

The Lakeview Lamp

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." – **Psalm 119:105**

Jan 25

2009

Don't Go To Church Sometimes; Be the Church All the Time

Edwin Crozier

I guess in some use of metonymy the phrase, "We're going to church on Sunday" is somehow correct. I don't want to suggest folks are going to go to hell for saying this. However, I must admit the phrase makes me cringe every time I hear it. "Go to church." This phrase doesn't portray the Bible's meaning of "church." In fact, it misses it.

This phrase suggests "church" is something we go to at specific times and then leave. That is not the New Testament picture at all. The church was not a place to visit. The church was a group of people. The King James Version highlights this in its rendering of **Acts 2:47**, "*And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*"

When we meet with the saints on Sunday, we are not going to church. Rather, the church is assembling. Yes, since we are part of that church, we should "go" (cf. **Hebrews 10:25**). However, we must not think "going to church" is our relationship to Christ's church.

We don't "go to church;" we are the church. But what is the church? No doubt we could use a standard definition like "the group of all the saved everywhere of all time." That's true enough. However, consider the definition given in **Ephesians 1:22-23**. "*And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*" The church is the body of Christ filled with His fullness. That is, just as our physical bodies are the extension of our head's leadership, we are extensions of Jesus here on earth. Just as our hands do, our feet go, and our eyes look at what our head tells them to, we are to let Jesus' direction fill our lives because we make up His body.

Notice also the definition in **II Timothy 3:15**, "*If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.*" The church is God's household. When I'm going to my house, I don't say, "I'm going to Crozier." I am Crozier. I am a Crozier whether I'm gathered with other Croziers or not. In the same way, I don't go to God's family. I

am God's family. I'm in His family whether I'm gathered with other members or not.

Further, the church is the pillar and buttress (support) of the truth. We are supposed to uphold and expose the truth for everyone around us to see. We shouldn't just do this when we are assembled with other Christians. We are to do this all the time because we are the church all the time.

Yes, we assemble with the local church. But we don't go to church sometimes. We are the church all the time. Let's act like it.

How To Be A Friendly Church

Allan Eaken

We have visitors every week, and I am thankful for them because they are a primary source of new growth. To be regarded as a friendly church is a precious commodity; it takes work to maintain that important trait. Here are some rules that will help us perpetuate a friendly environment.

THE 30-SECOND RULE. Most guests will make a judgment about us during the first 30 seconds after they enter. Let's greet people at the doors with a handshake and a smile. "We're so glad you came!"

THE FRONT DOOR RULE. Many people need help to find their classes or a seat in the auditorium. If they find it difficult to locate a class or a seat, they may choose not to return.

THE AISLE RULE. Unless you need to be on an aisle, leave room for visitors and guests to sit on the aisles. Our long pews make it necessary for many of us to sit in the middle.

THE TEN-FOOT RULE. Greet any person with whom you are not familiar who comes within ten feet of you. Make eye contact and be friendly.

THE FIVE-MINUTE RULE. Take the first five minutes after services to seek out guests and greet them. Encourage them to return and thank them for coming.

Our attitude will determine whether or not they return. They come back when they feel welcomed and appreciated. Let's do our best to see that this happens.

News and Notes

- * There will be a singing tonight after worship at the Nicholson home.
- * A sign-up list for the 2009 last Sunday night singings **at members' homes**, along with the **Lord's supper preparation duties**, is posted in the back.
- * There is a desk and a pulpit base in the resource room. If you are interested, then please let the elders know. There is also a transparency projector and old song books.

Members:

- * Connie Cobern is confined to a wheelchair with her gout in her foot.
- * Geneva Copelin got good reports on follow-up visits with her regular doctor and surgeon this past week.
- * Estelle Hayes turns 98 years old today. Tuesday some are gathering at **Shoney's at 11:30 to celebrate with her. Everyone is invited.**
- * Devin and Aiden Neighbours have been diagnosed with ear infections.
- * Nancy Read's **sight continues to improve in her left eye.**
- * Bill White has a follow up endoscope on Monday. They are going to do some biopsies of the Barrett's esophagus in Bill's lining of his throat caused by his acid reflux.

Friends and Family:

- * Justin and Julia Edwards (TX), past members here, had a new baby.
- * **Brian Neighbour's boss** is battling cancer.
- * **Zachary Neighbour's mother** (FL) is having health issues again and is back in the hospital.

Absent: Chris Gertsch (Dresden), The Nicholson children (AL).

New Reports: None known.



“The Lord has been mindful of us; He will bless us;...He will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great.” – Psalm 115:12-13