

# MYTH BUSTER

Series: What's A Christian Look Like in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Pt4

March 22, 2020 ser3922

## I. POINT OF INTRIGUE (hook)

**A. Today, we're going to dispel five myths that keep people from attending church.**

Here are the five:

**Show photo** of  
"The Five."  
(Oops! Wrong  
five.)



**Show photo** of  
the "Fantastic  
Five." (Oops!  
Wrong five.)



**How many times have you heard?**

**1. I'm divorced and cannot take Holy Communion. *Myth!***

**2. The Church doesn't want me; I'm not good enough. *Myth!***

**3. All the Church wants is my money. *Myth!***

**4. If I go to Church it will burn down. *Myth!***  
(Maybe! LOL!)

***ILLUSTRATION:*** Our oldest grandchild, AJ, wanted a perm for his birthday. (**show photos – before & after**)



I called Martino's Salon and set up a time to have it done. While there I commenced a conversation with Mr W. (Fooled you. LOL!) Part of our conversation included Martino, his role in the Passion Play, and that Mr W was coming to GCCC on Sunday,

because Martino had invited him.

Last Sunday, I was in the Main Lobby greeting newcomers, which I love to do. Surprisingly, despite the CoronaVirus scare, I met a number of visitors. When the lobby had calmed down, lo and behold—(sounds like T’was the Night Before



Christmas), there was Mr W with his fiancée`. He expressed how much he enjoyed the service—his first, and, said he was coming back this week to BAFS. If he said it once, he said it a half a dozen times: “The church is still standing, but I haven’t left yet.” LOL!

This week was going to be the real test, but...we’re having Church online. Hopefully, Mr W is watching online, and I’m praying when the service is over, his house is still intact.

The reality is that every believer is the Church. The four or six or eight walls are simply our assembly halls.

**EXTRA:** How will the believing Church recognize the Man of Lawlessness? It will be when he asks us to worship him. That’s when he will desecrate the Temple of the Most High. That’s the Abomination of Desolation. On that day, what happens next will make the CoronaVirus look like milquetoast.

**(Back to our list.)**

5. If my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds, I'll go to Heaven. *Myth!*

**B. Let's *pray* and then we'll dispel the five myths.**

## **II. DISPELLING THE MYTHS, WHICH KEEP PEOPLE FROM ATTENDING CHURCH**

**A. Myth #1: People who have been divorced cannot take Holy Communion.**

1. Show me one place in the Bible (which is our final authority for life, faith and the practice thereof), where it says if a person is divorced, he/she cannot take Communion.

### **Matthew 26:20-27**

When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. <sup>21</sup> And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." <sup>22</sup> They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?" <sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. <sup>24</sup> The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." <sup>25</sup> Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you." <sup>26</sup>

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." 27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.

***SOME ARGUE***, Judas may not have been at Table when Jesus said, "all of you." Whether he was or wasn't is not the issue. What Jesus was doing was pointing to what was about to happen. That He, God in the flesh, was going to be crucified shed His blood, for the remission of sins for ALL—no matter how sinful. And that, "Whosoever' would believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life." ***John 3:16***

There is no cleansing virtue in Communion itself. The healing virtue lies in Who it is we remember, Jesus the Christ and Savior of the World.

2. So, who can't take Communion? Time does not allow me to develop this point thoroughly. Let me put it in one sentence: If you have an offense against your fellow brother, sister or family member and haven't settled it (made a genuine attempt to settle it), don't take Communion (***1 Corinthians 11: 17-34***).

**B. Myth #2: The Church doesn't want me; I'm not good enough.**

Here's my response to that.

1. The true Church does want you—I'll show you that in a moment; and,
2. Yes, you are correct, you ARE NOT good enough.

Let's start with the latter.

St Paul, quoting King David from *Psalm 14*, says to the Gentile world in *Romans 3*,

<sup>10</sup> As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

<sup>12</sup> All have turned away, ...

there is no one who does good,  
not even one.”<sup>[b]</sup>

You're right, you're not good enough and neither is anyone else. So, get over it. That's why we go to Church. To become better people and meet the One who makes us a better person, Jesus.



**RECALL THE SCENE?**

Jesus calls attention to two men on Solomon's portico. (**show photo**) One was a Pharisee who was praising himself and boasting of his righteousness, the other was a common man,

who cried out, “LORD, be merciful to me a sinner” (*Luke 18:13*).

Jesus then asked His disciples whom it was, the Pharisee or the Publican who left the porch justified. (Not all Pharisees were hypocrites; many were good people.) The disciples answered correctly. It was the man who confessed he was a sinner and asked for mercy.

**Now, to the first half of the myth: *The Church doesn't want me.*** (But they'll take my money. Right? We'll get there!)

### ***The Parable of the Great Supper***

<sup>16</sup> Then [Jesus] He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many,<sup>17</sup> and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.'<sup>18</sup> But they all with one *accord* began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. ...<sup>19</sup> And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. ...<sup>20</sup> Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'<sup>21</sup> So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here *the poor and the* [ ] *maimed and the lame and the blind.*'<sup>22</sup> And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.'<sup>23</sup> Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.<sup>24</sup> For I say to

you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' " **Luke 14:16-24**

You say, "The Church doesn't want me." I'm not sure what Church you're speaking of, but clearly, the Church that Jesus' pastors wants you.

The question posed by this parable isn't, "*Does the church want you?*" but, "*Do you want the Church?*" (capital "C").

### **C. Myth #3: All the Church wants is my money.**

Ok, I'm the founder and lead Pastor of a church, the name of which is Gloucester County Community Church. And, I'm not going to lie to you, we do want your money. That's not a myth! Furthermore, any pastor who tells you otherwise is not being completely honest with you. But, and here's the big but, (one "t"), the reason why the Church wants your money is two-fold:

1. Yes, it helps pay the bills, keep full and part-time personnel employed and helps us do things with excellence.
2. But more importantly, the reason why the Church wants your money is that God asked you for the tithe, and He does so for YOUR well-being and blessing.

***Malachi 3: 8-10***

<sup>8</sup> “Will a man rob God?  
 Yet you have robbed Me!  
 But you say,  
 ‘In what way have we robbed You?’  
 In tithes and offerings.  
<sup>9</sup> You are cursed with a curse,  
 For you have robbed Me,  
*Even* this whole nation.  
<sup>10</sup> Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,  
 That there may be food in My house,  
 And try [test] Me now in this,”  
 Says the Lord of hosts,  
 “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven  
 And pour out for you *such* blessing  
 That *there will not be room enough to receive it.*

**THOSE WHO ARGUE THE TITHE IS OLD TESTAMENT  
 AND NOT NEW**—Jesus said in *Matthew 23:23*, the tithe  
 is what you should do and not neglect justice, mercy  
 and faith.

The tithe prioritizes EVERYTHING. Jesus said,  
 “*Where a man’s treasure is, there his heart will be  
 also.*” **Matthew 6:21** Put your treasure in the right  
 place and the dividends are without measure.

There is NO greater financial covering, especially in  
 times of leanness and difficulty than the tithe.

**3.** Two final thoughts:

- a. I've never seen a person who faithfully tithed, not have what they needed. Never!
- b. I've never seen a person try to out-give God and succeed.

**D. Myth #4: If I go to Church it will burn down.**

(We covered this myth in #2, *I'm Not Good Enough*.)

**E. Myth #5: If my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds, I'll go to Heaven.**

Let me be Jewish for a moment and answer a question with a question. (Jesus did that often.)

**1. If we could be good enough to qualify for Heaven by our good deeds:**

- Why is there a virgin birth?
- A cruel crucifixion?
- A burial?
- A resurrection?

**2. Because we can't qualify outside of Jesus.**

Bottom line!

From the beginning of time God had mankind shed blood for the remission of sin through various sacrifices, UNTIL Jesus, who was the final blood-sacrifice was made. That's why Scripture tells us in ***Colossians 1:21-22***,

**<sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled <sup>22</sup> in the body of His**

flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith ...

## II. INVITATION

Are you in the faith? Have you received Christ for the forgiveness of sins; made Him your LORD and Savior?

I wasn't quite five years old when I did something really bad. Now, I didn't know what it was I did, but I knew it was wrong because EVERYTHING inside of me told me it was wrong. At five, I didn't know what to do. I ran home to my mother, told her everything (probably wouldn't do that today if Mom was alive LOL!) and she graciously directed me to Jesus.

So, right then and there, I knelt by a kitchen table and asked Jesus into my heart. My life has never been the same. I gained (like the thief on the Cross that Martino mentioned last week), the best friend I've ever had. And, you can too.

Here's how:

**Admit**— your sins have separated you from God. (*Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23*);

**Believe** – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.) (*Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22*);

**Commit** – yourself to His righteousness by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (*Isa 53:5; Col 1:22*);

**Do it today!** (*Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2*).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit, come into my heart; Jesus, be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen!

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