

## A MATTER OF TRUST

OCTOBER 8, 2022

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

**W**e worship God with our tithe, offerings, and donations because God loves His church. The church, as the community of believers, was founded by Jesus (Matt. 16:18). He “gave himself up for her” (Eph. 5:25). He is the Head (Eph. 1:22) and Chief Cornerstone of the church (Eph. 2:20), which is His body (Col. 1:18). And she has the beautiful title of the “bride of the Lord” (Rev. 19:7, 8). To her, He gave a special assignment, “to serve as the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). Ellen G. White made this affirmative comment about God’s church: “Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 12.

In response to God’s love for His church, the believers of the early church supported both the local church community (Acts 2:45) and church communities far away. Following a severe famine throughout the Roman empire, Luke reports the compassionate response of God’s church: “The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea” (Acts 11:29). In his writings, the apostle Paul regularly appeals for the collection of funds for the church, the Lord’s people, in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1—9:15; Rom. 15:14-32). Besides that, there is clear evidence of believers supporting with wages those “whose work is preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17, 18). Paul endorses such practice by quoting Jesus: “The worker deserves his wages” (Luke 10:7). The early church believers applied the general principle of love and generosity by caring for God’s church.

The church is not without flaw; it never has been. But it is loved and has a unique purpose. This week as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings, called Promise, we can respond to the call to love and support the ones who Jesus loves.

### PRAYER

*Lord, we thank You for establishing the church in the world and our local communities. Please help us emulate the love that You have for the church by cheerfully supporting those who are part of it and its mission.*