

# What It Takes to Make a Strong Church

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Just what does it take to make a strong church? There is at once a simple answer. It takes strong Christians to make a strong church. While it is not so that the congregation is only as strong as its weakest member, the weak member, certainly figures in the equation. The church is all about people and, axiomatically, as the people make spiritual progress so does the congregation. Weak members deter these efforts.

Actually, the Lord's Day has as one of its purposes to "come together to stimulate to love and good works" (Heb. 10:23). As we sing together, pray together, learn together, remember the Lord together, we grow together.

I want to suggest some important things necessary to the making of a strong church of Christ. It's all about the people— people who have:

***A sense of dedication to the authority of God's word.*** The true Christian is a biblical literalist. He believes in the inspired word of God—that God gave it to motivate our actions, guide our lives, give us strength. A strong congregation of God's people will tolerate no creed, no biblical addition, no man-made concepts. His trust is in God's word—that word which was promised by God (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Ephesians 3:1-5; I Peter 1:10-11; II Timothy 3:16-17; I Peter 4:11). Strong churches have strong members, people who are dedicated to His word as the only approved apostolic authority in all religious matters. And they count on that word for the fodder which produces their maturity (II Peter 1:3-10).

***A sense of dissatisfaction with the world.*** One who is faithful to the principles stipulated in the Scriptures develops, because of his intimate association with those scriptures, a dissatisfaction with world. The people in a strong church—every one of them—have come to the realization that this world has nothing lasting to offer, that what life is all about is what's up there, not what's down here (I John 2:15-16). He understands fully that he can be in the world without being of the world, that the time here is but a probation—a time to equip himself for a better clime. A strong congregation of God's people is comprised of spiritually minded people who have an other-world view of life.

***A sense of determination to persevere.*** There is in every true child of God a full realization of what is ahead for the faithful. It is to that end he aspires, to that goal which he works. "Be ye therefore steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58). He is steadfast even in the most difficult circumstances; he is not moved by what comes from the profession of his faith; he is constantly growing, ever progressing in the elongation of his hope in Jesus (I Peter 1:3-5). His determination to last regardless of the circumstances is a strong deterrent to the possible invasion of false notions and doctrines of men. He is willing and able—spiritually equipped—to ward off evil, while fighting temptations in his own life (Ephesians 6:10-18).

***A sense of dedication to the work involved.*** A strong church is a working church, one where each member, having determined his role in this most important enterprise, has dedicated himself to doing all he can with all that he has. He is determined “not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3-4). He understands full well his role in the local church and is dedicated to doing his part—and that as well as he can.

***A sense of love for the brethren.*** “Brethren, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God” (I John 4:7). The dedicated Christian is dedicated—to God, and to his brethren in the faith. Because he loves, he gives. Because he loves, he tries. Because he loves, he helps. Because he loves he is not only strong, but he helps his fellow saints to become strong as well. “This is the love of God that we love one another.”

What does it take to make a strong church? People like you—people who love God, love one another, and are totally dedicated to His word. “Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Ephesians 6:10)!