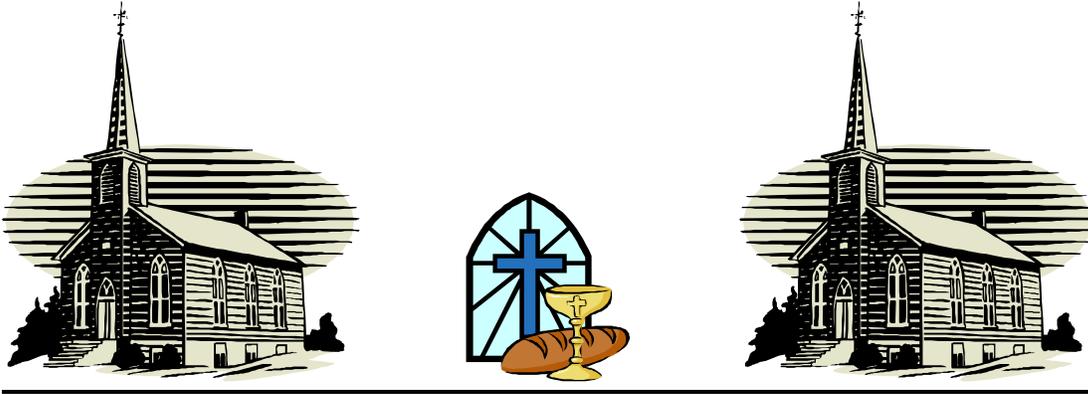


# **The Church “Pulling Together in a Mixed Up World”**

## **Service Version II**



Author: Sr. Pastor Roscoe L. De Chalus

**Lord of Hope Ministries International**

Date: August 16, 2004 Modified June 15, 2005 for Service

**Prelude:** “Build your Church into my heart” Instrumental Version. Greg Ferguson

**Scripture reading:**

Matthew 16:18	And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
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**Worship:**

**Offering and Announcements:**

**Video: “Blankets of Love” Voice of the Martyr**

**Message:**

Our world has changed quite a bit within the past five years. In all of the turmoil the Church is experiencing division where some are not standing on the word of God.

We will dive into this message so please stay with me as I lay this message out.

Let us pray.

Father, please teach us so we can have discerning ears and eager hearts to stand for your word while equipping each other with your truth. May your church be found by you to be

honoring you and not compromising your truth as we live our life. Pull your church together so that your power will save many in Jesus name amen.

This message is titled **The Church “Pulling Together in a Mixed Up World.**

A lot of things are happening in our world; too many to discuss in one message.

Do you remember hearing about congregations splitting up over same sex unions and openly gay priest taking the ministerial leadership?

There are allegations of priest committing sexual abuse that are distancing some people from the church.

The church is also experiencing persecution. Listen as I read the following:

**Al-Qaida threats to Christians are very real. Look at what is going on in Indonesia.**

## Gunmen attack Indonesian church

By Tim Johnston

BBC, Jakarta

Seven people have been wounded in a shooting at an Easter church service on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi.

Hundreds of people have died on the island in conflicts between Christians and Muslims.

Police said two gunmen burst into a church on a Saturday night and sprayed the congregation with automatic weapons fire before escaping.

Hospital staff said on Sunday none of the injured, who included a four-year-old girl, were in imminent danger.



## Voice of the Martyrs:

### Pastor arrested, church building destroyed in Zhejiang, China

April 16, 2004

A 100-year-old building that housed an unregistered Chinese house church was badly damaged on March 11, then completely destroyed March 31. This congregation included about 300 members, and had existed for the past 20 years. Liu Fuen, 50, pastored the church throughout its history.

The pastor's home, which is where church meetings were held, had already been declared the site of "illegal religious meetings" when members of the congregation met on March 8 to do some work on the building in order to make it better suited for church meetings.

Three days later, 300 Public Security Bureau (PSB), paramilitary police and government workers converged on the building, badly damaging it during a half-hour rampage. The group was led by Wang Tao, the Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) for Beilun District. Seeing the destruction, four neighbors who were not Christians complained to Wang, saying, "How can you arbitrarily destroy someone's house?"

Wang ordered the four neighbors arrested and held on Administrative Detention for 15 days.

Christians at the church were able to repair some of the damage to the house, and continued meeting in the building until March 31. On that day, Wang led a group that arrived at the church in 28 different vehicles. Four PSB officers entered the building and evicted 10 Christians who were praying inside. Then, police and other officials completely destroyed the building, leaving only piles of rubble. Officials hung posters on surrounding buildings announcing that this was the site of illegal religious activity and was being destroyed for that reason. A loudspeaker also announced that message as the destruction went on.

Pastor Liu Fuen went into hiding after his home was destroyed, but was arrested April 9 by six PSB officers at the home of his youngest son, Liu Yongsheng.

Police were not done harassing this church. The congregation gathered for Easter Sunday services at the home of Liu Mingliang, Pastor Liu's oldest son. PSB officers again raided the service, arresting Mingliang and breaking up the service. The raiding officers were led by Hu Xinyu, head of the so-called Political Protection Division of the district PSB.

There are congregations splitting because of disagreements with the direction the leadership is taking the church.

There are differences of opinion in the church. Some issues we can disagree on but not divide over them. We have clear guidelines to refer to in the bible that churches needs to stand on.

An action that goes against God should not be accepted in the church as okay.

Priest sexually abusing children has been all over the news. Homosexuality, same sex marriages is being made legal through some state governments.

Friends, remember we love people but do not have to accept sin. Acceptance of sin should not be happening based on scripture. For example:  
Homosexuality is a behavior, a choice that some people are making and is not how God made them. It is sin not a civil rights issue. Just like stealing, murder, lying, idolatry, coveting what you neighbor has. These are all choices that are sinful.

Scripture warns that in the last days increase lawlessness will occur.

2 Peter 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts

When you have time read Matthew 24: 3-14 to learn about the last days.

The world is no longer following God's timeless standards. The church is supposed to be the salt of the earth always upholding God's standards.

Attention, Attention body of Church. We need to pull together. This doesn't mean that we have to accept false doctrine. This means being salt to those who are drifting away from the word of God. We need to influence them by the way we live. We need to be

vigilant in prayer over all matters of the church. We need to unite in prayer seeking guidance through the Holy Spirit.

Unity at all cost should not apply here. We should never compromise the word of God. Pray for all of the churches that are following the world instead of leading the world to Christ. Does Acts 5:29 mean anything anymore?

### **Acts 5**

<sup>29</sup> **Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.**

The Ten Commandments:

Judge Moore tried to take a stand by not removing the 10 commandment monument from the court house in Alabama. It cost him his job.

Some questions to ponder:

Where was the church during this time? Did we, the body of Christ unite over this?

Why didn't many church pastor's rally behind him publicly?

I didn't see a massive round of public support. Yes, people agreed with him but did they take a stand like my friend Sandy Rios. She is the President of Concern Woman Today. She spoke at a rally to over 1200 people in support of Judge Moore.

[Sandy Rios Speaks at Ten Commandments Rally 9/5/2003](#)

This is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

[CWA President Stirs Crowd at Ten Commandments Rally](#)

[Sandy Rios Addresses Hundreds of Protesters at August 30th Rally on Judicial Building Steps in Montgomery, Alabama](#)

[Court moved Chief Justice Roy Moore's Ten Commandments monument on August 27, 2003. UPDATE, 9/3/03: CWA President Sandy Rios speak up for the people's right to acknowledge God in the public square. She delivered this inspiring speech to a crowd of 1,200 in Montgomery, Alabama on Saturday, August 30. CWA continues to stand up for Chief Justice Moore and the American right to religious freedom!](#)

"The issue is not just Justice Moore," says CWA President Sandy Rios. "It is our fight to acknowledge God in the public square."

Way to go Sandy!

How do we stop the madness?

Everyone needs to turn to God and His word the bible. The bible gives many examples on how to live God honoring lives. The bible also says what God will do for a repentant nation.

2 Chronicles 7:14

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

In my opinion, some will repent and follow scripture but the bad news is many will not.

In order to facilitate change we need to start with ourselves and then our family. Christians needs to have a united front standing on the principals of the Lord no matter what! Never mind what Hollywood, government or the popular opinion is. God's word is over all!

When disagreements in philosophy occur we need to speak the truth in love, agree to disagree and leave peaceably. Remember our goal is to add to God's family not contribute to distancing someone from God's great love.

With the terror alert elevated to level orange every knee should be down with prayers flowing heavenward.

God is our strength and the Prince of Peace. Call on Jesus Christ to intervene in the war on terrorism and in the battle for the family and in the spiritual formation of the church.

### **Questions to ponder:**

Are you sold out for God?

Is the Bible the final word for you and your family?

Are you standing with or against the church?

Is your church following Jesus Christ?

### **Side Screens:**

**Forgive**

**Repent**

**Trust and Embrace God's word**

**Imitate Christ**

**Love your enemies**

**Question and test what you believe**

**The Bible is Authentic and trust worthy  
Pray**

Everyone, discover your spiritual gift and deploy them into action for the kingdom of God. The Church really needs people of faith to stand up and be counted. Pastors, Deacons, Ministers lead the body per scripture. Everyone must do what our Lord requires. His words are everything!

Friends, we need to pray for our governmental systems and the people who are charged by the people to govern the land. They are human just like us and make mistakes too. Pray for God to give them Godly wisdom and a heart to follow God's principals no matter what.

**Conclusion:**

The Church is the hope of the world!

In the years to come, I think it will take more courageous people to stand on the word of God no matter what the cause. The Church needs to stand firm on biblical principals no matter what.

Will you?

Let's stand for closing prayer.

**Scripture References:**

2 Peter 3:3

Matthew 24: 3-14

Acts 5:29

2 Chronicles 7:14

Matthew 16:18

