



LET US GO ON TO PERFECTION (3)

Spiritual Indicators (2) – How Important is the church to me?

Last night we began noticing some spiritual indicators to help us see where we are in relation to where we ought to be. Tonight, we want to focus on the church in our lives as Christians.

I. Do I understand what the church is?

- a. **What is the church?** The church is not a building. Rather it is a group of saved people. Universally, all who are saved. Locally, a group of the saved who join together... As we join together, we become a body of the Lord's people answering directly to Him cf. Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15, 5:23, Colossians 1:18
- b. *Part of God's eternal purpose* – Ephesians 3:10-11
Jesus built His church – Matthew 16:18-19, Acts 20:28
- c. **Do I understand what the church is? Do I see how important it is?**

II. Am I a part of His church?

- a. **Am I part of this local congregation?**
- b. God wants me to be part of a local church –
 1. There are things God expects us to do collectively – worship, support the gospel
 2. Many of the letters written to local churches also addressed those who made up the congregation – saints! 1 Corinthians 1:2, 10; Colossians 4:15-16 – What the saints learned was communicated within these congregations
- c. God wants me to identify with a local church
 1. Consider: **Paul** – Acts 9:19, 26, 11:25-26, 13:1
 2. Other than temporary circumstances, you do not find those choosing simply to be “saints” and NOT part of a congregation. (cf. 3 John 10, Acts 8:39, etc.)
 3. Some are hesitant to identify with a congregation for various reasons.
 - a. Maybe they don't know enough about a congregation.
 - b. Some don't want to put themselves under the authority of the leaders in a congregation. Hebrews 13:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.
 - c. Others just want to attend without the commitment!
 - d. **Thought: What if everyone had this attitude?**

III. Why should I be part of a local church?

- a. For the sake of the future of the church – cf. Luke 18:8
- b. For the sake of the purity of the church – Ephesians 5:26-27, cf. 1 Corinthians 5:1-8, etc.
- c. Because I want to grow as a Christian. Brethren can help me
- d. **Am I as involved as I ought to be? Am I doing my part?**

IV. What can I do to promote growth in the Lord's church?

- a. *As a part of the body (local church), I am expected to do my part* – Ephesians 4:16
- b. *I will be accountable for doing my part* – 2 Corinthians 5:10, Galatians 6:5
- c. *Realize you CAN do something* – every part has a function, most of us can do more!
- d. *How am I representing the church to others?* Matthew 5:13-16. Titus 2:11-12.
What impression of the church do others see? Am I making her as attractive as possible?
- e. *Do I attend as often as possible?* Hebrews 10:24-25. You will not benefit if you are not here.
- f. *When I am here am I worshipping God properly?* John 4:24, cf. 1 Corinthians 14:15, etc.
- g. *Am I working to help us appoint elders?* (cf. Titus 1:5)
- h. **How am I supporting this church?** Do I see her as a **spiritual investment**? You are devoting your resources – time, money, talents and energy into her:
 - i. “Invest” with your material things – 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, etc.
 - ii. “Invest” in Bible classes – a quality of a strong church is well planned Bible classes.
 1. **If you want to grow as a Christian, attend Bible classes!**
 2. If you want to REALLY grow, **“invest” in the Bible classes**. Prepare
 3. **Why not seek to teach a class according to your ability**. Teachers of Bible classes, who properly prepare, benefit greatly. Consider Hebrews 5:12
If you are able to teach, you are needed!
 - iii. “Invest” in your brethren – Romans 12:9-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Hebrews 3:12-13

The future of the Lord's Church depends upon how strong we make her today.

Consider: What if everyone were just like me?