

The Church is Not...

The Scriptures describes the church in a variety of ways: the body of Christ, the Way, the kingdom of God, the bride of Christ, etc. However, let us give some attention to some things the church is **not**.

The church is not made up of people who believe they are better than others. “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself” (Phil. 2:3). Rather, God’s church is made up of those who realize they should be better than they are and must continually strive to do better always. “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me” (Phil. 3:12).

The church is not made up of perfect people, but people who realize they are following a perfect Lord and a perfect law and therefore must do the very best they can. “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:21,22).

The church is not trying to withdraw from everyone, but rather draw everyone into its fellowship and love who are willing to walk in the light where God the Father and Christ the Son are found. “If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:6,7).

The church is not made up of people who never make mistakes, but those who often acknowledge their mistakes and then forsake them. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8,9). Never must we seek to justify our wickedness or continually make the same mistakes over and over again.

The church is not trying to take the joy out of life, but rather is trying to put real joy into every life it touches. “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice!” (Phil. 4:4). Great joy is found in embracing our purpose of life (namely, fearing God and keeping His commandments; Eccl. 12:13).

The church is not trying to make you feel ugly by rebuking sin, but rather it is trying to instill the beauty of holiness in your life. “Therefore, having these promise, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).

The church is not trying to separate you from your money, but rather it is trying to keep your money from separating you from God. “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Tim. 6:9,10).

The church is not trying to become the master of your life, but trying to get you to master yourself. “Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desire to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me’” (Matt. 16:24).

The church is not trying to rob your life of priorities, but rather to get you to put **the** priorities in your life. “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things [the necessities of life] shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33).

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