

Prophecy: 3 Reasons Not to Give Up on Your Local Church

Editor's Note: This is Part 1 of a two-part series.

Who am I speaking to?

You are the one who has professed faith in Me and yet you have disconnected yourself from any meaningful relationship to My body—the church.

How then can you be Mine? Can you claim Me as your head and cut off My hands and feet?

I have ordained that you are a part of My purpose in the earth to demonstrate My love to one another in My church. By this all men will know that you are My disciple. Do you indeed profess Me, as aloof you walk through the world? Are they persuaded to call Me Lord because of your love for My people?

I am not finished with you, and I have not found your works completed in the sight of My God. Therefore, cry to Me for a spirit of repentance, humility and fear of the Lord to return to you. For without these I will spew you out of My mouth.

Return to Me, cleanse your hands, purify your heart you double-minded.

Draw near to Me once more.

Show the world you are truly My disciple by loving all men, especially My body.

Return to Me.

On the morning before my 72nd year, I was contemplating the heart of the Lord for His church in this final hour of our

church age, and this word came to me, so I wrote it down. I was meditating on what message could I possibly write to the dropout believer in this day and time. My thoughts I have written below. But the Lord clearly has His own perspective and speaks without regard to any man. However, let me speak directly to the dropout from my ministry perspective.

As a dropout, over the years, you still have a hope in Jesus whom you identify with, at least as the ideal the world needs. Yes, there have been a lot of trials and troubles in your life. Some of these have given rise to the notion that you no longer want or need the kind of relationships that are only found through fellow Christ-followers in His body. In fact, some of those very people are the ostensible reason you no longer want to be associated with them. Worst case, some of the things that the church seems to be wrapped up in don't reflect your sensibilities (rightly or wrongly).

Could it be that the culture that you have become immersed in today has dulled the insight that the Lord first gave you? Could it be that the worldly spirits of pride, materialism, self-centeredness, manipulation and love of what the world has to offer taken root in you?

Is it possible that you have become deceived by actually believing that you can love Jesus and ignore, despise, or even hate some of His people?

Only the Lord and you can truthfully answer that question.

Rather let me as Paul does implore you to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20). In fact, there are seven very good reasons why you need the church!

I challenge you to consider if you are exempt from each of these.

1. Fellowship

One important reason for your connection to the local church is fellowship with like-minded believers. In our society, with its emphasis on materialism and secular humanism, it is inevitable that believers will be affected adversely unless they maintain close fellowship with other believers in Jesus Christ.

In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul commands the church:

“Therefore this I say and testify in the Lord, that from now on you walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, having their understanding darkened, excluded from the life of God through the ignorance that is within them, due to the hardness of their hearts” (Eph. 4:17-18).

Paul and the Lord affirm that those of the world walk in “the futility of their minds,” in worldly wisdom which is “earthly, natural, demonic” (James 3:15, NASB). Thus, it is vital to every believer to have regular fellowship with spiritually minded believers in Christ to expose the darkness that beckons us.

” Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth—proving what is pleasing to the Lord” (Eph. 5:7-10, MEV).

2. Relationship

The second reason it is important for you to be connected to the local church is in order to develop true spiritual relationships. Let’s examine closely what we are saying here:

First: The need for real relationships. Everyone has certain needs in life that can only be satisfied by relationships with others. Our first relationship is with our Father, His Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. God has intended that man develop

relationships with others for mutual blessing and support. Many people try to substitute TV, sports, hobbies, nightclubs and drinks for real relationships. These are a poor substitute.

Second: The need for spiritual relationships. Every believer needs to have some person(s) that he can share spiritual insight with and “stimulate” one another to love and good works (Heb. 10:24).

Third: The need for true relationships. What other kind of relationships are there? False relationships. The apostle Paul summed it up best:

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion has light with darkness? What agreement has Christ with Belial? Or what part has he who believes with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

“I will live in them and walk in them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.”

“I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

3. Prayer

The third important reason why you need to be connected to the local church is for prayer. Remember Jesus said—without Me you can do nothing. That actually means nothing!

One major blessing of being a believer is that we have supernatural help available to us all the time. However, many

times we tend to get sidetracked with the urgency of a situation or crisis and can't or don't take time to pray. Or we may become so sick or demoralized that we just don't feel like praying.

Our friends and prayer partners in the church bear these burdens in prayer so God can "come on the scene" in our behalf. Sometimes God requires prayerful confession from us in order to be healed. The apostle James put it all together when he said:

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone merry? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much (James 5:13-16).

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