

I have a dream!

I dream of a worshipping church:

Where worship is exciting and invigorating,
Where people expect to encounter God,
Where Sunday is a day not to be missed,
Where celebration is a hallmark, and yet where awe and humility are to be found,
Where worship is structured and yet free and flowing,
Where the Lord's Supper is central,
Where children, as well as adults, sense the life of the Spirit.

I dream of a biblical church:

Where the Word of God is at the centre,
Where the exposition of God's word holds the place of honour,
Where the whole counsel of God is preached,
Where people expect to hear God speaking to them,
Where study is combined with devotion,
Where a wide range of 'electives' is offered,
Where all are encouraged to keep on learning.

I dream of a praying church:

Where prayer is seen as a privilege rather than a duty,
Where people expect God to hear their prayers,
Where husbands and wives pray together,
Where church members pray with and for each other,
Where the leaders pray regularly together,
Where the services are prayed for but where the needs of the world are not forgotten.

I dream of a Spirit filled church:

Where all are open to the Spirit,
Where people are constantly seeking to be filled with the Spirit,
Where people expect to see God at work,
Where people are unafraid to venture deeper in the spiritual life,
Where no gift is undervalued or overvalued,
Where every member has a part to play, for every member has a gift,
Where people feel free to express their love for one another and the Lord.

I dream of a family church:

Where all feel they belong,
Where all the members are drawn together in home groups,
Where all rejoice together and suffer together,
Where family life is promoted,
Where the emotional and physical needs of singles are met,
Where the old feel loved and wanted,
Where the casualties of family life are made welcome.

I dream of an evangelising church:

Where new people are seen at every service,
Where people expect to see friends won for Christ,
Where every month people come to know the Lord Jesus,
Where evangelists are regularly visiting the district,
Where young people are reaching out to their friends,
Where new Christians are encouraged to exploit their old network of friends,
Where small groups are used for evangelism.

I dream of a serving church:

Where members serve one another,
Where the practical resources of the fellowship are shared,
Where our love for one another spills out to the world outside,
Where members are involved in the community,
Where those involved in the community are supported,
Where the needs of the weak receive priority,
Where God's love is seen in deed as well as in word.

I dream of a liberated church:

Liberated from tradition,
Liberated from self centredness,
Liberated from duty,
Liberated from pressure of time,
Liberated to serve the world,
Liberated to serve one another,
Liberated to serve God!

When I first read this I was immediately drawn to the description of what a church could be if it was like the one described (it's not perfect in describing an ideal church but it's close) and I have referred to it over the years in churches I have been involved in.

It was only when I was called into full time ministry that I had the opportunity to encourage elders and members alike to think it through and use it as a benchmark for comparison with where we are. It has been an incredibly useful tool and I would really like to give credit to the author, however, after 30 years I no longer have those details. If you read this and are or know the author please contact me so that I can give appropriate credit.

David Clarkson.