

Prepare To Grow Revelation 3:7-13

An Open Door

Philadelphia was ready to grow

Laodicea was not - **Revelation 3:15-19**

Evangelistic effort destroyed by spiritual environment there

Growth requires a continuing spiritual effort; Mortality rate of new converts is often high

Bringing into fold requires continued nurture for converts

To have real, enduring growth, we must get ready to grow!

Preparing ourselves as a congregation; Preparing ourselves as individual members of congregation

What We Must Do As A Congregation

Assemblies Must Draw Us Closer To God - **1Corinthians 14:24-25**

And one another - **John 13:34-35**

Assemblies That Strengthen And Encourage - **Hebrews 10:24-25**

Avoid confusion and disharmony - **1Corinthians 11:17; 14:26**

Assemblies That Show Preparation And Devotion

Requires forethought - "Going to church" or "Gathering for worship"? "Attend Bible class" or "Gather for Bible study"? "Take the Lord's Supper" or "Remember His death"?

Leaders obligated to prepare

Each must participate heartedly and with purpose; Joyful hearts and open minds

More Than Just Assembly Times

Welcoming attitude - Greeting visitors, taking new members into the family; Getting familiar with everyone in congregation

Nurturing new members takes commitment

Babies in Christ often require special attention and nurturing; New converts often bring with them personal problems; Need care of interested, mature Christians - **Romans 15:1-3**

What We Must Do As Individuals

Strengthen Our Relationship With God - **Philippians 3:12-16; 2Peter 1:5-8**

Regular time with the Lord - **Psalms 1:1-3**

Strengthen Relationship With One Another - **Hebrews 10:24-25**

Love & unity great witness for Christ - **John 13:34-35; 17:20-21**

Strong group of Christians essential to nurture new converts - **1Thessalonians 4:9-10; 1Peter 1:22**

Seek out opportunities to strengthen our bond in Christ - **1Peter 4:8-9**

Develop Relationships With The Lost

Basis for continued relationship

Light must shine in darkness to be of value - **Matthew 5:14-16**

If people are sick, those w/cure must be among them - **Matthew 9:10-13**

The right example can prepare people to receive Word - **1Peter 3:1-2**

Developing such is an ongoing process - **Matthew 7:6**

Reaching beyond close friends and family - **Luke 4:42-44**

Opportunities await us - **Matthew 9:9-13**

Hospitality with neighbors, helping needy, comforting hurting

First Prepare Self - 2Timothy 2:21-22

Prepared congregations will prosper - **Revelation 3:8**

Burden rests upon us as individuals - Chain is no stronger than its weakest link

Alternative to growth is gradual decay and death.

Shall we be like church at Laodicea, or church at Philadelphia?

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