

NON-NEGOTIABLES

WHEN CHOOSING A CHURCH

There are many factors to consider when choosing a local church.

Here are a few that are non-negotiable for me.

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1 The church should be **theologically conservative**.

Meaning they hold to:

- the inerrancy of Scripture
- deity of Christ
- the doctrine of the Trinity
- and other historic standards of Christian orthodoxy

2 The church should preach a **clear, accurate, and urgent Gospel message**.

Meaning they teach eternal salvation can never be attained by one's own efforts:

- at moral improvement; through a promise or pledge to do better
- through making a commitment of some kind to God by turning from sin, through a willingness to stop sinning or improve one's behavior
- nor through any other effort that relegates eternal salvation to some type of two-way contract or agreement between God and man.

When it comes to eternal salvation, Jesus paid it all. It is nothing in our hands we bring, simply to the cross we cling! There is one giver: God. And one receiver: man. We receive the free gift of eternal salvation, fully paid for by the blood of Christ, by trusting Him and Him alone as the only one who can forgive our sin and save us from sin's penalty, namely, eternity in hell.

I would stay away from any church that espouses a Calvinistic view of salvation.

3 The church should be **solidly dispensational**.

Meaning:

- they hold to a consistent literal, grammatical, historical interpretation of Scripture
- they recognize the distinction between God's program for Israel and His program for the Church
(i.e., they do not hold to replacement theology or covenant theology)
- they believe in the pre-tribulation rapture of the church
(i.e., the rapture will occur prior to Daniel's 70th Week)
- and they are premillennial
(Christ will return to earth to rule and reign for 1,000 years from Jerusalem)

4 The church should **teach the whole counsel of God**.

Meaning they do not ignore the roughly 16% of the Bible that deals with unfulfilled end times prophecy. They should teach the Bible expositively in context without spiritualizing or allegorizing the text.

5 The church should hold to a **young earth view of creation**.

Meaning God spoke the world into existence in six, literal, 24-hour days, and the universe is roughly 6,000-8,000 years old.

6 The church should **exude grace** in all its practices and teachings.

Meaning it is not legalistic (teaching a works-based theology).

7 The church should be **willing to take a stand against government** tyranny.

Meaning if the government forbids churches from gathering in person to worship the Lord, or places other types of unbiblical restrictions on the church, the church will not comply.