

# May – From the Pastor’s Desk

2011

In Matthew 12, Jesus continues his ministry of proclaiming the Kingdom of God. The chapter begins with Jesus teaching about the Sabbath. It moves on to Jesus healing many sick, culminated by his healing of a man who was blind and mute. Jesus’ actions have gotten the crowds thinking. They are wondering if he is the Messiah, the Savior. At this point the religious people, the Pharisees, jump in and seek to impede the advancement of the Kingdom of God. They accuse Jesus of doing his miracles and healings by the power of Satan. Jesus’ response to their claims is very logical and thought provoking. ***Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand.”***

Jesus statement can be applied to the local church. Scripture makes the promise that The Church (universal) will never fall. No matter the powers that rage against the church, it will not fall. This promise, however, does not apply to each individual church. Rather, Jesus’ statement that a house divided against itself will not stand is more accurate for a local church that wages war from within.

Spring Valley is currently in a time of transition following our March 6 decision as a congregation to move to one blended service. During times of transition, churches face the danger of becoming “divided against itself.” In times of transition, changes are made. These changes affect people in different ways. It is how we receive and respond to these changes that is of utmost importance. If our concern is over our personal preferences, first and foremost, we run the danger of hindering the mission that Christ has given the church – to advance the Kingdom of God.

It is easy to offer opinions, suggestions, and criticisms when changes are made. It’s easy to divide ourselves along our own personal preferences. It’s harder to be the unified body of Christ, the Church. In order to be the church, we are called to sacrifice out of love for Christ, love for one another, love for the church, love for those in need of salvation, and love for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sacrifice is not an easy thing. It only happens when it comes from the heart. Being unified is not merely a decision that we make in our minds. It is a matter of the heart!

As we walk through this time of transition together, let us continue to monitor our hearts. Do my actions (or inaction) spring from a heart of love or my personal preferences? Do my words speak love or division? Am I moved by selfish motives or by passion for the mission of Christ? My prayer is that as we move through this time of transition we would be drawn closer to Christ and one another, so that together we may advance the kingdom of God – in our own hearts, in our church, and in the community around us.

In Christ,  
Pastor Scott