

The Local Congregation

Qualities of the Contributing Member

Introduction

Titus 3:14 And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

- 1. John F. Kennedy's challenge – "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" – appealed to our sense that it is noble to try to make a worthy contribution to the world we live in.**
- 2. In many areas of human endeavor, people are highly motivated by the desire to "make a contribution."**
 - A. This certainly should be so in the Lord's work!**
- 3. Congregations are blessed when they have even a handful of "contributors":**
 - A. Members who are willing to give themselves tirelessly in order to be useful in whatever way they can, to add something worthwhile to the greatest undertaking in history, the Lord's work.**
- 4. This morning we are going to look at three overall characteristics of those who contribute to the work of a local congregation and they all start with "I".**

Interest

1. In order to be the kind of contributing member that God would want us to be we must have a genuine interest in His work.
2. In the Lord's work, much depends on whether we do what we do because we like doing it or because we view it as a duty — it is the difference between want to and have to.
 - A. Does the spiritual life really make us excited?
 - B. Is the Lord really and truly our "first love?"

Revelation 2:4 Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

3. It could be that the reason we are not as interested as we ought to in the Lord and His work may be that we just don't believe its all that important.
4. What outward indicators are there of our interest in the local work?
5. The truly significant contributions among the Lord's people are made by those who have more than a passing interest in His work:
 - A. Those who are really attracted to it and fascinated by it, those who are truly concerned about it.

Involvement and Consistency

1. **The members of the body are functional parts that serve some useful purpose and have some work to do in the body**
 - A. **“Membership” in the Lord’s body is an active thing, rather than passive.**

2. **Not only are we members of Christ, we are “individually members of one another.”**

Romans 12:3-5 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, **so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.**

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.

3. **Sometimes we may be guilty of avoiding commitments and obligations**
 - A. **Not wanting to be “tied down”**

 - B. **Not seeing ourselves as “attached” or “connected”**

- 4. We make our proper contribution to the Lord's work when our individual work is properly involved with the work of others in the body as a whole**

Ephesians 4:11-16

- A. Members need to understand that we must strive to do our share, helping one another in the body.**

- 1) Men and women need to be asking "what can I do to help this local body of Christ?"**

a. Personal evangelistic efforts.

b. Attending and being an active part of business meetings.

c. Taking your turn in teaching Bible classes as needed.

d. Doing the necessary "background" work in keeping up with and maintaining the building.

- B. If all of us would get properly involved and be consistent, we will make a difference for much good!**

Intensity

1. It is important that all we do in the Lord's work is accomplished with great intensity (zeal).
2. The "pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8) have eliminated general concerns about many things in order to focus intensely on "one thing"

Philippians 3:13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

- A. Lukewarmness is not pleasing to God
Revelation 3:15-16

3. Solomon advised:

Ecclesiastes 9:10 **Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might;** for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.

Conclusion

1. It takes inner growth to make a worthwhile contribution
2 Peter 1:5-8

2. All of us have responsibilities in the local congregation
 - A. We should be loyal to Christ and the responsibilities that He has given us.

 - B. We are to function as the unit God designed, and it is only possible when we all do our part.

- 3 Every member is responsible
1 Corinthians 12:20-27

4. Are we doing our part or have we failed not only God, but His family as well?

5. When we are gone, how will the world be different for our having been here?

6. Each Christian should: “Ask not what the church can do for me, but what I can do for the church”
 - A. What contribution to the local congregation have we made?

 - B. ASK: Am “I” truly a “contributing member?”

