

Spiritual Disciplines Within The Church

Chapter 13: Why Research the Church?

Introduction:

“The decision you make about what church to attend will greatly affect your spiritual life and the lives of your children. In fact, the decisions you make now will affect your descendants and the generations to come. That’s a sobering reality.” Because the church plays such a vital role in your life it is vital that you choose wisely.

I. Researching the church will help you avoid an unfaithful church. (Rev. 2-3)

- A. It has activities and reputation without life. (Rev. 3:1)
- B. It never accomplishes anything. (Rev. 3:2)
- C. It has forgotten the scriptures and faithful preaching. (Rev. 3:3)
- D. It is indifferent to the things of God. (Rev. 3:15-16)
- E. It has no sense of need or of dependence upon God. (Rev. 3:17, John 15:5)

II. Researching the church will help you avoid an unfaithful minister.

- A. The New Testament repeatedly warns us to watch out for the false prophets. (Matt. 7:15, Acts 20:28-30, II Peter 2:1, I John 4:1)
- B. The presence of many false prophets is a sign of Jesus’ return. (Matt. 24:11)
- C. Some men disqualify themselves by becoming unfaithful to biblical standards. (I Tim. 3:2-6)
- D. Some hearers will find men to preach to their felt needs. (II Tim. 4:3-4)

III. How to identify false teachers. (II Peter 2)

IV. How should you research the church you consider joining.

- A. Discover what the church (and especially the pastor) believes.
- B. Discover what the church does.
- C. Discover who the people are. (I Tim. 3:15; II Tim. 1:13-14, 2:2; Jude 3)

V. Applications.

- A. The ideal church may not exist—at least not in your area.
- B. A good church is worth a good distance.
- C. The Lord wants you to find a church where you can be involved. (Heb. 10:25)
- D. If all the churches in your vicinity are unbiblical, consider helping to start a new one.