

Ten Commandments For Healthy Church Relationships

Pastor Jack Marslender, Posted October 16, 2002

I am nearly a life long Baptist, and I love Baptists. I love our commitment to Scripture. I love our emphasis on evangelism. I love our deep passion for missions.

To be honest, though, there is something about being a Baptist that I don't love. Unfortunately, Baptists don't have a great reputation for getting along. We've been known to "fuss." We feud. We argue. We complain. We whine. We maneuver for power. Followers put down their leaders, and leaders put down their followers. It's an unholy epidemic in the church.

This is not the way that Jesus designed His church, so, for the sake of the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His kingdom, we must learn to get along. As a result, we work hard to live by the following ten commandments for healthy church relationships.

1. We will love God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Deuteronomy 6:5)
2. We will love each other as we love ourselves. (Mark 12:31)
3. We will use the Bible as our guide for our doctrines and practices, and it will take priority over any other tradition, belief, opinion, or expectation. (Psalm 119)
4. We will communicate in both our private and public lives with love, respect, honesty, and kindness. (Ephesians 4:25-32)
5. We will not gossip, slander, or speak evil about other believers, and we will refuse to listen to any gossip, slander, or evil about other believers. (Ephesians 4:29)
6. We have the right to disagree with church action or with each other, but only when we can do so with love, respect, and civility. (Ephesians 4:32)
7. We will refuse to hold grudges, making every effort to keep peace in the church. We will settle our differences before each day is ended, knowing that unresolved anger is an open door of destruction for the church. (Ephesians 4:26-27)
8. We will forgive each other fully and completely, just as Christ has forgiven us. (Ephesians 4:32)
9. We will treat our pastors and leaders with respect, endeavoring to make their work a joy rather than a trial. (1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:17)
10. We will insist that our leaders and our members uphold these commandments and values. If all attempts at reconciliation fail and a member persists in causing division, then the church shall remove them from fellowship. (Matthew 18)

Being a Christian and a church member brings with it a tremendous obligation to learn to love each other, and to make sure that that love prevails in the church at all times!