

Are You an Owner or a Renter?



"Have you ever rented a car?" my friend asked. "Sure I have, lots of times when I travel," I said.

"O.K." he said. "Do you ever rotate the tires of the car you rent? Have you ever washed the car? Have you ever changed the oil?" I've never given it a thought.

"Have you done any of those things with the car that you own?" Sure I have, many times, I told him.

Why the difference? Because one I'm just using, I realized, but the other I have an investment in.

My friend then asked. "Does your church have mostly 'renters' or 'owners'?" I looked at him real hard. I was trying to make the connection.

"You know, do you mostly have people who use the church for their convenience, or do you have mostly people who are committed to the church?" Tough question to ask; harder question to answer.

So, are you a renter or an owner? A renter goes to church when it's convenient; an owner is the church always. A renter worships occasionally on Sunday mornings; an owner worships every day. A renter has ministry done to them; an owner does ministry for others. A renter quits when they get tired; an owner never gives up. A renter complains when things aren't going their way; an owner prays to have God change their heart. A renter occasionally gives their money; an owner gives not only their money, but their life.

The point is, God is inviting us, through Jesus, to be owners; to own the faith that he gives us, and to own the ministry we have been created to do.

Are you a renter or an owner?

*Fr. Stewardship for the 21 Century: Brian Malison,
Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA*



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