

“COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH”
MATTHEW 16:13-20

INTRO: From the biblical perspective, **THE GREATEST INSTITUTION ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH IS THE CHURCH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.** Every born again believer is a part of the **CHURCH** and yet we often fail to realize **HOW SIGNIFICANT THE CHURCH IS IN GOD’S PLAN AND PROGRAM FOR THIS DISPENSATION OF GRACE. Because of that there are many Christians who fail to be committed to the church of God to the degree that Christ desires.** Consequently, the respect for and the ministry of the church is not to the level that God would have it to be. Therefore, in this study, we are going to take a closer look at the church as revealed in the Word of God with the prayer that each of us will grow in our understanding of and commitment to **THE GREATEST INSTITUTION ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH.**

(My personal background in the church)

OBSERVATIONS FROM MATTHEW 16:18,19

1) THE EXISTENCE OF THE CHURCH – Vs. 18a

“I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH”

- Based on the work of Christ on the Cross – Acts 20:28
- Based on the work of Christ via the Holy Spirit
 - John 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:13
- Based on the work of Christ through His Resurrection
 - Ephesians 4:7-12ff

2) THE EFFECT OF THE CHURCH – Vs. 18b

“THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.”

- -Generally speaking, all of Hell (Hades) under Satan’s forces will do all possible to destroy the church
- -Specifically speaking, Hell (Hades) is the place of punishment for those who die without Christ.
- Practically speaking, Death is a weapon Satan uses to destroy the church (John 10:10), but he has no power to stop the church. Even as believers die, more come to Christ and carry on the ministry of the church.

3) THE EFFORT OF THE CHURCH – Vs. 19

“WHATSOEVER THOU SHALT LOOSE ON EARTH SHALL BE LOOSED IN HEAVEN”

- The effort of the Church is to get out the Word of God. When that happens, God honors and uses His Word accordingly by **saving** souls who believe, by **maturing** believers in Christ and by **correcting** believers who sin.

4) THE ESSENCE OF THE CHURCH

The Universal Church – **The worldwide Holy Spirit established organism, of which Christ is the head, composed of All Born-Again Believers from the time of Pentecost in Acts 2 until the Rapture as revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.**

The Local Church – **The Local assembly of professing baptized believers in Jesus Christ, organized according to NT principles, to do the work of God in a certain location. Note :1 Corinthians 1:1,2; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1**

EVERY OBEDIENT SPIRIT-FILLED CHILD OF GOD WILL BE COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST WITHOUT ANY HESITATION

I. THE PURPOSE OF BEING COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

A. Because the Church belongs to God – 1 Corinthians 1:2

- **Commitment to the Church is the result of being committed to God.**

B. Because Christ Died for the Church – Acts 20:28

- **Commitment to the Church is commitment to the work of Christ.**

C. Because Christ is the Head of the Church – Colossians 1:18

- **Commitment to the Church is commitment to Christ.**

D. Because the Church is the Pillar and Ground of Truth – 1 Timothy 3:16

- **Commitment to the Church is commitment to God’s absolute truth.**

E. Because the Church is Christ’s Body on Earth – Ephesians 1:22,23

- **Commitment to the Church is commitment to all that Christ is, has done and will do on earth.**

II. THE PROCESS OF BEING COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

NOTE: BEING COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH IS MORE THAN A GOLD STAR FOR PERFECT ATTENDANCE. IT INVOLVES PERSONAL DEDICATION, BASED UPON A BIBLICAL CONVICTION AND COMMITMENT TO THE WORK OF OUR LORD THROUGH HIS CHURCH. IT REQUIRES SUBMISSION TO HIS AUTHORITY, AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION THROUGH THE GIFTS, ABILITIES AND TALENTS GOD HAS GIVEN US BY TOTALLY YIELDING OURSELVES TO GOD AND THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN EVANGELIZING THE LOST, EDIFYING THE BELIEVERS, AND EXALTING GOD UNTIL WE SEE CHRIST IN THE RAPTURE. HEBREWS 10:25

- A. By Being Born Again
- B. By Being a Student of the Word of God
- C. By Being a Prayer Warrior
- D. Being a Financial Supporter
- E. By Being a Regular Active Participant
- F. By Being a Spirit-filled Servant (Spiritual Gifts)
- G. By Being a Protector of the Ministry (Doctrinally and Personal Holiness)

III. THE POWER OF BEING COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

- A. Personal Obedience to the Word of God – 2 Timothy 3:16,17
- B. Personal Submission to the Holy Spirit – Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16

LESSON AND APPLICATION

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IS NOT JUST ANOTHER ORGANIZATION OF THE WORLD. IT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN PLANNED AND DESIGNED BY GOD FOR THIS DISPENSATION TO MAKE HIM KNOWN TO THE WORLD. IT IS A PRIVILEGE AND HONOR FOR BORN-AGAIN BELIEVERS TO BE A PART OF THE CHURCH AND TO BE COMMITTED TO ALL THAT IT IS. BEFORE BEING COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH WE MUST BE COMMITTED TO ALL WHO GOD IS. THE TRUE RESULT OF BEING COMMITTED TO GOD WILL BE BEING COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH. **ARE YOU TRULY COMMITTED TO GOD? ONE WAY TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION IS TO EXAMINE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH.**