

"Now we have received not
the spirit of the world, but the
Spirit who is from God, that we
might understand the things
freely given us by God."
(1 Corinthians 2:12 ESV)



The Greatest Threat to the Church

Sometimes the question, "What is the greatest threat to the church" will come up in sermons, Bible studies, or casual conversation. The answers typically given in response are: the government, other religions or denominations, the education system, cultural issues, or groups or individuals who persecute people of faith and so on. While all of these are valid threats, they are not the greatest threat to the church. What if I told you the greatest threat to the church was already inside the four walls of every faithful congregation, and it didn't get there through a clever scheme or trickery. The greatest threat to the church is you, me, us, its members. How can this be so? When we fail in our responsibilities, we hurt the church. Make no mistake there is no force that will ever destroy the universal church, it will flourish with or without us (Matthew 16.18), but there are ways we can harm the church.

When we don't attend the appointed meeting times of the congregation, we are doing harm to the church. Hebrews 10.25 gives the command to not "neglect" or "forsake" our assembling together. One of the outcomes of the worship service is providing encouragement to one another. When we "neglect" the assembly we miss out on an opportunity to encourage another person, and for others to encourage you. By missing you have the opposite effect, you discourage your fellow brethren. The body of Christ needs all its members to function properly (1 Corinthians 12.12-27). ...

Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com

No one part is any less important than another. We all have a role to play in our local congregation. “If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.” (1 Corinthians 12.19-20, 26 ESV). When we are absent the body of Christ cannot function as it should.

When we fail to grow from spiritual immaturity to spiritual maturity, we are causing harm to the church. The Hebrews writer condemns the readers for their lack of growth given the amount of time that had passed, “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food” (Hebrews 5.12 ESV). Of course, maturity takes time, but we can’t allow ourselves to let time pass and not mature leaving us stuck on milk our entire lives. One of the goals of spiritual growth is to be able to teach others about Christ, and the ability to defend the gospel. Teaching others and defending the faith is how we can help the church grow. How can we carry out the great commission to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28.19), if we can’t explain to them the gospel message? A failure to grow is an attitude problem and not because God’s word is too hard to understand (1 Corinthians 2.12). Growth can only come through “constant practice” (Hebrews 5.14 ESV) of God’s word. Neither time alone nor heritage can make one spiritually mature.

Finally, when we fail to be an example of Christ to the world, and not live as the Bible commands us too, we are harming the church. The disciple of Christ is expected to be distinct from the world. 1 Peter 2.9 says we are “a people for God’s own possession” (ASV). Therefore, we will be distinctive since we belong to God, and not the world. Many want to be a part of the world, and belong to God, which is not possible. We represent the church every day as we go about our lives. Our actions are either going to lead people to Christ, or away from Him. How are we representing Him? “We are the only Bible the careless world will read. We are the sinners’ gospel; we are the scoffers’ creed. We are the Lord’s last message given in deed and word. What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?” (*The World’s Bible*, hymn).
Written by; Derek Steen

Believing Prayer

“Jesus said, ‘Whatsoever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive’” (Matt. 21:22).

We cannot separate prayer from its source of power. If we see prayer simply as an activity to perform and check off our to-do list of spiritual deeds for the day, we miss the heart, substance and opportunity prayer offers. Jesus reminds us that prayer is connecting with God. God Who created all things, Who spoke all things into existence and Who upholds all things with the word of His power. His power is matchless and His love without limits.

Christ’s promise that we will receive anything we ask for comes with a condition: we must believe. A torrent of words-even eloquent or flowery- do not please God. Intense emotions do not necessarily moves His hand. Faith, however small, in God, makes Him smile and connects us to His heart and His purposes.

“Believing prayer” is characterized by a genuine commitment to God’s desires. We long for God to be honored, not us. We want Him to touch our lives, not for us to be in control. To know what God wants, we search the Scriptures to find out what is on His heart and how He wants to work in our lives. We listen as we sit silently with open hearts.

This kind of prayer never demands that God act a certain way. Instead, believing prayer acknowledges our inadequacies, limitations and focuses on God’s greatness and goodness to direct both prayer and His answer.

What are some steps you can take today to develop a habit of praying this way?

“Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees” (William Cowper).

Written by; Rickie Jenkins (Campbell Road Church of Christ Facebook Page).