

# I LOVE THE CHURCH.

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I love the church. Christ is the Head over His church. He rules. He leads. He is our captain, our guard, our preserver, our protector and our provider. He saved us and He secures us. I absolutely love the church. If I could say this, I love my church. I don't mean that they belong to me; rather, I love the particular local assembly in which God has privileged me to shepherd and serve. I love the place where God has me. Perfect? No -- because I'm there! Is it without sin? No -- because I'm still there! But I love the flock of God which has been chosen by God, beloved by Christ, quickened by the Spirit and which thus zealously desires to engage in good deeds. I love the church. This certainly is not exhaustive, but I want to provide 8 simple, brief reasons WHY I LOVE THE CHURCH.

*I love the church because it is...*

### **1. An assembly of believers bought with the blood of Christ.**

The church consists of the community of the redeemed. Those for whom Christ died comprise the body of Christ. He redeemed them with His precious, spotless, eternal, unblemished blood. The church is a gathering of Christians.

### **2. An assembly of believers hungry for the preached Word.**

Sheep must eat. If they don't eat, they'll be famished for a time and inevitably they'll die. The people of God hunger for God's Word since there they know they'll find Christ, hear from Him, and grow. Believers want to be nourished!

### **3. An assembly of believers earnestly fighting sin & zealously pursuing holiness.**

God's chosen and beloved must put to death the former deeds of darkness and strive to replace those old habits with new, godly patterns of holiness. Christians fight sin & hate it. Christians pursue Christ and purity with fervency!

### **4. An assembly of believers devoted to fervent prayer privately and corporately.**

Healthy relationships require good communication. It is no different with believers and God. God instructs believers to pray without ceasing & He provides manifold blessings upon congregations that gather to pray. God responds!

### **5. An assembly of believers committed to evangelism pleading for souls!**

To be saved by God is to love His gospel of sovereign grace. God's gospel is an ocean of love. Believers meditate on it. It also entails a passionate concern for others to know Christ, hear this gospel, and repent to be saved. Christians refuse to go to heaven alone. He whom the gospel has saved burns in his soul to take others with him to glory.

### **6. An assembly of believers captivated by Christ and compelled to live for Him!**

Like the prophets of old, godly living is not satisfied with knowledge of God or mere obedience to God. The believer wants God & hungers for Christ *Himself*. Christ's radiant beauties & perfect delights compel believers to live for Him!

### **7. An assembly of believers loving one another enough to serve, reprove, & encourage one another.**

Like a servant looks to his master and like a child looks to his father, so every believer looks to Christ and longs to be like Him. Christians love as they've received love. They serve and encourage others as Christ has done to them. God's people count it a joyful duty and rewarding delight to serve others & sacrificially love their neighbor!

### **8. An assembly of believers supportive of their shepherd-leaders.**

Sheep depend on, love, follow, and need their shepherds. Just as Christ is the ultimate Shepherd, he has given under-shepherds to care for His people, to feed them by preaching and to care for their souls. God's people love their shepherds, seek to know them, respect them, pray for them diligently, serve them happily, and make their shepherding a joy.