

ARE YOU DEDICATED TO THE CHURCH THE LORD BUILT?

Anyone that is at all knowledgeable of the Bible knows that the church spoken of and to which various apostles and others wrote letters was built by the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said to Peter and the other apostles, "...upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). This church is often spoken of as the body of Christ. Paul wrote that God had ..."put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). All that are deemed saved in the sight of God are added to this church (Acts 2:47). And Jesus is said to have purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28) and He is said to be the saviour of it (Eph. 5:23). Now with all this said, we get to the point of this brief article.

Knowing all the above things about the church that the Lord built, are you dedicated to it? There is a big difference in having been added to the body of Christ some time in the past and being dedicated to the body of Christ in the present! What might be some of the means by which we could measure our dedication to the Lord's church, thus to the Lord Himself.

Just what does it take to make you miss a service of the Lord's church. Does a little tiredness, a little company coming in, a little fun in the sun type activities cause you to miss the services of the church? One is not dedicated to the Lord and His body if anything or anyone, outside of something such a sickness, will come between him and the commanded worship of the church.

Can one really claim dedication if they never even try to lead others to that institution bought and built by the Lord for the salvation of all men who will come in obedience to him? We think not! The main job of the church is to take the soul saving gospel to those who are lost. No man can become a member of the church the Lord built without having been taught the word of God.

Is it possible for one to dedicated to the church that the Lord built and then refrain from laying by in store as has prospered and as one has purposed in their heart (I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 9:7)? Again, we think not!

Dedication means recognizing the church for what it is and making it the focus of your life.

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WHAT WE NEED IS MORE SALT!!!

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

In the above verse and those following, speaking of the child of God being a light of the world, it is evident that as a Christian, one has responsibility to influence the world. Using the metaphor of salt as in verse thirteen above, let us consider our responsibility to the world around us. Three attitudes toward the world are available to a Christian. First, he can conform to the world, but this is forbidden. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..."* (Rom. 12:2). Secondly, one can practice asceticism or flee from the world. Going to a place of solitude and cutting oneself off from the world around them, having little or no contact is also forbidden by God's word. This very command to be the salt of the world and the light of the world forbids one fleeing the world. The third attitude is that of striving to influence the world around us.

The apostle Paul instructed Timothy, *"...but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity"* (I Tim. 4:12). The life we live can serve as a great means of influence with those around us. Let us never be found guilty of influencing those around us to live as servants of Satan rather than servants of God.

Certainly our influence will be felt by the world around us, if we will spend time teaching the gospel to others. Not all will be obedient, but those that do become God's children will be changed. And, even those that do not become Christians may well be affected for the good.

But, don't forget the last part of Matt. 5:13. *"...but if the salt have lost his savour...it is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men"*. Brethren, if we fail to be salt and light, we fail in our responsibility to our Father in heaven and His Son our saviour. When we can live in the world for years without ever being noticed as being different, we are not influencing the world but conforming to the world.

What we (the world, the church as a whole and this local congregation) needs is more salt. Pass the salt please!

Robert