

# LOVING MY CHURCH

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**TEXT: Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her**

**THEME: LOVE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Three pastors got together for coffee one day and found all their churches had bat-infestation problems. "I got so mad," said one, "I took a shotgun and fired at them. It made holes in the ceiling, but did nothing to the bats." "I tried trapping them alive," said the second. "Then I drove 50 miles before releasing them, but they beat me back to the church." "I haven't had any more problems," said the third. "What did you do?" asked the others, amazed. "I simply baptized and confirmed them," he replied. "I haven't seen them since." *Reader's Digest, July, 1994, p. 64.*

## **WHAT MAKES THE CHURCH SPECIAL**

1. THE CHURCH IS OUR REFUGE AGAINST SATAN'S ATTACK
  - Matt 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.
2. THE CHURCH MANIFESTS GOD'S WISDOM
  - Eph 3:10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, NIV
3. THE CHURCH IS THE PILLAR AND FOUNDATION OF THE TRUTH
  - 1 Tim 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

## **KEY REASONS FOR LOVING THE CHURCH**

1. JESUS BOUGHT IT WITH HIS OWN BLOOD THEREFORE HIS PEOPLE MUST TAKE CARE OF THE CHURCH AS SHEPHERDS
  - Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.
2. JESUS LOVED THE CHURCH THEREFORE HIS PEOPLE MUST LOVE HIS CHURCH AS WELL
  - Ephesians 5:25b "...Christ loved the church.."
  - 1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. NIV
3. JESUS GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR THE CHURCH THEREFORE HIS PEOPLE MUST DO SO AS WELL
  - Ephesians 5:25c "...and gave himself up for her."
  - Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

***SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:***

*The Church as the Body of Christ is the only physical representation of Jesus on earth acting as Ambassadors of God's Kingdom.*

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***CONCLUSION***

The people that will show genuine love for the church is the genuine disciples of Jesus Christ and if we don't, who will? Therefore, never give up on to prop up the church that many have died defending and standing up for it in the past, today and in the future.