

Preacher's Pen points

“You stand out...”



The church often gets notes of appreciation for loving service in response to sickness or to a death in a family. They are commonly read in our announcements and posted on our bulletins boards. Recently I was encouraged by the following note of a different kind sent to my e-mail address by Douglas McDonald, one of our recent visitors:

After attending the Wednesday evening bible class and devotional at Perry Heights yesterday, I wanted to drop you a short note and commend the congregation on your friendliness and warmth. We were very encouraged by the adult bible class teacher and his gentle, doctrinally sound approach to the difficult subject of church discipline. Having recently visited many congregations of the Lord's church, you stand out as a loving family who strive to stay true to God's word. Thanks.

A Loving Family

I would like to commend the church for a noticeably increased effort to greet and make welcome visitors who come among us. It has been an integral factor in our growth this year. On another occasion recently I asked a visiting family if they had been made to feel welcome. The response was, “From the parking lot all the way to the building”. One church growth study revealed that many people have already formulated an opinion of a congregation in the first ten minutes of being among them. So, I congratulate you for wisely reaching out and making our first impression a

good one!

Well-kept facilities

In addition, the church is to be commended in improving the appearance of our facility with the landscaping and the repaving and striping of the parking lot. Probably all of us who go into a business gather first impressions from the appearance of the building before we even begin to reflect upon the quality of the services they may offer. So it is with churches. What such things say to visitors is that “you are important to us” and “what we do here is important to us”.

Doctrinal soundness

Most important, of course, is the need to remain true to the word of God. Regrettably, all over the country, people are drawn to a friendly group of people with attractive facilities, only to be led into misunderstandings of the Scripture and religious practices not authorized by God. In our assemblies it should always be foremost that the word of the Lord “*sound forth*” from us like it did from the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 1:8) and that all who teach “*speak for edification and exhortation and consolation*” (1 Cor. 14:3). So we offer a word of appreciation to Doug Driver and to all our teachers who speak the word of God with both soundness and sensitivity to the listening audience.

Thanks to Brother McDonald!

So often people are quick to offer criticisms of the churches where they attend and fail to see the good things that it has to offer. We thank Brother McDonald for giving us positive feedback on how we’re doing. He has encouraged us to do even more by his letter! —Johnny Felker