

What I Owe The Local Congregation

Lesson Four

My Positive Influence

My Pattern

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.
7. I owe the local congregation my pattern and my positive influence...

I. I Owe the Church My Positive Influence

- A. Every life is an influence on others – either for good or bad.
- B. As a Christian, my influence in the world must be for good.
 1. By doing good works (Matt. 5:16)
 2. By not doing evil (Rom. 13:11-14; Eph. 5:8)
 3. By obeying the Gospel (Phil. 2:15-16)
- C. As a Christian, I must leave a good impression about the church to all.
 1. I should not “run down” the church, its elders or members.
 2. I should not make fun of the church.
 3. I should not discourage others from the work of the church.
 4. I should not be ashamed of the church or the truth it upholds.
- D. Am I having a positive influence on how others view the church?

II. I Owe the Church My Pattern

- A. There are examples (patterns) that every Christian should follow.
 1. The pattern of Truth (Hebrews 8:5).
 2. The pattern of Christ (1 Peter 2:21-24).
 3. The pattern of the Apostles (1 Corinthians 11:1).
 4. The pattern of the Elders (Hebrews 13:7).
 5. The pattern of the Faithful (Philippians 3:17; Hebrews 6:12).
- B. However, every Christian must also be a pattern for others to follow.
 1. A pattern of faithfulness (1 Timothy 4:12).
 2. A pattern of good works (Titus 2:7-8; 1 Peter 2:11-17).
 3. A pattern of endurance (1 Thessalonians 1:6-8).
 4. A pattern of submission (1 Peter 3:1-6).
- C. We must avoid setting a bad example before others.
 1. A pattern of hypocrisy (Matthew 23:1-3).
 2. A pattern of pride (3 John 1:9-11).
 3. A pattern of offense (1 Corinthians 8:9-13).
- D. Am I setting a proper example that others may follow?

Conclusion: *I owe the church both my positive influence and my pattern of faithful obedience.*