

In a “consumer-centric” world where our natural tendencies towards self-centeredness, laziness, and procrastination lead to “quick-fixes” rather than transformative progress, the church can easily fall into two errors. (1) Fixating on entertainment, and/or (2) Disengaging from true discipleship.

“A conscience soothing Jesus, with a unscandalous cross, an otherworldly kingdom, a private, inwardly limited spirit, a pocket God, a spiritualized Bible, and an escapist church. It's goal is a happy comfortable and successful life obtainable through the forgiveness of an abstract sinfulness, by faith in unhistorical Christ.” - Orlando Costas: Christ Outside the Gates

“The people who hanged Christ never, to do them justice, accused him of being a bore – on the contrary, they thought him too dynamic to be safe. It has been left for later generations to muffle up that shattering personality and surround him with an atmosphere of tedium. We have very efficiently pared the claws of the Lion of Judah, certified him ‘meek and mild,’ and recommended him as a fitting household pet for pale curates and pious old ladies.” - Dorothy Sayers

“An “impersonal God”—well and good. A subjective God of beauty, truth and goodness, inside our own heads—better still. A formless life-force surging through us, a vast power which we can tap—best of all. But God Himself, alive, pulling at the other end of the cord, perhaps approaching at an infinite speed, the hunter, king, husband - that is quite another matter. There comes a moment when the children who have been playing at burglars hush suddenly: was that a real footstep in the hall? There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion (“Man’s search for God”) suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found Him? We never meant it to come to that! Worse still, supposing He had found us?” - C.S. Lewis: Miracles

The church is NOT:

A building/place: Cannot “go” to church

A service: Cannot “do” church

THE MINISTRY (of reconciliation) - the total removal of hostility between man and God, through the agent of reconciliation, Jesus Christ.

THE MESSAGE (of reconciliation)

The message of the Gospel

- #1 - Sin - 2 Co 5:19 - “not counting men’s sins against them”
 - Romans 5:10-12 - all have sinned
- #2 - Substitutionary Atonement - 2 Co 5:21 - “Him who knew NO sin, to become sin for us”
- #3 - Faith -
 - John 1:12-13 (NIV) Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

#1 - It begins by knowing Christ. vs. 18 - “who reconciled US to Himself”

#2 - You’ve thereby been given a task - the MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

#3 - You’ve been entrusted with a message - the MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION

Therefore - “GO **BE** THE CHURCH”

- ✓ Point people to the bridge of Jesus Christ
- ✓ Tell people the message of the bridge to God through Jesus Christ