

# HOW TO FIND THE PERFECT CHURCH



I was saved many years ago in January 1970, while stationed aboard the USS FORRESTAL (CV-59). During the next few months while still deployed to the Mediterranean on the Forrestal I attended every Bible study I could so that I might learn more about the Lord and what He wanted me to do with my new life in Him. Upon arriving back in the States I seriously began to look for a place to go where I could worship the Lord and learn about Him. I knew one thing - I wanted to hear about Jesus. No man had taught me about the importance of the local church or had even suggested that I should find a good church to attend when we got back home. I just knew that God wanted me in a good local, visible church. After returning to the states, while I was on a trip to Memphis with the NAS Cecil Field fast pitch softball team, God sent some young men from Trinity Baptist Church to my home, gave my wife a Gospel tract and invited her to the church. Sharon, my wife, read the tract, Ford Porter's *'God's Simple Plan of Salvation'*, and asked the Lord to save her. When I arrived back home from the softball tournament, she related to me what had happened on that Thursday evening, and showed me the Gospel tract. I suggested that she again pray and ask the Lord to save her, which she did. We decided that maybe this church would be a good church to attend, and on Sunday morning we went to Trinity Baptist Church for the morning service. I knew that this was the church that God wanted us to attend after we heard Pastor Bob Gray preach about Jesus Christ as the only Saviour for mankind. God confirmed to my family and me through His word that this was the church that He wanted us to join in

order to get busy for Him. We did just that, and God blessed us immensely because we were obeying Him.

**Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

We have been members of Bible believing independent Baptist churches ever since then, even though we have moved many times in our travels for Him. In all those years we never found a perfect church from the standpoint of finding a church with no defects or problems. Believe it or not, we have never looked for a perfect church, but in every case, we were right in the middle of God's will. You can search the word of God from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find God telling you to find a perfect church to join. One man said it this way many years ago, *"If you ever could find a perfect church, and you joined it, it would no longer be perfect."* This was a deflating thing for me to learn, but it was true.

Not only have we never been members of the perfect church, but we have never been members of a church in which we have agreed with everything taught by the Pastor and/or those who preached from the pulpit. Yet, I remind you, I was doing God's will by being a part of that church. God definitely put us in those churches. And guess what? God knew that the church wasn't perfect. Yes, indeed, God was not caught by surprise at the imperfections of the church in which He, I emphasize, He placed us. I repeat, it was **God's will** that we become members of an imperfect church and a church in which we did not agree with every point of teaching. There are, believe it or not, some sanctimonious sages out there who are convinced that unless you believe just like they believe, you are an heretic.

**Mark 3:35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.**

Over the past 15 years plus that I pastored I saw many people come through the church's doors looking for an independent, fundamental, Bible believing, Baptist church in which to become members. After taking one hour to listen to the pastor, they walked out the front door never to return again. Many of these folks never one time prayed and asked God to show them His will about attending/or joining the church. Some little thing kept them from becoming members of our church. I have heard about people who would not join a church because the Pastor didn't give an invitation during one of the services. I have heard about people who would not join because the Pastor didn't require the ushers to wear a tie. I have heard about folks who would never join a church because the Pastor wore a colored shirt instead of a white one. The reasons for not attending or joining were many and varied, but never one time have I had a person say, I prayed about whether God would have me to join, and He showed me that I shouldn't join this church. This is not surprising, since most 21st Century Christians do not have the slightest idea how to determine God's will for their lives. As a result, they are missing many of God's richest blessings and are never able to experience the fullness of God's blessings on their life.

The perfect church that you are looking for is the one that God desires for you. It might be one that you don't agree with in all of its teachings, and it sure will be one that is not perfect. If you really want to find the perfect church, you will have to learn how to find God's will for your life.

Now, I'm not suggesting that God would have you join a church which is corrupt in it's primary doctrines, such as the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Deity of Christ Jesus, the blood atonement, salvation by grace, and other basic fundamental doctrines that everyone who is a born again Christian knows and believes. God would never have you join a church that violates His word. However, we have set up doctrines not taught in the word of God that have become litmus tests to establishing whether a person is

'sound' doctrinally. I mentioned some of them earlier and you could probably add to the list 'ad nauseum.' One of the main problems with our brethren today is this tendency to 'add' to the word of God their own little pet doctrine(s) and insist that all must agree or they are to be shunned and/or branded as heretics.

**Mark 7:7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**

If you really want to find the perfect church, here are three primary actions that you must take:

1. Make sure that you are really saved. No one can find the will of God in their life until they are saved. If you have never been truly born again, then you must repent by trusting in the risen Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

**2 Corinthians 13:5** *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

**John 3:3** *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

2. Promise God that you will submit to His will no matter what He directs you to do in your life.

**John 7:17** *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*

3. Get into the word of God and read and study until God shows you His direction.

**Hebrews 5:14** *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have*

*their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

God will show you the 'perfect' church for you as He grows you in your Christian life. He may have you join a church that isn't just exactly what you think it should be in order to teach you some valuable lessons that you need in your life. He may have you in a church that needs your particular talent in order to bring that church in to conformity to His direction. Whatever the reason, when you obey God, you will be blessed and will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Then when you walk into a church searching for God's will, He will direct you to do His will, and you will be a blessing and will be blessed in your walk with Him.

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