

## “Cheap Gadgetry vs. Lasting Quality”

I own a lot of tools. For instance, how many preachers do you know that have  $\frac{3}{4}$ ” drive ratchet with sockets for up to 2 and  $\frac{1}{2}$ ” (and some other wrenches for the really “big” stuff!)? I’ve inherited some, and bought many others, but I have a lot of tools. But what I don’t have much of is what I call “cheap gadgets”- you know, the ones advertised as “multi-tools” that will replace a whole box of other tools with one to “do it all.” My admittedly limited experience tells me that a tool, especially a “cheap” one, that purports to “do it all” usually does a poor job at any and every task. On the other end of the spectrum is a tool that may be only for one primary purpose, but it does it well, and will do so, if you take care of it and don’t abuse it, until the Lord returns! So I have a lot of tools. But these things got me to thinking of spiritual matters- you’re “shocked and amazed” I’m sure...

There seems to a lot of “**cheap**” **churches** around these days. You know, the ones that offer “cheap” salvation that requires little or no real cost or obligation to the *consumer*. You can “come as you are” and “stay as you are” (no true repentance required) as long as you profess some minimalistic “faith in God” (however you interpret Him, and whatever you think such requires of you). However, the “lasting quality” alternative could cost you your *family*, Luke 14:26a; will cost you your *priority*, Luke 14:15-24; may even cost you your *life*, Luke 14:26b-27; and your *possessions*, Luke 14:28-33. If we truly understand and appreciate what the real church “cost”- “*the church of God which He purchased with His own blood,*” Acts 20:28, should we be willing to settle for a cheap imitation over the lasting/eternal quality of the real thing?

It also strikes me (and “turns my screws”!) that there are similarly a lot of “**gadget**” **churches** around these days. You know, the ones that attempt to “do everything” for you. They’ll babysit your toddlers, educate your adolescents, occupy your teens, entertain you with music, lights, and drama they call “worship,” require little from you by way of spiritual cost or obligation (just a bunch of dollars will do), always leave you feeling good about yourself regardless of your true spiritual condition, and all the while feed the hungry and house the homeless. Now that’s quite the “gadget”! The “lasting quality” alternative, of course, has one primary objective- to be “*the pillar and support of truth*” (1Tim.3:15) toward the purpose of Christ, “*to seek and save that which was lost,*” Luke 19:10. This is spiritual purpose is carried out in local congregations that are founded, maintained, and operated to *find* and *follow* “*the truth*” (cf. John 8:31-32), and thus by it be made spiritually *free*. All this other stuff is just “gadgetry” intended to attract and appease the masses looking for a “cheap” alternative to the “lasting quality” of true spiritual commitment to eternal life. Don’t be fooled by the “As seen on TV” “virtually no cost to you” imitations that promise to “do it all” but fail to do anything of last value. Do your research (that means read your Bible!) and invest only in the One that “*does the will of My Father, who is in heaven*” rather than an imposter that only says, “*Lord, Lord...*” Matt.7:20-27. (Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA; online at [vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com](http://vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com); email to [mrpcstrong@hotmail.com](mailto:mrpcstrong@hotmail.com))