

Danger Signals **in the Local Church**

Based on Scripture and ministerial experience

By Rev. Charles Svoboda

1. A church that so overemphasizes the Holy Spirit that it fails to glorify the Lord (see John 16:14).
2. A church guided on the sidelines by its former pastor or by a pastor emeritus, whose voice can still be heard echoing through the rooms and auditorium of the church.
3. A church with a sound constitution, but failing to obey it—a case of sound doctrine, but being sound asleep (see Ephes. 5:14; James 1:22-24).
4. A church that preaches about the Bible, but it does not preach the Bible (see Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 4:2).
5. A church with people in leadership who do things for spite (see Phil. 1:15-18).
6. A church without a policy manual spelling out its “dos and don’ts” as a congregation. As a result, its pastor bears all the responsibility for decisions the church as a family should have made. The need to move from the “I” area to “We” (see principles set forth in 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23).
7. A church predominantly governed by relatives, otherwise known as “nepotism” —a case of stepping on one toe and 40 people yelling “ouch!” (see Titus 1:5-11).
8. A church with women over men (see Gen. 3:16; Ephes. 5:22; 1 Tim. 2:12-15; 3:1).
9. A church with an annual vote on its pastor, thus creating a “we’re-calling-the-shots” atmosphere (see 1 Pet. 5:3—“examples”).
10. A church with its pastor acting as a “Protestant pope” (see Acts 10:26; 14:15; 1 Pet. 5:3). A church true to God will follow the Master more than the pastor (see Psa. 118:8; Matt. 20:28).
11. A church so dignified it is petrified. But neither should a departure from doing all things decently and in order be advocated (see 1 Cor. 14:40).
12. A church growing through gimmicks could end up being called “the trick-and-treat church” and find itself being tricked by the Devil (see Prov. 15:27).
13. A church with a heavy program of music and tidbits in place of God’s Word (see Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 5:2).
14. A church with a pastor attending a secular school for family training (see Psa. 1:1).
15. A church with leadership refusing to accept correction. Like cement, thoroughly mixed and firmly set (see Prov. 9:7-9; 25:12; 29:1).
16. A church with a constitution that contradicts God’s Word (see 2 Cor. 2:11; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17).
17. A church without a missionary program or a church with an unbalanced missionary program (see Matt. 13:38; Acts 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:8).
18. A church practicing “Galatianism” (see Gal. 3:1), and guilty of discrimination (see James 2:1-6).
19. A church bent on quantity, but blind to quality. A victim of the “numbers racket” (see Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 3:6).
20. A church in the color gray area with no stand on separation (see 2 Cor. 6:14-18).
21. A church so carried away by its own definition of “love” that it fails to exercise discipline among its membership when needed (see Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17, 18; 1 Cor. 5:13; 2 Thess. 3:10-15).
22. A church unwilling to receive a fallen believer back into fellowship after experiencing biblical repentance (see 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Ephes. 4:32).

Are any of these danger signals true of your church?



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