

The Greatness of the Church

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It is common to hear the church spoken of as if it were of no consequence or importance at all. Some, even preachers among them, believe the church is completely optional in one's religious life. If one is thinking of a human institution of religion, not founded by Christ, and not following the New Testament, then such churches are not only unimportant, they are harmful. When we speak of the greatness of the church, we refer to the church which Christ built, which is His kingdom on earth (Mat. 16:18-19) and over which He reigns from Heaven at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34-36). Why is it so very great?

- 1. Because of its Founder.** Jesus built the church on His own Sonship of God (Mat. 16:16-18). He is the Chief Cornerstone in its foundation (Eph. 2:20). If Ford Motor Company is great because of the genius of Henry Ford, how much greater is the church because of the genius of its Founder, Jesus Christ!
- 2. Because of the price paid for it.** Most institutions are founded to enrich the founder, including many churches. However, Jesus built His church, not for Himself, but for the eternal welfare of His enemies, men lost in sin. In the act of dying on the cross to save men, His blood became the purchase price for the church (Acts 20:28). The church is those people whose souls have been bought from slavery to Satan and saved to serve Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19). If the perfect, precious blood of Christ is worth anything, then the church He bought with it is of infinite greatness.
- 3. Because of its intimate relation to Christ.** It is the called out, saved people of which He is the Savior (Eph. 5:23). It is the spiritual body of which He is head (Eph. 1:22-23). It is the bride of which He is the husband (Eph. 23, 32). It is the kingdom over which He is the King (Mat. 16:18-19; Col. 1:13). It is the army of which He is Commander in Chief (2Tim. 2:3-4). It is the family in which we have Him as a Brother and God as our Father (Mat. 12:50; Rom. 8:17).
- 4. Because of its mission.** The mission of Jesus Himself dictates the mission of His church. He came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Jesus' church is not a political power like Roman Catholicism, nor an economic power like Mormonism, nor a militaristic power like Islam, nor a mystical body like Yoga or Buddhism. The church of Christ exists primarily to serve the spiritual needs of men through preaching the Gospel of Christ (Mark 16:15-16).
- 5. Because of its blessings.** God gives many good gifts to all men, saint and sinner alike (Mat. 5:45; Jam. 1:17). His greatest blessings are spiritual blessings, and these are to be found only in Christ and His church (Eph. 1:3-7). One does not have the benefits of this Divine institution apart from membership in it. Forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, hope of Heaven, sonship of God, the privilege of prayer, fellowship with the best people on earth, the opportunity to serve both God and men and many other blessings are found only in Jesus' church.

It is a matchless privilege to be a member of the church of Jesus Christ. Moreover, all men are invited to enter into it and partake of its privileges by obeying the Gospel (Acts 2:38, 41, 47). Men reject this holy privilege to their own eternal destruction.

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