



## A LETTER FROM YOUR PASTOR: OCTOBER 2021

by Lee Shipp

### WHY WE CANNOT FOLLOW DOCTOR'S ORDERS

#### Author's Note:

I am called to minister unto Jesus. I am called to equip Jesus' Church. My passion and burden in this closing age is to stir up and build up the faith of believers. My hope – this letter will go into the hearts of all believers.

The scriptures warn of a great falling away before the Lord returns. Barna reported in 2020 of last year that one-third of evangelical Christians left the church and a high percentage of churches in America have closed. Victormarx.com reports that 7000 churches close each year. 1500 pastors quit each month. My burden is to help as many believers stay strong and “be the Church” in this final hour. May edification and conviction (from this letter) be that of the Spirit of life.

My title does not reflect doctors in general. I am very thankful for the godly doctors that are in my life. The doctors I refer to are the Government's Doctors that we see on T.V., who have no regard for the Church of God. Furthermore, the government and their doctors have been found wanting. They have been exposed for cover-ups and misinformation.

How can we follow doctor's orders? Do you see now? Do you see why the church matters? Can anyone convince me now that the Church should be shut in and shut down?

Jesus told us to go. Should we stay home because man says so? We are to be a light, a city set on a hill; we are not to hide our light under a bushel (or behind the doors of our homes).

The Church is a gathering, a community, a body functioning! The Greek word for “Church” is “Ekklesia”, which means “a calling out, that is (concretely) a popular MEETING, especially a religious congregation.” The Thayer Greek Dictionary defines “Church” as a “gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place to assemble.” History reveals that this supernatural Holy Ghost led thing called the “Church” did just that:

*“And they continued ... IN FELLOWSHIP” (Acts 2:42).*

*“And they, CONTINUING DAILY ... from house to house” (Acts 2:46).*

*“... they WENT to their own company” (Acts 4:23).*

*“... the church that is in their house” (Romans 16:5).*

*“The churches in Asia salute you ...” (1 Corinthians 16:19).*

*“Salute ... the church which is in his house” (Colossians 4:15).*

*“... to the church in thy house” (Philemon 1:2).*

*“[Do] not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is ...” (Hebrews 10:25).*

### WHAT ELSE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT TO DO?

The Holy Spirit has only one option – the Church! His job is to give irrefutable evidence of the resurrection of Jesus through the Church, which is to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

We must gather in the end to encourage one another. This desire and courage to gather is the supernatural impartation of the Holy Ghost. Through that gathering (called the church) the Holy Spirit wants to exercise gifts through believers to benefit one another and bring God glory. If we do not gather what possible damage have we done to His purposes in our generation?

I beseech those spirit-filled believers who have abandoned the church in this chaotic time – what could you have been giving to the Body through your gift of prophecy? What faith and strength could you have provided for the Body to continue? What words have we lost because you were not here and watched online?

### “THERE IS ALWAYS A NEED FOR THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD”

You cannot speak a word of prophecy or wisdom online. You cannot lay your hands on the sick – online! What direction and impartation has the Body been robbed of because you were not here and watched online?

Multitudes have abandoned the Body of Christ (the Church). Paul said they would, “*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, EXCEPT THERE COME A FALLING AWAY first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ...*” (2 Thessalonians 2:3). Multitudes have failed to follow Jesus in the last few months of the most exciting times the world has ever known. The greatest days of evangelism are here and yet multitudes of evangelical believers are sitting in their homes afraid, blaming God, and missing the greatest harvest-time the Church has ever been given.

My heart is poured out for you beloved. Please do not allow yourself to be one who is a part of the great falling away that Thessalonians speaks of. Do not become one who turns back as Hebrews 10 describes. Jesus is coming! Do not be discouraged by what you see but rejoice that your Lord exposed this moment two thousand years ago. Jesus needed Peter and Paul in the 1st Century. He needs you in this one. He created you for this moment. He chose you to serve Him in one of the greatest moments of history. Do not turn back.

### THE CHURCH MATTERS

So again, I ask, “Do you see why the church matters? Can anyone convince me now that the

Church should be shut-in and shut down?" The Church is a supernatural gathering to bring hope, help, and healing to men everywhere. The Church is a supernatural gathering to bring glory to Jesus!

We watched the Lord do this with Hurricane Ida. I regret the suffering and devastation that so many suffered from this storm. Immediately during and after the storm, we worked as the Church to bring help and relief to many. We shall continue to do so to those suffering. But may I testify to the "supernatural" of the gathering called the Church. On Friday, August 27 we were led by Evangelist Jeff Lee for a Night Of Hope. It was beautiful. On Saturday, August 28 the Church gathered for warfare to pray against the devastation of Hurricane Ida. On Sunday, August 29 the Church gathered in the morning as Hurricane Ida had fortified herself into a major hurricane with sustained winds at 150 mph. With a storm quickly approaching us, the Church gathered to pray! We fought that storm. We cried for mercy. There were words of prophecy and knowledge.

The Lord showed me the storm was coming and would be bad. We prayed with authority for angels to be posted on the coast to resist these winds. We prayed for mercy. The Holy Spirit helped me understand and pray, *"Father, the day is coming when you will pour out wrath without mercy. But this is not that day! Have mercy Lord! If the storm must come, then please protect our lives and our property. Protect us from flooding and damaging winds."* I remember closing the prayer meeting that morning saying, *"Many people, and believers, have resigned themselves to devastation because this angry beast is strong and is upon us; however, it is not here yet - there is still time for a miracle!"* Oh, the joy of being a believer and not a skeptic. When I got home from prayer, I was given such peace. I knew all would be well with us for the Lord had spoken to me. I needed no other word - Jesus gave me His. Like Paul in the battered ship, so the Lord gave me peace for our people.

I sent the following text to our office staff before the storm made landfall: *"Y'all I just have a peace that God has heard us. I do think we will get some weather, but I believe we are gonna be ok. Jesus will take care of us, and our church families will be alright. This is one of the worst storms in our history, but I just believe He has said it is going to be ok ... we need to be prepared to have a night of thanksgiving Monday."*

That evening the storm was upon us. The devastation was massive. It was one of the worst storms to ever hit Louisiana and the United States. Over a million people were without power. Cities became uninhabitable. Tragically dozens would lose their life. But may I say that in a congregation of more than five hundred people, no one suffered personal damage or significant property damage. A family had a tree do minimal damage. Trees were blown over in our people's yards as though angels laid them there. The trees were fallen in the most perfect place so as not to cause damage.

The Lord did it - just as we prayed. He was merciful. No harm to property. No harm to the church. So on Monday evening, the Church gathered again; this time to give thanks to God. It is only right, and oh so pleasant.

Since then, we have been working. Helping. Serving. Getting supplies. Cutting trees. On Wednesday the Church gathered again. This time to work on the Lord's yard. To clean up debris. It was beautiful to see so many who came to serve. People in the neighborhood stopped and marveled at how Christ-like our Church was.

After we worked, we praised. Because there was no power in the building, we held the service on the lawn. We praised and preached and rejoiced. Multitudes watched us do this and gave glory to God! Hurricane Ida knocked the power out of the building but not out of the Church!

## WHAT IF ...

Do you see why the Church must gather? What if nobody got out? What if nobody helped with supplies? What if nobody came to clean the Churchyard? What if there were nobody at the prayer meetings and everybody was at home? What if .... I hate to even think of the alternative. Christians had to be out during Hurricane Ida. The Church's response was expected. Just think of the insults we would be getting if the Church stayed home. The Church's help is dramatically more efficient than the government.

Our neighbors and communities were expecting us to be out. How can we, for the sake of saving our own lives, hide in our homes when multitudes were suffering, and family/friends were in need? No! We could not. For His sake, we must lose our life. The world was asking for the Church - it was there, once again!

How could we stay in and just hope everyone was ok? Something inside of us compelled us to go - to help - to meet - to pray - to praise - to give thanks - to clean the House of God. How could we just sit in our homes and "pray?"

*"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:16-17).*

Furthermore, James 2:14-20 says, *"What doth it profit my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me this faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead."*

This is the compulsion - faith! Something divine is in us, pushing us. We cannot help but be where He is. We have but one desire, to walk with the Holy Ghost and be the vehicle for His supernatural demonstrations. It may not be a Hurricane Ida we face. This particular storm is not the issue. The issue is - there is always a need for the Church in the world, while there is a world going to hell. That is why we cannot follow doctor's orders; we are already under the orders of another!