

DO WE EXPECT TOO MUCH?

Sometimes those of us who are parents may wonder if we expect too much of our children. We may begin to wonder if we are being too harsh, too unbending on them as they seek to explore new frontiers and sprout wings. The response will generally be NO!

The same thing can be said about members of the Lord's church. Are elders asking too much when they ask members of the church to do certain things, to conduct themselves in a certain way, to change things in their life, etc... Again, the answer will come back, NO! Let's look at some areas and see if it is expecting too much when they ask members of the church to do these things. We will concentrate more on attendance in this list of things.

- I. Give generously, liberally, and sacrificially.
 - A. Giving is something we don't like to talk about.
 1. The denominational world talks about it all the time. Those from this background know this!
 2. We go to the other extreme.
 3. We apologize for even talking about it.
 4. It seems that giving become an unpopular subject when it "makes its way" from the home with a multi car garage, closet-filled, pantry-filled home, to the parking lot with all the fine automobiles, to the padded pews and air-conditioned buildings...then to the pulpit!
 - B. II Cor. 8:5—first gave self
 1. I Cor. 16:1,2
 2. II Cor. 9:6-8
 3. II Cor. 8:3—ability and beyond.
 4. II Cor. 8:7—abound in this grace also.
- II. To be honest, moral, sober, and upright in their daily living.
 - A. Is it asking too much to expect people to live the kind of lives they profess?
 - B. Titus 2:11-14
 1. Zealous of good works (Titus 2:14)
 2. I Peter 1:14-16
 - C. We take up our cross daily and follow Jesus (Lk. 9:23).
 - D. Romans 12:17—honesty (Provide things honest in the...)
 - E. Is it asking too much to expect Christians to be honest?
- III. Abstain from all appearance of evil (I Thess 5:22).
 - A. What does abstain mean to you?
 - B. Christians should want to see how far away from evil they can get.
 1. Many times we want to see how close we can get to it w/o being burned.
 2. I Peter 2:11.. "The Christian's first and greatest difficulty is with himself."
 - a. He has bodily passions which men around him are in no sense holding in control, and to which he has given power because once he did not hold them in control
 - b. When a man becomes a Christian he virtually pledges himself that henceforth he will "hold the vessel of his body in sanctification and honor."
 - c. But fulfilling that pledge he finds to be most serious and anxious work. [Homiletic Comm]
 3. We are to shun evil in whatever form or appearance it may present itself.
 - C. God said, "abhor that which is evil (Rom. 12:9)
 1. To abhor is to hate, despise, to find repulsive.
 2. It has been said that our one security against sin lies in our being shocked by it.
 3. Jer. 6:15... Are we shocked by sin today?
- IV. Stay away from ungodliness and worldly lusts.
 - A. Renounce ungodliness.

1. Godliness is described as the conduct necessary to preserve and maintain God's provisions
 2. Ungodliness would be the opposite. (Psa. 1:1)
- B. Renounce worldly lusts
1. I John 2:15-17–
 2. Such renunciation is to take place when we begin the Christian life.
 - a. Col. 3:1ff
 - b. Rom. 12:1,2
 - c. I Pet. 4:2—but for the will of God
 - d. I Thess. 4:1-5..will of God.
 - e. There is no way that the church can be the light of the world, save by contrast (Matt. 5:16)
 - f. It seems that we do not want to be different.
- C. Included in this thought would be the rejection of the works of flesh (Gal. 5:19-21)
- D. Replace them with fruit of the Spirit and Christian graces (Gal. 5:22,23 ; II Pet 1:5-7)
- V. Seek first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33).
- A. Is that expecting too much?
1. Christianity cannot be a casual matter.
 - a. Living for Christ is a daily, serious, obedient endeavor.
 - b. It is not a game we play. It is serious business.!
 2. The way we put God first is by putting his kingdom first!
 3. What is first in your life?
- B. When we put the kingdom of God first, we will be faithful at all services.
1. Neglect in assembling for worship and study is one of the most prevalent sins in the church today. It is a problem we are facing!
 - a. Check almost any church bulletin and you will note a 30 to 60% decrease in attendance from Sunday morning to Sunday night or Wednesday night.
 - b. Why? A few are absent due to age and physical infirmity.
 - c. However, the majority had rather relax, recreate and be entertained by the Hollywood set.
 2. The empty pew is a display of the Laodicean spirit. (Lukewarm devotion)
 - a. Their thimble-size capacity for spirituality is quickly filled. [Bible-class 30-45 minutes]
 - b. Their commitment to things divine is exhausted in an hour per week.
 - c. Like Israel of old, they view the worship assembly with a spirit of boredom.. (Mal. 1:13).
 3. The empty pew is an expression of contempt for the blood of Christ.
 4. The empty pew is a statement that sporting events, recreation, family visits are more important than worship!
- C. What about Heb. 10:25?
1. Forsaking is a present tense form, hence a practice that is repeated.
 2. It is not a once-and-for-all-time abandonment; it was a customary habit into which some of the Hebrew saints had fallen.
 3. It strongly emphasizes a disregard for others that characterizes some—those who persistently neglect church meetings.
 4. Forsaking the church assemblies is a shameful form of both arrogance and selfishness.
 5. Some of these brethren had gotten “into the habit of excusing themselves from the meetings” of the church. . . Perhaps as a result of the fear of persecution, materialistic pursuits, or downright laziness
 6. Is missing a service “forsaking?”
 - a. The answer is “yes” and “no.”
 - b. There are those who have to care for the sick.
 - c. Some may have to work (Not by choice).
 - d. On the other hand, there are many others who are shamelessly flippant about their obligation to meet with the saints.

- e. With but the slightest deterrent—be it a sports event, a family outing, or the “I’m-too-tired rationalization—it matter little to them.
- f. The truth is, it is a **HEART** problem. The Lord’s kingdom is not *first* in their lives, it runs a distant somewhere else.
- g. If the preacher or the elders attending like some members, there would be outrage!
- 7. Here is a thought: Do the elders of this congregation have an *obligation* to feed the flock (Acts 20:28)?
 - a. If so, does the flock have a *duty* to yield to their persuasion, submitting to their guidance (Heb. 13:17)?
 - b. If then, the elders attempt to nourish the church at appointed times, does the Christian have the right to *frivolously* decide whether or not he will follow their leadership in this regard?
- D. There are some who think they can quit the church without quitting Christ.
 - 1. They have left the church but believe they are still connected with Christ, retaining their salvation, having fellowship with Him in private and generally enjoying His approval.
 - 2. They are out of fellowship with the church but still in fellowship with Christ on an individual basis, they think.
 - 3. Christ is the head of the body, the church (Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18).
 - 4. Can one quit the church and not, at the same time be quitting Christ.
 - a. The church is the body of Christ.
 - b. To have life, the body must be connected to the head.
 - c. An individual member must remain connected to the body to receive the life from the head.
 - d. When you quit the church, you quit the Christ. It is as simple as that!
- E. I Cannot attend Sunday morning, Sunday night services, Wednesday Bible Study
 - 1. Too tired
 - 2. My only time at home
 - 3. Visiting.
 - 4. Had company
 - 5. Movies
 - 6. Just not interested
 - 7. Too much church
 - 8. Favorite TV program
 - 9. Kids had a (baseball, softball, football, basketball, volleyball, soccer) game
 - 10. Signed: _____
- F. If one member of the local church can ignore that church and attend on a part-time basis and not be guilty of sinning, then all the members of that congregation could abandon such a church and its work and worship.

Con: WE have said all of this not to upset or offend you, but to hopefully provoke you to love and good works (Heb. 10:24). ..to cause you to think about the commitment you made to God and the example you are displaying to those around you as to the importance of assembling with the saints to worship God and study His word. I wish I knew what it would take to cause you to want to serve your God as you should. A religion that will not take you to the assembling together certainly will not take you to heaven! Are we expecting too much? God’s word says NO ! ! ! What do you say by your words and life?