

## “A LIVELY CHURCH?”

By Brian

How do you gauge the strength and activity of a congregation? How can you tell if you are loveless like Ephesus (Rev. 2:4), faithful like Smyrna (Rev. 2:10), compromising like Pergamos (Rev. 2:14, 15), dead like Sardis (Rev. 3:1), steadfast like Philadelphia (Rev. 3:8), and or lukewarm like Laodicea (Rev. 3:16)?

Obviously, the Lord had perfect knowledge of those seven first century churches in Asia Minor. Our estimation of our congregation (or others) is subjective to a degree. We may feel we are on-track, while the Lord knows that we're off-track; or we may feel like we're weak, when the Lord knows we're doing the best we can.

Without trying to pat ourselves on the back too much, or resting on our laurels, we need to appreciate the many who lend their talents to the work of the church. Those who teach, preach, lead in public worship, or serve as elders and deacons are but a few of our involved individuals.

We have nursery keepers, van drivers, building openers and closers, food committee members, contribution and attendance counters, greeters, and those who are responsible for these being assigned. We have those who, on their own, write notes of encouragement to others, visit our sick and shut-in, call those who need a lift, teach the lost and seek to restore the erring.

A lively church depends on me.