

Fresh Fire Ministries
The Expository Teaching Ministry of Jay Duane Driver

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV)

The physical manifestation of the church reveals itself when believers all over the world assemble themselves together in various places of worship. These physical structures are not the church, but rather "locations" where the body of Christ agrees to meet on a reoccurring basis to honor and give thanks to God for the resurrection of our Lord. It is also the place where believers meet to exhort and encourage one another. This is something that should be done with increasing regularity as we patiently await the coming of our Lord for His bride, the church. **"That He might present her to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:27 (NKJV)** The church is a spiritual entity, that meets in earthly places, that cannot be confined by those places that harbor its assembly.

Recently, as a result of the developing health crisis, federal, state, and local municipalities have mandated directives and executive orders placing limits on the number of persons that can assemble in one physical location. As a result, many churches across our nation will not be able to meet at their typical places of worship. On the other hand, many pastors and church leaders will choose to defy these mandates while in direct rebellion to biblical scripture. **"Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves." Romans 13:2 (NKJV)** Many will meet as an expression of their faith, to demonstrate their resistance to what they deem as the persecution of the church, or in opposition of the perceived works of darkness and principalities. Then there will be those who will meet because of the fear of the financial impact it will have on their church coffers, anxiety of the unknown, or for some other non-biblical contrived reason or conspiracy theory.

Buildings and physical locations can be condemned, destroyed, foreclosed on, repurposed, and relocated. However, you cannot close the church! Its foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord. Its windows and doors span the entire universe. Its roof is celestial, decked from the hallowed halls of heaven. It is not limited by time or confined by space. It cannot be legislated for or against, it cannot be voted in or out. No man can dictate its power and no man can prevent its reason for existing. Its power is unequalled, and its impact cannot be duplicated. Its members are on earth and in the presence of the Lord simultaneously. You cannot close the church and the church will not close until Jesus comes. Jesus made a promise and that promise is just as true today concerning the church as it was the day that He spoke it into existence. The gates of hell will never prevail against the church!

Yet during times of national crisis and adversity that has global implications, the responsibility to marshal the resources needed to ensure a positive outcome will rest upon the entire constituency of our nation, including the church. We may be asked to operate, on a temporary basis, outside of our comfort zone, our typical place of worship. But as in the case of the governing authorities who may make such requests, we must comply because it is our Christian responsibility to do so. It is not a matter of being in fear or having a lack of faith. When asked, we must partner with our governmental authorities to ensure that we do not place the health and welfare of our local congregations at risk. It is not some conspiracy or tool of the world system to persecute the church. It is simply the right thing to do under trying circumstances that if we cooperate will reveal the power of our Christian witness to the world. Look around. The church ain't closed!