

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

By Scott Parker

WHAT IF EVERYONE AT PALMER ROAD WAS JUST LIKE ME?

It is ever so easy to deceive ourselves (Hebrews 3:13; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 3:18; et al). I often think about how self-deceived the local church in Laodicea had become by the time John penned the Revelation. You remember that section of text, right? If not, take a moment to read it:

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (Revelation 3:14-18 – emphasis mine).

I hope no one of us ever falls victim to self-deception. Thus, my purpose in writing this article is to help generate honest self-examination on your behalf. I ask that you will seriously ponder the questions that I have listed below.

- IF EVERY MEMBER HAD YOUR ATTENDANCE RECORD, HOW OFTEN WOULD THE BUILDING BE EMPTY?
- IF EVERY MEMBER PRAYED AS MUCH AS YOU PRAY, HOW MANY PRAYERS WOULD BE LIFTED TO THE FATHER?
- IF EVERY MEMBER WAS AS THANKFUL AS YOU ARE, HOW THANKFUL WOULD THE CHURCH BE?
- IF EVERY MEMBER PRACTICED HOSPITALITY LIKE YOU DO, HOW MUCH HOSPITALITY WOULD OCCUR?
- IF EVERY MEMBER WAS AS MATERIALISTIC AS YOU ARE, HOW CARNALLY MINDED WOULD THE CHURCH BE?
- IF EVERY MEMBER MATCHED YOUR WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION, COULD THE CHURCH PAY HER BILLS?
- IF EVERY MEMBER INVITED FOLKS TO OUR ASSEMBLIES, HOW MANY INVITATIONS WOULD BE EXTENDED?
- IF EVERY MEMBER HAD ONLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCRIPTURES WOULD THE CHURCH STILL BE SOUND?
- IF EVERY MEMBER WORSHIPPED THE WAY YOU DO, HOW MUCH REAL WORSHIP WOULD TAKE PLACE?
- IF EVERY MEMBER FORGAVE OTHERS LIKE YOU DO, HOW FORGIVING OF A CONGREGATION WOULD WE BE?
- IF EVERY MEMBER REFRAINED THEIR TONGUE LIKE YOU DO, WHAT WOULD, OR WOULD NOT, BE SAID?
- IF EVERY MEMBER HELPED THE WORTHY POOR LIKE YOU DO, HOW MUCH BENEVOLENCE WOULD BE DONE?
- IF EVERY MEMBER COMPLAINED AS MUCH AS YOU DO, HOW MUCH COMPLAINING WOULD GO ON?
- IF EVERY MEMBER DRESSED LIKE YOU DRESS WOULD THE CONGREGATION BE KNOWN FOR MODESTY?
- IF EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH SOWED THE SEED LIKE YOU DO, HOW MUCH SEED WOULD BE SOWN?
- IF EVERY MEMBER VISITED THE SICK LIKE YOU DO, WOULD THE SICK RECEIVE MANY VISITS?
- IF EVERY MEMBER WINKED AT SIN LIKE YOU DO, HOW MUCH SIN WOULD WE HAVE IN THE CAMP?
- IF EVERY MEMBER WAS AS SELF-CENTERED AS YOU ARE, HOW SELFLESS WOULD THE CHURCH BE?

Folks, there is a catchy phrase I heard one time that goes as follows: **“If every member of the local church was just like me, what kind of church would this church be?”** The question is a valid one. This article has sought to help you answer the query. If everyone at Palmer Road was just like you, where would we be as a congregation?

Please think seriously about it and make any adjustments that are necessary.