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# I Went To Church Yesterday

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This is March 30, 2020 as I record this message. I would like to share with you five reasons why I went to church yesterday.

## **1) I went to church to worship God.**

I figure it's sort of the least I can do.

A long time before I was born God knew I would be born. He knew that because He knows everything, but really He knew that because He is the Creator and He had plans to make me.

And because He knows everything, He knew I was going to be bad—not too bad, just bad enough to deserve eternal hell in a lake of fire.

So, a long time ago before God made me, He devised a great plan to save me—before He even made me. He and His Son had this agreement with one another:

- God the Father decided that God the Son would come into the world as a human being (Jn 1:14).
- He would live like a man,
- Be tempted like a man (Heb 4:15),
- But live perfectly like God.

But His perfect life didn't save me. His perfect life only prepared Him to be a substitute to die in my place—to experience the hell which I deserved.

So, after living flawlessly, healing the sick, raising the dead, and going about doing good (Acts 10:38), the Lord went to Jerusalem and turned Himself over to the agents of the devil (Jn 10:18).

- For about 8 hours men shouted at Him, accused Him falsely, spit on Him, and laughed at Him.
- Then for about 15 to 20 minutes they beat Him with a scourge—but they stopped just short of beating Him to death, because they wanted to crucify Him on a cross.
- So they took Him on the edge of town and stripped Him of His clothes and nailed Him—naked—to the cross where He lingered for 6 more hours and then He died.

After it was all over, two men buried the Lord in a tomb where, three days later, He resurrected in power (1 Cor 6:14). Then 40 days later He ascended into heaven (in the sight of His disciples—Acts 1:9) where He was crowned as King of kings and Lord of Lord (1 Tim 6:15).

I went to church yesterday to remember what my Lord did for me and, in some small way, show Him I appreciate what He did for me (Lk 17:15-16). It just seems like the right thing to do. When the Lord commands me to assemble on the first day of the week to remember His substitutionary-sacrifice for me (Acts 20:7), how can I stay home?

And, so ... I went to church.

## **2) I went to church because our nation is going thru a terrible problem with coronavirus.**

This may sound strange, but think this thru with me. I have two points to make here.

First, our nation is facing a crisis with a virus that's never been seen before. We don't know exactly how to kill it.

But God knows all about this virus and He is able to destroy this virus and help us.

My second point is, the church is the only institution on the face of this earth whom God listens to (Jn 9:31; cf. Acts 2:47). So I put two and two together I here's what I get:

- If God is the only One who can help us in this crisis,
- And if the church is the only institution which God listens to,
- Then it just makes sense that the church should be assembling and praying to God for help in this time of crisis.

But instead of encouraging the church to gather and pray for the nation, our government is forbidding the church to assemble and pray to the only One Who can help us. The government is saying, "*God, we don't want your help, we'll do this on our own.*"

The thought of solving any problem without the help of God seems counterproductive. I'm convinced that no vaccine and no medical treatments will ever be effective if God doesn't bless the effort. I am thoroughly convinced that if and when we survive this crisis, it will be because God is good and God helped us and because God's people were praying to God and worshipping Him.

And, so ... I went to church.

### **3) I went to church because the church is an "essential business."**

The governor of Oklahoma stated that only businesses which offer "essential services" may continue to operate. When the list of "essential services" was published, I was saddened to learn that:

- Public and private golf courses
- Liquor stores

are considered as "essential services,"<sup>1</sup> but church assemblies were not "essential."

With all due respect to governmental leaders, this is simply untrue. The church is absolutely essential.

The church was in the eternal purposes of God. Before God created the world, He had plans to bring the church into existence. In one sense, God made the church before He made the world. To the church at Ephesus, the apostle Paul wrote:

#### **Ephesians 1:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

<sup>4</sup> just as **He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oklahoman.com/article/5658579/coronavirus-in-oklahoma-what-businesses-are-essential>; 3/27/20.

Think about this. Before the foundation of the world, God made plans to have His church. He never made plans and preparations for golf courses or liquor stores.

**Ephesians 5:25**

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.

The Lord died for the church—He did not die for a non-essential institution. Something is wrong when our society thinks golf courses and liquor stores are essential, but the Lord's church, for which He died, is non-essential (cf. Acts 20:28).

And, so ... I went to church because it's essential in the sight of God.

**4) I went to church because I'm worried about my children and my grandchildren.**

When my children were little I had them memorize the Sermon on the Mount. I taught them this was the greatest sermon ever preached in the history of the world. In that sermon the Lord said:

**Matthew 6:33**

<sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

What kind of message will I be sending to my children now if I prioritize something above the Lord's kingdom (His church)? The Lord also said:

**Luke 17:33**

<sup>33</sup> Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

How can I teach this passage to my children or my grandchildren and expect them to take it seriously when I place all my emphasis on preserving my physical life and not my spiritual life?

And, so ... I went to church because I want to teach my children and my grandchildren by example and not just by word.

## 5) **I went to church because I'm worried about my brethren and sisters in Christ.**

I've been hearing accusations hurled at faithful Christians:

- *"You shouldn't judge others to be weak just because they choose to stay home like the government says."*
- *"You might make someone else sick and it might kill them. And if they die, that will be on your head for killing an older person."*

Listen, I'm concerned about getting the coronavirus and I'm concerned about unintentionally giving the virus to someone else. I believe if someone knows for a fact he has been exposed to coronavirus, then he should quarantine himself to keep from spreading it to others. I also believe, that if someone has the symptoms of coronavirus, he should likewise quarantine himself. But there's more to worry about than physical life and physical sickness.

- What if, by going to church, I help save someone who is on the verge of dying in sin and discouragement?
- What if I don't assemble to help my brothers and sisters who might be weak and dying in their faith?
- Some of my brothers and sisters might be on spiritual life-support. Shall I ignore them in order to stay healthy physically?

### **Hebrews 10:24-25**

<sup>24</sup> And **let us consider one another** in order to stir up love and good works,  
<sup>25</sup> **not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

If I understand this correctly, I am being considerate of my brothers and sisters by assembling together with them to help them spiritually.

There's more to this life than the physical side of things. If we all isolate ourselves physically we may live longer physically—but we are only delaying the inevitable. We are all going to die.

## **Hebrews 9:27**

<sup>27</sup> And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.

I'm not looking forward to dying physically. I'm not someone living with a death wish. But there is a "*second death*" described in scripture (Rev 20:14). That's the death that worries me. There's only one kind of person protected from this "*second death*":

## **Revelation 2:11**

<sup>11</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death." '

The "*overcomer*" is the only person who will not be harmed by the second-death. The "*overcomer*" is a Christian who died in a faithful standing with the Lord.

You see, as long as we're alive on this earth, we are still on trial.<sup>2</sup> The "*overcomer*" is a Christian whose trial is over—it has ended. The "*overcomer*" is a Christian who died faithful to the Lord. This is the one whose destiny is sealed. He is forever saved and safe and can never fall away now—because he cannot be harmed by the second death.

So I'm thinking to myself: Maybe one of my brother or sisters are discouraged. Maybe one of them is getting weak. Maybe my brother needs some help and encouragement during this discouraging time. Maybe if I could help my brother he will stay faithful and one day die and become an "*overcomer*" who will never be harmed by the "*second death*."

So ... I went to church yesterday because I'm more concerned about the "*second death*," than I am about the first death.

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<sup>2</sup> The "trial" of the Lord Himself was called "in the days of His flesh" (Heb 5:7). As long as the Lord was living on this earth as a human, He was on trial. When He died, His trial ended. The devil was a fool. He thought if he could kill the Lord he would win. What the devil forgot was: As long as the Lord was alive He could sin and He could die—just like any other human. If the Lord ever sinned, we would all have been forever and hopelessly lost. He was our only hope. All of heaven was holding their breath while the Lord lived—hoping He could make it without ever sinning. But when the Lord died, His trial was over. Now the devil faces an Opponent who can no longer sin nor die. Putting the Lord to death was the worst mistake the devil ever made and he will pay the price when judgment day comes (Rev 20:10).

## **Conclusion**

I hope you went to church yesterday too. If you didn't I hope you will consider some of the things we've covered in this short study and, when next Sunday come, I hope you'll go to church too—not just for your own sake, but also for the sake of the other brothers and sisters at church who need your encouragement.

### **Matthew 16:26**

<sup>26</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

God bless the brotherhood.