

## Centering a Community

Many metropolitan areas are well developed with fast food restaurants, motels, grocery and big box stores. Sheetz service stations and other major gasoline stations seem to be popping up everywhere along well traveled routes.

Vehicle traffic is heavy around town.

As a community grows, development often becomes “clutter.” Our recent New England fall leaves trip gave us a nostalgic glimpse of the basics of a community. Vermont is a state comprised of primarily small, quaint villages. Their lifeline to the world beyond is a 2-lane road. Life seems to be much simpler there. Descending down the mountain road into each village, rising above the tree tops, was the gleaming white steeple of the town church. The church was the town anchor, located in the center of town.



Its steeple is usually the highest structure in the town. Every town had a church. Only some of the communities had a General Store and fewer still had a gas station. As I drove into these communities I came to the conclusion that, for them, the basics of life centered on God. Of secondary importance was the place to congregate and purchase needed supplies at the General Store. The center of town – literally and figuratively -- was the church. Symbolically, God provided for their basic needs. Anything else was clutter.

Most of us don't live in the simplicity of a rural setting. We live in an urban world with a growing population and community assets. Gas stations, grocery stores, pharmacies, fast food restaurants, heavy traffic and interstate highways are all part of the life we have grown to expect. It is human nature to want more, so we keep adding new features to the community. As a result, it becomes difficult to distinguish wants from needs. Perhaps the people in rural Vermont have it right. With God as the center of our lives there is little else we really need.

Regardless of where you live, what you need is for the church to always be the center of your life. Let the church be your stabilizing influence. It is where the community comes together to worship and to thank God for all He has done in their lives. It is where people come to strengthen their faith to deal with the clutter and challenges of their world. How about you? Is the church the center of your life?

**Question:** Regardless of where you live, is God the center of your life?

**The Bible Says:** Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things (Colossians 3:1-2).

**Prayer:** Lord. Our world is becoming more complex and congested. We pray that our lives will be centered on the church as a way of getting to know You, Lord. Amen.