

Why I Love Church

Sermon delivered on August 16th, 2015

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Text: *Ephesians 5:25-33*

I - Introduction

Occasionally, I meet people who say, I love God, I love Jesus and then say, but I hate church. And the usual reason 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? We need to recognize that the church is not the only place where we find hypocrites, they are everywhere. You will find them in the school, at the work places, in the grocery stores, Petco Park, Disney Land, Wal Mart, I-15, etc. Hypocrites are everywhere.

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 not drive on the freeway because of the hypocritical drivers? Of course not, it would not be practical.

What is a hypocrite?

A **hypocrite** is a person who acts contrary to his or her stated beliefs and feelings.

I do not one hundred percent act the way I believe. And if you are honest, I believe you will confess that too. All of us without exemption, at one point or another have been hypocrites.

So, they are right. The church is full of hypocrites, because none of us have consistently lived out all our stated beliefs and feelings, and this includes all those who hate church because of hypocritical Christians.

The Only One Who is NOT a Hypocrite

There is only one who is not a hypocrite and that is Jesus Christ. He is the only One who has consistently acted and lived up to His belief and teachings. He is the only One who has perfectly lived what He preached.

I am glad that though, at times I am a hypocrite, He still loves me and gives me a hope to be transformed. He has not given up on me.

Today, I would like to speak with you about how **Christ view the church**; not somebody's point of view but Jesus' point of view of church.

It is God's will that we 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 sole Christians, a maverick. **You cannot live the Christian life without the church.**

My Prayer and Desire

My desire is through this message God will cause us **to be excited about the church** and that we **may grow in our love and affection** for her, just as God has and wants us to.

Psalm 84

1: How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! 2: My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. 3: Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God. 4: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

10: For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Psalm 122:1 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

Psalm 92:12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13: Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. 14: They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; 15: To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

The sermon today is basically about, why I love the Church?

If you want to know more about the church please visit our website gracetruthbbc.org and check out sermons I preached on November 2nd and 9th, 2014; **I Will Build My Church** and **What is the Church?**.

II - Reasons Why I Love the Church

1. Christ loves 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. I love the church because Jesus loves the church. What Jesus loves, I love.

The people who say, I love God, I love Jesus but I don't need the church, **most likely do not know the Jesus of the Bible**. Because the Jesus of the Bible loves 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 Jesus Christ and hate 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.

When 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.

He loved us with a love exceeding great and strong, which is wonderful, inconceivable, and unparalleled; and even as the Father has loved Him; with a love that is free and sovereign, unchangeable and everlasting.

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.

2. Christ gave Himself for the church

25: **Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**

Christ loves the church. He values the church so much that He literally, completely and utterly gave Himself for her. **I want to be careful when I talk about the church,** because Christ loves the church so much that He gave Himself up for her.

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.**

Not the world, and the things of it, which are His; not men, nor angels, nor animals, not goats, Bulls, lambs, but Himself.

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.

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 is well-pleased** with the offering on the ground of its sweetness, and so is reconciled to us.

3. Christ is committed in purifying the church

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."* She would have believed, if weren't 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!** Fasten your eyes on Him. *"I am not offering you Christians. I am offering you Christ."* The One who died for you and me, even for the hypocrites.

But 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, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word. The Word in all its searching, humbling, rebuking, correcting, informing, stimulating, refreshing, consoling 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.

Christ's Ultimate Goal for the Church

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.

4. Christ is the Head, the church is His body

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. 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Ephesians 1:22 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.

Ephesians 1:30 For we are members of **his body**, of **his flesh**, and of **his bones**. 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

One of the rewards of Jesus' resurrection is that He was appointed head of the church. One of the prizes He got for being crucified and raised from the dead - the Father made Him the Head of the church. He is the head and the church is His body.

5. Christ glorifies God through the church

The church is the way the glory of God is displayed and proclaimed to the world.

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 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.

III - 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 treasure? 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 brought back to life

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 is to be raised up from the dead. Before you can be part of the church you got to be part of Jesus and the only way to get to Jesus is by being raised from the dead.

That's why when we gather together as people of there should be some kind of celebration.

Every time we come to the door we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and our own resurrection from the dead unto life.

2. You must unashamedly proclaimed your coming back to life

Now that you have been brought back to life, you can be part of the visible NT local church. You can be a part of a local church whose heart beat is the death, the burial and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What is our story? We 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. Our story is that Jesus is alive and He has transformed our lives, and we are not ashamed to proclaim that. We are not ashamed to be identified with Christ and with His church.

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, 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 peo-

ple. Young and old, you are invited to come and openly confess your allegiance to Christ and His church!

IV - An Open Invitation

My prayer and my hope is the Grace & Truth 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.

Grace & Truth Bible Baptist Church extends to you an invitation to become a part of the life and ministry of our church family. Would you give me that privilege to lead you and to be you pastor you? I will not promise you much, but I promise you this, by the grace of God, I will seek to lead you with grace and truth.

AMEN!