

# Church Matters

Honoring Our Commitments Matters  
Sunday November 22, 2009  
Pastor Warner Smith

## Message Truth:

Does church matter to you? If so, how much does it matter? A lot or a little? The fact is the church does matter, and it matters a lot. Why? Because no other organization on the planet has the mandate of the church. Unfortunately, too few Christians are committed to being obedient in their lifestyles and maintaining unity in their relationships by being accountable to God and one another. Typically our church experience is marked by division and disappointment. Many today shop around without committing to a local body of believers or join but then drop out. This is not how Christ's bride is to behave. For church to matter to us as much as it should we must honor the commitments we have made to obey Christ, live for Him personally, and walk in unity and accountability with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

## Message Text:

<sup>8</sup>Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. <sup>9</sup>I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret **from the beginning.** <sup>10</sup>**God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom** in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup>**This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Ephesians 3:8-11 (NLT)

## Commitment Matters

<sup>23</sup>Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he **must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.**" Luke 9:23

1. Following Jesus is not a \_\_\_\_\_.  
"If anyone would come"
2. Following Jesus means that I do not always do what I w\_\_\_\_\_ to do.
3. Following Jesus means there will be a personal c\_\_\_\_\_  
I must p\_\_\_\_\_.
4. The decision I make to follow Jesus must be m\_\_\_\_\_  
each and e\_\_\_\_\_ day.

<sup>57</sup>As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>58</sup>Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." <sup>59</sup>He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>60</sup>Jesus said to him, "**Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.**" <sup>61</sup>Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family." <sup>62</sup>Jesus replied, "**No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.**" Luke 9:57-62

5. The cares of our p\_\_\_\_\_ lives get in the way of serving Christ.
6. Those who are genuinely c\_\_\_\_\_ are committed til the end.

## Obedience Matters

<sup>23</sup>Jesus replied, "**If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.** My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup>He who does not love me

will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. John 14:23-24

7. Our obedience is a s\_\_\_\_\_ test of our love for Christ than are our p\_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. <sup>27</sup> **My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.** <sup>28</sup> **I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.** <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; **no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.** <sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one."

John 10:25-30

8. True disciples of Jesus I\_\_\_\_\_ to Him and f\_\_\_\_\_ Him.
9. The s\_\_\_\_\_ of a true disciple of Jesus is s\_\_\_\_\_ in His and His Father's hand.

### Lifestyle Matters

<sup>17</sup> So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. <sup>19</sup> Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. <sup>20</sup> **You, however, did not come to know Christ that way.** <sup>21</sup> Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. <sup>22</sup> **You were taught,** with regard to your former way of life, **to put off your old self,** which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; <sup>23</sup> **to be made new in the attitude of your minds;** <sup>24</sup> **and to put on the new self,** created to be like God in true righteousness

and holiness. <sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup> "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and **do not give the devil a foothold.** <sup>28</sup> He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. <sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,** with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

Ephesians 4:17-32

10. The l\_\_\_\_\_ of those who know Christ is different from those who do not know Him.
11. Those who know Christ are to p\_\_\_\_\_ a\_\_\_\_\_ the old self (flesh nature). In doing so we do not give Satan a f\_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>21</sup> Test everything. Hold on to the good. <sup>22</sup> Avoid every kind of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

12. When in doubt as to whether something is r\_\_\_\_\_ or w\_\_\_\_\_, we should err on the side of caution.