

WELCOME GUESTS!

If you are visiting with us and have any questions about what you have seen or heard today, please fill out a visitor's card or ask to talk to one of our shepherds. Our desire is to give you a biblical answer about the things that we believe and practice.

THIS WEEK'S READING:

- 11/27 – 2 Tim 1-4; Psalm 22
- 11/28 – Titus; Psalm 23
- 11/29 – Philemon; Psalm 24
- 11/30 – Heb 1-3; Psalm 25
- 12/01 – Heb 3-4; Psalm 26
- 12/02 – Heb 5-6; Psalm 27
- 12/03 – Heb 7-8; Psalm 28

ASSEMBLY TIMES:

SUNDAY

Sermon 9:00 am
Bible Classes 10:00 am
Worship 11:00 am

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes 7:00 pm

JESUS DOESN'T JUDGE A CHURCH BY IT'S SIZE, PT1

BY WES MCADAMS

The phrase, "church growth" has become a buzzword in religious circles. For many, the size of a church is the primary way to judge its health and success. They believe churches should do anything and everything to grow their numbers, because size is what matters. But on the other hand, there are those who assume a large church indicates compromise and apostasy. Have you ever stopped to consider that the New Testament puts very little emphasis on congregational size? So why do we emphasize it so much? Maybe it's time to realize that Jesus doesn't judge a church by its size.

Judging Large Congregations

Just because a congregation is large does not necessarily mean it is healthy, successful, or being blessed by God. There are plenty of churches who have gotten large by telling people what they want to hear. Paul told Timothy a time would come when people would, "accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions" (2 Timothy 4:3). When this happens, we shouldn't assume Jesus is applauding these churches for the fact that they are bursting at the seams.

When we equate large churches with success, we are often willing to do anything it takes to "grow." We start thinking of the church as a business and the community as potential customers. We start catering our "menu of ministries" and the way we worship to what people want, all because we judge a church by its size.

But on the other hand, we must not assume every large church is large because they are compromising the truth, entertaining the masses, or not teaching sound doctrine. I know several wonderful congregations who have well over a thousand members. Sometimes churches have a lot of members because they really are reaching a lot of people with the gospel.

Judging Small Congregation

Just because a congregation is small, does not mean the members don't care about reaching people with the gospel. It does not mean they are "inward focused." It does not mean that church is dying.

Many Christians get discouraged with their smaller congregations, or refuse to place membership in smaller congregations, because they have preconceived ideas about there being something wrong with small congregations. There is nothing wrong with a small congregation. Jesus loves small congregations too.

But on the other hand, there are those who equate small with faithful. Or they equate small with friendly and close-knit. Just because a congregation is small does not mean it is a faithful congregation or that it is a loving close-knit family. Sometimes the stereotypes are true. Sometimes a congregation is small because the members are doing nothing to reach people with the gospel.



TODAY'S INTERACTIVE OUTLINE

Hearts on Fire

Fueling Our Zeal With Wisdom

November 26, 2017

Our Definition of Zeal:

Zeal is a burning desire to please God. This burning desire is seen in our lives as we display courage, diligence, and wisdom in our love and service.

Today we are going to begin showing how we can “add logs to our fire” so our zeal can continue to burn and even burn hotter. One of the things we desperately need to keep our zeal burning is wisdom and knowledge that comes from spending time in God’s word and from seeking wise counsel from more experienced and more mature Christians.

I. Knowledge and Wisdom Will Keep You Zealous for the _____.

- A. Negative examples of zeal without godly knowledge and wisdom:
 - 1. Many Jews at the time of Jesus and Paul (Romans 10:2).
 - 2. Paul before becoming a Christian (Galatians 1:13-14; Philippians 3:5).
- B. The Jews, in their zeal, were attempting to gain righteousness through keeping the _____ instead of trying to attain God’s righteousness that comes by faith in Him.
- C. A good example of zeal being directed by a knowledge of God: Jesus
 - 1. See John 2:17
- D. Are we more zealous for our traditions than we are the word of God?

II. Knowledge and Wisdom Will Keep You From _____.

- A. Illustration: The zeal of new converts.
- B. A great example of someone whose zeal led them to do damage is King _____.
 - 1. He was certainly zealous (see 2 Kings 10:16-17).
 - 2. What he did in his zeal (see 2 Kings 10:13-15; 18-27)
 - a) Deception and murder
 - b) His zeal led him to go beyond the commandment of the LORD
 - 3. Jehu didn’t follow the LORD with all his heart (2 Kings 10:31).
 - 4. Judgment came upon Jehu’s house because of his sin (Hosea 1:4-5).
- C. Application: see Colossians 4:5-6.

Conclusion & Application:

- A. Have you done things in your zeal that make you in need of God’s mercy?
- B. Do you need our help in seeking knowledge & wisdom?

THINKING THROUGH TODAY'S LESSON:

- Is your zeal directed towards the right things? Are you more zealous for serving the Lord and His people or are you more zealous for:
 - Manmade traditions?
 - Seeking your own righteousness?
 - Worldly things, such as sports, school, family, etc.
- Does your zeal lead you to stand up for what is right or true? When God’s “house” is being profaned, are you filled with a burning desire to do something about it?
- When was the last time that you sought wisdom from an older, more mature Christian?
- Do you “walk with wisdom” towards outsiders? (Col 4:5-6)

MY NOTES: