**Choosing A Church**

**Introduction:**

When one goes looking for a car to buy, the choice may be based upon many factors: cost, size, gas mileage, style, function. . . When one goes looking for a church, how should the choice be made? Upon what grounds should you choose?

**Body:**

1. **Wrong Grounds**

* To be with the prominent and the wealthy of the community
* To help make your business grow or to further your career
* Because that’s where your family has always gone; your friends go there
* It’s fun and entertaining; the “in” place to go
* I can just blend in and nobody will expect much from me.

1. **Right Grounds**

* Those in the church were added by the Lord as those were in the New Testament. (Acts 2:47) “praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” How were they saved? (Acts 2:36-38, 41 and Matthew 28:18-20) “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” and “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age’.” (NKJV)
* The church wears a scriptural name; one applied to it in the Bible. It does not wear the name of a person. (I Corinthians 1:12-13) “Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul, or I am of Apollos, or I am of Cephas, or I am of Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” The church is to be named after Christ. It’s His church and He is the head of it. (Ephesians 5:22-27) “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” Ephesians 5:22-23
* The church had its origin in the First Century and not any time later. (Matthew 16:18-19) “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the Gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” The church started on Pentecost. (Acts 2) Notice the past tense in Ephesians 2:19-20. “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigner, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of the household of God, having **been built** on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”
* Those in the church practice only authorized worship. (John 4:23-24) “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

1. The Lord’s Supper in observed every first day of the week. (Acts 20:7) “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul ready to depart the next day spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”
2. Christians make a contribution. (I Corinthians 16:1-2) “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”
3. Only men lead public prayer. (I Timothy 2:8) “I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;”
4. All sing without musical instruments. (Ephesians 5:19) “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”
5. All listen to the Word of God that is taught. (Acts 20:7)
6. The church follows only Christ and not the traditions of men. (Colossians 2:8) “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”
7. The church does not believe that God is still revealing His will through visions, latter-day revelations, etc. (Jude 3) “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

**Conclusion:**

While choosing a car is certainly an important decision, it pales in comparison to choosing a church. **Choose wisely because it will affect your eternal destiny.**

Bobby Stafford

August 25, 2013