

Why the Church Is So Great—No. 1

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The church described in the New Testament is the greatest institution in all the world and through all time. This can be said without qualification because the church is a Divine institution. It has been so corrupted and perverted by human hands since its beginning more than 2,000 years ago, that many have never seen the beauty and splendor of it as Christ intended it to be. It is imperative that we not think of it in terms of a mere human or worldly entity. Men dare not treat it like some kind of business, civic, or political organization. It is the kingdom of Christ on earth (Mat. 16:18-19), over which Christ reigns from Heaven at the right hand of God (Acts 2:34-36). One cannot be loyal to Christ Himself without being loyal to His church or kingdom. Those who mistreat His church mistreat Him. (Acts 9:4-5). Both members and non-members need to appreciate the church of Christ more. In interest of this aim, we will study, in this and subsequent brief articles, some reasons why the church is so great.

The church is great because of its founder. There is no more important factor in any organization than its founder. The driving force who gave the Ford Motor Company its direction and purpose was Henry Ford. He determined its function and established its principles of operation. He organized it the way he wanted it to operate. His wealth and wisdom gave it birth and it is an extension of his own ideals and personality. Jesus is the founder of His church. He promised to build it (Mat. 16:18). He is the chief cornerstone in its foundation (Eph. 2:20). Its purpose, function, principles of operation and its organization were all divinely conceived and ordained. It was not a last-minute contingency or a substitute for another plan that had failed. Rather, it was (and is) according to the eternal purpose of God which He fulfilled through Christ (Eph. 3:10-11). The church is a result of the Spiritual wealth and wisdom of Christ. It is such an extension of Jesus' divine personality that it is said to be "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23). If the Ford Motor Company is great because of Henry Ford, how much more is the church great because of Jesus Christ.

It is our obligation to reflect His spirit and ideals as members of His church. Christians are exhorted to "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus (Phi. 2:5). Peter reminds us: "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow His steps (1 Pet. 2:21).

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