

## Visiting Other Churches

### I. The purpose of going to church

1. To worship God in spirit and in truth (**Joh 4:23-24**).
2. To learn God's truth from the scripture (**Act 2:42; Eph 4:11-12; Act 20:20, 27**).
3. To pray to God (**Act 2:42**).
4. To fellowship with other believers (**Act 2:42**).
5. To sing praises to God (**Col 3:16**).
6. To keep the ordinances (**1Co 11:2**).
7. To be edified, exhorted, admonished, and rebuked (**2Ti 4:2**).
8. Keep these things in mind as we consider when and when not to visit other churches.

### II. Different types of churches

#### 1. Your church

- A. This is the church of which God has made you a member (**1Co 12:13-27**).
- B. This is the church to which you are accountable (**Heb 13:17; 1Pe 5:5**).
- C. This is the church where you keep the ordinances.
- D. This is the church where you should normally be worshipping God.

#### 2. True churches of like faith and order

- A. These churches are just as much true churches as is yours.
- B. These churches include:
  - i. The Minneapolis Church
  - ii. The Excelsior Springs Church
  - iii. The Detroit Church
  - iv. The Cincinnati Church
  - v. The Grand Rapids Church
  - vi. The Lakeland Church
  - vii. The Pennsylvania Church
  - viii. Good Ground Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta.
  - ix. The Odell Church
- C. These churches worship God in spirit and in truth.
- D. It's fine to visit these churches as long as the following criteria are met.
  - i. You know that it is not a substitute for being in your own church.
  - ii. You do not partake of communion or feetwashing with them.
  - iii. You do not meddle in their affairs.

#### 3. True churches that have error in them

- A. These are baptistic churches that have a baptistic lineage as does ours, but that have one or more errors in them.
- B. These churches include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - i. Primitive Baptist churches
  - ii. Particular Baptist churches
  - iii. Landmark Baptist churches
  - iv. Missionary Baptist churches
  - v. Some independent Baptist churches
  - vi. Some Anabaptist churches

- C. These churches might have errors such as arminianism, eternal sonship, premillennialism, dispensationalism, false bible versions, pagan holidays, incorporation, open or close communion, musical instruments, deacon-rule, legalism, etc.
- D. Before visiting these churches, consider your reason for doing so.
  - i. Are you going there to worship God because you are away from home and can't be at your own church?
    - a. If so, how many of the above listed errors does the church have?
    - b. If it has all of them, it would be very difficult to worship God with them because nearly everything that was said or done would be wrong (**Psa 119:128; Psa 119:158**).
    - c. If they use a false bible version, it would be quite difficult to be edified by the preaching.
    - d. If they are hardcore Arminian and focused on it, it would be hard to worship God while hearing that false doctrine.
    - e. If it is near Christmas or Easter and the church is celebrating them, I would not attend because the focus of the service is on paganism (**1Co 10:20-21**).
  - ii. If you are going simply out of curiosity, then it would be fine to go as long as these criteria are met:
    - a. Be on your guard to not be deceived by false teaching (**1Co 15:33**).
    - b. Don't commune with them.
    - c. Pay attention to the lyrics of the hymns that they are singing and don't sing along with doctrinally erroneous songs (**1Co 14:15**).
    - d. Pay attention to what is said in the prayers that are offered and do not give your mental consent to anything prayed that is false.
    - e. If an "altar call" is given and the pastor asks everyone to bow their heads while he tries to guilt people into getting themselves into heaven, keep your eyes open and don't bow your head.
    - f. Don't give the people there the impression that you condone their error.
    - g. Don't put money in the plate when they pass it by you.
  - iii. If you are visiting a church to appease family members with whom you are staying, it would be fine to go as long as these criteria are met:
    - a. All of the things listed above.
    - b. Make sure that your family knows what you believe and what you disagree with them on.
    - c. You do not want to give them the impression by your attendance that you endorse their beliefs and practices.
    - d. If you have children, make sure that you explain to them the errors of the church and that you are not condoning them, but only visiting.
    - e. It can be profitable for your children to have the experience of seeing how other churches do things and to understand where they are wrong and why.
  - iv. Visiting a family members' churches can open the door to talk to them about the truth. If you go, be ready to share your faith with them afterwards.

#### 4. False churches

- A. Not everything that calls itself a church is one (**Act 19:37**).
- B. Satan's religious centers call themselves churches; their attendees, Christians; their leaders, pastors; their perversions, Bibles; their god, Jesus (**2Co 11:4**); and their religion, Christianity.
- C. These "churches" might have errors such as those listed above in the true churches plus such things as speaking in tongues, prophesying, healing, women preachers, infant baptism, baptismal regeneration, baptism by sprinkling or pouring, praying to idols, transubstantiation, keeping the sabbath, denying the deity of Christ, denying the Trinity, etc.
- D. Depending on the nature and extent of the error, you may or may not want to visit these "churches" for the purposes of curiosity or family appeasement.
- E. I strongly advise against visiting a "church" if any of the following things are true concerning it:
  - i. It is Pentecostal or Charismatic.
    - a. These "churches" often speak in tongues, prophesy, and heal people.
    - b. These things are either fakery or are done by the spirits of devils (**Exo 7:11-12; Mat 24:24; 2Th 2:9; Rev 13:13-14; Rev 16:14**).
    - c. These "churches" go by names or titles such as Pentecostal, Oneness Pentecostals, Charismatic, Foursquare, Full Gospel, Renewalists, Apostolic, Holiness, and Assemblies of God.
    - d. Visiting these devil-infested religious centers is dangerous and I strongly advise against it.
  - ii. It denies the deity of Christ or the Trinity.
    - a. This includes Oneness Pentecostals, Unitarians, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), Iglesia ni Cristo, Assemblies of Yahweh, and Unification Church.
    - b. These false religions deny the true God and I strongly advise against visiting them for any reason (**Pro 14:7; Pro 19:27; Pro 17:4**).
  - iii. It has a woman preacher.
    - a. The Bible forbids women to teach, have authority, and speak in the church (**1Ti 2:11-12; 1Co 14:34-35**).
    - b. If a "church" has a woman preacher for it's leader, it is guaranteed to be in error (**Isa 3:12**).
    - c. It could be possible to go to a protestant church that uses the KJV and hear a Biblical sermon, but since it is an error for a woman to open her mouth in church, the entire service is tainted with sin and rebellion.
    - d. It is for this reason that I strongly advise against visiting a "church" with a woman preacher (**Rev 2:20**).
  - iv. It is a Catholic "church."
    - a. The Catholic religion doesn't even resemble Biblical Christianity.
    - b. They use a false version of the Bible which they don't believe to be the ultimate authority.
    - c. They pray to saints and idols.

- d. They believe that the priest turns the bread and wine into the literal body and blood of Jesus Christ and they worship it.
  - e. They teach baptismal regeneration.
  - f. They practice infant baptism.
  - g. They teach that salvation is by works.
  - h. They worship Mary and claim that she was immaculately conceived and sinless.
  - i. Their errors are too numerous to list.
  - j. The only reason to visit a Catholic Mass is for the experience to seeing it once.
  - k. I do not recommend visiting a Catholic church with family members who are Catholics (**Rev 18:4**).
  - v. It is better to sit home alone than to sit in the assembly of the mockers (**Jer 15:17**).
  - vi. If a family member invites you to any of the above listed false "churches", I strongly recommend that you decline.
- F. Protestant "churches"
- i. Protestant "churches" are not true churches.
    - a. Protestant "churches" such as the Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Anglican, Congregationalist, Methodist, Christian & Missionary Alliance, and the Church of God all directly or indirectly came out of the Roman Catholic Church and are therefore daughters of the Mother of Harlots (**Rev 17:5**).
    - b. Nondenominational and Community "churches" either came from protestant "churches" or from some guy with a bright idea and are therefore also not true churches.
    - c. Most protestant "churches", with the exception of C&MA, Church of God, and some nondenominational and community churches, practice infant baptism by sprinkling or pouring.
    - d. Nearly all protestant "churches" are Arminian, premillennial, dispensational, use musical instruments in worship, and celebrate pagan holidays.
    - e. Most of them do not use the KJV, which would be a reason to seriously consider not visiting them.
  - ii. The worship services of some of these "churches" resemble true churches to varying degrees.
  - iii. The more erroneous the doctrine and practice of protestant churches is, the more caution should be exercised when deciding to visit them or not.
  - iv. The same guidelines apply to visiting these "churches" as apply to visiting true churches with errors in them.