

“Involvement”

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It is a lofty and Scriptural aim to have every member in each local congregation of God's people actively serving (1 Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:16; Tit. 2:14). In spite of such exhortations, most congregations still have only 20-30 percent of their members really "involved." When there is a door knocking campaign, a program of visiting, a workday on the church property and such like, about the same ones show up each time. Just think what wasted talents reside in each congregation because of those who will not become involved.

As desirable as maximum involvement is, it should not become the "tail that wags the dog" – an end within itself. Some have become so concerned with this matter that they have employed a "Minister of Involvement" to get folks busy and keep them busy. Some of these churches have achieved a high level of involvement. Sadly, such involvement is frequently seen to be in things more of the flesh rather than the spirit. If a church has 90 percent of its members "involved," but much or most of it has to do with the use of its half million-dollar gymnasium (frequent practices and competition on one of its volleyball, basketball or softball teams), participating in a church-sponsored golf tournament, going on the church-planned scenic tours (on the church bus), working in the church's crafts club or in its aerobics class, just what is the advantage (to the Lord's work) of such "involvement"? "For what is a church profited if it should gain 100 percent involvement from its members, but lose its own God-given aim and distinctiveness in the process? Or what shall a church give in exchange for its membership 'involvement' and numerical 'growth'?"

Take away the gymnasium, the entertainment angle and the highly structured program geared more to social than to spiritual aims and it will soon be seen why so many are "involved." Perhaps the best that can be said for such carnally oriented churches is that they will relieve many of the surrounding congregations of some of their carnally minded members. This is the source of the rapid "growth" of many of the larger churches – not from conversions, but from membership transfers who are more interested in a country club with some religious overtones than they are in the church of the Lord. If this is what it takes to get maximum "involvement" a church is better off with only 20-30 percent involved if they are faithful to the Lord's purpose and work for His church. Given a choice between 50 people who know the Book and love the church and 2,000 country club types who can't bear more than 20 minutes of pulpit

pabulum every Sunday that sends the grossest sinner out feeling good about himself, the 50 will be the better and stronger choice every time.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, February 4, 1988, of which I was editor.]

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