

## What I Owe My Home Congregation

Unto the church of my Lord in every locality, I am under solemn obligation to the extent of my ability, but unto my home congregation I am under special obligation.

1. I want my home congregation to radiate a wholesome influence in the community. Therefore, I owe it the example of a good life. For it, I must live "soberly, righteously and godly" (Matt. 5:13-16).

2. I want the strangers who enter the door of the meeting house to feel at home, to learn to love us, and to return from time to time. They are guests; I must greet them. I owe it to them and to the church to show myself friendly. I must not stand back and wait for others to greet them; this I must do (Heb. 13:2).

3. No congregation can make progress without faithful and efficient leaders. To a certain extent, the members of the church make or break their leaders. To the end that our leaders may be stronger and more efficient, I must give them my support. As long as they are true men, I must not embarrass them in their work.

4. My home congregation has financial obligations which are due at regular intervals. Whether I give or do not give, these obligations must be paid. If it is right for my congregation to pay its obligations each week, it is right for me to give each week. Though circumstances may force me to be absent at times, my contributions must find their way into the treasury of the church (1Cor. 16:1-2).

5. I know that the very existence of any congregation depends upon the attendance of its members. In fact, the attendance is the life of the church. For this reason, I must attend the services -- all of the services I can. I will not have it said that my home congregation perished because I would not attend services (Heb. 10:25).

6. I want my home congregation to grow, to multiply in membership. Therefore, I must set myself to the noble work of winning souls for Christ.

Wishing to be honest, I must meet my obligations to the best of my ability. I must, with the help that God gives, play my part in the incomparable work of building the body of Christ which He purchased with His own precious blood. (Contributed by Wendell Bennett)

Well Now, That's Different!

By Luther Blackmon

Have you ever tried to picture in your mind what would happen if some eccentric multi-millionaire philanthropist should announce in the local newspaper that one night during one of our gospel meetings he would give each person present one thousand dollars? Well I have. And in fancy's vision, I see a strange and motley crowd: the rich and the poor, the fat and the frail, Republicans, Democrats, scoffers and cynics, "God-is-dead-ers," segregationists and integrationists, the famous and the infamous. People who haven't spoken to each other in years would sit side by side if necessary. The once-a-weekers and the once-in-a-whilers would be there. Grandpa would rub his "rhuematiz" leg with some goose grease and turpentine and he would be there. Folks who haven't been there because they were afraid to drive at night would chance it; all the backsliders would suddenly warm up and take their place where they could be seen. All the puny excuses and anemic alibis and other kinds of lies we have been telling

ourselves and others about why we didn't attend worship would disappear like dirt before "Tide" or roaches before "Raid." We would have crowds that would make a Democratic Convention look like a country picnic -- that is until the money was passed out. We would look for a slump after that. What kind of "Christian" would do for money what he would not do for his soul?

Ironic, Isn't It?

In 1870, a bishop speaking before a church gathering stated that, "Man has invented everything that can be invented. He has done all he can do." But the meeting's presiding officer suggested that a great invention would yet be made within the next fifty years. Upon further questioning, the officer replied, "I think man will learn how to fly." The bishop was astonished, saying, "Don't you know that flight is reserved for the angels?" It was just thirty-three years later that the Wright brothers embarked on their first halting flight at Kitty Hawk. Imagine the amazement of Bishop Milton Wright, who had denied the possibility of flight only to later witness his two sons, Orville and Wilbur Wright, become the first humans to fly! (Carl D. Windsor, *On This Day*, Thomas Nelson pub, 1989, p.89)

Trading Gold for Iron

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

During his reign, King Frederic William III of Prussia found himself in trouble. Wars had been costly, and in trying to build the nation, he was seriously short of finances. He couldn't disappoint his people, and to surrender to the enemy was unthinkable. After careful reflection, he decided to ask the women of Prussia to bring their gold and silver jewelry to be melted down for their country. For each ornament received, he determined to exchange a decoration of iron as a symbol of gratitude. Each decoration would be inscribed: "I gave gold for iron, 1813."

The response was overwhelming and, more importantly, the women prized the iron from their king more highly than their former jewelry. The reason, of course, was obvious. Their decorations of iron were proof that they had sacrificed for their king and country. Let us willingly and freely sacrifice for our glorious King by denying ourselves and daily taking up our cross and following Him

A Moments Wisdom

A good friend is like toothpaste. He comes through in a tight squeeze.

The antidote for fifty enemies is one friend.

In prosperity, our friends know us; in adversity, we know our friends.

I'm going to destroy them. I'm going to make them my friends. (Note: Abraham Lincoln, when asked how he intended to deal with his enemies)

Liberal: a person with a high pressure feeling, low pressure thinking and a constant urge to give away what belongs to somebody else.

A politician is a person who can make waves and then make you think he's the only one who can save the ship.

Politics and the fate of mankind are shaped by men without ideals and without greatness. Men who have greatness within them don't go in for politics.

When politicians come up with a solution to your problem, you now have two problems.