

Which Church Is The Right Church?

By Conrad Barrett

One would think the most peaceful place on earth would be inside church walls where people meet to worship God and have fellowship with others. Sometimes it is so, but other times it is not.

Choosing a particular church is not always done for the right reasons, but sometimes our choice is right. Some choose one over another because it may be denominationally compatible with our religious philosophy. Denominations are good because they give us choices. Sometimes, though, the name of the church becomes more important than what actually goes on inside that church. We may need to do a little more thinking and soul searching. Are church titles more influential on us than what we really believe or what we actually practice? It is something to think about, seriously.

Convenience sometimes becomes a factor as to where we attend church, but should not be the only one. Many can drive or be driven for many miles to see and hear something we really want, but attending a church because it may be a bit farther or closer from where we live, is not good reason to choose or not choose a particular church. Sometimes, however, in certain circumstances it may be necessary to attend a church closer to home, especially when there is no other viable choice. Most of us, however, do have a choice.

One reason given by many Christians as to why they attend a certain church is because their friends go to that church. The overall consideration, then, is that people make a choice to be with their friends, regardless. Usually in making such a decision, there is a leader among such friends and they actually do the choosing for us. The followers, then, become puppets for that leadership. Many nominal Christians may have never really connected to God in a positive way and as a result, become followers of human leadership more than followers of the Lord. It is easy to become engrossed or enwebbed in a certain mind-set when we choose to follow others and give little or no consideration as to what God really wants us to do. Why should any Christian let the influence of others become more persuasive than the leadership of the Holy Spirit? Our real question here, then, is who is leading whom? Is it the Lord or is it someone else? A good and sincere prayer time can help us.

Church selection is made many times because of certain preachers, teachers, and singers, but it should be understood that these people move from time to time and there is nothing permanent about following them. Even though we may like a certain preacher or singing style, these things can change and then what do we do? My point is that our commitment must rise above any and all personnel of any church and the ultimate question is what does God want me to do and where does He want me to do it? We should never allow others to take the place of God's leadership in our lives. Consciously, or unconsciously, this can be done. To allow anyone to lead us over the leadership of the Holy Spirit and God's word, is to place ourselves in bondage to that person. God forbids such. Don't let it happen to you!

Never should one pursue selfish interests in church life. Attending a particular church for social reasons, financial reasons, or who may be attending there, should never be a serious consideration. The church world has come a long way from the stable in Bethlehem and from the old rugged cross to the modern church structure which we now

have. Let's never forget our roots and the real reason why we embrace the Christ whom we serve, along with the reason why we attend church.

It is true that within some churches certain "in house" political groups are formed. This should never be. Division is not in our best interest and should never be exploited in any church, because each of us has a ministry and we should pursue it to its fullest. The church, however, should free itself from its own politics and trust the Lord with promoting whomever He desires to whatever position He wants for us. We all are delightfully different and we all have something to offer. Remember, if we pray and let Him, He will lead us. God is very capable of leading His church. Let's follow.

If we listen, God will talk to us, perhaps not audibly, but maybe by giving us a special feeling or speaking to us in a "still small voice". If we make time for Him, He will make us know what His will for us really is. We can then find our place in God's wonderful kingdom and the church where God really wants us to be.

Churches, regardless of what religious persuasion, should have a common basis for existence and that basis is in the person of Jesus Christ. If we follow Jesus Christ we will love Him and love each other. If there is anemia in the church world, it is because we have become more religious than spiritual, more denominational than spiritual. The "fix it" solution is in Christ where we all should unite.

The church which is right for each of us is the one to where God leads us and the one where we should be a faithful and helpful part. Go to it for the right reasons and support it for the right reasons. The right church is the church where the word of God is taught and where we can worship freely in spirit and truth, and where we can work for the Lord. Whether it is close to us or a few miles away, the right church is one where we will feel at home and where God wants us to be.

Christian Chapel Church
4043 Chandler Road
Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403
(918) 687-1606