

# CHATTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF  
MADRAS CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
JUNE 2019



## What Are You Looking For in a Church?

by Interim Pastor, Dr. Steve Goodenough

Last month we discussed what the church is not, and some of the problems that come from having a distorted view of church. Although we only touched on a couple of things, there are a lot more we could have delved into. However, as I prayed for you and what the Lord would have me share with you in this newsletter, I was strongly impressed with the question, "What are you looking for in a church?" This is a fair question since many of you have had to church shop in the past and some of you may be church shopping in the future. For those of you who have attended Madras Christian Church for years, the question is still valid if you think about it; if what you are looking for from Madras Christian Church were to cease, then what you are looking for in a church would prompt you to shop for a church elsewhere. In other words, you would leave Madras Christian Church if you weren't able to get what you want from the church.

So, what are you looking for in a church? I imagine some of the answers would be; "I'm looking for a place to worship on Sunday mornings." If that is your answer, then you are probably seriously analyzing the worship

style of that particular church. For example, someone might say, "I go to that church because they sing hymns from a hymn book with a piano or organ." Others of you might say, "I go to that church because they sing contemporary praise songs with a band."

Some other possible answers to the question, "What are you looking for in a church?" might be, "I'm looking for a church that has a good youth group or children's ministry," or "I'm looking for a church with a lot of people my age." How about this one, "I'm looking for a church where I can find my future partner" (Partner is a politically correct term for either a husband or a wife. But then again, in today's corrupt world partner could mean someone you shack up with for a while).

If you analyze each of these answers, or even if you would answer the question differently than anyone of these potentials, there is one thing in common with them all and could be in common with your potential answer, and that is: they are all consumer mindset oriented. What do I mean by consumer mindset? It means that if you are looking for what



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the church has to offer you, than you are looking to consume something a particular church has to offer. From a consumer mindset point of view, the church is a product or service and you are the consumer. If you go to the store to buy a bottle of Ketchup you might like Heinz brand, but somebody else might like another brand and would never buy Heinz because they don't like it. Either way, ketchup is the product and you are buying it because you want to consume the product. Another example might be a car wash. Some of you might choose a particular car wash because you like something about the service there; others might choose a different car wash for whatever reason. Either way, the car wash is a service and you are the consumer.

The problem with approaching church from a consumer mindset is that we have turned church into a product or service to be consumed and we are the consumer. If we look at church the same as we do a bottle of ketchup or a car wash then we have a tendency to shop for our likes. Sometimes, if we are in a position of influence or leadership, we seek to shape the church into what we like and cast off the things we dislike. Often, the shaping of the church to our likes means running off those who are promoting things we dislike in order to make our consumption more enjoyable.

A good example of this is the Pharisees. Mark 7:1-9 relates how Jesus interacted with the Pharisees' consumer mindset:

The Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.)

The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?" And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.' BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.' "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men." He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. (Mk. 7:1-9)

The Pharisees were seeking to establish a monopoly on the religion of that time, they had a product well packaged and were marketing it with as much force as they could muster. The ignorant average Joe didn't know any better and consumed the Pharisees' product of tradition in order to think they were right with God. Jesus confronted the Pharisees' soured product and then went on in verses 14-23 to explain the difference between a consumer mindset versus a true disciple by emphasizing that it is what comes out of man's heart that defiles. The implication here is that a true disciple has a new heart and out of it springs a sincere interest for others' well-being (love). This kind of love is not self-seeking nor a consumer, rather a giver.

Can you imagine a church where everyone comes to give love and encouragement to others? Imagine a church where you do not come to consume something but come to give! Let us shed the consumer mindset and stop asking about what the church has to offer and seriously consider what we have to offer the church.

In Christ,

Steve





Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat

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<p>9:00 AM <b>2</b> Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship</p> <p>POTLUCK</p>	3	4	5	6	7	8
 Ed O. <b>9</b>	 Ray A. <b>10</b>	11	12	 Alan D. <b>13</b>	 June M John V. <b>14</b>	 Dixie B <b>15</b>
<p>9:00 AM Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship</p>			<p>5:30 PM Wednesday Bible Study</p>		 <b>FLAG DAY</b>	
 Rich B. <b>16</b>	17	18	19	20	21	22
<p>9:00 AM Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship</p> <p>Father's Day BBQ POTLUCK</p>		<p>7 p.m. Board Meeting</p>	<p>5:30 PM Wednesday Bible Study</p>		 <b>SUMMER BEGINS</b>	
23	24	25	26	 Scott & Rhonda <b>27</b>	28	29
<p>9:00 AM Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship</p>			<p>5:30 PM Wednesday Bible Study</p>	<p>8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast</p> 		

<p><b>30</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p><b>Meditations:</b></p> <p>2—Leonard 9—Scott S. 16—Ed 23—Brad 30—Lynn</p>	<p><b>Deaconesses:</b></p> <p>Ryna &amp; Rhonda</p>	 <b>FATHER'S DAY</b>	<p>June 16th</p> <p>Please join us for a Father's Day BBQ Potluck! Church will provide meat, buns &amp; condiments. Please bring sides &amp;/or desserts to share!</p>	 <b>CHURCH BBQ</b>
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**RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED**

**Find us on the web...**

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June

