

Why I Love The Church

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A local church is featuring a sermon series titled, “Why I Hate The Church.” I want to talk to you about why I love the church.

1) ***I Love The Lord.*** The Lord and the church are inseparably connected. When Paul wrote the saints in Ephesus, he spoke concerning “...Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:32). The Lord is the Head and the church is His body (Eph. 1:22-23). The Lord is the foundation and the church is the house (1 Cor. 3:11; 1 Tim. 3:15). The Lord is the husband and the church is His bride (2 Cor. 11:2). In the judgment scene of Matthew 25, the Lord said, “...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (v. 40). When Saul of Tarsus “...persecuted the church...” (Gal. 1:13), he persecuted the Lord (Acts 9:5). Thus, to love the Lord is to love the church and to hate the church is to hate the Lord.

2) ***Christ Loved The Church, And Gave Himself For It.*** The Bible teaches, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). Did you notice how much the Lord loved the

church? He *gave Himself for it!* Read Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23 and John 19, and behold the love of Christ for the church! “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13).

3) ***God Planned It.*** The church is not here by accident or afterthought. Ephesians 3 sets forth the church, “According to the eternal purpose...” of God (vv. 9-12). Designed “...from the beginning of the world...” by the Heavenly architect, the church has a divine purpose!

4) ***Christ Built It.*** In a question-answer session with His disciples, Jesus promised, “...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18). Death and the Hadean realm could not prevent the Lord from building the church as Acts 2:22-47 shows!

5) ***The Saved Are In It.*** It is recorded in Acts 2:47, “...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” In Ephesians 5:23, Paul featured Christ as “...the saviour of the body” (Eph. 5:23). The body is the church (Col. 1:24). Salvation is in

Christ (2 Tim. 2:10), and to be in Christ is to be in the church! (Col. 1:2, 13, 22, 24).

6) ***Christ Purchased It With His Own Blood.*** As Paul met in Miletus with the elders of the church in Ephesus and gave charge concerning their work, he declared, “...feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). This shows the great value of the church!

7) ***Christ Is The Head Of It.*** Speaking of Christ Paul affirmed that God, “...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church” (Eph. 1:22). Again it is written, “...Christ is the head of the church...” (Eph. 5:23). Possessing “...All power...in heaven and in earth” (Mt. 28:18), He is the absolute authority! The church does not have a human head, and it never becomes headless, “...seeing he ever liveth...” (Heb. 7:25)!

8) ***The Church Is The Fulness Of Christ.*** The church, the body of Christ, is “...the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23). Thus, whatever is available in Christ cannot be obtained outside of

the church of Christ! Things found in Christ include: Redemption (Rom. 3:24), sanctification (1 Cor. 1:2), a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17), liberty (Gal. 2:4), all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3), the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7), an inheritance (Eph. 1:11), salvation (2 Tim. 2:10), and the hope and promise of eternal life (Titus 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:1; 1 Jn. 5:11).

9) ***I Am Reconciled Unto God In It.*** Ephesians 2:16 makes known, "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross..." This passage equates with Ephesians 2:13 which says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." To be reconciled is to be made nigh. Without the church I was far off!

10) ***The Church Is The Pillar And Ground Of The Truth.*** Writing Timothy Paul mentioned, "...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). The church holds up and supports the truth! God's word

is truth (Jn. 17:17). There is nothing greater than the truth of God's word! It makes free (Jn. 8:32), sanctifies (Jn. 17:17, 19), saves (Eph. 1:13), gives growth (Eph. 4:15), heralds hope (Col. 1:5), furnishes fruit (Col. 1:6), begets (Jas. 1:18), and purifies (1 Pet. 1:22).

11) ***The Church Will Be Delivered Up To God.*** The church has a glorious destiny! At Christ's coming, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father..." (1 Cor. 15:24).

12) ***There Is Only One Church.*** Ephesians 4:4 states, "There is one body..." Remember the body is the church (Col. 1:24), and the church is the body (Eph. 1:22-23). The prophets only predicted one (Is. 2:2; Dan. 2:44), the Lord only promised to build one (Mt. 16:18), He purchased only one (Acts 20:28), and He is Head and Saviour of only one (Eph. 5:23)!

When One Loves The Church: He will be baptized into it (1 Cor. 12:13), assemble

with it faithfully (Acts 11:26; Heb. 10:25), give cheerfully to support it (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7), always abound in its work (1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 6:1), worship God in it (Jn. 4:24; Acts 2:42; Heb. 2:12), work to bring others into it (Jn. 1:40-42; Acts 8:4; 11:19-21; 2 Tim. 2:2), and glorify God in it (Eph. 3:21).

Not all have a proper view of the church. Some despise the church of God (1 Cor. 11:22). What is your attitude toward the church?

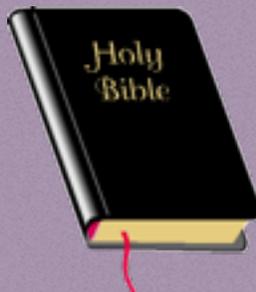
As the song says, "I love Thy Kingdom, Lord, The house of Thine abode; The church our blest Redeemer saved With His own precious blood. I love Thy church, O God! Her walls before Thee stand, Dear, as the apple of Thine eye, And graven on Thy hand. For her my tears shall fall, For her my pray'rs ascend; To her my cares and toils be giv'n, Till toils and cares shall end. Beyond my highest joy I prize her — heav'nly ways, Her sweet communion, solemn vows, Her hymns of love and praise."

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