

How to Find a Good Church

ESSENTIALS:

- ❖ **The Bible is recognized as God's authoritative and reliable, and final word. All teachings are tested by the Scriptures. Belief in its verbal, plenary inspiration is essential. (1 Tim. 3:15-17, Heb. 4:12-13, 2 Pet 1:19-21).**
- ❖ **Belief in the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, are equal, pre-existent, eternal, yet one in nature and purpose. (Gen 1:1-2, Matt 28:19-20, Jn 1:1-3, Jn 14:16).**
- ❖ **Salvation comes only by grace through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. (Eph 2:8-9, Rom. 3:23, Rom 6:23, 1 Jn 5:10-13).**
- ❖ **The Gospel is defined as found in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: Christ died, He was buried and He rose the third day according to the Scriptures.**
- ❖ **The Holy Spirit indwells believers and enables them to live lives of service and honor to God. This is the result, and not the cause of Salvation. (Eph. 2:8-10, Rom 8:1-6, Jn 15:1-5).**
- ❖ **The Holy Spirit is the seal of God. (Eph 1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22).**
- ❖ **Baptism is a public demonstration of faith in Jesus Christ. (Jn 3:5, Acts 2:38, Matt 28:19-20).**
- ❖ **Believers receive a spiritual gift when they are saved. All the gifts are to be used for the building up of the church in unity and function. (1 Cor 12-14, Rom 12:4-8, Eph 4:12-16).**

- ❖ **Believers expect a literal second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. (Mt 24:27, I Th 4:13-18, Mt 26:64; John 14:1-3).**
- ❖ **Those who receive the gift of eternal life will be taken to a literal heaven in the next life. (Jn 14:1-3, Rev 21:1-4, Matt 25:46; Phil 1:21-23; 2 Cor 5:8).**
- ❖ **Those who reject the Gospel will experience eternal separation from God which the Bible calls hell. (Rev 20:11-15, Mt 10:28, Mt 25:41-46).**
- ❖ **Believers are expected to support the work of God by giving generously. (Mal 3:8-10, 1 Cor 9:6-7, Mt 6:19-21).**
- ❖ **Believers are expected to guard the unity of the church. (Jn 17, Phil 2:1-11, Eph 4: 30-32, Col 3:12-16, Jn 15:12).**
- ❖ **Believers are to follow Jesus' three great commands to love God, love each other, and reach the world for Him. (Mt 22:34-38, Mt 22:38-40, Mt 28:19-20).**

Every Christian believes **THE APOSTLE'S CREED**,
the earliest statement of Christian doctrine:

*I BELIEVE in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I BELIEVE in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
died, and was buried.*

*He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

I BELIEVE *in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic [universal] Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.*

NON-ESSENTIALS:

- ❖ **Exact timing or interpretation of prophetic events.**
- ❖ **Doctrinal disagreements that orthodox Christians debate.**
- ❖ **Things not taught by Christ, by the apostles, or not practiced by the early church.**

QUALITIES TO LOOK FOR IN A CHURCH:

- **Love and unity in the congregation.**
- **Evangelism and mission outreach.**
- **Generous compassion for the poor.**
- **Leadership that is accountable to spiritual authorities.**
- **A balance of grace and truth in the teaching and in church life and church discipline.**
- **Look for a church that teaches the Bible verse by verse rather than topically. This way you will get the whole counsel of God's Word.**

DO NOT JOIN A CHURCH THAT:

- **Claims to be God's true church excluding all other Christian churches.**
- **A church that denies the Trinity.**
- **A church that teaches a "Prosperity" gospel.**
- **Is controlling and equates its rigid demands with loyalty to Jesus.**
- **Compromises Biblical truth.**
- **Has an extra-biblical source of authority or any other books of the Bible that claim to be inspired by God.**
- **Where the pastor leads like a dictator, instead of leading by example.**
- **A church that Proselytizes from other Christian churches.**
- **A church where the Bible is referenced, but not opened.**
- **A church that insists on the observance of restrictive diets or the observance of Sabbath days.**

STARTING SELECTIONS:

- **Calvary Chapel**
- **Christian and Missionary Alliance**
- **Evangelical Free Church**
- **Many Baptist denominations**

FORMER SDA PASTORS & THEIR MINISTRIES

ERIC BAHME – Eastside Foursquare Church, Portland Oregon www.eastsidechurch.net message online/download.

JONATHAN BILIMA – Kairos Church, Riverside California www.Relevant316.com podcast, message online/download, author.

RITCHIE CARBAJAL – Crossweave Church, Escondido, California www.crossweave.org message online/download.

RICHARD FREDERICKS – Damascus Road Community Church, Damascus, Maryland www.damascus.com message online/download.

MARK MARTIN – Calvary Community Church, Phoenix, Arizona ww.calvaryphx.com. Live streaming video all services, 24-hour online radio, www.calvaryradio.com, podcasts, weekly messages online/download, CDs, daily gracemail email devotional. SDA outreach ministry: www.exadventist.org, author.

LESLIE MARTIN - Women's Ministry director at Calvary Community Church. Tuesday morning & evening Women's Bible studies live streaming www.calvaryphx.com, podcasts, weekly messages online/download, CDs, author.

CLAY PECK – Grace Place, Berthoud, Colorado www.graceplace.org streaming video, podcasts, weekly message online/download.

JAMES RAINWATER – Bethany Brethren in Christ Church, Thomas, Oklahoma
www.Bethanybic.com message
online/download (coming soon).

GREG TAYLOR – Hempfield Brethren in Christ Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
www.hempfieldchurch.com – message
online/download, author.

JOHN TULLIO – Gospel Life Community Church, Walnut, California
www.gospellifecommunity.org podcast,
message online/download.