

Week 6

Day 36: Look for God Among You

Read 1 Corinthians 14:24-25

"and as a result he will fall facedown and worship God, proclaiming, 'God is really among you.' " 1 Corinthians 14:25

What would you say is the most important thing about your church?

For many people, the answer would be that this church meets my spiritual, emotional, or relational needs. As you think about our church, who are some of the people who have or are making a difference in your life?

What are some of the ministries of our church that deepen your relationship with the Lord?

In the text we read today, we find what I think is the best response to the question "What do you say is important to this church?" First, an unbeliever discovers the truth about a Savior, next accepts Jesus, and finally shouts, "God is really among you!" How great if this could be said about every church in our land.

In a healthy church, it is easy to see that God is the center of that church.

Prayer

Pray for God to show you how He is moving in your church. Ask God to help you reflect His presence to a lost world

Day 37: Obey His Marching Orders

Read Matthew 28:16-20

"Then Jesus came near and said to them, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.' " Matthew 28:18

In military circles, when a high-ranking officer speaks, people listen and follow directions. Our Commander-in-Chief, Jesus Christ, has spoken and called His church to action. The Great Commission is not optional or suggestive in nature. Jesus expects His followers to obey His marching orders. Our marching orders begin at home and extend to the ends of the earth. The Great Commission is the mission mandate for every church, regardless of the church's structure, size, or style.

In the act of going, Jesus hasn't called His people to merely record decisions. He has commanded that His people make disciples. A disciple is a learner and follower of Christ. Is the church you serve intentional about making disciples? What is your strategy for reaching all nations? Our Commander-in-Chief refuses to send His followers into the mission field alone. He promises to always be with us.

You and I have been called to attention and given an assignment that can change lives, marriages, families, churches, and nations. Let's not disobey our Commander-in-Chief's marching orders!

Prayer

Reflect on how you've responded to the Great Commission. Have you and your church treated Jesus' command as optional or mandatory? May you allow the Lord to use you to impact the nations for His glory!

Day 38: Hot, cold, or lukewarm?

Read Revelation 3:14-22

"So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth."
Revelation 3:16

As a result of a bad meal, a curvy road, or a contagious virus, you feel sick to your stomach. Feeling nauseated is uncomfortable. Jesus challenged the Laodicean church on several points. However, the church's real condition left Him nauseated. A lukewarm church makes Jesus sick to His stomach. What led the Laodicean church to be lukewarm? God's people thought they were self-sufficient. Jesus wasn't really needed on a day-to-day basis. In fact, He was standing outside the church, knocking on the door, and hoping to be invited back in.

Generally not in words, but at least in actions, many churches rely on their structures, staff, and strategies rather than on Christ Jesus. The church's Redeemer is left standing outside the fellowship, desiring to be welcomed back in. There's hope for a lukewarm church. Jesus gives His people an opportunity to repent and change directions.

Is our church dependent on the presence and power of Jesus Christ? Is our church's behavior causing Jesus to be nauseated?

Prayer

Position yourself to discover what Jesus thinks about your church. If you and your faith family are nauseating Jesus, hear His knock, open the door, and invite Him in. He longs to fellowship with you!

Day 39: Strengthen what remains

Read Revelation 3:1-6

"Be alert and strengthen what remains, which is about to die, for I have not found your works complete before My God." *Revelation 3:2*

After Jesus had evaluated the church at Sardis and given his assessment, He then gave them a divine action plan. Christ said to, "Strengthen the things which remain." It sounds as if there were some things in the church that were good and pleasing to God, but which needed attention before they lost their vitality.

Most churches have one or more areas of strength. Some congregations are great mission churches that go on mission trips and give money to missions. Others are really good at welcoming outsiders in and making them feel loved and valued without feeling judged by people. Some are great worshipping congregations where folks are invited into the presence of God through singing and other means.

How can you be used to strengthen areas in your church?

Prayer

Would you pray today that God would reveal to you and others in your church those areas where your congregation is strong? Ask God to help you build on that area of strength for His glory and the good of the church and the community where God has placed you.

Day 40: Evaluate your church

Read Revelation 3:1-6

"To the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The One who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars says: I know your works; you have a reputation for being alive, but you are dead.'" Revelation 3:1

Your church is evaluated every week. The first-time guests who visit have an opinion about your church. The senior adults who attend have convictions about the life and ministry of your congregation. The young families have some thoughts as well as the youth. The community in which your church is located also has something that comes to mind when they think of your church.

These opinions are varied and may have some merit. The opinion, or rather judgment, that matters most is the one offered by Jesus, the Head of the church. Jesus has some thoughts concerning your congregation, and the road to growth begins with seeking Jesus' view of your church.

How does your congregation's perception of your church's effectiveness differ from the perspective of Jesus?

Prayer

Pray today that God will help your congregation understand how He views it, and what He wishes to see happen for your church to move into new life and ministry, and be an influence for Christ in your community.