

“Flickering Lamps – Christ & His Church” (Blackaby)

September 30, 2020

Week 3: ‘Christ’s Presence and His Church’

I. Christ in His Church

“If churches recognize almighty God’s presence right where they are, it will revolutionize their ministry...Christ’s presence was just as available to us as to any church in the world.”

The Bible teaches this:

- The Church in Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17)
- Church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13)
- The Church in Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22)

“Churches are often disoriented to Christ’s voice and oblivious to His presence. That’s why the risen Christ concluded His message to each of the seven churches by urging, ‘Anyone who has an ear should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches’”.

“Do you have eyes, and not see, and do you have ears, and not hear? (Mark 8:18)
Christ’s presence does a church little good if His people do not recognize when He is seeking their attention.”

II. Six Differences Christ’s Presence Makes in a Church

1. Christ’s Presence Reflects a Relationship

“One of the saddest indictments of today’s Church is that Christians often settle for religion rather than a relationship.”

“The problem for many churches and some entire denominations is that their people are disoriented to God. They go to church to attend a service, or hear preaching, or put their children in Sunday School, but no one helps them understand Christ is seeking to personally relate to them.” (47)

Making Membership Meaningful:

New Christians: More significant than filling out a card!

Christians seeking a new church home: READ 1 Corinthians 12:28

“Adding one’s name to a membership roll is easily done. Accepting a new family member goes much deeper. If newcomers don’t understand the covenant they are making with the other members when they join your fellowship, then when someone hurts the new member’s feelings, or a more dynamic church opens down the street, they may choose to remove their name from the roll. But if Christ adds believers to your church, only He can lead them away.” (48)

2. Christ’s Presence Brings Joy (Psalm 16:11)

“Joy is one of the best spiritual barometers for a church.”

“It is impossible to gaze at the Son of Man of Revelation and be unenthusiastic.”

“...when people understand that Christianity is about a loving, life-changing relationship with Christ, they experience divine joy even while enduring life’s most difficult circumstances.”

3. Christ’s Presence Transforms Our Service

“Serving Christ is a high honor and one that should bring enormous joy and satisfaction...Unless people’s eyes are riveted on Christ, serving Him can become a burden rather than a delight.”

Conclusion: Testimonies about Christ’s presence in your life