

PROTECT YOUR CHURCH

Dear Friend:

I was recently talking to a new believer about the importance of the local church. I tried to emphasize that Jesus calls the church his bride. Ephesians says that he died for the church. That says a lot about how important the church is.

Unfortunately, over the years I have heard many stories about the church that only speak about negative things in the church. "Church politics", church infighting, bad behavior of the pastor and/or lay people, etc. Whenever I hear stories like this, I try to counter by saying that the church is made up of people, therefore, there are no perfect churches.

If you are a member of a church, it is your job to protect the unity of your church. Unity is the soul of fellowship. Destroy it and you rip the heart out of Christ's Body. Nothing on earth is more valuable to God than his church. Last Sunday we had a great State of the Church/Congregational meeting. It was a wonderful thing to see us have a meeting with so much unity. I heard real unity in the desire to accomplish our mission, to reach out to the Scouts (they are under our umbrella), and to reach out to the Preschool. Those are a couple of groups connected to the church. However, much conversation focused on reaching into the community to let them know we care.

Our church is worth protecting because we are pursuing ways to DO our mission. So... here is a brief list of how you can protect your church. First: focus on what we have in common, not our differences. Second: Be realistic in your expectations (long for the ideal but don't abandon the church when the real isn't the ideal). Third: Choose to encourage rather than criticize (constructive criticism in the right spirit is valuable. Criticism in the wrong spirit is selfish and destroys). Fourth: Refuse to listen to gossip. (Gossip is passing on information when you are neither part of the problem nor the solution). Chances are that if you ask the gossiper: "Have you talked to "So and So" about this? If so, is it okay I tell them about this?".

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Mike

Prayer Concerns: Midge Gathers (cancer), Bonnie Boone
Events: Communion Sunday