
Bible Talk

This week the question is: **What is the church good for?**

Today, there are many ideas about what the church is good for.

- Some think the church is good for women and children.
- Some see the church as a good place to meet a single person to date.
- Some think the church is a good place for babysitting while mom and dad go out, or sleep in.
- Some think the church is a good place for wholesome recreation.
- Some see the church as simply a tax deduction on Schedule A of their income taxes.
- Some think the church is good for nothing.

But would it surprise you to learn that Jesus did not build His church for any of these reasons! That's right! Jesus did not design the church:

- for just women and children
- as a dating service
- as a babysitting service
- to provide recreation
- to give a tax deduction
- to help pay rent and utility bills

Jesus did not design the church for any of these purposes! He had a more noble purpose in mind when He designed the church!

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH

First, let us notice that the church was extremely important to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

Acts 20:28

28 ... shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Listen to this! Jesus purchased the church with His own blood! This should tell each of us that the church is extremely valuable and important to the Lord! He would never have shed His blood for something worthless! Surely the church is good for something.

Again:

Ephesians 5:25

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Please think carefully about the implications of this passage! If Jesus gave Himself for the church and shed His blood for the church, neither you, nor I can be saved without the Lord's church.

MEN ARE RECONCILED TO GOD IN THE CHURCH

Not only did Jesus die for His church, but the church would be used to reconcile men to God:

Ephesians 2:16

16 and that He might **reconcile them both to God in one body** through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Notice carefully that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, would be reconciled unto God in the one body -- the church.

To "reconcile" means to restore friendship between two opposing parties. When men sin they are separated from God (Isaiah 59:2). The sinner is opposed to God and God is opposed to the sinner. But Jesus is able to "reconcile" men with God. He is able to restore the friendship that use to exist between God and man. How does Christ restore this friendship? He does it "by the cross in one body"!!! This is why the church is so important.

- 1) Men are reconciled to God only in the church!
- 2) No one can be reconciled to God outside the church.
- 3) Only members of the church of Jesus Christ can be saved from their sins and be reconciled to God.

THE CHURCH AS GOD SEES IT

There are many other things which the church is good for.

(1) The church is good for declaring the eternal wisdom of God

The Bible teaches that before the world was ever created, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit decreed that there would one day be a church established. This church would be brought into the world to save men and would make known the "wisdom of God":

Ephesians 3:10-11 (NASV)

10 In order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord.

What a wonderful thought this truly is -- that the Godhead decided and decreed before the world that the church would one day declare forth the wisdom of God!!!

(2) The church is good for glorifying God:

Ephesians 3:21

21 to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

(3) The church is good for saving men:

Ephesians 5:23

23 ... Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

(4) The church is good for upholding the truth of God:

1 Timothy 3:15

15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

CONCLUSION

Much more could be said, but time will not permit. But before closing, let us ask: What may we learn from all of this???

We learn that the Lord did not give us His church

- to entertain us
- or to provide babysitting services
- or to provide a dating service
- or to provide wholesome recreation
- or to pay rent and utility bills

Instead, the Lord died for His church and built His church so we could be saved and God could be glorified!

My friend, if you are not a member of this glorious church of Jesus Christ, you can become a member:

- by believing in Jesus
- repentance
- confession of your faith
- baptism for the remission of sins

If you would obey these simple steps, the Lord would add you to His wonderful church.

Acts 2

41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

47 ... the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. To speak with someone about the congregation simply you may call **405-567-0575** or you may leave your name and number at the sound of the tone and one of our brethren will be glad to call you back and assist you. We also invite you to visit our web site www.WillOfTheLord.com where you may also download the notes from the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.