

**GOD'S PLAN FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH – PART 3  
BECOMING A CHURCH THAT PLEASES GOD**

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*“<sup>10</sup> “I wish that one of you would close the temple doors, so that you no longer would light useless fires on my altar. I am not pleased with you,” says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies, “and I will no longer accept an offering from you.” Malachi 1:10*

**I. HOW DO WE TYPICALLY EVALUATE A CHURCH?**

**WE ASK QUESTIONS LIKE:**

**1. DO I \_\_\_\_\_ THE MUSIC?**

**2. ARE THE MESSAGES \_\_\_\_\_ TO ME?**

**3. ARE THE SERVICES \_\_\_\_\_?**

**4. DOES EVERYONE ELSE \_\_\_\_\_?**

**5. DO MY KIDS \_\_\_\_\_?**

**6. DO THE SERVICES/MESSAGES MAKE ME \_\_\_\_\_?**

**THE PROBLEM WITH THESE QUESTIONS: THEY ARE \_\_\_\_\_**

**II. THE PRIMARY CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING A CHURCH**

**1. DOES IT \_\_\_\_\_?**

*“<sup>1</sup> I hope you will put up with a little more of my foolishness. Please bear with me. <sup>2</sup> For I am jealous for you with the jealousy of God himself. I promised you as a pure bride to one husband—Christ. <sup>3</sup> But I fear that somehow your pure and undivided devotion to Christ will be corrupted, just as Eve was deceived by the cunning ways of the serpent.” 2 Corinthians 11:1-3*

*“<sup>25</sup> For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word. <sup>27</sup> He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.” Ephesians 5:25-27*

**III. HOW CAN I ENSURE GOD IS PLEASED WITH MY CHURCH?**

**1. REALIZE THAT SINCE I AM “THE CHURCH” & ONLY HAVE CONTROL OVER MYSELF, I  
MUST \_\_\_\_\_**

*“<sup>1</sup> Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you.” 1 Thessalonians 4:1*

**2. START BY ASKING GOD \_\_\_\_\_ THAT  
WILL PLEASE HIM**

<sup>5</sup> If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone.” James 1:5-6

<sup>16</sup> Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. <sup>17</sup> Don’t act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.” Ephesians 5:16-17

**KEY: THIS IS DRIVEN BY A \_\_\_\_\_**

<sup>37</sup> If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine.” Matthew 10:37

**3. DEVOTE MYSELF TO REGULAR WORSHIP, GIVING GOD MY \_\_\_\_\_**

**& WORSHIP HIM \_\_\_\_\_**

<sup>46</sup> They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity...” Acts 2:46

<sup>23</sup> But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. <sup>24</sup> For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” John 4:23-24

<sup>7</sup> You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, <sup>8</sup> ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. <sup>9</sup> Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.’” Matthew 15:7-9

**4. DEVOTE MYSELF TO PRAYER, GIVING GOD REGULAR \_\_\_\_\_ &**

**STAYING IN \_\_\_\_\_**

<sup>42</sup> All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

**5. DEVOTE MYSELF TO TEACHING OF MY TEACHING MINISTERS, GIVING GOD MY**

**\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ THAT IS NOT IN LINE WITH MY CURRENT WAY OF LIVING**

<sup>42</sup> All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

<sup>2</sup> But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.” James 1:2

**6. \_\_\_\_\_ MY CHURCH FAMILY HOWEVER I CAN, AS OFTEN AS I CAN**

<sup>9</sup> “I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! <sup>12</sup> This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” John 15:9-13

<sup>34</sup> So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. <sup>35</sup> Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” John 13:34-35

<sup>16</sup> We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our

brothers and sisters....<sup>18</sup> Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. <sup>19</sup> Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God." 1 John 3:16 & 18-19

**Key: I Must \_\_\_\_\_ In Order To Love On Them**

<sup>25</sup> And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." Hebrews 10:25

<sup>42</sup> All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer." Acts 2:42

**7. USE \_\_\_\_\_ WHENEVER POSSIBLE TO SERVE MY CHURCH FAMILY**

<sup>7</sup> A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church." 1 Corinthians 12:7

<sup>6</sup> In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. <sup>7</sup> If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. <sup>8</sup> If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly." Romans 12:6-8

**8. LIVE \_\_\_\_\_ MY BROTHERS & SISTERS IN CHRIST**

<sup>20</sup> "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—<sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 7:20-23 (NIV)

**9. EMBRACE \_\_\_\_\_ FOR THE SAKE OF FOLLOWING CHRIST**

<sup>23</sup> Then he said to the crowd, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. <sup>24</sup> If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it." Luke 9:23-24

<sup>12</sup> Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup> Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. <sup>14</sup> If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. <sup>15</sup> If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs. <sup>16</sup> But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!... <sup>19</sup> So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for he will never fail you." 1 Peter 4:12-16 & 19

**Key: One Way I "Suffer" Is To \_\_\_\_\_**