WHAT KIND OF CHURCH DOES THE LORD WANT?

BY
GLEN E. TROPP

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: I know thy works, and thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast; that thou hastest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. HE THAT HATH AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH UNTO THE CHURCHES: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Revelation 2:1-7

In the day in which we live, we hear many different opinions about the church. First, I would like to make it quite clear that the word of God teaches that Jesus started the church during his earthly ministry. He started it with some of the material prepared by John the Baptist. John 1:35-39 and Matthew 16:18.

Secondly, the Word Church comes from the word "ecclesia" and means called out ones or called out assembly. In reference to its new Testament usage it always meant a called out group of baptized believers who had covenanted together to carry out the commission of the Lord as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20.

Thirdly, the church is always referred to as a local, visible body of believers. There is not one instance in the Word of God where the church is referred to as an invisible, universal body, therefore; to be Biblical and Scriptural, one must believe in the Local Church.

Many today are giving their ideas about the kind of Church they want and desire theirs to be, but I submit to you that instead of being concerned about what Kind of Church we want, we should be concerned about the kind of church the Lord wants.

What kind of Church does the Lord Want?

Grace Missionary Baptist Church
1823 Alaine Mail Road
Houston, Texas
I. THE LORD WANTS A CHURCH THAT WILL LISTEN TO HIM.
Our Lord speaks to us through His Word and informs us about His will not only for our individual lives but collectively as members of one of His Churches. Everything that we need to know to maintain His Ministry through the Church has been supplied to us through His Precious Word and Empowered by the Holy Spirit.

II Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

He tells us the Truth concerning the following subjects: Creation (Gen. 1:27-28); the Virgin Birth (Matt. 1:21-23); the Institution of the Church (Matt. 16:18); the two church ordinances (1K. 22:29-30, Matt. 28:19-20); the Commission (Matt. 28: 19-20); Salvation (John 14:6, Acts 4:12, 1 Tim. 2:5, and John 1:12); Baptism (Mark 1:5-9, Acts 1:22); the Second Coming (John 14:1-3, Acts 1:11); Heaven, Hell, and Many others.

You will notice in our text, specifically verse 7a, the importance of Listening to the Lord. In this instance the Lord was speaking to the church of Ephesus. He had commended them concerning some of the things that were being done but he also reprimanded them about the fact that they had left their first love. He then called upon them to repent and warned them that if they didn't, he would remove the Candlestick. To be perfectly honest, I do not know all that is contained in this statement of warning, but I submit to you that the following was more than likely included in this warning. If they didn't repent, they would lose their usefulness and effectiveness as a church. In other words, if they didn't repent, they would cease to be His Church. So, by this example, you can see the importance of Listening to The Lord.

Notice also His appeal to the Church of Smyrna-Rev. 2:11; The Church of Pergamos-Rev. 2:17; The Church of Thyatira-Rev. 2:29; The Church of Sardis-Rev. 3:6; the Church of Philadelphia-Rev. 3:13; and the Church of Laodicia-Rev. 3:22. In all instances He said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The evident problem that is so prevalent today is that many are not listening to the Lord. This can be substantiated by listening to the content of the Proclamations that come from different ones and looking at the Practices that are exemplified in the lives of so-called Christians. Many are listening to the calls of the World and yielding to their demands. This is seen in the fact that so many today, even so-called "Religious Leaders," are questioning the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures. They are adding to the scriptures. They are openly and blatantly disobeying and disregarding His instructions. They are trying to get a Bible and a Church that the World will accept and Brother, I want you to know that when that is done, and it can be accomplished, then that Book that they came up with, will be so abused and mutilated that it will cease to be God's Word and that Church will become so worldly and socialistic that she will not be the church of the Lord Jesus Christ anymore and she'll not be the Light of the World nor the Salt of the Earth.

May God help us to Listen to The Lord and obey His orders and instructions.
therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

You know, it's good to know the truth but what is needed today more than ever, is people who are living the truth. People who are walking their talk, and talking their walk. So much of the time we preach a Dynamite Gospel but then turn around and live firecracker lives. We are to be doers of the Word. We are to observe His teachings and this means and implies doing. Notice the commission as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

He said in verse 20, teach them to OBSERVE. What one knows is important, but what we do is more important. Living for Him denotes separation. This includes separation from the World, from Government, and from Dictatorial Powers. May God help us all to Live for Him.

IV. THE LORD WANTS A CHURCH THAT WILL LOVE FOR HIM.

Our Lord, right now, is in heaven doing His Heavenly Ministry for us there. He has left His Churches down here in the world to carry on for Him. How is this old, sin cursed world going to know about the Love of God if they don't see it in us, and hear about it from us? You see, we are His representatives. II Cor. 5:20 states, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us: We pray you in Christ's stead, be

{Continue on page 5}
We are to love one another and lost souls. We are to do it in the stead of the Lord. A lot that is seen today, even in the Religious World and among her leaders, is certainly not an exemplification of the Love of God. May God help us to love lost souls like Paul did.

Romans 9:1-3, "I say the truth in Christ. I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

Yes, the Lord wants a Church that will Love for Him.

V. THE LORD WANTS A CHURCH THAT WILL LAUNCH OUT FOR HIM.

This includes Work, Time, and Money, but woe be to us if we're not willing to pay the price so that others, the World over, can hear the Good News about God's Salvation. We should never be satisfied with our accomplishments for the Lord, but always have Higher Goals and Greater Ambitions for the furthering of His Cause. Remember the Words of the writer when he said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish..." Proverbs 29:18a

Surely the Lord wants us to launch out for Him. Yes, the Lord wants us to count the cost, but you know, there are two ways to count it. Most just count the cost one way, but there is another. We should think what will it cost us if we don't do it? In my ministry, I've found out that it's not so much of a matter of can we do it, but rather, WILL WE DO IT? Our Willingness needs to 

---

THE HOPE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

BY

CHARLES SWILLING

Text: Prov. 14:27-35

Introduction:
The righteous in the text are those who have been born again. They have trusted Jesus as their Saviour. Jesus is the hope or expectation of the righteous. The writer of the Hebrew letter describes the hope as sure and steadfast as an anchor to the soul.

I. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE A CERTAIN HOPE.

A. Jesus' promises are sure.
   1. He is faithful and true.
      a. He is able to keep His promises
   2. He promised eternal life to the believer.
      a. John 10:28-30
   3. He promised a home in heaven to the believer.
      a. John 14:1-3

B. The Bible is plain.
   1. The hope is sure and steadfast.
      a. Hebrews 6:19
   2. David was confident of this hope.
      a. Psalms 16:9
   3. Job was assured of this hope.
      a. Job 19:25-27

II. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE A CHERISHED HOPE.

A. Cherished because of our sonship.
   1. I John 3:1-2
B. Cherished because of our fellowship.
   1. Romans 5:1

   2. I John 1:7
C. Cherished because of our partnership.
   1. I Cor. 3:9

III. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE A COMPLETE HOPE.

A. The Salvation of the Soul.
   1. Eph. 2:1
B. The Salvation of the Life.
   1. Mark 8:34-38
 C. The Salvation of the Body
   1. Romans 8:23

   2. Phil. 3:21

IV. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE A COMFORTING HOPE.

A. It gives comfort in evil days. Romans 15:4
B. It gives comfort in troubled times. Psalms 39:7
C. It gives comfort in the house of death. I Thess. 4:13,17
D. It gives comfort in times of discouragement and disappointment.

V. THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE A COMPELLING HOPE.

A. Compels us to trust in the Lord. Isaiah 26:3
B. Compels us to righteous living. I John 3:3
C. Compels us to serve the Lord. John 9:4
BEHOLD THE MAN—JESUS
BY
D. B. WRIGHT

SERIES: "BEHOLD"  Message No. 2
TEXT: John 19:1-6 (Specifically v-5)

INTRODUCTION:
A. Jesus is "on trial" before the governor whose name was Pilate.
B. Pilate was also "on trial" before the Saviour.
C. Jesus is "on trial" in the hearts and minds of every one in this service.
D. We, like Pilate, are also "on Trial" before Jesus.
   1. Jesus stands at our heart's door!
      a. Offering the gifts of God to all who will receive Him by heart—faith.
      b. Offering fellowship and communion with the already saved who will let Him into their life's plans.
   2. Jesus, as Judge stands at the door of each heart and life today!
      a. John 5:22
      b. II Tim. 4:1
      c. James 5:9
   E. I challenge each one of you to Seek the Holy Spirit's Help in "Beholding the Man Jesus.

I. BEHOLD THE MAN—FROM HEAVEN.
A. John 17:5
B. John 1:1-2
C. Gal. 4:4
D. John 3:13
E. John 3:17
F. I John 4:10

II. BEHOLD THE MAN—FAITHFULLY FULFILLING HIS FATHER'S WILL.
A. Luke 2:49
B. John 6:38
C. John 4:34
D. John 17:1
E. Matthew 26:39
F. John 19:30

III. BEHOLD THE MAN—FOUND FAULTLESS.
A. Pilate—John 19:4,6
B. Pilate's Wife—Matthew 17:19
C. What matters most....Matthew 17:5

IV. BEHOLD THE MAN—FOUNDER OF HIS CHURCH.
A. Matthew 16:18
B. Eph. 5:25
C. Acts 20:28
D. Matthew 4:19
E. Acts 2:37

V. BEHOLD THE MAN---FRUIT GIVER
A. John 15:5
B. Acts 1:8 Our's to witness!
C. Acts 2:37 His to add!

VI. BEHOLD THE MAN---FUTURE KING OF KINGS.
A. Psa. 24:7-8
B. Rev. 19:16
C. When King Jesus comes, the words of Paul shall become a reality.
   1. I Tim. 6:14-15
D. Rev. 5:10
E. Rev. 20:6

VII. BEHOLD THE MAN---FRIEND OF SINNERS.
A. Prov. 17:17
B. Prov. 18:24
C. Jesus spoke of one who had died, "our friend sleepeth."
   1. John 11:11
D. His enemies spoke correctly of Him as the friend of sinners.
   1. Luke 7:34
E. Indeed Jesus is More than a Friend.
   1. He loveat at all times. John 13:1
   2. He can do for you what no brother can.
      a. Acts 4:12
   3. Indeed He receiveth sinners eateth with them.
   4. His love is matchless.
      a. John 15:13

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A PART IN A GREAT OUTREACH MINISTRY?

Your monthly contribution to the SOUNDING OUT THE WORD MINISTRIES could help greatly in getting the Word of God to others. Why not consider this a part of your Mission Work and join in and help us?
WHAT YOUR ABSENCE TELLS OTHERS
BY ELVIN CROCKER

Text: Hebrews 10:24-27

Introduction:
A. An admonition to attend regularly the Lord's services is given in this text.
B. A serious warning follows to those who will not heed the admonition.
C. The cry of the empty pew is the loudest heard in today's church work.
D. Consider what a church member's tells others.

I. THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE GOD'S WORD AS HE SHOULD.
A. Concerning promised blessings.
   1. He has promised to meet with and bless his children.
   2. By example he has promised church blessings.
   3. He has promised the blessing of salvation to all who will hear and believe.
      John 5:24
B. Concerning his judgments.
   1. Satan tells people today the same kind of falsehood that he told Eve.
      Genesis 3:2-5
   2. There is a chastening that awaits God's children who do not believe the admonition of the text. vs. 26-27

II. THAT HE IS NOT ENJOYING GOD'S BLESSINGS AS HE CAN.
A. The Psalmist rejoiced in the blessings of God's house.
   a. Psalms 122:1         b. Psalms 133:1
B. Asaph enjoyed a closer fellowship with God by coming to the sanctuary.
   Psalms 73
C. Church attendance ought to be viewed more as a privilege and less as a duty.

III. THAT HE DOES NOT APPRECIATE THE PRIVILEGE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AS HE OUGHT.
A. To be a member of a church to which the great commission has been entrusted is a royal privilege. Mark 16:15
B. To help carry on His Kingdom business is a wonderful opportunity.
   I Corinthians 3:9

IV. THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE THE CONCERN THAT IS NEEDED.
A. For his own spiritual welfare.
   1. No man normally deprives himself of food and water.
   2. Growth in grace means very little to some people.
      a. I Peter 2:2          b. II Peter 3:18
B. For the Church's Welfare.
   1. Wrong view and attitude toward church officers.
   2. He says by his actions, "I do not care about church progress.
C. For the Spiritual welfare of others.

CONCLUSION: Does it matter to you what your absence tells others?
THE SPIRIT OF PHARISAISM
BY
DON MCCORMACK

Text: Luke 12:1
Introduction:
A. The pharisees were a group of Jews who lived during the
days of Christ's earthly ministry. They were the separate
ated ones.
B. One might praise their devotion and dedication, but
their doctrine is most damaging. There is not a group
that goes under this name today (in our country) but
their principles, practices and teachings are very pre-
valent.
C. This religion is very deceiving, subtle, and hard to
rebuke.
D. Jesus said, "Beware of it."
1. We should know what it is and pray that we'll never
let this spirit enter into us.

I. WHY DID JESUS DENOUNCE IT?
A. Because they were hypocrites.
1. Matt. 15:7-8
2. What they did, they did to be seen of men.
B. Because they were Sign Seekers.
1. Matt. 16:1, 23:5
2. Christians can easily let the spirit of unbelief over-
take them.
3. Many today only believe if they can see an outward
manifestation of emotion.
C. Because they placed more value on material things than
they did the Spiritual.
1. Matt. 23:23
D. Because of their methods and practices of Soul Winning.
1. Matt. 23:15
2. Indeed the whole spirit of their religion can be
summed up in this statement.
a. There was no confession or humility, just a proud
self-righteous spirit.

II. HOW CAN WE DETECT PHARISAISM?
A. They preach they are the only ones who are right.
1. They think they know everything.
2. They interpret the Scriptures only as it pleases
themselves.
B. Their practices deny their teaching.
1. They taught God's law—"Thou shalt not kill"...yet
they said, "Crucify Jesus."
2. They taught you should not eat with unwashed hands...
yet they would not help a wounded man.(Samaritan)
3. They taught, "Love they neighbor as thyself...yet
they had no compassion except for their own group.
C. They only criticize and judge, and never do anything
constructive.

III. HOW CAN YOU BE DELIVERED FROM THIS EVIL SPIRIT?
A. Matthew 5:21
B. How can your righteous exceed that of the Pharisees?
1. Christ in you..........Romans 4:6-11

CONCLUSION: I Cor. 1:30
I Cor. 1:29