What Makes A Strong Church?

Intro: As a basis for our study notice Eph. 6:10-18 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;” Individuals make up the church; therefore strong members will make a strong church.

I. WHAT ARE SOME NON-ESSENTIALS.
   A. Not wealthy members.
   B. Not famous people. (for example, Byron Nelson, Pat Boone).
   C. Not large numbers.
      2. Started with 32,000.
      3. God only needed 300 men.

II. WHAT ARE SOME ESSENTIALS.
   A. A Converted membership.
      1. Mat. 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
      2. They love the truth.
      3. They have conviction; stand for something.
   B. A Working membership.
      1. Jam. 1:22 “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”
      2. Mat. 7:21 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”
      3. This will prevent worldliness and church troubles.
   C. A Praying membership.
      1. There is power in prayer. cf. Jam. 5:16 “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
      2. We need to learn to talk to God; cf. Luke 11:1 “And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.”
      3. We must help God answer our prayers.
         a. Pray for the sick—minister unto them.
         b. Pray for the lost—take the gospel to them.
   D. A Sacrificing membership.
      1. Willing to work and give; spend and be spent.
      2. Christianity is a story of sacrifice from beginning to end.
E. A United membership.
1. Christ prayed for it; John 17:20-21 “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
2. Paul pleaded for it; 1 Cor. 1-4. see 1:10 “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
3. Mat. 12:25 “And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.”

F. A Separate membership.
1. Separated from the things of the world.
2. Should be the light of the world.
   a. 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
   b. Mat. 5:14-16 “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

G. A Missionary - Minded membership.
1. Concerned about the lost here.
2. Concerned about the lost everywhere.

H. An Optimistic eldership.
1. Men of vision and foresight.
2. Plan for the future - 5, 10, or 25 years.

I. No Radicalism, Hobbism. One can tear down more than 25 can build up.

Conclusion: These are some of the qualifications of a strong congregation. But we must grow individually.