

## **From The Pastor's Study The Fate of our Church**

I have talked about a dream and a vision. There is going to come a time when the churches are going to completely open their doors. If we don't have a plan in place telling what we are going to do when seekers come to our door, or when people are seeking a new church, we lose and that means many may miss out on an eternity with Christ and spend their eternity lost.

People outside the church, or outside this congregation will, or at least should want to know how GPC is different than other churches, what is our response. What sets us apart, allow me to suggest a couple of things.

First, the Scriptures guide our faith. What we teach comes right out of scripture, we don't candy coat it but we don't try to beat people down we lift them up. Scripture guides both our faith and actions, it isn't about the law, it is about love. It's about sharing the same love, and that is what Greenbrier Presbyterian Church has go to be about and is about. "They will know we're Christians by our love."

Truth leads us, truth in scripture is where the teaching starts getting a little harder to handle. Either something is true or it is not and if it is not true it has no place in the church, any church. But as one of my favorite contemporary Christian songs say, "Truth without love means nothing". Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." That means all these false teachings about false gods have no place in our churches but our doors are open to the world and our arms are open in love.

It's hard to make those lines in the sand without stepping on someone's toes, but if anyone is going to step on toes leave that task to your pastor, the congregation's job is to welcome and love. Jesus told us to love our enemies and while those who haven't found their way to the cross aren't our enemies, we are certainly called to love them.

One more thing here; the Hebrew people, the Jews, are God's chosen people, and He never disowned them. If we break our connection with them, we break our connection to the one who created us, our limb is removed from the Jesse Tree. Some denominations have proclaimed the Jews to be terrorists, enemies of the Christian faith. Hey folks, if there is any judging to be done, leave it to the one who will judge in righteousness, He took on that job when He created the world, let Him do His job.

We all have our opinions about what God's Word but there is only one opinion that counts and that is the one who inspired His words to be written. Sometimes His Word is crystal clear, sometimes it is as clear as a mud puddle to us. The only way we are going to know the difference is to study the Word, not just read it, but study it. Become intimate with the words.

When people come through our door they need to know they are welcome and the one true God loves them and we are to be the expression of that love. Everyone is just as worthy of that love as you and I are, which means we aren't except through the love of Jesus Christ.