

# **The Future of the Church**

## **Study Notes for Message on 24th January 2021**

Today we shared truisms about the future of the church in our changing cultures. We list them below to discuss as many as you wish. First, let's remind ourselves of our reading. Read **Acts 2 verses 1 to 9**.

### **1. Opportunities to grow are still there, and can outweigh the losses.**

The church was begun by Jesus, and remains his. Despite our mistakes and vices, Jesus causes his church to survive. His church is not dead.

### **2. Churches that love their model more than their mission will die.**

Many churches won't survive. The tipping point will be whether they concentrate on the mission of the church or on their pre-conceived model. Our mission is to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus. If we focus on the mission, and continue to innovate to make it work in our changing culture, we will thrive.

### **3. Togetherness will remain.**

The church has always come together; because the church is, at heart, about community. What we can achieve together is much greater than what we do by ourselves. There will always be a place for a gathered church.

### **4. The end of 'What's in it for me?'**

Many people come to church only get what they need, be satisfied, and think of nothing else. That's wrong. Jesus calls us to die to ourselves, not follow him to get what we want. Those churches which reject such consumerism will rise.

### **5. Meetings will be of people more ready to give than to receive.**

Gatherings will focus less on ourselves and more on Jesus and his love for this world. Instead of focusing on those who already believe, they will concentrate on those who don't know Jesus. Treating people with kindness, love and compassion.

### **6. Commitment to Jesus will make people want to attend.**

The idea that getting people through the door will draw them closer to Jesus will reverse. Those already led to Jesus, enthused with Jesus, will come.

### **7. Less, simpler activities will be offered, to help people live day-to-day.**

Churches that try to grow by offering more activities, can exhaust people and burn them out. Instead, churches will focus on enabling people to live out their faith day-by-day. Churches that do less things, but do them well, will be most effective.

### **8. Online church will add flavour.**

Online church may become 'their' church for those who have no other option. But, the gathered church is church at its best. Online church will add extras.

### **9. Online church will draw people in, not give them an excuse to leave**

Online church has become an exit for Christians who are finished with attending church - whose commitment to Jesus has waned. Yet, online church has the power to be a great way in for those who are wondering, unsure, or curious.

### **10. Congregations will be both large and small**

The size of a church is unrelated to its effectiveness. Effective churches will focus on smaller, more intimate gatherings. Churches will grow because they work through many smaller groups under some form of shared guidance.