

4-16-23
SO WHY DO I NEED A CHURCH?
4-16-23 from 4-15-00

Text

Matthew 16:15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

Matthew 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matthew 16:17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [it] unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Intro: Last week was Easter Sunday and people attended churches all across America out of tradition.. Easter and Christmas are times for church. I believe that we celebrate the resurrection of Christ every Sunday, and we should make the first day of the week special every week. I like what Bryan McDonald said last week in his Seder meal. He said the Jews celebrate the 7th day of the week as a day of rest and worship.. we worship the first day of the week and rest. Due to the work of Christ we start out the week with rest because he did the work of salvation for us. The Jews, and in fact it seems all those who worship the 7th day, are trying to enter into rest by working towards it. We enter into his rest by his work and by grace based on what he did for us. I thought that was profound and good. You will find in the book of Acts, the New Testament church met and worshipped the first day of the week.

As we enter the end times, I have noticed a great falling away of many people in obeying the command to assemble themselves together faithfully in church. Many Christians are becoming neglectful in their heart for assembling themselves together.

When inviting people to church through the years, I have actually had people respond to me... "Church... what do I need that for.. " Others are not as bold as to say that to my face but in fact their actions say it loud and clear....

When it comes to the work of the Lord we are in perilous times.. Some in response to the attitude of the day have decided to aggressively make the church more relevant for today... New Music, New Methods, A New Philosophy of Ministry... these are the Contemporary Christians.... the Bible describes this trend well when it says:

II Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

II Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

II Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

People more and more are heaping to themselves teachers after their own lusts.. What that is saying, is that end time people will not endure sound preaching and doctrine based on Scriptural truth. They will want a message tailored to their own lusts, passions and desires. They will want more entertainment than sound doctrinal teaching..

So we are in perilous times when it comes to Church ministry.. This morning we want to consider this question..

"SO WHY DO WE NEED A CHURCH"

INTRO:

First of all let us consider.. What is the church. When we understand that we may understand more about why we need the church.

I. So What is the Church?

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Ephesians 5:31 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 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband.

The Church is called the bride of Christ.. It is a living Spiritual body of believers mysteriously united together by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. We are bonded together in spirit and by the Word of God to do the will of God on earth. All our outward ordinances and activities should be an outward manifestation of the mysterious invisible union.

CHURCH ORDINANCES ARE A SPIRITUAL PICTURE OF ITS DOCTRINE
ALL FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS ARE A PHYSICAL PICTURE OF ITS REALITY
EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS ARE OUTWARD MANIFESTATION OF ITS WORTH..

You do not become part of the church through outward ceremonies, or traditions, the only ones who are part of the Church are those who receive Christ by faith and have received His spirit...

The church is the assembly of a group of people who have been saved, baptized and are endeavoring to serve Christ and be a witness for him in this world. The Church is the earthly assembly of God's heavenly people.

II. HOW DO I BECOME PART OF THE CHURCH?

Matthew 25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Matthew 25:2 And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish.

Matthew 25:3 They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

Matthew 25:4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

Matthew 25:5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

Matthew 25:6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Matthew 25:7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

1. Notice all 10 of these virgins looked alike..

From outward appearances you cannot tell if someone is part of the true Church...

You don't become part of the Church just because your name is on a roll.

You don't become part of the Church just because you have been baptized.

You don't become part of the true church just because you attend service...

You don't become part of the church just because you know doctrine..

THE ONLY WAY YOU WILL BE ACCEPTED OF THE BRIDEGROOM AS HIS BRIDE IS IF YOU HAVE OIL IN YOUR LAMP...

That oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit of God...

All ten of the virgins looked alike outwardly..

At the resurrection.. only 1/2 of those who are on church rolls will be part of the true Church....

NOT PART OF THE CHURCH JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE CATHOLIC, BAPTIST, METHODIST, PRESBYTERIAN... All those who teach that Jesus was born of virgin, died buried rose again.. According to Scriptures.. Only half are really part going to accepted as the bride of Christ...

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

The Spirit of Christ is the oil...

If this parable has a true application in real life than Easter for many is a time to get religious... but about half of the people that went to church on Easter Sunday in all "Christian Churches" will not be accepted when Christ returns...

From outward appearances all 10 of these virgins looked alike..

2. Only those virgins with oil in their lamps will qualify as the bride of Christ....

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Why do some have it and others do not?

The reason is simple... the five foolish virgins were not willing to be spent for the oil...

When the time came and Jesus returns for is bride, the foolish virgins were told to go and buy the oil for themselves. You cannot give someone your salvation. Paul said he wished he could. If he could he said he would.

Romans 9:3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

You cannot give your salvation to someone else. You can witness to others but you cannot give them a spiritual blood transfusion and impart to them what you have. In other words each person has to make that commitment themselves.

If there is something you are holding on to in this life as more important than Christ.. than you are like one of those sleeping virgins.

In the parable of the 10 sleepy virgins the only reason that 5 of them had no oil in their lamp was because they were not willing to be spent for it. They refused to buy it. After all no one could see if they had oil or not.

My personal relationships, my family and career meant so much to me.. I feared what they would think of me if I became a Christian.

I believed in God..

I prayed

I didn't have oil in my lamp... until I was willing to empty my spiritual purse and trade what was important to me in this life for Christ.

Matthew 25:8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

Matthew 25:9 But the wise answered, saying, [Not so]; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

Matthew 25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

Matthew 25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

When will that door be shut?

At death it is too late to get that oil...

At the coming of Christ it will be too late to get that oil...

Will you become part of the true Church?

You need to trade what is in your earthly treasure chest for heavenly treasure...

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Don't be like Lot's wife..

Don't be like Judas Iscariot... 30 pieces of silver..

Don't be like rebellious Israelites.. heart was back in Egypt

What kept back these 5 foolish virgins from purchasing that oil earlier?

MAYBE:

They thought they had time....

They thought they could straddle the fence of neutrality

They thought they could wait to the last minute..

They thought that the return of the bridegroom was far off..

3. Only as you give him the purse of your heart can you purchase the Holy spirit

When do two people get married... only when they vow to forsake all others can they be married..

You don't buy a bride with money.

You purchase your bride with your heart...

Would you marry someone who wanted to still date after marriage?

When you get married you should vow to forsake all others... for that bride or groom...

If you are holding back spiritually, Christ will not accept you as his bride..

4. Have you come to that place in your life where you have been willing to forsake all others this is when you purchase the oil...

It will cost you something to do that.. it will cost you in the area of commitment.. and dedication etc..

Who really knows what they are getting into when they get married????

So too you make that commitment as a step of faith...

III. WHY THEN DO WE NEED THE PHYSICAL BODY OF THE CHURCH?

If the real Church is an invisible mystical body, that you only become part of by receiving His Holy Spirit into your heart. Once you receive the spirit of God you become part of the Church.. why then do you need the physical body that we call a church which is represented by a local assembly?

Until we are united with Christ..... notice all 10 virgins were huddled together in one place.. Waiting for the bridegroom to come..

Why were they united together? They no doubt received an order from the bridegroom to wait together.. till he comes..

While we are waiting to enter into the spiritual marriage we have received orders from the Lord to stay together until he comes back.. The church is that place where we spiritual unite and stay together...

According to Ephesians 5 Christ gave himself for his church:

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Notice that the Bible says, Jesus had in mind to draw together a group of people that he calls his church. Will you despise that which our Lord purchased and died for?

When Saul was persecuting the church, Jesus said to Paul why persecutest thou me?

Luke 19:12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

Luke 19:13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

Occupy the vineyard.. stay in his house... and take care of things until he comes..

Those who abandon the Church are not even in the right place for the Lord to receive them. Those who abandon the local church are not even huddled together to be received of the bridegroom.

YOUR RIGHT STANDING IN THE CHURCH IS EVIDENCE OF YOUR RIGHT STANDING WITH GOD... The house of God is symbolic of his local Church.....

The Lord said to the Apostles..

Matthew 18:18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

I was talking to Brother Abante about people who got mad at me, left the church, were bitter and then died.. I remember when I told him the story he said emphatically ... "They're is hell brother.. they're in hell...."

The Bible says,

I John 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

The church is God's bride.. birds of a feather flock together. If you are his bride you will be assembled together with the rest of the body awaiting Christ's return.

The church is God's vineyard, the talents given to his servants were to be invested in the master's vineyard..

The church is God's house. We as his servants are suppose to be part of that building and we are to be adding to that building till he comes.

I Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

I Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

I Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

I Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

I Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

When you travel by air it is important to be at the airport when the plane took off..

If you were told.. Tarry in the airport till it comes.. and you said.. when will you come .. the Lord says none of your business.. just wait.. and be ready.. have your ticket purchased.. it could be an hour.. a day, two days.. just wait... What if I decided to go sight seeing and while I am sight seeing the plane lands and takes off? You would miss your plane.

Your right standing with the local Church is your right standing with God. The church is God's airport so to speak.

How can expect that you are right with God if you cannot be right with God's church?

Jesus said:

Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done [it] unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done [it] unto me.

LISTEN TO THIS... THIS IS IMPORTANT..

John warned that those who abandon God's Church are not really saved:

I John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

The 5 unwise and sleeping virgins had not abandoned the assembly and they were not saved.. How much worse will it be for those who will have nothing to do with the assembly!

IV. SO WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL REASONS I NEED A LOCAL CHURCH:

The Church.. a fellow replied to me.. "What do I need that for.."

1. FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE GATES OF HELL

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Revelation 13:4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who [is] like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

Revelation 13:7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

God promised special power to His church and that Church will prevail as long as we are in right standing with Christ.. and do his will... Individual saints cannot claim that same power against Satan. The church is our spiritual umbrella.

Rome could not conquer the Church..

No nation on earth has prevailed against the church...

The Church must be removed before Satan is able to take over the world...

II Thessalonians 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

II Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [will let], until he be taken out of the way.

II Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

II Thessalonians 2:9 [Even him], whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

So you need a church for spiritual protection.

2. TO FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

Only the Church can properly fulfill the great commission..

Salvation.. Baptism.. Continual teaching... There is No school in the US still preaching the gospel as old as our church...

3. TO STRENGTHEN EACH OTHER TO DO THE WORK OF THE LORD

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some [is]; but exhorting [one another]: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

There is camaraderie in the church...

We need mutual camaraderie and encouragement in pursuing the work and the mind of Christ.. In the church we are provoked to that end...

God knew that we need that so he commanded us to assemble together in the church that we might have that..

4. THE CHURCH IS A PLACE TO DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

I Peter 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

I Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, [even so] minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

The Church provides a spiritual nursery atmosphere where new Christians can crawl and then walk and then run for God..

Where else will you be encouraged to do things for God and serve God?

Won't happen at work.. school... in society..

5. THE CHURCH IS A PLACE TO PRACTICE KINGDOM BUSINESS

I Corinthians 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

I Corinthians 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

I Corinthians 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

I Corinthians 6:4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

God allows conflicts and problems to happen in the church so that we can practice applying spiritual principles to real life situations..

There must be trials and problems and even exposure to people who are not right with God..

If the saints shall judge the world first they must practice judging matters in the local church...

6. THE CHURCH IS A PLACE TO UPHOLD THE TRUTH

I Timothy 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Every Church ought to be a place where the truth is studied explored and upheld..

The Courts are there to uphold civil law..

The Church is there to uphold the truth of the word of God

7. THE CHURCH PROVIDES A PLACE TO GIVE YOUR OFFERINGS TO GOD

Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of [our] lips giving thanks to his name.

Hebrews 13:16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

In the O.T. there was always a place to bring the God's offering. That was the place he said He would chose. God had a specific way to bring offerings and specific way to bring them. Why do we think He would change that?

Deuteronomy 12:13 Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest:

Deuteronomy 12:14 But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Malachi 3:9 Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation.

Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that [there shall] not [be room] enough [to receive it].

Malachi 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

Malachi 3:12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

How exactly do you give an offering to God if you do not have a local church where you can bring it?

8. THE CHURCH IS A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN FIND GODLY LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you.

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

Now when you abandon the church you abandon God's Urim and Thumin for your life. You will lack direction, you will lack that input necessary for blessing in your life.

What made David a great king? What made him a great king was he inquired of God each step of the way in all his battles. How did he do that, he went to God's ordained leaders. In his day these men were the prophets and priests, the ones ordained to lead God's people in his days.

In the church age God has given Pastor teachers. When you abandon the church you cut yourself off from their input into your life.

Search the Scriptures and you will find everyone who abandoned God's house and leaders did not prosper. Their lives were a disaster. Do you think anything has changed in that area.

9. THE CHURCH IS A PLACE WHERE OTHER PREACHERS CAN BE SENT OUT

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Just talking to a Pastor about a missionary that called him to come present his ministry. The missionary left his local church and did not join another. The Pastor would not have him come to his church. The man was very knowledgeable, but he was trying to bypass God's program and established chain of leadership. The church is to be God's sending agent.

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

V. WE SHOULD STRENGTHEN OUR LOCAL CHURCH AND SUPPORT IT..

Let the Blood flow freely...

One of the worst problems of the body is a heart problem...

If the blood of your physical body does not properly nurture other members of your body then you are in trouble...

We should never do anything that would quench the Holy Spirit...

We should never do anything to cause division and a bad spirit in the church.

- 1. Make sure that you have oil in your lamp..**
- 2. Make sure you are continually filling those lamps...**
- 3. Make sure you are assembling ready to go..**
- 4. Make sure that the church is a priority with you..**

Bottom line application:

In the day that we live God's program and desire is to work through his church to bring people to Himself. Are you part of this program?

I have committed my life to church work ever since I got saved. God showed me how important that was, and I have followed these principles.

God has blessed me.. given me all that I need. I have lacked nothing all these years. I can say that if you do the same you will be blessed. You will lack nothing.

God loves his church.. do you?

God's desire is to build his church are you a co-worker with God?

God rewards those who do good to the church ..

Church work is eternal work. What you do for the church you do for Christ..

I want to warn you about an attitude I have seen with certain people who have abandoned the church. They look at the church as a leech factor. As an entity that is just trying to siphon from them. How sad that is. Again.. Jesus said, what you do for his church you do for him.

The church is God's ordained institution to bring growth, spiritual blessings into your life.

I have heard people call the church Pastor Bissol's church .. this is Christ's church

I have heard people refer to the church as "Them..." as if it were a club..