

IS CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NECESSARY?

1. Text: Matthew 16:15-19
2. Our question: Is membership essential to our salvation? Do I have to be a member of some church?
3. This is one of the most misunderstood subjects in religion.
4. Let's move to our answer in five steps:

I. The Ill Will Toward Churches

1. Many frankly don't believe the church is that important and have a general dislike for churches and "organized religion."
2. And what do they usually see? Bible neglect, false claims, worldly church leaders, coldness and indifference; conforming to the world, hypocrisy, money-grubbing, either entertainment or boredom as worship, marketing mentality, political-social entanglements.
3. Many say: I could love Christ, but I don't like churches. Can't I be a Christian without the church?

II. Ignorance Of The Church

1. The major problem: people don't know the New Testament teachings on the church. In vast confused maze the true idea of the church is lost. Clarity will come only by going to Scripture.
2. Church is ekklesia (114 times in text) and means "called out" as to an assembly. English word church from word for "belonging to the Lord." Together: the called out assembly belonging to the Lord. We're called by the gospel (II Thess. 2:14)

III. The Importance Of The Church

1. Is that called out group important to the Lord? Absolutely!
2. Matthew 16:18 Ownership, building, indestructibility.
3. Ephesians 3:10-11 Manifold wisdom of God seen in it. In God's eternal purpose.
4. Acts 20:28 Christ purchased with His blood.
5. Ephesians 5:23, 25 Christ is the savior of the church and gave himself for her.
6. Practical reasons for it:

IV. The Identify Of The Church

1. But the problem: What we see today is not what God wants.
2. Is membership in which church essential? The church of Scripture. You do not have to be a member of any denomination to be saved. Fatal admission of the denominational world. But you cannot be saved outside the Lord's church.
3. Is church membership necessary? Yes and no. Yes, if the church of Scripture. No, if some human denomination.
4. When we offer the invitation tonight:

V. The Interlock Between The Church And Salvation

1. Imagine an incident: Acts 2 repeated
2. At end: Acted on Acts 2:38. Now what? Acts 2:47 What church?
3. Compare Mark 16:16 to Acts 2:47.
4. If we do the same thing they did then we will be saved in the same way they were. If we do the same thing they did then we will be added to the same church they were.

Conclusion:

**A Sermon preached by Monte Ginnings
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