

Don't Go To Church, Be The Church

That's the latest motto that arrived in my mail this week from OUTREACH MARKETING. Pretty snappy, huh? The point is that some folks attend without ever getting involved in the work. Oh, they'll help out in this area or that area, if asked, but they don't seem to ever get past the "we" (our family) and "them" (the church family) attitude. May I suggest, if you think this way, that you stop "going to church" and start "being the church." Be that which you expect the church to supply.

An important effort of the church's teaching program that always needs the best workers, the most interested people, and the latest methods is the curriculum program for our children. An effective teaching program can be so efficient that many churches use that method completely for outreach. Students bring students. Parents spread the word. Teachers do such a fantastic job that kids are drawn back and visiting parents appreciate the efforts they see going on. If there is a weakness in this method however, it is that great teaching takes time and effort. It's not something read out of a workbook. Super teachers are in short supply and they almost always get overworked. Good helpers are almost as difficult to procure. Do you want your congregation to be known as a top level place for Bible classes that motivates kids to learn the Scriptures and love the Lord? Don't just go to church and enroll your kids. Volunteer to teach, help, file, and store for those who teach. Don't go to church, BE the church.

Isn't it great to visit a church and be warmly greeted? Not just a "hello" mind you, but invitations to come and sit with a member, teens who welcome other teens and offer those same invitations to come and sit with them. Pointing out tracts, CDs, songbooks, bulletins and other worship aids. Assisting little ones to their proper classes. Friendly conversation that makes a visitor feel comfortable, accepted, and desirous of returning. This requires one to be present early enough to welcome visitors and not just coming in at the last moment. It also requires us to stop expecting "the church" to be welcoming, and do the job ourself. Stop going to church, BE the church.

Carl McMurray