputy of the country, a prudent man;* ***called for*** *Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.*

**4b.** Holy Founder of Mankind, Holy Founder of the physical Jewish nation, holy Founder of the Church, we open our hearts and lives to show you our needs. We stand bare before you.

What Abraham and others in Holy Scripture showed is clearly a prerequisite for influential forms of evangelism. Abraham claimed God’s territory in an ungodly environment. The same happening/event/principle takes places when a new church is planted. A new church plant represents a physical presence of the Kingdom of God in evil territory.

1 Official/governmental permits are usually required to do outdoor/mass evangelism.

Respect and influence is an absolute necessity to obtain building permits for our houses of Prayer.

Further, believers as individuals must gain such respect and approval both from God and from unbelievers in order to bring individuals of all levels of society to the salvation of their souls.

You the Almighty One know all this.

2 Make us Your friends like Abraham we pray.

3 Make us people after Your heart as David we pray.

4 Make us greatly loved as Daniel we pray.

5 Make us mighty MEN of God as Paul we pray.

DO WE HAVE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS OR DISCUSSION?