

The Way Jesus Wants The Church

No. 273

Introduction.

- I. About 2000 years ago Jesus left heaven and came to earth to establish His church. The church began on the first Pentecost following His resurrection in about 33 A.D.. It began with 3,000 believers and through the years millions have become a part of this blood bought institution.
 - A. Some people today say that the **influence of the church is waning**, but we know that it is still a mighty power in the hearts and lives of millions of people.
 - B. **Men may curse the church**, but they would not want to live in a world where was no church and no Christian influence. They would not be willing to bring up their children in a Christ-less, church-less atmosphere.
- II. Today, I would like for us to discuss, "The Way Jesus Wants The Church." We need to discuss this theme because sometimes we lose sight of Christ's plan for the church.
 - I. **A United Church** - Jesus wants His church to be a united church.
 - A. A **football team** is composed of eleven men, but the men do not go in eleven different directions. They have just one object and they work together to get the ball over the goal line. An **army** may be composed of thousands of men, but they have just one object and they work together to overcome the enemy.
 - B. **The church must be united.**
 1. If the church is to win, she must go out as one. "United we stand, divided we fall." (Mk. 3:25).
 2. Let us be united in our love and devotion and service for God.
 3. **Let's be united in the great purpose of the church**, namely, to make Jesus known in the world.
 - a. Let much of our giving and singing and teaching and preaching and work be to that end.
 - b. Let us lay aside every human doctrine, every prejudice, every trivial difference and every jealousy and let us move forward as one great body under the leadership of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
 - c. **Remember Paul said.** (1 Cor. 1:10).
 - II. **An Attended Church** - Jesus wants His church to be an attended church.
 - A. Jesus has commanded us to be **faithful in attendance**. (Heb. 10:24, 25).
 1. We need the strength and fellowship and inspiration offered by the assembly.
 2. We need to exhort others and to worship God.
 - B. Recently I read about a family that gets up about 4:00 on Sunday morning to attend church services. They

must walk about 45 minutes to get to the public transportation and then ride the bus for 2 hours to get to Bible study and church. Once church is over they must ride the bus again for 2 hours and make the 45 minute walk home. Why do they do this? The answer is obvious. They have a great love for God and His people. They want the spiritual strength that God and church offer.

- C. This is contrast to some who offer the least excuse for not attending worship services. We ought to love Jesus and His church more. We ought to be at each and every service of the church.

III. A Friendly Church - Jesus wants His church to be a friendly church.

A. **A church must have a personality.** It must be friendly if it is going to attract people.

1. There are those who ride many miles and pass by other churches to go to the church that is filled with friendly people.
2. Very often someone tells me they **visited some church and not a single person spoke to them.** This is tragic, and certainly the Lord's church should never be like this.

B. I am thankful for the friendliness of this church and may the Lord help us to make this even a friendlier church in the future.

C. Let us always speak to one another and to every visitor and invite them into our homes for sweet fellowship.

IV. A Bold Church - Jesus wants the church to be a bold church.

A. The early church was **fearfully persecuted**, but it stood boldly for the truth. It possessed a holy boldness that came only from God.

B. **We are to stand for the truth.**

1. There are many **"isms"** today that would be **"wasms"** if the church would boldly stand for the truth.
2. We are living in a **wish-washy world** when it comes to moral and doctrinal truth.
3. We have a Bible and we believe in it and we ought to stand for its truths. (1 Cor. 16:13 RSV; Jude 3).

V. A Live Church - Jesus wants the church to be a live church.

A. **On one sultry night a group of young people sat talking about the hot weather.** They just could not find any relief from the heat. Finally, one of them said, "Let's go to prayer meeting over a Blank Church." Another said, "Where did you get such an idea?" He replied, "We can get cool there - that is the coldest place in town." How tragic when young people and others look upon the church as the coldest place in town. That is just the opposite of the way Jesus wants the church. He wants it to be on fire for His great cause.

B. All of us at sometime have been in our cars and have **passed an empty stadium** that would seat thousands of people. Some miles down the road we came upon a stadium packed with people. What was the difference? Why were they there? They were there because something was going on.

1. **If the Lord's church is alive**, if something is going on, if its members are working, then the crowds will be coming all the time.
2. If we do not have a live, interested, enthusiastic group of workers, the church will not impress the world

and it will grow weak and eventually die.

C. Here are some characteristics of a live church.

<p>Live churches believe in a Great, Powerful God. Dead churches trust in themselves.</p> <p>Live churches are constantly changing with respect for God's word. Dead churches don't have to change.</p> <p>Live churches have lots of noisy kids. Dead churches are fairly quiet and intolerant of kids.</p> <p>Live church's expenses always exceed their income. Dead churches take in more than they ever dreamed of spending.</p> <p>Live churches are constantly improving for the future. Dead churches worship their past.</p> <p>Live churches move out in faith. Dead churches operate totally by human sight.</p> <p>Live churches focus on people. Dead churches focus on programs.</p>	<p>Live churches are filled with those who give as they have been prospered. Dead churches are filled with tippers.</p> <p>Live churches dream the great dreams of God. Dead churches relive nightmares and tragedies.</p> <p>Live churches don't have "can't" in their dictionary. Dead churches have nothing but "don'ts, cant's and wont's."</p> <p>Live churches evangelize. Dead churches fossilize.</p> <p>Live churches have constant problems or challenges. Dead churches are quietly coexisting with the world with no problems for anyone!</p> <p>Dead churches split hairs and strain at gnats. Live churches major in justice mercy and faith.</p>
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VI. A Loving Church - Jesus wants the church to be a loving church.

A. The members are to **love each other**. (Jn. 15:12; 1 Pet. 1:22).

1. It was often said of the early Christians, "See how they love one another."
2. It is sometimes said today, "See how indifferent they are to one another."
3. **But we ought to love one another.** We have the same Father and the same Savior. We are members of the same family and we are living for the same spiritual purpose.

B. The members of the church are to **love the lost**. (Lk. 19:10).

1. Jesus came into the world to seek and saved the lost and His church must do the same.
2. **The Lord's church must be a soul-winning church.**
 - a. It should make a diligent effort to save those in the community.
 - b. It should also make a diligent effort to reach those in other lands. (Mk. 16:15).
 - c. **An artist was once asked to paint a picture of a decaying church.** It was thought he would paint a tottering ruin, but instead he painted a picture of a magnificent building. As you looked into the open door, you saw a richly carved pulpit and the fine carpet and the stained windows. But just inside was an offering box, and on the box was this card, "For Foreign Missions." There over the slot on the box the artist painted cobwebs. That was the reason the church had decayed. She had forgotten others and had ceased to be a missionary church. Consequently, she had died!
 - d. Oh, the Lord wants us to lift up our eyes to the perishing around the world and go to the ends of the earth to save the lost!

C. The members of the church are to **love the fallen**.

1. If ever there is a time when a man needs sympathy, it is when he has fallen by the wayside.
2. Jesus wants the church to be made up of people who love the fallen and who find their greatest joy in reaching down and lifting them up, and healing the wounds which the devil has inflicted upon them. (Gal. 6:1, 2).

VII. **A Spiritual Church** - Jesus wants His church to be a spiritual church.

- A. **A church may have a fine building**, a big contribution, hundreds of names on the roll, and crowds overflow the building, but if the members are not full of the love God, and living Christlike lives the church is nothing and is a disgrace, an abomination to Christ. We must “be” and “do” in order to be acceptable to Christ.
- B. **A well-known singer went to a small town for her vacation**. She knew that she had some important mail coming and went down to the Post Office to get this registered mail. The postmaster said, “I am sorry, but I can’t give you this mail unless you can present positive means of identification.” She showed him her credit cards, but he said, “I am sorry, but this is not enough. Sometimes credit cards are lost and someone else uses them.” The singer thought for just a moment and then she said to herself, “I know what I’ll do. I’ll sing.” She began to sing in her rich, full, wonderful voice, and soon the littler post office was crowded with people. She held them spell bound during the song. Then she asked, “Now, may I have my mail?” And the postmaster said, “Yes, I know that you are the great opera singer. I have your records in my home.” She identified herself by her singing.

C. **How can we identify ourselves?**

1. How can we prove that we are Christians?
2. We must be spiritual letting the Spirit of Christ guide our lives. (Gal. 5:22, 23).

Conclusion.

I. **On one occasion a violin string laid upon a table.**

- A. **It was a helpless, inanimate thing**. There was in it no power, no strength, no beauty, no music.
- B. Then the master violinist came to the table and picked up the string. He fitted it into its predestined place in violin. Soon he was turning the key and getting the string in tune. Then he touched the string with the bow, and brought forth lovely music from that which had been dead and inanimate before.

II. **Many church members are lying idle like the string of the violin.**

- A. If this is you, don’t let your life be like that useless string lying on the table.
- B. Come and put you life into the hands of God. Let Him fit you into your rightful place in the church and its activities. Don’t be satisfied merely to have your name on the church roll! Be a real Christian. Be committed to the Lord. Help the church be as Christ our Savior would have it.

III. **At this time we offer the Lord’s invitation** to all who would like to become a Christian. You can become a Christian by turning from your sins, confessing Jesus as God’s Son, and by being baptized. We also extend the invitation to all who would like to rededicate their lives to Christ or who would like to place membership with this congregation. Come now as we stand and sing.

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