

perfect church. He said, If it was a perfect church it would not be so any longer after you joined it! The purity of the church is a comparative thing. If a group is denying the essentials of the faith, we certainly have no business in it.

But to say you've got to have a thoroughly pure church--it reminds me of what happened when I left Westminster. I stood on the platform--sat on the platform at the final commencement and R. B. Kuiper stood up there and said, We are a smaller church than we were a year ago, but we are a purer church." Everybody looked at me, of course.

I feel we should keep our church as pure as we can, but I won't guarantee anybody is a Christian. I think that the Lord knows who are his. And a person has a right to know if they have been saved, but I don't think anybody else has a right to know that that person is not a hypocrite. I don't think anybody can tell who has been saved. I would never --- I would say if you believe in the Lord, and cast your sins upon Him and determine to follow Him you are saved through all eternity, but I can't tell what's in your heart. I don't think there ever was a purer church or ever will be.

But a church that is in a situation where its members out of loyalty to the church have to go and listen to what tears down the Word of God is certainly a church a Christian should not belong to. I would say that. I have always taken the stand that I will give the Word of God anywhere I get a chance. If there is a church where people do not hear the truth at all, and I have a chance to go and give them the gospel I'm going to do it, and I have spoken in churches where some of my friends were horrified.

I have not given much publicity to it and I have not often had such opportunities, but I have felt I should take advantage of an opportunity like that if I have it. On the other hand I would not go to a church and hold a series of meetings in a denomination under the control of modernists where even if they have a godly minister, he might be leaving and the modernists will put in an unbelieve the next year! I would not go to such a church and hold a series of meetings which would be publized so that I would be a means of drawing Christians to that church. I would not do that.

But the balance between these two is usually quite clear, but sometimes it isn't, and I think a person has to make his own decision on such matters. I have always felt that, but have not argued. That is true--the purity of the visible church. There is no visible church that is pure. No such thing. There is the invisible church which is made up of those whom God is sanctifying so they will eventually be pure, but no one of them is pure today. So I'm not sure the term "purity of the visible church" is a good term to use. But I do think it's important a church keep its leadership very strictly in hands of well-informed people & do its best from receiving as members those it do not have reason to believe are truly Christian. But I don't think you can avoid making mistakes.