

# Why the Church Is So Great—No. 2

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The New Testament church is the greatest institution ever built. This is so because it is ordained of God and built by Christ through the work of His apostles (Mat. 16:18-19; Eph. 3:10-11). Due to the ways in which men have corrupted it throughout its history, its simplicity and beauty have been obscured to most men. It is impossible for men to appreciate the church too much. Christ loved it so much He gave Himself up for it (Eph. 5:25). One cannot be true to Christ without being true to His church. If we mistreat His church, we mistreat Him (Acts 9:4-5). The fact that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is its founder makes it great above all other institutions on earth, but there are other things that contribute to its greatness also.

**The church is great because of the price paid for it.** Most earthly institutions (including many religious organizations) are founded to enrich the founder. Not so with the church of Jesus. He built His church, not for Himself or for some personal advantage or profit. Rather, He built it for the eternal welfare of His enemies, men who were doomed to Hell without the church. In the act of dying on the cross to save men, He paid for the church with the price of His blood, (Acts 20:28). This fact teaches us that the church is those people whose souls have been bought from the enslavement to Satan in sin and who have been saved to serve Christ. This is accomplished when one obeys the Gospel plan of salvation (Rom. 6:17-18), which includes being buried and raised with Christ in baptism (vv.3-4). Peter says that we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, from a way of life that was worthless, (1 Pet. 1:18-19). To accomplish this phenomenal task, Christ had to humbly give up His exalted place in Heaven, become a servant among men as a man, and die for the sins of others (Phi. 2:5-8). If the perfect, precious blood of Christ is worth anything, then the church bought with it is of infinite greatness!

**The church is great because of its intimate relationship to Christ.** It is described by several comparisons or figures in the New Testament, in all of which its vital relation to Christ is emphasized:

- 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 the Head (Eph. 1:22-23).
- It is the bride of which he is the husband (Eph. 5:23, 32).
- It is the **kingdom** over which He is King (Mat. 16:18-19).
- It is the **army** of which He is Commander-in-Chief (2 Tim. 2:3-4).
- It is His **family** in which we have Him as a Brother and God as our Father (Mat. 12:50; Rom. 8:17).

If there is any honor at all in being associated with great people, consider the greatness of the honor to be found in all these intimate associations with Christ by being in His church! Since to be in His church is to be in all the above, therefore, to be in His church is to be saved and to be outside of it is to be without hope and without God in this world.

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