

What Church to Go? What Denomination to Stay?

by Zac Poonen

The speaker emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and being a disciple of Jesus, rather than being connected to a denomination or church organization.

Duration: 6:39

Scripture: Matthew 18:20, John 4:23-24, Revelation 2:4, Revelation 3:16, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "Church Loyalty", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being true disciples of Jesus rather than being loyal to denominations or organizations. It highlights the need to seek churches and leaders that challenge individuals to grow spiritually and be radical in their faith, even if they are not part of the same denomination. The speaker warns against the dangers of worldly churches and the importance of being connected to Jesus rather than a specific group or denomination.

Transcript

Shall I surprise you by telling you something? You get a big surprise when you hear this. When some brother from Bangalore is transferred to another place and we have a church in that place. You know what I tell him? I tell him we have a church there, you can go there.

But if you find that church doesn't help you to grow spiritually and become a disciple of Jesus and you find another church there, maybe another Pentecostal church or charismatic church, where you find the pastor, maybe they don't have the correct pattern like we have, but the pastor there is a God-fearing man, challenges you be a disciple. Brother, don't go to the church connected with CFC, go to that church. I'll tell you, I say that publicly, my loyalty is not to CFC, my loyalty is to Jesus Christ.

And if in a particular town one church related to us is worldly and some brother goes there and says well that's a worldly church, I don't want to go there and he finds another church better than that, I say go there. I won't stop you. I'm not here to sponsor and support worldly elders just because they are connected with CFC.

I want people to be disciples of Jesus. I don't want them to be connected to us in some type of denominational relationship. I'm against denominations.

I finished with denominations years ago and I want to tell you, if CFC becomes a denomination, I'll have nothing to do with it. We are interested in building local churches. We have fellowship but we're not a denomination.

Denominations get corrupt. You know, that's how Methodist Church, you know what happened to it, Presbyterian Church, you know what happened to it, Catholic Church, the whole thing gets the sickness if it's a denomination. But you look at the churches in Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3. Church in Ephesus, Church in Tiatira, Church in Pergamos, Myrna, Philadelphia, Laodicea, they're all within, if you look at a map at the back of your Bible, you'll see they're all within about 30-40 kilometers of each other, very close by.

I mean it's closer than from here to Kolar, 40-50 kilometers of each other. But they're not one denomination. If they were one denomination, the Lord would have told John, just write a letter to the bishop of that denomination and ask him to circulate it to all the seven churches because they're all in the same condition.

No. To each church, give this message because the condition of each church is different. Each elder is in a different condition.

Even though they're 40 kilometers from each other, here was one church utterly worldly, they had lost their first love, God was about to remove their being even called a church, Ephesus. Here was another church which was worldly, rich, plenty of money, but worldly, dead, wretched, the Lord was about to reject that. And 40 miles of kilometers away was another church, Philadelphia, wholehearted, radical.

So supposing some, and you know in those days there was of course only one church in each place, but when the church in Ephesus, when God, if they did not take God's Word and they finally did not repent, the elder did not repent, the church may have five-six hundred people and they didn't repent, the Lord said, I will remove the candlestick from you, I'll remove the lampstand, and then it's no longer a church in God's eyes. The Lord said there were a few overcomers there. To every church, He said, him who overcomes.

In every dead church, there'll be some overcomers. Not every dead church, but in many dead churches, there could be an overcomer. Even in Laodicea, the Lord spoke to the overcomers.

So let's take Ephesus, there were some overcomers there. What would the overcomers do when Jesus has left the church? Will they stay there? No. I won't stay in a church where Jesus is left.

No. The church in Laodicea, in Revelation chapter 3, you know what the Lord said to that church? In Revelation chapter 3 verse 20, I stand at the door and knock. So where is He? Outside or inside? Outside.

But what are they singing inside? Lord, thank you to where two or three are gathered together in your name, we are here and you're here. He wasn't there. Just because you quote that verse, He's outside.

And it's very easy for the Lord to go outside your church, even if you're connected with CFC. The Lord's not connected with CFC, the Lord's connected with people who love Him. I remember hearing of, I don't know whether it was John Wesley, but somebody, and there's a story that he went and he went to heaven in a dream.

And he asked the angel at the gate, do you have any, do you have any Catholics here? No. Do you have any Baptists here? Do you have any Presbyterians? No. Do you have any Methodists? That's the church he started.

He said no. He got a shock. No Methodists here in heaven? Then who do you have here? Just a few people who love the Lord.

Then he went to the gates of hell and asked the demon there, do you have any Catholics? Oh, plenty of them. Do you have Methodists? Plenty of them. Methodists also? Plenty of them? Oh yeah.

Do you have anybody here who loves the Lord? Not even one. Do you know that the Lord is not connected with any denomination? And it's very important for us to remember that. Just because maybe you have an elder brother who's radical, wholehearted, God-fearing, that doesn't mean every church connected to CFC is like that.

40 miles away may be a church just like Laodicea connected to CFC that come for the conference, but dead like anything which God one day will reject. And there's no use saying to God in that day, but Lord, we went to the conferences. We were connected with CFC.

Lord says it makes no difference. We need to understand the principle of the local church. Jesus stands in the midst of a local church.

And the church in Bangalore, it's condition the Lord knows. The church in different different parts of places, God knows the condition. One may be spiritual.

Another 40 kilometers away belonging to the same group may be absolutely dead.

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