

Why I Love the Church

**Sermon delivered on February 11th, 2024
AM Service**

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Text:

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26: That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27: That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Introduction

God has established three important institutions in this world, namely, Church, family, and government. In the Scriptures, we often read the amazing things that God says about the Church. We read the sure promise that He will build His Church and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. What a blessing to be part of the great work that our Lord is building.

There are people who say, I love God, I love Jesus and then say, but I don't care much about the church. And the usual reason I hear why they don't want anything to do with church is because, church is full of hypocrites. Is it possible to love God, to love Jesus and have nothing to do with church? What do you say to people who say, the reason they don't like church is because church is full of hypocrites?

If that is true, that the church is full of hypocrites, is that a good reason to ignore church? I don't deny that there are hypocrites in the church, but we must also recognize that the church is not the only place where we find hypocrites. You will find them in the schools, in the workplaces, in the grocery stores, in the ballpark, at Disney Land, at Wal Mart, at Vons, on the freeways. Hypocrites are everywhere. Every place you go, you will run into people who are hypocrites. Now, do you avoid going to Wal Mart because of the hypocrites? Do you quit your job because you have co-workers who are hypocrites? Do you give up on your family because one of your family members is a hypocrite? Do you avoid driving on the freeway because there are drivers who are hypocrites? Of course not, that would be impractical.

Our Lord knows there are hypocrites in the church, but He does not cast out the Church because of them. He still cares and still has a high view of the Church despite of the imperfect people in the Church. Today, I would like to speak with you about how Jesus Christ view the Church; not somebody's point of view but our Lord's point of view of church. It is God's will that those who believe and follow Jesus Christ should be a part of the church, that we should love the church, that we should rejoice, and we should delight in her. It is not God's plan for us to be lone Christians. You cannot live the Christian life without the Church.

My prayer and desire is that through this message, God will help us get excited about the Church and that we may grow in our love and affection for her, just as Jesus Christ does and wants us to do likewise.

The sermon today is basically about, why we ought love the Church? Let me give you five reasons.

I - Christ Loves the Church

We ought to love the Church because Christ loved the Church.

[Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;](#)

This is an obvious reason. We ought to love the church because Jesus loves the church. What Jesus loves, we ought to love.

The people who say, *"I love God, I love Jesus Christ, but I don't need the church,"* most likely do not know the Jesus of the Bible. Because the Jesus of the Bible loves the Church. The Jesus of the Bible is committed to the Church. The Jesus of the Bible treasures the Church. The Church is precious to Christ. It is impossible to love God and to love Jesus Christ and despise the Church.

[1 John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.](#)

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father, loves His children, too.

If I become a friend with someone, I become a friend with his wife and kids, too. If I love him or her, my love extends to their family. In the same way, when we love God, we also will love His children. And if you don't love His children, then one has to question how much you really love God and Jesus Christ.

All who love the Lord Jesus ought to deeply care about the Church. If we love the Lord, we should give similar affection the Church which has a dear place in the heart of our Saviour. I love Church because the Church is the object of the Lord Jesus' own love.

II - Christ Gave Himself for the Church

We ought to love the Church not only because Christ loves the Church but also because Christ gave Himself for the Church.

[Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;](#)

Christ so loved the Church that He gave Himself for her. He values the Church so much that He literally and completely gave Himself for her. O, how we need to be careful when we talk about the Church.

[Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.](#)

Jesus Christ gave Himself for the Church. He did not offer the world, and the things of it, which all belong to Him. He offered not men, not angels, not animals, not goats, not bulls, not lambs, but Himself.

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us **an offering and a sacrifice** to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Christ was both the priest and the sacrifice. He offered up himself a sacrifice for the sins of His people, and He offered up to God, against whom they had sinned, to satisfy His justice, fulfill the demands of His law, and glorify His holy and righteous government.

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a **sweetsmelling savour**.

When Christ offered up Himself as a sacrifice “the Lord smelled a sweet savor;” God the Father accepted it and was completely satisfied. God was well-pleased with the offering on the ground of its sweetness, and so is reconciled to us.

III - Christ is Committed in Purifying the Church

We ought to love the Church not only because Christ loves the Church and He gave Himself for the Church but also because Christ is purifying the Church.

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

We need to understand that the Church is still in its imperfect state. A young college student who once told a Christian, “*I would like to believe in Christ. But I have never seen a Christian who was like Christ.*” In other words, he would have believed, if it were not for the Christians.

We must remember that the church is still in its imperfect state. They are right, the church is full of hypocrites and it's because Church is not perfect. But Christ is! Fix your eyes on Him. Don't fix your eyes on the imperfections of the Church. Don't despise church and leave church because of imperfect people in it. If you do that, you are like burning down your own to get rid of a spider web in the closet. “*Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater*” so to speak.

I like what someone has said, “*I am not offering you Christians. I am offering you Christ.*” We are offering you the One who died for you and me, even for the hypocrites.

Jesus Christ is committed to the Church and the immediate object of Christ was to cleanse her, to make her holy, to sanctify her—that is, consecrate her to God, cleanse her by the washing with water through the Word. The Word in all its searching, humbling, rebuking, correcting, informing, stimulating, refreshing, purifying power.

2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

This is Christ's ultimate goal for the Church.

Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

The ultimate object of Christ for the church is to present it to Himself a glorious church, without spot and wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

IV - Christ is the Head, the Church is His Body

We ought to love the Church not only because Christ loves the Church, He gave Himself for the Church and He is purifying the Church but also because Christ is the Head of the Church.

Ephesians 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29: For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30: For **we are members of his body**, of his flesh, and of his bones.

One of the rewards of Jesus' resurrection is that He was exalted to be the head of the Church. Having raised Jesus from the dead, the Father seated His Son at His right hand and "put all things under Jesus' feet and gave [Jesus] as head over all things to the church."

Ephesians 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21: Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22: And hath put all things under his feet, and **gave him to be the head over all things to the church**, 23: Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Colossians 1:18 And **he is the head of the body, the church**: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19: For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

Our Lord spoke about this when He commissioned His disciples in [Matthew 28:18](#), "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." This is one of the rewards our Lord earned for being crucified and raised from the dead—the Father made Him the Head of the Church.

V - Christ glorifies God Through the Church

We ought to love the Church not only because Christ loves the Church, He gave Himself for the Church, He is purifying the Church and He is the Head of the Church but also because Christ glorifies God through the Church. The Church is the way the glory of God is displayed and proclaimed to the world.

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21: **Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus** throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

God should get the glory. But how does He get the glory? In and through the church. Christ is glorifying God. The church is glorifying God and through Christ and in His church in which He is the head of the body. They are joined together. That's how God intends to get the glory through Christ and His Church.

Closing Exhortation

How do I become part of the Church?

How do I become part of what is so glorious, so precious, so valuable to Christ? How do I become a part of an institution that He so treasures? How do I get to be a part of the church? Do I join the church? Is it by attending the church? Is it by moving my membership?

1. You must be born again

The only way to be part of the church is to be brought back from the dead to life. That is the only way to get into church—it is to be raised up from the dead. Before you can be part of the church you have to be part of Jesus and the only way to get to Jesus is by being raised from the dead. You must be made alive spiritually through the Gospel by the Spirit of God.

1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

You must repent and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

To be born again, to be made alive you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord. Those who believe are made alive in Christ; have been brought back from the dead to life. That's why when we gather together as people of there should be some kind of celebration. Every time we come together as Church family, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and our own resurrection from the dead unto life.

2. You must be baptized

Now that you have been brought back to life, you can be part of the visible New Testament local church by baptism. Now, baptism does not save anyone. Baptism is simply saying that you are not ashamed to be identified with Christ and His Church. In baptism, you are saying that you were once dead in sin but now alive to God, alive to the things of God. And it's all because of the grace of God. It's all because of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In baptism, you are saying that you are not ashamed to proclaim that Jesus Christ is alive, and He has transformed you, and you are not ashamed to proclaim that.

This is what a local church is. A local church is made up of people who are not ashamed to declare that they are followers of Jesus, and that they believe the Gospel. That is why I am calling you who have been brought back to life by the power of Christ resurrection, to come out and be baptized—proclaim Christ's death, burial and resurrection, celebrate your own death, burial and resurrection (the old man is dead but the new man is alive), identify with Jesus Christ and His people. Young and old, you are invited to come and openly confess your allegiance to Christ and to His Church!

For those who are members of Grace & Truth Bible Baptist Church, my prayer and my hope is that we will be an assembly of people who will have an amazing reverence for the Church. For

better or worse, we will carry the name of Jesus Christ. We will carry the Church of Jesus Christ in our hearts, into our family, and into community.

AMEN!