

CHURCH TURMOIL

Where's the 3000?

Discussion

As I worshipped with so many others this past "New Beginnings" Sunday, I couldn't help but feel an excitement and a real blessing being a part of such a growing and dynamic church. As I looked across the row after row of pews filled with people, I thought to myself: Now this is what being a successful church in God's Kingdom is all about! And then God set me straight. I realized immediately -- Wait a minute! -- Where are the 3,000? On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit empowered the Church, and God added 3,000 to their body in a single day. Why hadn't He done the same for us on New Beginnings Sunday?



It was then that I realized that the sign of a successful church isn't the attendance; it's the attitude. It isn't its programs or great worship services; it's the prayer and effort the church puts into being the "ninety-and-nine" (Matthew 18:12). That is, we've been saved; we're the ninety-and-nine. But instead of remaining secure in our salvation, we are to follow Christ's example and go in search of the one. Note that I said in search of the one, and not in search of the 3,000. When I consider what God did that day, I see immediately that He did it -- not the "Church"; and I see it was not something that the Disciples did -- in fact, they didn't even have that number as a church goal in those days.

No, rather we are to go in search of the one. That one lost person who lives next door, who works with us, who brings their sons or daughters to our soccer games, or that one lost nurse or doctor we see regularly. That's the sign of a successful church: that we are always seeking and teaching the lost; raising up those who then, in-turn, can also go in search of the one. And at the end of the day, if each of us finds just one lost soul for the Kingdom, 3,000 will be just the beginning.

Let's celebrate being a part of the ninety-and-nine, and let's do it by sharing the Good News of Jesus with someone who's lost this week. Imagine if, in addition to 250 in attendance next Sunday, we each brought one lost person. How awesome that would be! Then imagine -- that each accepted Christ!

In Christ,

Wes