

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE LORD'S CHURCH?

During the course of his sermon, an evangelist wanted to emphasize the brevity of life. He took a long pause, then said, "Every member of this church is going to die." To his ultimate surprise, a man in the back row responded to this statement with a big smile. The evangelist was taken aback so he repeated the phrase with greater volume. This time he noticed the man cross his arms and look even happier than before. This rattled the preacher so much that he literally shouted the words a third time, "Every member of this church is going to die." In the midst of a loud but somber cry of "Amen" from the congregation, that guy in the back seat just kept beaming from ear to ear. Immediately after the service, the evangelist tracked down the man and asked, "Why did you smile so big when I said 'Every member of this church is going to die?'" The man erupted with a huge smile and said, "Because I'm not a member of this church." (Stories for Preachers and Teachers).

Not being a member of the Lord's church is certainly not a reason to smile. The statement that the evangelist should have made was, "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment," (Hebrews 9:27). Whether you are a member of the church or not you're still going to die someday. And on that day it will matter very much whether or not you are a member of the blood bought church (Acts 20:27). Just as inside the ark was the only place safe from the punishment of the flood, inside the Lord's church is the only place to escape the punishment of hell. Have you been baptized into the church of our Lord where the redeeming blood of the Savior awaits? (1Peter 3:20-21; Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:7).

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