

CHOOSING A GOOD CHURCH

By Dr. Hal Webb, Evangelist

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Heb. 10:25 & 26.

The Bible makes it very clear, a true born again Christian should choose a good church, and join it. Not just any church, but a fundamental one that stands without apology for the whole Word of God. Just picking a building with a religious title will never do. Many churches are no longer a good place to worship, because they are mere propagators of the religious ideas of man. They fail to follow the Bible, confuse enthusiasm with true worship and glorify man more than God. Many fail to meet the strong standards that a true believer must maintain. In this message I want to outline some ways to choose a good Christ honoring church. **(1). Consider The Preaching:** *"If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."* Isa. 8:20. The writer Isaiah warns of those that use familiar spirits and wizards that peep and mutter, instead of glorifying God. Instead of the law and clear testimony of the Bible, many present day ministers speak of the things of man, and dodge the truths their congregation doesn't want to hear. Good preaching must be Bible centered, holding it forth as the authority man needs. A clear stand against sin and all evil should ring from the pulpit. Christ, the only one that by His blood can save, should be preached, and religious falseness of many should be exposed. A Hell to shun and a Heaven to be gained should be clearly propagated. A good pastor will advocate real

righteousness, and expose the falseness of man's efforts to save. He will walk in Godly example, and always preach the truth with power and sincerity. His love for the listeners should always show as he leads them on God's true path. **(2). Is There Bible Study?** *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* John 5:39 A good church will have a thriving Sunday School with teachers and students that like to study the Word of God. Preaching will be based on the scriptures, and encouragement to learn Bible verses heard often, with good Bibles in the pew racks to assist in study. People in a good church will *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."* I Peter 2:2. A good pastor knows he can't go wrong preaching *"thus sayeth the Lord."* A good church will center around the Holy Word of God, and not the babbling sayings of the often accepted religious crowd. **(3). How About Prayer Meeting?** I Tim. 2:8 urges *"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."* All Christians are urged to *"pray without ceasing."* I Thess 5:17. A church that won't pray together, won't stay together. A good solid Wednesday night prayer meeting is crucial to the strength and vitality of a good church. A time to share requests, and lay burdens upon the Lord, reveals much about the genuineness of any church. Beware the church with a coffee counter in the cloakroom or a fun time instead of prayer time. Much prayer is the secret of maintaining a good church. **(4). Teachings On Salvation:** *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."* Luke 19:10. Or Acts 4:12 *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"*. Churches that base hope of Heaven on works, manufactured prayers, relics, beads and idols, are bound to be false places of worship. It is impossible for man to

become good enough to be saved or to work for it in any way." *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one*". Rom 3:10 and Rom. 3:23 *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* A good church will preach salvation through faith in Christ. Baptism is an ordinance of a good church, but it does not save. Beware a church that teaches salvation in Christ, plus something else. Simple childlike faith in the finished work of Christ saves the soul of a sinner. Salvation does not depend on any church, but upon accepting what Christ did on the cross for all who will believe. **(5) Consider The Members:** "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." I Tim. 4:12. You can tell a lot about a church by the people it produces. Worldly church members are a dime a dozen, and you will find them living like the sinners they still are. Whether young or old you will be able to see a difference in the caliber of those who belong to a good church. They will keep their word and their conversation will not be sprinkled with the profane language of the world They will show their love for others, and be enthused about their church and the faith it produces. They will be church centered, maintain purity and be different in wholesome living. **(6) Consider Their Association:** *"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."* II Thess. 3:6. Churches are many times guilty of association with other religions which are polluted by false doctrines. The word Fundamentalism is hated by many religious churches. Separation is ridiculed and great pressure is applied to compromise the beliefs of good churches. Modernistic ecumenical organizations are constantly working to pull good pastors away from true theology. Fundamental churches that are fooled

never grow stronger. They are rather weakened. I suggest before you join a church that you consult the pastor and the constitution to be assured they take the right stand. Consider also the type music used and avoid a church involved in modern Rock and Roll, modern Praise Music. In all matters you need to belong to a church that follows the disciplined life the Bible teaches. It will probably not be the most popular church but the most Godly one. **(7). Know Their Missions Program:** *"And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."* Mark 16:15. A good church should be active in several fields of missionary endeavor and sponsor several good missionaries in overseas work. The missionaries should take the same good stands as does the church. A good church seeks to expand its influence in a Biblical way to establish overseas churches. The command to spread the Gospel is not just at home, but around the world. A good, obedient church will send thousands of dollars to reach out to lost humanity everywhere. Now **I will Sum Up My Thoughts.**

1. Every Christian should be a member of a good Gospel preaching church.
 2. It should have a good reputation in organization and association with right groups.
 3. Biblical standards should be taught and obeyed in the families of the church.
 4. The church should be led by a good strong Bible preaching pastor.
 5. The Bible should be totally accepted and obeyed as the eternal authoritative Word of God.
 6. All of its ministry should prepare members to be like Christ.
 7. The ministry should be aimed at winning the lost and preserving the faithful.
 8. The music should be ole' time, hymnbook accepted quality. No modernistic beat & lyrics.
- I found a great church...How about you?**

