

## **Needs and Felt Needs**

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A lot of churches are playing to the felt needs of people to grow their membership. What is a need? A need is something essential, necessary, and life-changing. Are churches meeting the real needs of people? Are these churches meeting the need of salvation? Are they answering the question, “What must I do to be saved?” in light of biblical truth. Are they meeting the need to accept the Bible as the final, complete, authoritative, and inspired Word of God? Are they helping people to see the true nature of the church of the New Testament and to see the need to be Christians only? Are they helping people mature into the image of Christ? Are they helping parents to lead their children in the way of the Spirit of God instead of the sinful nature of the flesh? Are they helping people worship God in spirit and in truth? These are real needs that all people have. On the other hand, churches may appeal to the felt needs of people. These felt needs include such things as giving people what they want instead of what they need. Felt needs have to do with making people feel good instead of seeing themselves as those who desperately need God and his will. They have to do with worshipping any way one likes instead of in the way that pleases God. They have to do with “I’m okay, you’re okay” instead of becoming what God wants. They have to do with becoming like the people around us rather than like the people of God. They have to do with creating a circus atmosphere rather than an atmosphere of reverence and awe. They have to do with a God who is my buddy rather than the God who is holy. They have to do with feeding and clothing the needy but leaving them without provisions for the soul. They have to do with people “coming as they are,”

but “staying where they are.” Of course, in order to win people to Christ we must get their attention, but not at the expense of teaching the truth of God. So, what shall it be? Felt needs or real needs? If felt needs, what price are we willing to pay?