

Why Research the Church?

“The decision you make about what church to attend will greatly affect your spiritual life and the lives of your children. In fact, the decisions you make now will affect your descendents and the generations to come. That’s a sobering reality.” ~Mike Fitzhugh

Why do you think some people do so little research on a church they join?

Dr. Whitney gives the following **reasons to research a church before joining**:

- Researching the church will help you avoid an unfaithful church.
- Researching the church will help you avoid an unfaithful minister.

What are some characteristics of an “unfaithful church”? (e.g., pp. 189-193)

What are some characteristics of an “unfaithful minister”? (e.g., pp. 194-97)

Why do you think that, “Almost every book in the New Testament—22 of the 27—gives at least one warning about false prophets”?

Read 2 Peter 2. What characteristics are given to help identify false teachers? (pp. 197-99)

Dr. Whitney gives the following suggestions on **how you should research the church you consider joining**:

- Discover what the church (and especially the pastor) believes.
- Discover what the church does.
- Discover who the people are.

What else might be important to research about the church?

Dr. Whitney gives a list of questions to ask a pastor prior to joining a church. (pp. 200-02)
Which do you find most important? What might you add?

What does Whitney mean by, “A good church is worth a good distance”? Why is it “better to have a good church in a bad location than a bad church in a good location”? (p. 205)

What are the potential consequences of exchanging “a faithful church for a convenient one”?

What would you suggest to a person unable to find a faithful church in his/her area?

What were some of the most important reasons you joined your church? What changes would necessitate your departure? Can you support those with Scripture?

Why should people already established in a church home spend the time to study material such as in this chapter on recognizing a good church?

Why do you or do you not agree with Dr. Whitney’s statement that, “We can’t use the unfaithfulness of churches as excuses for disobedience to the command about not forsaking the assembly of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25)”? (p. 206)

What are some of the potential blessings of joining a faithful church?