

Church Above All

In today's world, many can take the church or leave it. Many leave it, in the sense that they don't value it so they do not participate.

See how many times the word church appears in this column. And let God be thankful for the number of times you go to church this year.

It is hard to see how an institution which is founded by God and sustained by Him can be treated so casually by so many. In fact, many famous writers, politicians, and many so-called educated people have written so many bad things about the church I am surprised that they have not been vaporized by a lightning bolt.

Still, the church continues on as the body of Christ, saving souls and doing good all the time. There is no place or group which can be the blessed and life-giving influence that the church offers.

This is a call to give thanks for what the church is, and for people to return to the blessings and grace that God provides there. Go to church, love the people and God unconditionally, and see that wonderful things can happen.

In fact, start praying for this to happen to you and others. See prayer as what it is, a force to change the world, a blessing for us and others which wins the spiritual wars hands down. "Prayer," said Martin Luther, "is a strong wall and fortress of the church; it is a goodly Christian weapon."

If you think the church needs some work, start praying. If you want the church to be vital and fresh, pray. If you want to fill your church with power and love, take up that ancient practice of prayer through which God works. It may be that you are the only one who can do it.

"What the Church needs to-day is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men [and women in every case in this quote] whom the Holy Ghost can use — men of prayer, men mighty in prayer."- **E. M. Bounds**

Have you been feeling a little down lately? Are you beginning to slip a little in the spiritual department? Perhaps it is that you haven't been to church, and when you have you have been looking at things other than God has destined us to look for.

Going to church is what a Christian does. It grows us, loves us, fills us, and makes us into the person we are born to be. Church is the place which recharges our spiritual batteries, and through which we go out to help others.

"Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man. — **Dwight L. Moody**

Find a church which grows you, where you can love and be loved. And when you find a church, stay there. Too often people get to thinking that the church is the place which agrees with all their opinions. In today's generation, which is always seeking instant gratification, people just hop from church to church looking for the perfect one, which never works.

This quest takes away from the church as God's hand. "Due to our consumer mindset, people are prone to jump from church to church, which weakens the church overall."~ Francis

Chan

Many step away from the church as adults, just when we need it the most. We were brought up to know God, and to try to pretend we don't is just lying to ourselves. We must give thanks for those saints who told us of Christ, and be the generation which saves those who are lost today.

“My mother,” wrote Tyler Perry “was truly my saving grace, because she would take me to church with her. I would see my mother smiling in the choir, and I wanted to know this God that made her so happy. If I had not had that faith in my life, I don't know where I would be right now.”

As the church, we must be followers of Christ and live the way he teaches us. We must give that confident and authentic witness which makes people want to join God's kingdom. We must be different, better, more alive, and more holy. “Those outside the church expect followers of Christ to live differently, yet today many in church are chasing after the world - not to win them, but to be like them.”~ Billy Graham

The church is a great place to be. The best place on earth. And the only way to get from this earth to the next. Jesus who is the way to heaven had founded the church to be his holy and mighty arm. We have a holy fellowship, a group like no others.

“Those who embrace belief in Christ Jesus are bound together in Him, in a real yet incomplete way, in his Body, the Church. Faith is never a solitary activity, nor can it be simply private. Faith in Christ always draws us into a community and has a public dimension.”~ Vincent Nichols

This is who we are. This is who all people are destined to be once they meet Jesus. His church, for better or worse, for all time!