

Qualities Of A Healthy Congregation (3)

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Passionate Spirituality

Lest we forget that passion alone is no guarantee of righteousness, consider the words of Romans 12:11, *“Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”* Just as important as passion is obedience, but often the former is neglected. It is unfortunate when our worship to God becomes mundane or routine. If we are not happy to worship the Lord, we will never convince others that they ought to become Christians.

Congregations that grow are those that *“hunger and thirst for righteousness”* (Matthew 5:6). They love what they do, they love evangelism, they love studying the Bible, regardless of how long the sermon might be. These churches enjoy being with each other and they make their earnestness for spirituality known to the world. What an impact we can have on the people around us when we live as fervently for God as possible! In casual conversation, make God the center of your attention. Say things like, “What a beautiful day God has given us!” or “The Lord certainly has blessed me today!” Pray before meals, even in public. Have a hymn on your mind wherever you go. Look forward to worship on Sundays and Wednesdays and never approach the Lord’s table grudgingly. Be excited! Be joyful! Everywhere you go, people should be amazed at your spiritual mindset and your peculiar penchant for all things righteous. Such a life will go a long way in developing relationships with believers and unbelievers alike, and it will engender a spirit of enjoyment when we worship our Lord!

Worship That Affects People’s Lives

Worshipping God should not be an arduous task that we groan about. Neither should it be boring. What a sad state it is when Christians do not long for the assembly as David does in Psalm 84. *“How lovely are Thy dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God... For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand outside...”* Do we say the same thing about coming together as an assembly and singing, studying, breaking the bread of the Lord’s table, and praying? Is worship something that touches your life is it something static?

In our worship, it is not enough to simply go through the motions of worship. We are not merely commanded to sing, but to *“speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Ephesians 5:19). We are not commanded to say prayers only, but to *“rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit”* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19). We are not to simply listen to a sermon, but to *“receive the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily”* (Acts 17:11).

Loving Relationships

Healthy churches are always characterized by their love. Without it, everything we do is in vain (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). Members should be wholeheartedly devoted to one another in love (Romans 12:10), giving preference to one another in all honor. Hospitality should abound, not only between members but to outsiders as well. The kind of hospitality we show to unbelievers can go a long way toward developing a relationship that will lead to their conversion. *“Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of every opportunity”* (Colossians 4:5). A congregation filled with love will be a place that is desirable – people will want to become a Christian! It will be a place of mercy and forgiveness, *“for love covers a multitude of sins”* (1 Peter 4:8). It will be a family of souls, dedicated to helping each other make it to Heaven. *“If one member suffers, all the members suffers with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it”* (1 Corinthians 12:26).