

ATTRIBUTES OF THE FAITHFUL CHURCH

1. The Faithful Church Loves The Lord Jesus Christ Above All Else; Deut. 6:5

Others are “adulterers”, unfaithful to Jesus Christ; Ezekiel 16:32

- a.** Their own lives and worldly pursuits take precedence over their devotion to the Lord; Jas. 4:4
- b.** An adulterer has other religious, political and economic “loves” with which she is intimate
- c.** She wants her “reproach” (stigma of sin) removed; she desires to be married (wants His name) but on her own terms; she wants to eat her own bread and wear her own clothes; Isaiah 4:1
- d.** The harlot of Babylon commits fornication with the kings of the earth; she sits “like a queen” upon many “waters” (multitudes of people); Revelation 17:1-18; 18:7

2. The Faithful Church Places Its Focus Upon The Great Commission; Matthew 28:19-20

Others employ “false conversions” or man-made methods to acquire converts; Matt. 23:15

- a.** King Jeroboam invented a “substitute order”: a church of ease and convenience; he made two calves of gold and appointed “man-made priests for his man-made feast”; 1 Kings 12:27-33
- b.** Seeker-friendly messages do not lead to true repentance or regeneration; the emphasis is not upon turning from sin, nor preaching of the cross, nor upon a consecrated, holy lifestyle
- c.** Some have a profession of faith, “a lamp” but no “oil” (anointing of the Holy Spirit which empowers them and illuminates the scriptures); Matt. 25:3; they cannot see in the dark; Jer. 8:7
- d.** There is no fear of the Lord, no warning of “working out” our salvation with fear and trembling, nor belief that a name can be “blotted out” of the book of Life; Rev. 3:5; Ex. 32:33

3. The Faithful Church Does Not Love Money Or The Things In The World; 1 John 2:15-16

Others say they are “rich” (increased with goods), but are in fact, spiritually “poor”; Rev. 3:17:

- a.** Finances / wealth was not the barometer of spiritual power of the apostles in the early Church
- b.** The prosperity gospel seduction and material affluence of the “word of faith” group is like the Sanhedrin and Pharisees of Jesus’ day, who were lovers of money; Luke 16:13-14; 1 Tim. 6:9-10
- c.** The merchants of Babylon are a “den of thieves”; Mark 11:15-17; Jesus overturns the tables of the money changers in the temple; John 2:14-16; Jeremiah 7:11
- d.** “Buying and selling” is the currency of the world; “giving and receiving” is the currency of the Kingdom; the truth cannot be bought with money; Isaiah 55:1

4. The Faithful Church Calls For Repentance, Holiness And Cross-Carrying Obedience

Others subscribe to “another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel”; 2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6-12:

- a.** The spirit of lawlessness pretends to be a move of the Holy Spirit, with its false revivals functioning under the seducing influence of the spirit of antichrist; 2 Thess. 2:3-11
- b.** The people are handed over to a spirit of error because they reject God’s Word as the final authority; they do not have a love of the truth; 2 Thess. 2:9-11; 2 Cor. 11:13-15
- c.** Some ministries began with biblical foundations but have compromised, preaching a social gospel message, having merged with the worldly narrative, the politically correct agenda

5. The Faithful Church Appoints Shepherds Who Feed, Guide And Protect The Sheep; Jer. 3:15

Others have unfaithful shepherds who sit in “Moses’ seat” (office); Matt. 23:2-7:

- a.** Hirelings - a common laborer who works for money; the ministry “professionals”; John 10:12
- b.** Wolves - prey upon and devour the sheep; John 10:12; Acts 20:29

c. Blind watchmen - are like sleepy, dumb dogs that can't bark; Is. 56:10-12; Ezek. 33:6-8

d. False shepherds, prophets and teachers can be identified by; Ezekiel 34:2-10:

1. False Doctrine - the corrupting and twisting of scripture, destructive heresies
2. The Love of Money, Mammon - financial misconduct, lack of accountability
3. Immorality - sexual deviation, perversion, adultery; 1 Cor. 6:9

6. The Faithful Church Teaches Sound Doctrine And Rightly Divides The Word Of Truth

Others place the source of their messages upon:

a. The futility of their own mind; they prophesy out of their own heart; Jer. 14:14; 23:16

b. Doctrines of demons or that which undermines what is taught in scripture; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 4:1

c. The "lying pen" of the scribes; Jer. 8:8; false texts, extra-biblical doctrines of men; 1 Cor. 4:6

d. An obsession with the supernatural or paranormal:

1. An over-emphasis placed upon demonic activity and fallen angels (God's angels do deliver messages, explain dreams and visions, but do not give doctrine); Daniel 8 and 9; Luke 1:11-38

2. Secular conspiracy theories, conjecture, paranoid speculation (where a trace of fact is amplified out of proportion); these are masquerading as "biblical discernment"; Is. 47:13

7. The Faithful Church Removes The Leaven From The House; Exod. 12:15; 1 Cor. 5:6-8

Others are given to "corrupting influences"; Galatians 5:8-9:

a. The "stew" in the pot is toxic; 2 Kings 4:38-41, and in some cases, the "pot itself" is toxic; Ezek. 24:6; Jer. 1:13; the system (container) is rusted and corroded

b. It lacks true substance; prodigals fill their bellies with the "husks"; Luke 15:16

c. The tables (places of food and communion) are full of "vomit"; Isaiah 28:8; Rev. 3:16

d. Corrupting influences include:

1. The Leaven of Herod - a ruler who fears the people, kills his competition (murders "babes": a new birth or move of the spirit), imprisons the prophetic ministry and cuts it off

2. The Leaven of the Pharisees - self-righteous hypocrites love the uppermost seats, desirous of titles, seek to accuse Jesus (and His body) and don't recognize God's visitation due to blindness

3. The Leaven of the Saducees - the secular, ruling hierarchy, humanistic thinkers, who practice lifeless religion; they deny the Resurrection (no supernatural ministry); they are cessationists

8. The Faithful Church Is Producing Good Fruit; John 15:1-6; Gal. 5:22-23

Others are like a "dead tree"; James 2:26, or a "degenerate vine"; Jeremiah 2:21

a. Some trees only have "leaves" (a good appearance), but have not produced fruit; Matt. 21:19

b. A "tree" is known by the kind of fruit it produces; Matt. 7:17; 12:33

c. Any tree or branch which does not bear good fruit is cut down, cast into the fire; Matt. 3:10

d. In the "day of trouble" there is no fruit on the tree or in the vines; Habakkuk 3:16-17

9. The Faithful Church Is Watchful, Sober And Focused; 1 Peter 4:7; 5:8

Others are like "Samson", who was careless and carnal:

a. Samson was a strong man raised up by the Lord to do exploits, but he "fell asleep" at midnight on the lap of the harlot, Delilah, who seduced him; Judges 16:1-21 (compare with Ruth 3:8)

b. While he was asleep, this "Nazarite" was shaven; he did not know that the Lord had departed from him; Judges 16:19-20 (baldness was a symbol of judgment and mourning); Is. 22:12

c. His unbridled lust made him vulnerable to Delilah's advances, who had Philistines (demons) hiding in her chamber; Samson took the "bait" and was caught in a trap of deception; Jer. 5:26

d. The Philistines “put out his eyes”, bound him with fetters of brass and brought him down to “grind in the prison house”; demons cause blindness and lead God’s people into captivity

10. The Faithful Church Worships In Spirit And In Truth; John 4:23-24

Others participate in a counterfeit worship:

a. The music “industry” and entertainment has replaced true music “ministry”, utilizing emotionalism and hype via the “foot pumps” of Egypt (working it up to get a flow); Deut. 11:10

b. It utilizes “strange incense”; Exod. 30:9, and kindles a “strange fire”; Nadab and Abihu offered “unauthorized” fire before the Lord; Lev. 10:1-7; Jeremiah 7:18

c. Pagan worship is associated with idolatry and sensuality around an “image”; Exod. 32:8; they “perform” and “bow down” at the sound of musical instruments; Daniel 3:5-7; Isaiah 14:11

d. Some worship in ignorance, based upon traditions or superstition; John 4:7-42; Acts 17:23

11. The Faithful Church Consists Of Disciples On A Narrow Way; Luke 13:24

Others consist of the multitudes on the wide road; Matthew 7:13-14

a. They merge with the people and the pagan customs of the land; Babylonian objects and images are in the temple; Ezek. 8:6-16; they embrace forbidden “practices of the east”; Is. 2:6:

b. It practices clairvoyance (counterfeit of prophecy) and divination (foretelling by occult means); Acts 16:16; mysticism, including the observance of omens and visualization, and Kundalini Yoga: false manifestations of the Holy Spirit; Deut. 18:10-13

c. Psychics and prognosticators can give “a word”, while true messengers give THE WORD

d. The deception is in the character of the false prophets of Ahab against whom Micaiah prophesied; the Lord puts a lying spirit into the mouths of the deceivers, causing the heretical congregations to believe them; 2 Chron. 18:19-22; Ezekiel 14:3-9

12. The Faithful Church Tests The Spirits And Warns Against False Brethren; 1 John 4:1

Others accept false brethren and seek after lying signs and wonders; Galatians 2:4; Matt. 16:4:

a. This causes people to turn their focus away from Jesus, the message of the Gospel and from the Great Commission; there are no “miracle crusades” in the bible, only “repentance meetings”

b. Signs and wonders were never the focus of Jesus’ messages, but signs follow those who preach the Word; John 14:11, and believe; Mark 16:17. Jesus refused to put on a show!

c. Examples of counterfeit signs and wonders are seen with Jannes and Jambres; Exodus 7:11; 2 Timothy 3:8-9; Simon Magnus; Acts 8:9-13, and the modern NAR with its signs and wonders movement are illustrated in Theudas and Judas of Galilee, mentioned in Acts 5

d. False brethren can be described as:

1. Spots in your fellowship meals - these are carnal individuals who indulge in evil; they are like “blemishes” or “leprosy”; they contaminate the atmosphere of Christian fellowship; Jude 12

2. Clouds without water - some have the appearance of holding “rain”, but they are “empty”; they appear to have “credentials”, but they don’t deliver, they are false; Jude 12; Heb. 12:1

3. Dead trees - some who are “dead” are among the living; they have no good fruit (faith, love); they lack a “root system” in God’s Word; Ephesians 3:17; Jude 12

4. Raging waves of the sea - those who are part of the turbulent masses of humanity: restless, wavering, inconsistent and unpredictable; James 1:6; Jude 13

5. Wandering stars - a star is intended to give light and provide guidance; these began on the right path, but are now “off course”; they have wandered into darkness; Jude 13

13. The Faithful Church Follows God's Divine Order; Hebrews 8:5; 1 Cor. 14:40

Others accept and tolerate those who are "out of order"; Jeremiah 6:16

a. "Saul's house" is out of order; his "anointing" ended in "witchcraft"; 1 Sam. 15:24-28; 28:7

b. "Jezebel" is out of order; she personifies the spirit of false religion, and is a metaphor for the harlot church; Rev. 2:20; she uses deceit to acquire the "vineyard of Naboth"; 1 Kings 21:7-16

c. "Korah" and his assembly of leaders are out of order; their rebellion against Moses and Aaron led to their death; Numbers 16:1-35

d. "Balaam" is out of order; he "rushes after gain" and sets up a stumbling block, causing others to sin; Numbers 31:16; Rev. 2:14

e. Diotrophes; 3 John 1:9-10, Philetus, Alexander the coppersmith and Hymaneus; 2 Tim. 2:17; 4:14, were out of order; they deceived and misled the church.

14. The Faithful Church Seeks The Eternal Kingdom Of God; Hebrews 11:13-14

Others promote and build their own kingdom:

a. Some (in the character of Nimrod), build a tower, a city and kingdom; his goal is to make himself a name, to exalt himself; Gen. 10:10; 11:4, Ezekiel 16:24

b. Their motive is driven by pride, self-promotion and the desire for fame; it functions through the strength of human ability, desire and ambition; Daniel 4:30-31; 5:20-28

c. Some like Absalom, are popular and charismatic; they conspire against the true King, and alienate the people from "David" (a type of Christ) to obtain a throne; 2 Sam. 15:6, 12; 17:1-4

d. The spirit of "elitism", self-exaltation and pre-eminence seeks to dominate others and bring them into submission to its own agenda; Isaiah 14:13-14

15. The Faithful Church Is Abiding In The Secret Place; Psalms 17:8; 91:1

Others dwell under the shadow of Egypt; Isaiah 30:2-3

a. The "shadow of Egypt" is a false protection / covering; Egypt is symbolic of the world system and slavery to sin. Pharaoh is a type of "satan", who rules over the land of Egypt; Ex. 7:13-14

b. Like Lot (who was carnal and an idolater at heart), he was drawn to Sodom; it was like the land of Egypt, and so he "pitched his camp toward Sodom"; Genesis 13:10-12

c. Hagar, the Egyptian woman, produced "Ishmael", who was born through the efforts of the flesh; they were sent away. Hagar is a type of the "woman in bondage"; Gen. 21:12 Gal. 4:22-23

d. God brings His "sons" out of Egypt; Exod. 12:31-33; Matt. 2:15, and the Egyptian army (the strength of Egypt), perishes by the hand of God; Exod. 14:26-28

16. The Faithful Church Prepares Herself For The Return Of Christ; Titus 2:13; Matt. 11:29-30

Others are distracted, unclean and unrestrained; Psalm 78:40; 1 Cor. 10:6-11

a. They wash themselves with "lye and soap" but they are spotted, dirty and stained; Jer. 2:22; they have not been cleansed by the washing of water through the word; Eph. 5:26-27

b. They are like a swift, uncontrollable "she-camel", running here and there; Jeremiah 2:23

c. They have the restless nature of a wild female donkey of the wilderness, in heat, sniffing the wind for the scent of another male; Jeremiah 2:24

d. Their ways are indecent; they "deck themselves" and wander through the desert, pursuing strangers and foreigners in the wilderness; Jer. 2:25, 33

Terri Hill

