

The Mind of Christ in a Local church
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Introduction: What is the primary function of a local church?

- A. A local church is to help mold its members to be like Christ. **(Eph 4:11-16)**
 - 1. Doctrinal purity is one of the battlegrounds where Satan must be defeated!
 - 2. If we lose this battle then we are brought into the bondage of men.
- B. There is much more to do in addition to working towards doctrinal purity!
 - 1. Do we think about growing to “the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ?” **(Eph 4:12)**
 - 2. We must be the kind of people that others believe that we have unselfishly put their interests above our own.
 - 3. We must be the kind of people that would help wounded and hurting people put their lives back together.

I. What does it mean to love others as Jesus loved us?

- A. How did Jesus say we can identify the Lord’s church? **(Jn 13:34-35)**
 - 1. How are we doing in finding the mind of Christ *in our hearts*?
 - 2. How would others see me? What would a visitor to our assemblies find?
 - 3. How we treat others, our personal awareness of others, our willingness to take time to know and help others will say in actions more loudly than any words.
- B. You will not open your hearts to one who does not care about you.
 - 1. That was true in your becoming a Christian! Each of you met someone who had a genuine concern for your soul.
 - 2. In our growth as a Christian, this same love is essential!
 - 3. We need more to be like Timothy! **(Phil 2:19-21)**

II. How do we respond to the shortcomings in others?

- A. That will depend on how empty we are of ourselves. Will we be like Jesus or like a Pharisee? **(Mt 5:3-9, Lk 15:1-2; 18:9-10)**
 - 1. Do we know where we have come from and how we were saved? These truths will make us a humble people but also a driven people. **(2 Cor 5:11, 14-15)**
 - 2. We are raised to walk in newness of life, not to a self-centered walk!
 - 3. What sins are on the tops of your list to look down on your brethren about? Consider some possible reactions to: immodesty, “legalism” (a dry doctrinal checklist), priorities in attendance, immorality, alcoholism, “bashing others” over doctrinal differences, homosexuality...
 - 4. All of these sins are serious. Do you give up on some automatically and become a scoffer towards them? Have you pushed others outside of your heart and really do not care for them? What would Jesus do?
- C. Consider the mind of God in helping David. **(Psa 31:19-24)**
 - 1. God keeps secrets and also keeps us away from the slanderous tongues.
 - 2. In a time of trouble we do not necessarily want agreement as much as we need an arm around us in comfort and support. Our God will always tell us the truth but also provide a rest in repentance and righteousness!

3. Even when David doubted God, He was faithful and delivered him.
- D. A question was recently raised in a blog “What’s one thing you feel you can’t say in the church?”
 1. The response was overwhelming with many situations mentioned.
 2. The underlying message was “I cannot trust my brethren” and “my shortcomings must be hid or I will be punished.”
 3. We need to be a merciful and understanding people that will help each other find repentance and comfort in our shortcomings. **(2 Cor 2:4-8)**

III. Do we seek out relationships with Christians or are they “in our way?”

- A. One way to see how a Christian is growing is in relationships. **(Rom 12:16; 15:5-6)**
 1. If a new Christian does not make new relationships with Christians, they often do not survive spiritually.
 2. My selfishness and “being busy” could contribute to the fall of a brother.
 3. I must have the mind of Christ to pursue another *outside of those that I easily enjoy being with*. **(Rom 15:1-2)**
- B. How do we treat the “socially awkward?”
 1. Our society teaches us to punish them and exclude them. In time the “awkward” person expects to be looked down upon and excluded.
 2. Consider the shock of Zaccaeiuis when Jesus came to Him? **(Lk 19:4-10)**
 3. Is the door of your heart and of your home shut?
- C. Do we see the divide between the “haves” and the “have-nots?”
 1. The early church had several occasions where this became a problem.
 2. One of the problems with the Corinthians was in this area. **(1 Cor 11:20-22)**
 3. James described attitudes within the assembly. **(James 2:1-4)**
 4. I have seen churches where groups of couples went on expensive trips. Are you also doing things that those who have less can do with you?
 5. Are we seeking out others are we a collection of cliques?
- C. What attitudes are we nurturing in our Children?
 1. We need to teach our children to include others that are “difficult” in our activities because that is exactly what our Lord wants us to do! **(Mt 5:46)**
 2. There are Parents who became bitter towards another couple or even towards a child, and in both spoken and in unspoken actions encouraged their children to snub and exclude other children.

IV. How do we find “the mind of Christ” in this congregation?

- A. We need to see the cross and how it will change our lives. **(Phil 2:1-5)**
 1. There should be nothing separating us as brethren.
 2. We need to resolve any differences and have a unity that can be seen!
- B. We need to be an approachable caring people who will help those with broken lives get back on their feet. **(Heb 12:12-13)**
 1. Who is the one in this flock you can turn to? Are you that for another?
 2. Let us each seek to “lower our voices of complaint” and hold out our arms to heal and forgive. What is the next step for you?

Conclusion: What are you looking for on judgment day? **(James 2:13)**