

What Drives this Church?

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Every church has something that drives it.
 - 1. There is a powerful influence in each congregation which says why that church exists.
 - 2. These influences determine what every church does & how well the church accomplishes its purposes.
- B. What is the driving force in this church?

II. WRONG INFLUENCES.

- A. Tradition.
 - 1. Churches that are driven by tradition say, "This is the way we've always done it."
 - a. These churches often condemn other churches for not doing things just so.
 - b. These churches are not willing to change, even if the change proves beneficial.
 - 2. We must be very careful about getting caught up in tradition (Mt 15:1-9).
 - a. The scribes & Pharisees wanted to know why Jesus' disciples did not follow the traditions of the elders?
 - 1) These scribes & Pharisees had given that tradition the status of divine revelation.
 - 2) We need to be careful that we don't elevate a tradition to the status of divine revelation.
 - b. However, the scribes & Pharisees did not honor their parents because of their tradition.
 - 1) Their tradition was that if they gave the money that would have supported their parents to God they did not need to support their parents.
 - 2) This tradition violated God's commands.
 - 3. Traditions are wrong when:
 - a. They have the status of Scripture.
 - b. They violate God's Word.
- B. Personality.
 - 1. This type of church is driven by the preacher.
 - a. Whatever the preacher wants to do, the congregation just follows.
 - b. Whatever the preacher says is the truth.
 - 2. We need to be careful that this congregation is not driven by the preacher.
 - a. The preacher is just one through whom individuals believe (1 Cor 3:5-7).
 - b. The preacher needs not preach "with wisdom of words" lest the cross "be made of no effect" (1 Cor 1:17).
- C. Finances.
 - 1. This church is afraid that anything new or different might cost too much money.
 - 2. The church does not exist to have a nice bank account; the church exists to glorify God.
 - 3. Are we are a church that is being driven by finances?

III. POSITIVE INFLUENCES.

- A. Reverence for Scripture.
 - 1. We must treat Scripture as it really is, the Word of God.
 - a. When the Thessalonians heard the gospel, they accepted it as God's Word (1 Thess 2:13).
 - b. We must love God's Word.
 - 1) Ps 119:47.

- 2) Ps 119:167.
- c. We must respect God's Word.
 - 1) When Ezra opened the book of God, all the people stood up (Neh 8:5).
 - 2) Standing is a form of respect.
- 2. When we respect God's Word, our lives are shaped by it.
- B. Passion for souls.
 - 1. We must actively seek those who have gone astray.
 - a. The shepherd who loses one sheep goes & finds the sheep (Lk 15:4).
 - b. The woman who loses one coin searches her house until she finds it (Lk 15:8).
 - 2. The early church was driven by a passion for souls.
 - a. Even after being arrested, the apostles went into the city & preached (Acts 5:21).
 - b. The early church was so driven to evangelize that the gospel was preached to every creature under heaven (Col 1:23).
 - 3. The church today cannot rest until every creature has heard.
- C. Love for God.
 - 1. When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, he said the greatest commandment was to "love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Mt 22:37).
 - 2. Loving God means that we place him first in our lives.
 - a. When God is first in our lives, our greatest pleasure is obeying him.
 - 1) Jesus told us that if we loved him we would obey him (Jn 14:15).
 - 2) If we love God, we will obey him.
 - b. Are you obeying God? Do you love God with your entire being?
- D. Love for man.
 - 1. Loving our neighbor as ourselves is the second great command (Mt 22:39).
 - 2. We need to meet the needs of our fellow man.
 - a. We can be lost for failing to meet the needs of our fellow man (Mt 25:41-45).
 - b. As we have the opportunity, we are to do good for all men (Gal 6:10).
 - 3. Are you loving your fellow man?
- E. Reverence for Jesus.
 - 1. Jesus is the head of the church.
 - a. Col 1:18.
 - b. Eph 1:22.
 - c. Eph 5:23.
 - 2. Because Jesus is the head of the church, the church needs to honor him in everything we do.
 - a. We have no right to change anything about the church, because Jesus is her head.
 - b. Before we do anything in a church, we need to ask, "Will this help us glorify Jesus?"

IV. CONCLUSION.

- A. Let's have a church that is built upon a solid foundation.
- B. Let's be driven by proper influences.
- C. Is your life being driven by proper influences?