

What Is Right With The Church?

Introduction. It is easy to be critical, and it is easy to spot fault. It is far more difficult to fix fault and recognize the good. The church is the same way. It is easy for us to be critical of the church and detect every weakness in every member, but how about what makes the church right?

Over the years I have heard and preached sermons which ask, "What is wrong with the church?" In some situations, those are very important questions to ask. However, today I want to ask a different question. I want us to ask "What is right with the church?"

I. ***A Church Is Right When It Respects God's Authority***

- A. During the Transfiguration, when flanked by Moses and Elijah, God made His declaration that we are to listen to and obey the voice of Christ (Matthew 17:5).
- B. The apostle Paul commanded the Colossians to do everything in the name of Christ (Colossians 3:17). The word "name" means that we recognize the authority of the person who is named (1 Samuel 25:9; John 20:31; Acts 9:27-29; 1 Corinthians 6:11). Therefore, we can only act when God allows us to through the authority of Christ.
- C. This is a great difference compared to what the world believes. A congregation that does not respect God's authority will introduce all kinds of man-made inventions. They will pay lip service to authority while doing whatever they want.
- D. John wrote in 2 John 9-11 that we are not to fellowship those who do not respect God's authority. Those who do not abide in the teaching of Christ are not in fellowship with Christ so why would we want to fellowship them?

II. ***A Church Is Right When It Has The Mind Of Christ***

- A. Possessing the minds of Christ means that we are to have the attitude of Christ in everything (Philippians 2:5). We are to think of or be mindful of the way in which Christ would have acted in every situation.
- B. Colossians 3:1-5 furthermore tells us to seek what is above. A church is right when its members really concentrate on spiritual affairs. This will renew us inwardly (2 Corinthians 4:16; Philippians 4:8).
- C. When Christ lived in Paul, he would not have been hateful, vengeful, jealous, envious, divisive or a whole host of other attitudes (Galatians 2:20). The mind of Christ is revealed in the gospel and therefore contains critical instruction for the Christian (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:25-32; 1 Timothy 4:12).
- D. A church that does not have the mind of Christ is subject to being torn apart by petty feelings and emotions and by the critical nature of some

of its members (1 Corinthians 1:10-12). It will also not be filled with worldliness and immorality which will destroy the church (Matthew 15:19-20).

III. ***A Church Is Right When It Defends The Truth***

- A. The apostle would not succumb to what was false for a moment (Galatians 2:5). The gospel is so important and so critical that it should be unthinkable to compromise its truth (Galatians 1:6-8; Jude 3-4).
- B. Our struggle is against the devil and his angels (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). We must therefore be strong and not allow ourselves to be influenced and manipulated by falsehood or the shifting nature of human opinion and desire.
- C. The apostles unashamedly preached the gospel (Romans 1:16), and so should we; but some churches over the years have given up on the idea of truth. They no longer resemble the New Testament pattern of the Lord's church (Revelation 2:5; 3:18-19).

IV. ***A Church Is Right When It Seeks To Convert Others***

- A. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, gives us a great example for what is right with the church (John 1:40-42). The church was designed to bring more souls into it (Proverbs 11:30; Isaiah 2:2-3).
- B. When Christians start following the example of Aquila and Priscilla in Acts 18:26, churches will grow and people will be converted (Matthew 28:19-20).
- C. In John 4:4-42, Jesus gave us a great example of converting others by catching her attention, creating an interest, showing her evidences, and producing results. Usually, the biggest hurdle to overcome is getting outside our comfort zone when talking to people.

V. ***A Church Is Right When It Uses Its Talents To The Glory Of God***

- A. If someone will cleanse themselves from sin, they will be vessels for honor in the Master's house (2 Timothy 2:21). Every Christian is supposed to be a useful vessel. We all have talents that can be used for continuing the work of the church (Acts 9:15).
- B. When Isaiah saw himself as he really was, a helpless sinner, and he saw the majesty of the Almighty God, he was willing to go out and use what he had (Isaiah 6:5-8). The gospel is all about doing and serving (Matthew 25:14-30).

Conclusion. When a church loses one critical person, they will gain ten who can see what is right with the church. So do not be upset when we lose critical people, because we will get many more back who will work and encourage the church instead of picking it apart.

Let's make sure that we see and work toward what is right with the church and what it takes for a church to be right before God. It is easy to criticize and much more difficult to solve problems, but the rewards are far greater, both for the church and for your own eternal destiny.