FOUR PILLARS OF A STRONG CHURCH

**INTRODUCTION**

IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS…25:GOD CALLED MOSES TO BUILD HIM A TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS where GOD HIMSELF WOULD VISIT AND TABERNACLE WITH HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE.

The tabernacle was first erected in the wilderness exactly one year after the Passover when the Israelites were freed from their Egyptian slavery.

*God was very specific with Moses…..“Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.” (Exodus 25:9)…* in other words…God gave very specific instructions about the size of each component and the materials the Israelites were to use.

The reason was this…..

*Then I will dwell among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them.” (Exodus 29:45-46)*

And so God dwelled among His people in the tabernacle in the wilderness. He appeared as a pillar of cloud over the tabernacle by day and a pillar of fire by night in the sight of all Israel. The people would not set out on their journey unless the cloud lifted. It was an unmistakably powerful visual statement indicating God’s presence among them.

God knew that the Israelites needed a visual evidence of His presence.

In my neighborhood a Christian friend of mine asked me to help him erect a shed in his back yard because he didn’t know the first place where to begin.

So without looking at the directions I told him I think we should start by putting up the four corners which were the pillars that would hold the rest of the shed in tact and in place. They would also aid in holding the structure and add the strength and support the shed would need.

1. **In our efforts to lead people to Christ and have Christ reside in our tabernacle...There are 4 pillars in the church that need to be in place so that the building will hold strong.**

**a. We must understand the importance of the Word of God –**

[**Ro 10:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%2010.17)**…17So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

**b. The gospel is the power of God to salvation –**

[**Ro 1:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%201.16)**…..16For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**

**2. Yet it helps to compliment the Word with a demonstration of certain**

**qualities that need to be in existence within the body…..**

**a. So that People can see the truth of the gospel in action.**

**b. With such actions People are more likely to believe in Jesus Christ.**

**3. When demonstrated by Christians in a local church, these 'PILLARS'**

**can serve to...**

1. **Let the nonbelievers know:**

**1) There is a God Who loves him or her.**

**2) That God has sent Jesus as a manifestation of that love.**

**Amen!!!**

**[There are at least four such "PILLARS" in the church,...]**

1. **THE PILLAR OF UNITY**

Psalm 133:1-2  Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!2It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

1. **THE VALUE OF UNITY OF BELIEVERS...**

**1. It shows and sends a message to the entire world that God has sent Christ –and Christ had this in mind!!!**

[**Jn 17:21**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2017.21)**..** 21That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

1. **It shows that God has loved the world –**

[**Jn 17:23**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2017.23)23I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

**B. SO THEN UNITY IS A PILLAR TO THE WORLD...**

1. **BECAUSE IT ALSO SHOWS THAT God loves the world**

[**Jn 3:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%203.16)**…**16For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**2. That God sent Christ who produces the unity witnessed by the world -**

[**Ep 2:13-16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ep%202.13-16)**….**13But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.14For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;15Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, smaking peace;16And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.

**C. SO THEN, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PILLAR OF UNITY...**

1. **Led Paul to condemn division and those who cause it -**

[**1Co 1:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Co%201.10) **10Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**

[**Ro 16:17-18**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%2016.17-18)**….17Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.18For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.**

1. **Led Paul to teach attitudes essential to preserving unity –**

[**Ep 4:1-3**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ep%204.1-3)**… 4 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,2With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;3Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

[**Php 2:2-4**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Php%202.2-4)**…2Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.3Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.4Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.**

**The message here is this….**

**[Let's be sure that we do nothing to destroy the 'PILLAR' of UNITY;**

**rather, let's work toward enhancing its effectiveness.**

**Another 'PILLAR' that points the church in the right direction is...**

**II. THE PILLAR OF LOVE**

1. **There is a special VALUE OF LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER...**

**1. It shows that we have been loved by Christ, whose love we seek**

**to imitate…**

[**Jn 13:34**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2013.34)**….34A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.**

1. **It shows that we are truly His disciples –**

[**Jn 13:35**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2013.35)**…35By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**

1. **SO LOVE IS A “PILLAR” TO THE WORLD...**

**1. That Christ has loved His disciples -**

[**Jn 15:12-13**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Jn%2015.12-13)**….This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.13Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.**

1. **That those who imitate His love are His true disciples -**

[Ep 5:1-2](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ep%205.1-2)…. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;2And walk in **love**, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour

1. **Therefore THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE...**
2. **Led Paul to encourage churches to increase in love –**

**1Th 4:9-10…..9But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.10And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;**

1. **This Led Paul to consider love as the "bond of perfection" –**

[**Col 3:14**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Col%203.14)**….**And above all these things put on **charity**, which is the bond of perfectness

**a. Here we see that love and unity go together**

**b. By our love for one another, we are more likely to preserve**

**our unity in Christ**

**[Unity and love also go hand in hand as "Divine PILLARS". The first**

**lets people know God loves them, and the second shows people who are the**

**true followers of Christ.**

**Now for a third 'PILLAR' ...]**

1. **THE PILLAR OF HOPE**

**Proverbs..13:12….** 12Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.

**a. THE VALUE OF HOPE...**

**1. It can prompt people to ask us questions –**

[**1Pe 3:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%203.15)**….15But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:**

1. **It can provide us opportunity to share the reason for our hope**

**B. SO HOPE IS Actually a PILLAR TO THE WORLD...**

[**Ro 5:1-2**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%205.1-2)**…..** **Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:2By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**

1. **Steadfast even in tribulation –**

[**Ro 5:3-4**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%205.3-4)**……3And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;4And patience, experience; and experience, hope:**

1. **Based upon the love of God –**

[Ro 5:5](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%205.5)….And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

1. **Made sure by the resurrection of Jesus –**

[**1Pe 1:3-4**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%201.3-4)**…3Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,4To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,**

**C. So then, THE IMPORTANCE OF HOPE...**

**1. Led Peter to command Christians to set their hope fully on the**

**grace to come**

[**1Pe 1:13**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%201.13)**….13Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;**

**2. Led Peter to command Christians to always be ready to explain**

**their hope –**

[**1Pe 3:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%203.15)**….15But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:**

**[To unity, love, and hope as "Divine Pillars", let's now consider a**

**final 'pillar'...]**

**IV. THE PILLAR OF GOOD WORKS**

**A. THE VALUE OF GOOD WORKS...**

**1. They can lead men to glorify our Father in heaven –**

[**Mt 5:16**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Mt%205.16)**….16Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

**2. They can lead men to glorify God in the day of visitation**

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[1Pe 2:12](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%202.12)….12Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**B. SO GOOD WORKS IS A pillar TO THE WORLD...**

**1. Directing people to consider the motivation behind such works**

**2. Opening people up to the gospel message which inspires such**

**works - cf.**

[**1Pe 3:1-2**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Pe%203.1-2)…. Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;2While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

**C. THUS THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD WORKS...**

**1. Led Paul to command that we be ready for every good work –**

Tit 3:1…  Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

**2. It also Led Paul to command that we be careful to maintain good works**

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[**Tit 3:8**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Tit%203.8)**,**[**14**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Tit%203.14)**…..8This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.**

**14:… 14And let our's also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.**

**CONCLUSION**

1. **With such "Divine PILLARS established in the church we can see how people can be led to Christ...**

**a. Our unity can convince people of God's love for them in sending**

**Christ**

**b. Our love can direct them to true disciples of Christ**

**c. Our hope can prompt them to ask questions as to the reason for our**

**faith**

**d. Our good works can encourage them to glory God by their own**

**obedience to the gospel**

**2. This is no way takes away from the power of the gospel to save**

**souls...**

**a. But the Lord intended for His church to be a city set on a hill**

**b. Which by demonstrating certain qualities as a group would draw**

**people to Him**

**Without these "Divine pillars" , we make it a lot harder for souls who**

**are searching to find their Savior and His gospel!**

**Are we doing our part in the congregation to display unity, love, hope and good works...?**