

Intro.

- A. The most famous statement made by the late President JFK: *Ask not what your country can do for you; Rather, ask what you can do for your country.*
1. Today many seem to think that the world *owes them something*.
 2. As Christians, it is good for us to contemplate, *“What do I owe the world?”*
- B. For a group of *debtors*, we are pretty good people – **Just think of what all we owe!**
1. We are indebted to medical science – Polio vaccine, lazer-laposcopic surgery, etc.
 2. Air conditioned cars, interstate system, computers, cell phones, etc.
- C. Yet, my greatest debt is to the church. => it is a debt of gratitude.

Discuss.I. WHY DO YOU & I OWE THE CHURCH?

- A. Because we owe the Lord, **Rom. 8:32** – *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us.*
1. There’s not a truer song sung than *Jesus paid it all.....He paid a debt He did not owe.*
 2. It is thru the church that we pay this debt, **Eph. 3:21** *to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus...*
- B. Because the church (or individual Christians) taught me the truth, **1 Tm. 3:15**
- C. Faithful Christians know a sense of security during illness, & even facing death (**Psa. 23 & Heb. 13:6**)
- D. Because of the encouragement & comfort that we receive during those worship assemblies. **Heb. 10:24**

II. WHAT DO YOU & I OWE THE CHURCH?

- A. We owe a debt of **COMMENDATION**.
1. So talk the church up, not down.
 2. Like Paul, we should commend the church (c. **1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:6**)
 3. Any *criticism* should be constructive, **1 Cor. 14:26c** *Let all things be done for edification.*
- B. A 2nd debt we owe the church = that of **CONSECRATION**.
1. You & I have a responsibility to bring honor to the church, **Rom. 8:12-14 & 2:24** [godless blaspheme]
 2. The world is watching us when we leave for “church”, how we play, work, talk & squawk!
- C. There’s a 3rd debt we owe the church = **COOPERATION**.
1. Cooperation *demand*s a willingness to work, **1 Cor. 15:58**
 2. “ gives strength in unity, **Deut. 32:30 (c. Ecc. 4:11-12)**
 3. We are – together --a body (**Rom. 12:5**); *one* body in Christ, the body = the church of Christ, **Eph. 1:22f**

III. WHAT IS MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS THIS DEBT???

- A. *“I can’t pay”* (will eventually be sp. bankrupt!!!) *Thanks be to God for His unspk. gift.*
1. It is true – we all owe more than we can pay **Mt. 18:24-25** (para. Re: 10 M talents) **& 2 Cor. 9:15** →
 2. But we all can *commend, cooperate, & consecrate* our lives to God.
- B. *“Others will have to pay”*
1. Unlike many debts, we have to be solely responsible. No one else can be faithful to God for us.
 2. **Gal. 6:5** *each one shall bear his own load.* (**2 Cor. 5:10; Ezek. 18:20**)
- C. *“I’m willing to pay S-O-M-E of it.”*
1. Partial obedience \leq acceptable, **Jas. 2:10** *become guilty of all, even if keep whole law & stumble in 1 pt*
 2. **Mt. 7:21**
- D. *“I will gladly pay it on regular installments...the rest of my life!”*
1. Paul’s attitude is worthy of our imitation, **Rom. 1:14-15**
 2. Those *willing to pay the debt* = grateful & honest, & they genuinely love God more than anything!

Concl.

- A. What kind of credit rating do you have with the Lord???
- B. God has provided a way for us to come to appreciate the enormity of our debt --- Jesus death...
- C. The only way to settle the debt for your sins is to be obedient to the Lord’s invitation, & serve Him.