

What I Owe The Local Congregation

Lesson Two

My Prompt Presence

Introduction:

1. The church is the blood bought body of Christ (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:22-23).
2. As such, it exists in two forms – universal and local.
3. While I am a member of the universal church of Christ, my service in the church is rendered on a local level – under the local organization of the congregation.
4. Thus, because I am a member of the local church, there is much that I owe it.
5. I owe the local congregation my prompt presence...

I. I Owe the Church My Presence

- A. What we owe the local church we owe Christ.
- B. I owe the church my presence because God commands it.
 1. By command – Hebrews 10:25
 2. By example – Acts 2:42; 20:7
- C. I owe the church my presence because my brethren need it.
 1. For encouragement – Hebrews 10:25
 2. For unity – Acts 2:1; 1 Corinthians 11:17-20
 3. For prayer – Acts 1:13-14; 2:42
- D. I owe the church my presence because the world sees it.
 1. If I forsake because company has come, what is my influence?
 2. If I forsake before the world, what is my influence?
 3. If I forsake to attend a denominational service...
 4. If I forsake, how am I influencing my family?
- E. I owe the church my presence because Christ deserves it.
- F. I owe the church my presence because I need it.
 1. How many who forsake still study the Bible at home?
 2. How many who forsake still attempt to worship?
 3. How many who forsake still give to the cause of Christ?
 4. How many who forsake still do the work of the church?
- G. I owe the church my presence because Heaven requires it.
 1. The phrase "*the assembling of ourselves together*" is two words in the Greek.
 2. This phrase is found only one other time in the New Testament.
 4. In 2 Thessalonians 2:1 it is used for our assembling together with the faithful of all the ages unto Christ in Heaven.
 5. If you do not assemble here and now you cannot assemble there and then!

II. I Owe the Church My Promptness

- A. Punctuality is a virtue that Christians should possess – especially when it comes to the services of the church. {*"The trouble with being punctual is that nobody's there to appreciate it."* – Franklin Jones}
- B. Tardiness is a theft of others' time.
 1. Ephesians 4:28; 5:15-16; 6:5-8; Titus 2:9-10; Romans 6:22

2. "If I have made an appointment with you, I owe you punctuality, I have no right to throw away your time, if I do my own." - Richard Cecil
 3. "Unfaithfulness in the keeping of an appointment is an act of clear dishonesty. You may as well borrow a person's money as his time." - Horace Mann
- C. Tardiness is a lack of respect for others.
1. For the Lord – Matthew 26:29
 2. For the teacher / preacher
 3. For the student / hearer
- D. Tardiness causes missed opportunities.
1. To learn
 2. To pray
 3. To sing
 4. To visit
 5. To help
- E. Punctuality will make us better servants of the Lord.

Conclusion:

1. Shakespeare wrote – "*Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.*"
2. Someone said, "Better late than never, but better never late.
3. We owe the local congregation our presence.
4. We owe the local congregation our promptness.
5. Will you determine to be promptly present for every service of the church?