

RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH

Part 3: Selected Scriptures

Despite all our sins and imperfections, the Lord Jesus' love for us as His church has never diminished over time. Our Lord Jesus had the church in His mind and heart as He hung dying on the Cross. Thousands of years had passed since then, the Lord's passion and love for us has never waned. God's Word reminds us that "Christ loved the church so much that He gave Himself up for us, that we might be holy and blameless" (Eph. 5:25-27). Revelation 1:5 refers to the Lord Jesus Christ as "the One who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood." It is in light of this unfailing love of the Lord Jesus for His church that we need to learn and understand the following biblical reasons why we should commit ourselves to be formal members of our local church.

1. Commitment to the church demonstrates the reality of our salvation and our love for the Lord Jesus.

2. Commitment to the church reinforces our biblical accountability.

3. Commitment to the church expresses our adherence to the essential doctrines of the Christian faith.

As a local church, we believe:

(8) in the church, the body of Christ, Christ Himself being the head of the body (Col. 1:18) and believers being the parts of the body (1 Cor. 12).

(9) in baptism and the Lord's Supper as the sacraments of the New Testament ordained by Christ Himself (Matt. 28:19, 1 Cor. 11:26).

(10) in the mission of the church to glorify God (Eph. 3:21), promote worship (John 4:23-24), edify and build up the saints (Eph. 4:11-16) and reach the lost for God (Matt. 28:19-120, Acts 13-14).

(11) in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, the one to eternal life and the other to eternal damnation (Rev. 20:11-15).

4. Commitment to the church fosters our participation in the _____.

In Matthew 28:19-20, the Lord Jesus commanded the disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." In Acts 1:8, the Lord gave this commission, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The mission of the church then, is to go into the world and make disciples by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into our local churches, that they might worship the Lord, learn and obey His Word, be equipped to serve their fellow believers and declare the same unchanging saving gospel to the lost until the Lord Jesus returns to bring His redeemed people to God's eternal kingdom.