

LESSON 2



THE CHURCH, THE MOTHER

Scripture Texts: John 3:6; Acts 2:42-44; Galatians 4:26; Colossians 3:14-15; Romans 14:1; James 5:20

The Day of Pentecost following the Lord's Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension was one of the most significant days in human history.

The church is the body of Christ. It is also the bride of Christ. It is the mother of His children. They love and care for one another. They are one big, happy family. They bring other souls to birth into the body of Christ. In the series of lessons that we are studying, we find that all things concerning the church are divine.

MEMORY VERSE: *"And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!"*

Matthew 12:49

Life Begins With Birth

According to John 3:6, birth is the only manner of entrance into the Kingdom of God. Christ was not speaking to Nicodemus of this birth as figurative or imaginary but actual; not bodily but spiritual. Nicodemus was a highly-educated man and held a high rank in the popular religion of his day, but he could not understand this birth that Jesus spoke of because he had never experienced it. God is the Father of each saint, or saved person (1 John 5:18).

Conditions for Birth

Acts 2:42-44 The Christian life begins and continues with an acceptance that God's truth has been revealed to us. We will never have a sound, effective, and militant church until we first have a believing church. A true church is a family over which the Heavenly Father presides and in the midst of which Christ abides. Without a great love between Christ and His church no children can be brought forth. A strong, healthy spiritual condition must prevail in order for the bride of Christ (the church) to bring forth healthy children. Christ will never permit children to be born to a spiritually-weak, nearly-starved church. This would result in stillbirth or weak offspring.

Galatians 4:26 **Jerusalem which is above**—this is the church, the New Jerusalem established under the Gospel (the new covenant) by Christ. **Which is the mother of us all**—the church is the mother of saints.

True Love the Key

Colossians 3:14 **Above all these things put on charity . . .** The power of the Spirit brings a new love into one's life. This new love broke down the barriers of race and creed that had formerly existed between the people. Now saints were learning what had been opened to them when the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom (Matthew 27:51).

Because love **is the bond of perfectness**, there must be a great love kept at all times between Christ and His church. The only means by which the church can keep her love fervent for Christ is by spending much time with Him. Included in this is prayer, Bible reading and study, meditation on good thoughts, church attendance, and

becoming active in the work of the church He has for each to do. This means putting ourselves out for Christ.

When the love of the church cools, a natural result will be barren altars. The church will become self-centered with no burden for children and overcome with laziness, with no desire to care for new converts. God said the church would dandle the new ones on her knees (Isaiah 66:12). Everything the church does for Christ is a service of love. Without this love the service of Christ becomes drudgery. How does the Word of Christ dwell in you? Does it dwell richly or poverty-stricken?

Colossians 3:15 **And be ye thankful.** Thankful people are loving people. Keeping a thankful attitude at all times for God's goodness to us will cause our love to stay hot for Christ.

Protect the Weak

Romans 14:1 A true mother guards the young and weak with a special care. A healthy church has babes in Christ and sometimes, some weak older ones. They are to be received into the family but kept from **doubtful disputations**—false doctrines, vain speculations on Scripture meanings, discussion of controversial problems, talk of the failures of some having a struggle in their lives, etc. Every member is a mother to these weak ones and should carry the responsibility. A true mother never makes the statement, "We would be better off without them." **And whosoever shall offend**—shall wrong or lead astray—**one of these little ones that believe in me**, his punishment will be severe (Mark 9:42).

Mothering Work

James 5:20 **He which converteth the sinner**—this is mothering work, bringing a soul into God's family. What reward! **Shall save a soul from death**—what great reward!

Of each thousand who come under conviction, how many are born again and grow to spiritual maturity? Not all the responsibility rests on the church. Some refuse to go all the way with God. The church is each member. Each has a duty, in his particular place, to help bring to birth, nurture, teach, train, protect, and raise to maturity those who are born into the church.

The part of our services that we call the invitation is a most serious time. This is the time when the mother is in travail to bring forth new children to Christ. Some may not be able to do altar work and other needed services at this time, but all can pray. How many souls may have been lost because of your talking or other acts of irreverence during this portion of the service? Think of it! There is joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:7); so should there be in the church.



JUST A THOUGHT

**Mother and child need to be bound together
in love from the first moment.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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