

# Decisions

## READING

Romans 12

1 Corinthians 12

James 2

One of the best church history books I've ever read is from the 1980's: "The Torch of the Testimony" by Kennedy.

It traces the history of all sorts of "branches" of the church, but as it does, a pattern emerges.

They usually branch off in response to some spiritual revelation about the errors of the current more main stream church.

But somehow they almost always get stuck on some man-made doctrine which they use to elevate themselves to "the one true church" status. But which inevitably turns out to have been wrong from the start, and which is often part of the spiritual awakening of the next branch.

So, firstly. What doctrine has your church got wrong?

What do they do which is more man made and honestly neither spirit made, nor Bible based?

From what I've seen there will be something.

Is it the hierarchical, authoritarian leadership structure?

Over emphasis of entertainment and music over actual Bible teaching?

Each one will be different, but there always seems to be something.

And of course, it's proponents just can't see that they're possibly wrong on it.

As an example, take the modern Evangelical church as a whole.

Kennedy points out that it has a massive focus on "The Decision".

Getting people to the point that they walk down the front and stand there as a way of declaring that they have made a decision to follow Yeshua.

Of course that's not a bad thing in and of itself.

But if we think the job's done once we've gotten a decision. That's basically the same as thinking we've done our job as parents once the baby is born.

But in reality, that is when the job really starts.

James says, "Faith without works is dead". And if all the new Christian has is a point in time where they made a "decision". They don't have much do they.

They need to be disciplined. Not just in terms of what the Bible says, but in terms of what that means for their life choices.

What that means for how they are now part of the church and how they should use their gifts and talents to help build the next generation of the church. Even if "all" they do is stack the chairs every week, or clean up after everyone leaves.

We rate that as a fairly low job, until it's not done. Then we notice it. Then we care about it. Then we want it done.

NOW.

That's when we realise that it's just as important as the sermon.

And not having it done impacts us as a body, just like every other job which needs doing to keep our body functioning properly as our father designed it.

We need to educate young Christians about body life. About each of us having been given a unique role in the church that only we can do. We need to teach them about everyone in the church being actively involved, not just the handful of people up the front every week.

And as a church, we need to stop measuring our success by how many "decisions" there have been. But by how faithful we have been to our job as a church. All of us. Not just the evangelists.

And as individuals, we need to measure our success, not by whether we can tick a box, "I'm a Christian. I made a decision." But by whether our faith has works. Whether becoming a Christian made any difference to the way we live our lives.

Whether we're actually a part of this church and it would notice if we left.

How about your church? Is it discipling? Or just evangelising?

Is it working as a body? Or more like a business?

How about you? Does your faith have works?

Are you an active part of your church body?

Who needs to change?

What can you do to make that happen?