

Why We Love the Church

During the month of March we're taking a look at the church: God's called out body. We've been talking about one of the greatest challenges of our day — countering the popular notion that the church is not that essential. How we should regard the church of our Lord? Why should we hold it in high regard? God has given us a family, Ephesians 2.19, 22. We are *fellow citizens* and *members of God's household*. But it's more than that. We are called to love the church because of what the church is to the Lord. Why do we love the church?

I. Because God Loves the Church

- A. God is the one building it through His Son: *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will **build my church**, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it, Matthew 16.18.*
 1. It is a divine work.
 2. It is personal. Intimate. It is God's church. It is Christ's church. It belongs to them
- B. Titus 1:2: It is part of God's promise, made before ***time began***.
 1. To whom was the promise made?
 2. 2 Timothy 1:9: *He has saved us and called us ... according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in **Christ Jesus** before time began.*
 3. Jesus fully understood this: *Everyone the Father **gives** me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will never cast out, John 6.37.*
 - a) Every saved individual is a gift by the Father to the Son.
 - b) Drawn by the Father, by the power of the Word of God, we choose God for the purpose of salvation, transformation and glorification.
- C. This is why we love the church. It is the work of God. It is His redemptive work in this world.

II. Because it was Purchased by His Blood

- A. We are not our own. We've been bought with a price.
 1. *For you know that you were redeemed ... with the precious **blood** of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, 1 Peter 1.18-19.*
 2. We are each precious.
 - a) How we treat each other is how we treat Christ.
 - b) Christ takes up residence in every believer. *But anyone joined to the Lord is **one spirit** with him, 1 Corinthians 6.17.* The greatest person in the universe lives in every believer.
- B. We must do everything we can to instruct, teach, love, and show respect for the bride of Christ.

III. Because the Church is God's Steward of Truth

- A. 1 Timothy 3:15: *... I have written so that you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and **foundation** of the truth.*
- B. This is our purpose in the world.
- C. When you walk in the door at Cornerstone ... you will hear the truth, God's truth, God's word, because it has the power to eternally change lives.
 1. Hebrews 4:12: *For the word of God is living and **effective** and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*
 2. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: *All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be **complete**, equipped for every good work.*
- D. We hold on to truth because ... It unifies us; It lives in us. It blesses us; It controls us.

IV. As We Close..

- A. 2 Corinthians 2:14: *But thanks be to God, who always leads us in **triumph** and through us reveals the fragrance of the knowledge of him in every place. (NASB 2020)*
- B. He always leads His church in triumph. In the end ... no matter what happens we win.
- C. How about you? Are you headed for triumph?