



# Why Are You So Bored *with* Church?

By Perry Stone

In retrospect, I often feel as though I was born in church. From age five to about age sixteen, I can recall very little about school activities, special events, vacations, or other activities I participated in. However, I can recall hundreds of churches, numerous camp meetings, and revivals and church conventions I attended. I can truly say that I was never bored, never resentful, and never despised my upbringing. In fact, church was my life, and we looked forward to getting together with others. There are several reasons why this was so.

## A “Holiness” People

From the 1930s to around the mid-1970s, the traditional Pentecostal churches, including the Church of God, Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Holiness, and United Pentecostal Churches, were identified as holiness churches. The term was used to mark denominations or individuals that emphasized sanctification, separation from worldly amusements, and rejection

of the temptation to use outward adornment in the form of jewelry and makeup. The mainline Christian denominations thought of the holiness people as a religious cult; however, many respected their high moral standards and spiritual zeal.

Because our denomination did not allow members to attend movies and required a certain public dress code, we were marked as “holy rollers.” It was common for Pentecostals to be verbally mocked, spat upon, cursed, and even physically abused for taking a stand for holiness and a pure life. In public schools, the mockery often occurred daily in some form. Thus, when time came to meet with other “holiness” youth, we were excited to be with like-minded people. We would fellowship, recharge our spiritual batteries, and rekindle the fire. We eagerly anticipated church conventions, and we waited for summer to arrive so we could attend youth camp and camp meeting, where we would renew friendships and “have church” under the open air tabernacle! Church was more than a gathering

to hear a message and special singing; it fulfilled a need to maintain our strength and undergird our standards.

## A “Spiritual” People

I honestly feel compassion for those who grew up with no godly influences in their lives. I was blessed to have a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather who were ministers and knew how to preach under divine inspiration. They were truly spiritual in the sense that they walked in the Spirit and refused to follow the pull or pressure to compromise their beliefs. They believed in divine healing, praying in the Holy Spirit, worshipping with a loud voice, and laying hands upon those with needs, believing for miracles to occur through the prayer of faith (James 5:15). I often heard my father in the basement of our home, praying so loudly that his voice seemed to shake the upstairs room where I was listening.

We loved attending church because we never knew what the Lord was go-

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ing to do in each service. I always looked forward to the times when I could hear T.L. Lowery speak, because we knew the Lord’s power would be present. We anticipated not just a powerful message, but a demonstration of God’s power, including the healing of the sick. We loved church because we believed the Lord would meet us at His house.

## **A “Fellowshipping” People**

Today, many churches no longer conduct a Sunday afternoon or evening service. A lack of interest among the church members contributes to this decision. Growing up, the Sunday night service was more popular than Sunday morning. Sunday nights were the “camp meeting” service. There were fewer time constraints, more liberty, and less formality on Sunday nights. Following the service, we would fellowship with one another, going out to a local restaurant and sitting together laughing, listening to faith building stories, or sharing our burdens. This is where we built relationships with others.

## **What’s Different Now?**

How have these things changed? First, ministers today seldom mention holiness, sanctification, or separation from ungodly habits. The ideals, values, and beliefs of Christians and secularists have blurred and are joined as one in such a manner that they cannot be distinguished. The hodgepodge of religion that teaches tolerance toward all beliefs has created a beast

that is a toothless representation of Christianity. Christians fellowship with light on Sunday and with darkness the other six days of the week, which is contrary to Paul’s admonition:

*“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols?”*

— II Cor. 6 14-16

It is hard to live in anticipation of three choir songs and a twenty-minute sermonette to a group of Christianettes. I have watched teenagers sleep through an entire Sunday morning service, or text while the choir is singing and the minister is speaking. They are bored, they don’t want to be there, and they count the minutes until the last amen is spoken. In my upbringing, we anticipated services in which the power of God would flow, people would rejoice, and you could feel the tangible anointing of God. Listeners must do more than hear and learn something; they must feel something. They must feel the life-changing, burden-removing, yoke-breaking power of God!

It is difficult, if not impossible, to experience quality fellowship among believers when attending a two-hour service once a week. This is one reason why there is such a turnover in local churches. If attendees do not connect with other

members, they will disconnect and never return. All people are relationship oriented; all need to feel loved and appreciated. Their emotional needs can be filled only when they get to know people and develop friendships; or as we used to say, “fellowship and break bread with one another.”

We live in an age of instant messages, instant news, instant information, and instant gratification. This “I must have it now or forget it” attitude has blanketed the spirits of this generation. The average congregation typically holds certain traditions and practices their routines, while today’s generation is bored by routine. They do not want to see the same thing over and over and over. We once conducted revivals that continued for many weeks, but the distinguishing mark was that every service was different in some way. Attendees never knew what was going to happen, how the Spirit would move, and what messages they would hear. People would attend nightly without missing and comment, “We love this because we never know what the Lord will do!”

I could write pages giving practical advice on how to remove the routine from the service and do this or that to change things up a little. However, an anointed Word from God, music that stirs the soul, and the divine presence of God hovering over the congregation will blow the boredom out of the hearts of the attendees. After all, the Word and the Spirit raised Lazarus, a man who was dead four days, and brought him back to life! ■