

Walking in the Light, Part 4

INTRODUCTION

- John wants to affect the very heart, mind, and soul of a person so that you not only kn_____ but put into pr_____tice the teachings

WALK IN TRUTH, NOT IN ERROR

- Much of faith, religion and churches have become consumer driven. Often people will look for a church that matches the wor_____ beliefs and not bibl_____ beliefs.
- The core of any church should first and foremost be theo_____. Otherwise, it's just a club, a social group. (See questions on the back of the sheet)
- Is the issue of false teachers new? _____ See Jeremiah 29:8-9
- To be a follower of Jesus is to _____ in his light. His light is the light of tr_____ and life. All other paths are darkness and de_____.
- What is the only way to be discerning between truth and error? To know God's Wo_____.

KNOW THE DEEP LOVE GOD HAS FOR US

- If you have been b_____ again, you know that God is l_____ and from the love of God you are to love oth_____.
- God _____ love. **NOT** God = love.
- Many people false make the equation: God = Love. But love _____ God
- Love does not define God, but God de_____ love.
- In Christ Jesus we see the full expression of God's love made man_____.
- Why did God send His only Son into the world? _____
- Pro_____ : the penalty is of God's wrath is paid in full.

DEEPLY LOVE ONE ANOTHER

- If you are filled by the very love of the G_____, you will naturally head in the direction of loving your bro_____ and sis_____

HEAR & APPLY THE WORD

- Read the Gospel of John. Then compare that to other religions.
- Spend some time at the foot of the cross this week.
- Put your love for Christ into action by loving another.

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Key Questions to Ask When Finding Good Church

Preface by Pastor Clayton Wilfer

1. Before you decide upon the church, I would encourage you to ask the pastor and even the elders of the church at least the first eight questions. You'll notice that they are theological in nature. This is because the core of any church should first and foremost be theological.
 - a. If the pastor or elders balk or fumble on any of first eight questions, or if they are offended by you asking the questions, this is a signal to immediately go to another church.
 - b. While these questions are more protestant based, they are not denominational in that they don't speak of baptism, the Lord's Supper, etc. While I, of course, think baptism and the Lord's Supper are very important, they are not the most important given our current American church culture.
 - c. Also, the points aren't all encompassing. In fact, it might be helpful to add a question on marriage, gender, etc.
2. If the core theology is solid, then it simply becomes a matter of stylistic preference (formal or informal liturgy, traditional or contemporary music, etc.)
3. Finally, a question for you to consider is this: what is the purpose of their church?
 - a. You can sometimes find out how the church perceives its purpose by looking that the mission statement. Is it only social works? At its core, the mission of any Christian church should be proclaiming Jesus and making disciples.

1. Who is Jesus Christ?

He is the Savior of the world. He died on the cross for the sins of the world. He is God who lives and reigns in eternity with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

2. Is Jesus the only way for salvation?

Yes, Jesus is the only way. There is no salvation found outside of him. There is only one road that leads to God – through Jesus. If the pastor even hems or haws about this find a different church.

3. What is man's biggest problem?

The Bible says that man's biggest problem is sin. Some churches focus on man's hurts and problems but not sin.

4. Do you believe in a literal hell and eternal punishment?

Jesus did (Matt.25). That should be the end of the story. If they don't believe in hell, they are probably universalists which means that everyone is saved no matter what they believe which makes Jesus' death irrelevant for salvation.

5. What is Scripture (or Do you believe the Bible is inerrant?)

The Bible is fully God's word without error and without contradictions (Inerrant - incapable of mistakes). Period. Or, do they believe it to be man's word inspired by God like man is inspired by a beautiful sunset?

6. What must a man do to inherit eternal life?

Repent and trust in Christ alone. If the word "repent" is never used, their idea of salvation is probably something called works-based salvation. For example, if I do enough good works, it will tip the scale into my favor.

7. How do you explain the gospel message?

Ask the pastor to explain the gospel to you. The salvation message should include: God's holiness, man's sinfulness, God's response (hell), God's kindness (Jesus on the cross), man's response (repentance and faith). Please be aware that "just ask Jesus into your heart" is not the gospel and that phrase is found nowhere in the Bible.

8. How often do you talk about grace, sin, righteousness and judgment?

Balance is key. This should not be the only emphasis, but it should be a regular emphasis.

