

**Why I Love the Church**  
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**Text: Matthew 16:13-20**

We can point out the faults and flaws within the church, but there is still much to love about the church.

**Reasons to love the church**

**1. Because Jesus loves the Church**

*"...Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her...."* Ephesians 5:25

The early church was not just a few people casually getting together at Starbucks; the church was at the very center of the purpose of God.

Symbols of Jesus' relationship to the church...

- **Built on a foundation**

*...you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...a chosen and precious cornerstone ....* 1 Peter 2:5-6

- **The head and the body**

*...Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.* Ephesians 5:23

- **Groom who loves his bride**

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her... and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless – Ephesians 5:25-27.*

**2. Because I love the people who are the church**

Church people aren't perfect, but some of the best people in the world are in the church.

**3. Because of its positive influence**

*...and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. – Matthew 16:18*