

Our heart.



Love the LORD your GOD
with all your HEART, with
all your SOUL & with all
your STRENGTH...

A pure heart.

God sees us as we really are.

1 Samuel. 16:7.

Man looks at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.

God's assessment of the human heart

Jeremiah 17:9.

*The heart is deceitful above
all things beyond cure.*

*Who can understand it?
I the LORD search the heart
and examine the mind, to
reward each person
according to their conduct,
according to what their
deeds deserve.*



The condition of the human heart.

Because our hearts are prone to sin and deceit, we need God to examine us and expose sin.

Proverbs 17:3.

The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.

Psalms 139:23.

Search me oh God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts...

Proverbs 16:2.

All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the LORD.



A pure heart.

We need to take responsibility for the state of our heart.

James 4:8-10.

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

God wants what is best for us, but the state of heart stands in the way.

Matthew 5:8.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Psalms 24:34.

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart.....



False doctrine is a result of an impure heart.

False doctrine comes from those who have departed from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Timothy Charged to Oppose False Teachers.

1 Timothy 1:3-6.

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.

Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work, which is by faith.

The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Some have departed from these and have turned to meaningless talk.

False doctrine is a result of an impure heart.

Titus Charged to Oppose False Teachers.

Titus 1:10-16.

For there are many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are disrupting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach, and that for the sake of dishonest gain. One of Crete's own prophets has said it: Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons. This saying is true.

Therefore rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the merely human commands of those who reject the truth.

To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

The condition of the human heart.

Matthew 22:35-40.

One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?

Jesus replied: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it:

Love your neighbour as yourself.

All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

- **Are you fulfilling the first command?**
- **Is what you do reflecting that you are motivated primarily by bringing glory to God?**
- **Does what we do as a Church reflect that it is not about us but about Him.**
- **Is this reflected in our Church attendance, in our giving etc?**

True repentance affects the desires of my heart.

Only when we have allowed the Holy Spirit to change our appetites can God satisfy us.

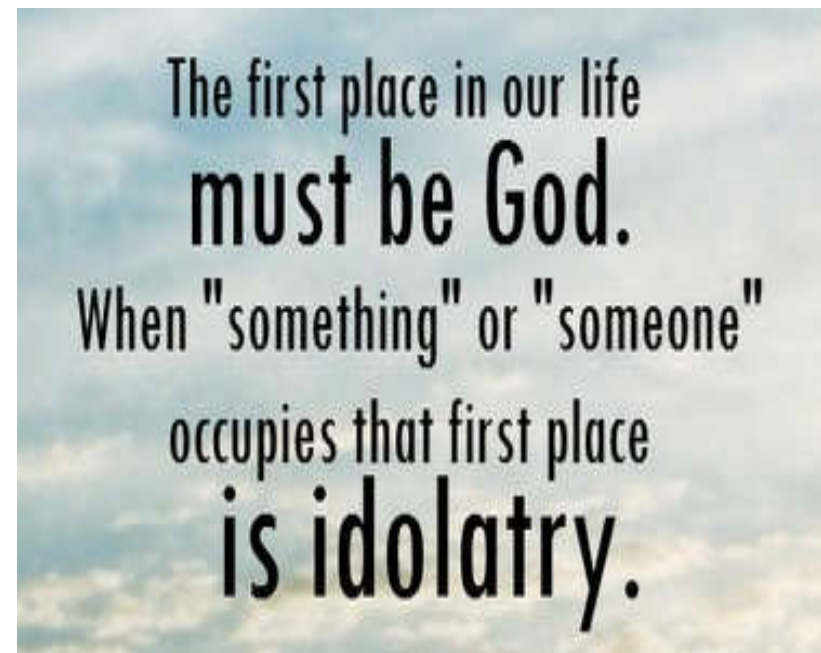
Philippians 2:12-13.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.

Psalms 37:3-4.

Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

It is God who must be first, it is about His purpose, it is in Him we must delight.



God wants first place in our heart .

Deuteronomy 6:5.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

(Since the law is fulfilled in Christ this should be the desire you have when you have been “Born again”)

Proverbs 3:5-6.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart.

Jeremiah 29:13.

And you shall seek me and you shall find me when you search for me with all your heart.

Jeremiah 4:3-4.

*This is what the LORD says to the people of Judah and to Jerusalem:
Break up your unploughed ground and do not sow among thorns.
Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, circumcise your hearts.*

1 Peter 3:15.

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.

Priorities.

Luke 16:16-24.

Jesus replied: A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, Come, for everything is now ready. But they all alike began to make excuses.

The first said, I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me. Another said, I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.

Still another said, I just got married, so I can't come. The servant came back and reported this to his master



A rich young ruler who put God first .

A young man boarded a ship about one hundred years ago headed for China. He had been waiting and preparing and it was finally his time to go to the mission field. Henry Borden was from Chicago, a graduate of Yale University and filthy rich. In fact, he was a member of one of the richest families in America. He stood to inherit the family enterprise and fortune. His father was terribly upset and he wanted his son to remain in Chicago and build their business. I would also guess that his father feared for his son's health and even his life, as sailing China at that time, before antibiotics and modern health advances, was fraught with danger. But Henry Borden had surrendered to Jesus years before. His Lord had called him to China and so answered the call. Family disapproval, a fantastic job, loads of money and social status could not sway him. Sept 21 1912 Chicago Tribune.



Do we have to love God above everything?

As I have been listening to the audio books of men and women who in the last two and a half centuries have left everything, and gone to darkest Africa, South America, India, China etc and faced hardships and disease and cannibals and the list goes on, I've been left with some questions. Why will some Christians give up so much and make so many sacrifices and others won't get out of bed on a Sunday and go to Church. Is there 2 types of Christianity on offer, one that requires us to lay down our all and to submit to God and His purposes and live a life for His glory, and another that requires no commitment or sacrifice and in fact God is the one who must constantly perform and meet our needs our wants and our whims.

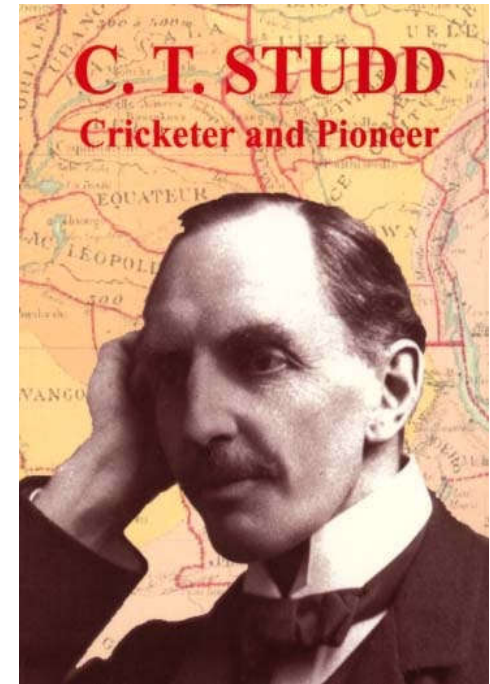
Or is there something wrong with our theology and we have been unknowingly, or perhaps even wilfully deceived.



Sharing the Gospel with others should be a priority.

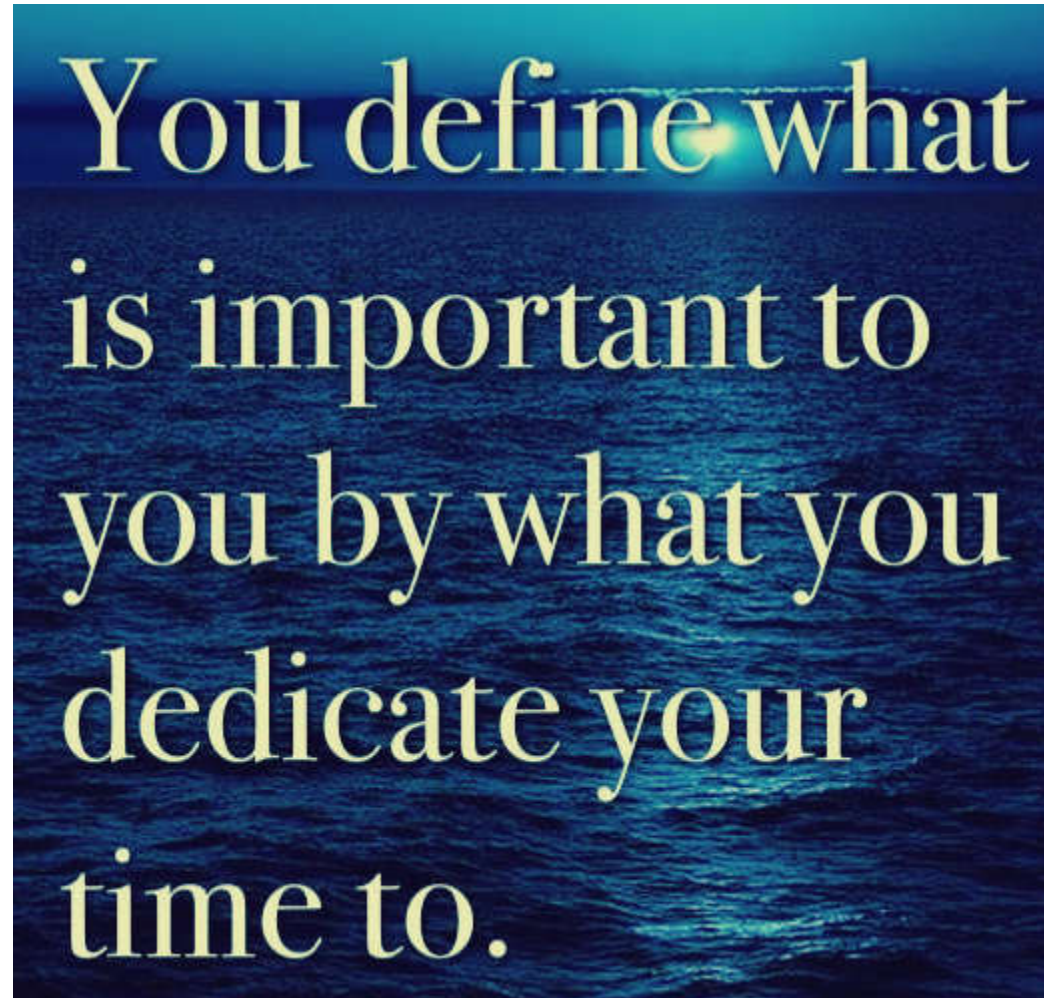
CT Studd was simply England's most exciting athlete. He said later that he never regretted his love for the game, but he did regret that he made an idol of it. What he did learn was self-denial, self-control, endurance, and a willingness to sacrifice for a cause.

These traits were later evident and very useful in missionary service. His service for Christ was not a priority and he always regretted this time in his life when Jesus was not first. He was quick to warn others not to follow his steps. In China he would later write his younger brothers: I don't say, don't play games or cricket or so forth. By all means play and enjoy them, giving thanks to Jesus for them. Only take care that games don't become an idol to you as they did to me. What good will it do to anybody in the next world to have been the best player that ever has played? And, then, think of the difference between that and winning people to Jesus.



Priorities.

**"The least pain in our little finger gives us more concern than the destruction of millions of our fellow men." -- William Wesley N
Hazlitt**



God's work should be our financial priority.

Tithing is one way to establish correct priorities in the area of our finances.

STEWARDSHIP-- *By George Wiseman*

It is not what we EARN that makes us rich, As riches are really known,
But how HONEST we are as we lay our hand, On what we call our own.

It is not what we KEEP that gives us peace, In the age when peace is rare,
But how TRUTHFUL we are as we lay aside, Our own and the Master's share.

It is not what we SPEND that brings us joy, For life can't be bought with gold,
But how CAREFUL we are that nothing we buy, Will tend to destroy our soul.
So it's not what we EARN or KEEP or SPEND, that gives us an honest glow,
But how RIGHTEOUS we are in the face of each, When only ourselves will know.

The purpose and priority of the Church.

Written by Gary Gilley:

The new gospel is a liberation from low self-esteem, a freedom from emptiness and loneliness, a means of fulfilment and excitement, a way to receive your heart's desires, a means of meeting our needs.

- ❖ The old gospel was about God; the new gospel is about us.
- ❖ The old gospel was about sin; the new gospel is about needs.
- ❖ The old gospel was about our need for righteousness; the new gospel is about our need for fulfilment.
- ❖ The old gospel is foolishness to those who are perishing; the new gospel is attractive.

Many are flocking to the new gospel, but it is altogether questionable how many are actually being saved

How many of us have been vaccinated with a mild case of Christianity?

How many among us have the real disease. (as quoted by Pritchard, p. 316)

The purpose and priority of the Church.

- "Nothing in Scripture indicates the church should lure people to Christ by presenting Christianity as an attractive option. ...

The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing (I Cor. 1:18). There is no way to make it otherwise and be faithful to the message. ... The gospel itself is disagreeable, unattractive, repulsive, and alarming to the world. It exposes sin, condemns pride, convicts the unbelieving heart, and shows human righteousness -- even the best, most appealing aspects of human nature -- to be worthless, defiled, filthy rags.

- **The Purpose of the Church has been turned on it's head, the Church does not exist to meet people's needs thus turning God into a benevolent genie who pops out of his lamp to deliver goodies and help us cope.**
- **The purpose of the Church is to glorify God and instruct people how to please Him (beginning with Salvation)**

The heart of man is seen by the state of the Church.

Consider the following statistical realities.

- About 80% of Churches in North America have either plateaued or are declining in membership.
- Somewhere between 60 and 80% of high school seniors ditch God when they go off to college.
- A Barna group survey found that 12% of American adults left the Christian faith of their childhood, while only 3% converted from no faith or another faith to the Christian faith.
- By the year 2025 it is expected that 70% of all churchgoers will stop attending church and seek new forms of expressing and experiencing their faith.

Furthermore not only is the church, as George Barna puts it, “a dying body” but it’s members are becoming increasingly self-centred.

- Christians worldwide, give on average, just 1.8% of their income.
- 70% of all abortions in America , are obtained by women who identify themselves with Christianity, 43% protestants, 27% as Catholics.

The heart of man is seen by the state of the Church.

- 18% of all abortions are performed on women who identify themselves as “Born again/Evangelical”.
- In 2005, Christianity Today reported that in a survey of 28 Protestant denominations, the amount spent on overseas missions for every dollar donated to a congregation, was 2 cents compared to 10 cents in 1920.
- 90% of all Protestant congregations have no commitment to, or involvement with, a foreign missionary.

Let's face it, we are consumed with ourselves. As the great Englishman John Stott has said, the American church is three thousand mile wide and only half an inch deep.

❖ What about us as a body of believers in Brakpan Assembly of God?

Are we honouring God by our behaviour and commitment.

One of the best ways to stop putting yourself first is to start serving others and loving them the same way Jesus loves you.

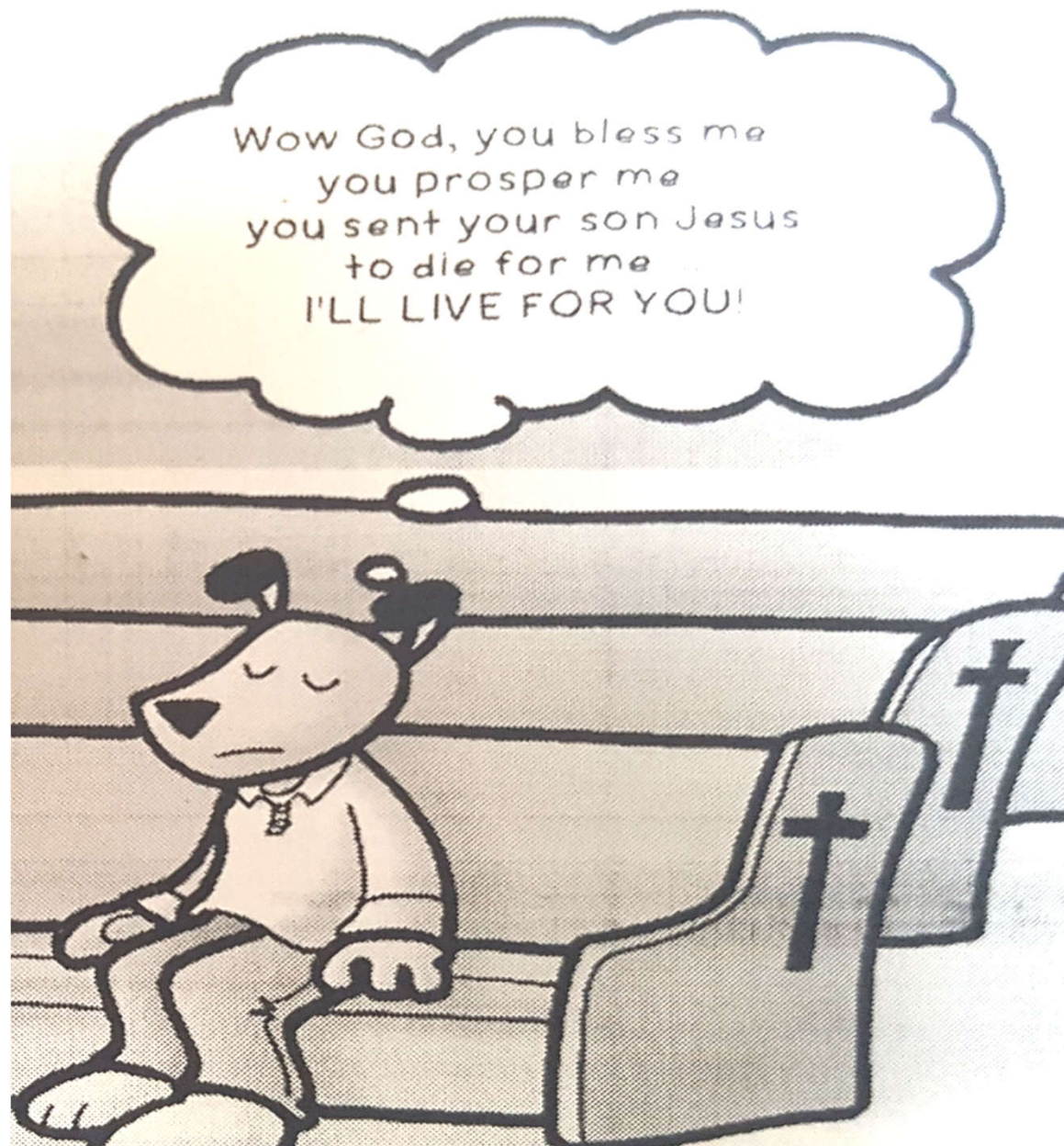
The heart of man is seen by the state of the Church.

- A dog says to it's master:
“You pet me, feed me, shelter me, and love me, You must be GOD”.
- A cat will look at the same master and say:
“You pet me, feed me, shelter me, and love me, I must be GOD”.

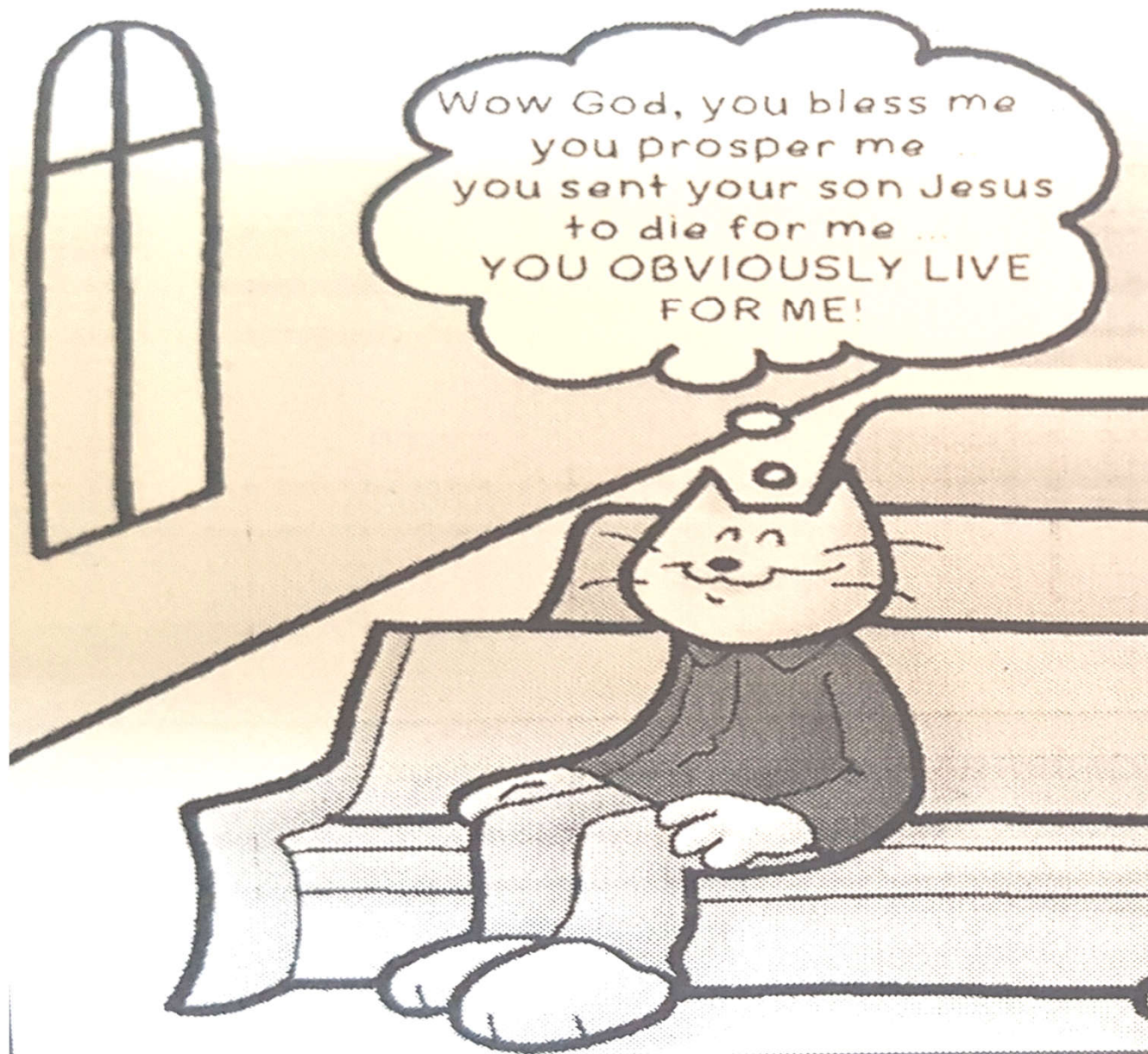
Sadly this joke typifies two types of Christians we find in the church today.



How do you keep a pure heart.



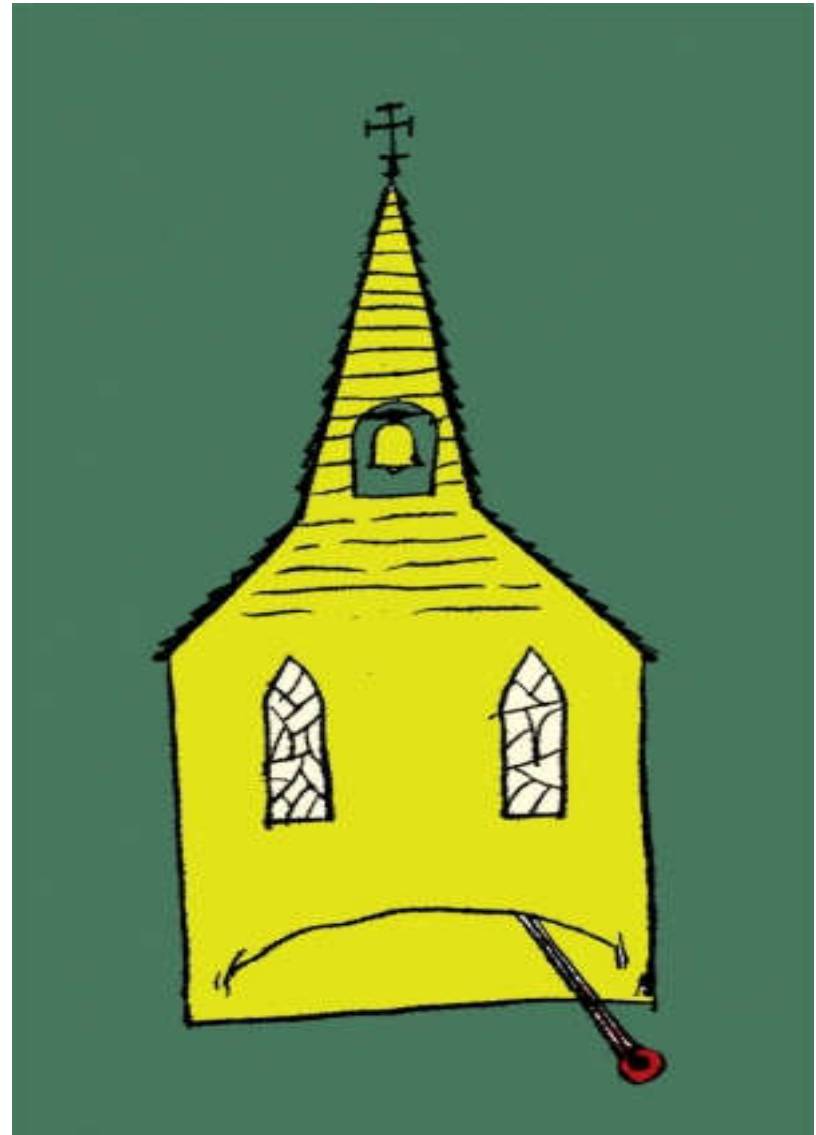
How do you keep a pure heart.



The heart of man is seen by the state of the Church.

In Brakpan Assembly let's examine.

- Our commitment to Sunday services.
- Our commitment to prayer.
- Our commitment to the home-cells or study groups.
- Our concern for each other.
- Our giving.



The heart of man is seen by the state of the Church.

Proposal for a change to our present home cell structure with a view to incorporating the following .

☐ Involving the whole family

☐ Praise

☐ Fellowship

☐ Prayer

☐ Bible study

☐ Open ministry

☐ Small group involvement

☐ Outreach

☐ Missions

☐ Making better use of the facilities that God has blessed us with



Church Activities

The heart of man.

Psalm 119:9.

How can a young man keep his way pure? By taking heed according to Your word.

God's word is the instruction manual for helping me to keep my heart pure all my life. It's not complicated to begin living a pure life.

God has given us guidelines in His Word as to what the early Church did and what we should be doing and we need to incorporate what is missing or neglected in our Assembly if we want to see Him get the Glory that He deserves and not bring disgrace on His name.

God is not interested in a shallow lip service.

Mark 7:6.

He replied Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

Activities of the early Church.

Acts 2:42-47.

They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

All the believers were together and had everything in common.

They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.

And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Vision.

How do you view yourself ?

- Does God have a plan for you ?

How do you view your fellow believers ?

- Do you have a responsibility towards them ?

How do you view God ?

- Does what He wants matter to you ?

❖ **God is not some genie
waiting to do our bidding !**

❖ **He is the almighty God,
creator of the universe
and we are charged
with glorifying His name.**



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