

What I Owe The Local Congregation

Lesson Three

My Participation

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.
6. I owe the local congregation my participation...

I. I Owe the Church My Participation in Worship

- A. Worship, as authorized by the New Testament, is congregational in nature.
 1. Singing (Heb. 2:12; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)
 2. Prayer (Acts 2:42; 4:31; 12:5, 12; 1 Tim. 2:8)
 3. Giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7)
 4. Preaching (Acts 20:7)
 5. Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20)
- B. The worship of the entire congregation is directed toward God.
 1. Singing (Rom. 15:9; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)
 2. Prayer (Matt. 6:6, 9; Luke 6:12; 1 Pet. 3:12)
 3. Giving (2 Cor. 8:5; 9:12)
 4. Preaching (Titus 1:3; Gal. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:1-4)
 5. Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-25)
- C. Yet, congregational worship also serves to benefit the participants.
 1. Singing (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)
 2. Prayer (1 Cor. 14:15; Phil. 4:6-7; Jam. 5:16)
 3. Giving (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 9:2)
 4. Preaching (1 Cor. 15:1; cf. Rom. 10:17)
 5. Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:26)
- D. If I do not participate in the worship service...
 1. I hinder the worship of the congregation (cf. Rev. 3:4).
 2. I do not express my worship, praise and thanksgiving to God.
 3. I prevent my brethren from being edified and encouraged.

II. I Owe the Church My Participation in Work

- A. The divinely authorized work of the church is threefold...
 1. Edification (Acts 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:3-5, 26; Eph. 4:12, 16).
 2. Benevolence (Gal. 6:10; Titus 3:8; Heb. 13:16; 1 Jn. 3:17-18)
 3. Evangelism (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; etc.)
- B. If the work of the church is going to be done, the church must do it!
- C. In order for the church to work, **I must work!**
- D. I must participate in edification...
 1. By attending and participating in the worship services.

2. By attending and participating in Bible classes.
 3. By involving myself in the teaching program.
 4. By visiting, calling and/or writing the wayward, sick and shut-in.
 5. By participating in opportunities of fellowship.
- E. I must participate in benevolence...
1. By making others aware of opportunities to do good.
 2. By visiting, calling and/or writing the wayward, sick and shut-in.
 3. By supporting the benevolent efforts of the church.
- F. I must participate in evangelism... (See *lesson five*)

Conclusion:

1. I owe the local congregation my participation in its worship and work.
2. In fact, I cannot be pleasing to God unless I participate!
3. Where will this congregation be in 5, 10, 20 years if we do not give it our participation **now**?