

## ABOUT THE LORD'S CHURCH

Some have on occasion maligned the church of our Lord and denied the importance of this marvelous institution. However, just a cursory study of the Bible will show such to be utter fallacy. If the Lord Jesus Christ is important, then the church of the Lord is important. The two cannot be separated. As persecution erupted against the church in Jerusalem, the Bible says, "As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3). Shortly thereafter, we read, "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogue, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2). But while he was on the road in route to the city of Damascus, the Lord appeared to him "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (Acts. 9:4). The Lord considered persecuting the church the same as persecuting Him personally.

How can this be? It is because the church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). Now we could write entire articles about the fact that the church was purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), how Christ is the builder of the church (Matt. 16:18) or how all spiritual blessings are in the church (Eph. 1:3). But, consider just for a few minutes the concept of the church being the body of Christ. Viewing this institution as the church is seeing it as a group that has been called out of the world to serve the Lord. Viewing the church as the kingdom is seeing it as the form of government, the Lord having absolute rule and each member being a citizen of that kingdom. But, viewing the church as the body of Christ is seeing the church as being made up of all those who have put Christ on in baptism, all working together in unity and harmony for the same cause. The apostle Paul wrote of this view of the church when he said, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..." (I Cor. 12:13). As he noted, "For the body is not one member, but many" (I Cor. 12:14). After using the example of all not being feet, ears, eyes and such but that each had their own place in the body, he said, "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another (I Cor. 12:25). We are a family!

*Robert*

## WHAT IS YOUR JOB?

Paul wrote of the church saying, "But now God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body" (I Cor. 12:18-20).

Though we all make up one body, not all have the same abilities. In the parable of the talents, Jesus said, "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability..." (Matt. 25:15). In like manner, not every member of the Lord's body has the same abilities resulting in not all having the same job or responsibilities. In the early church Paul said, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11).

It is true that we do not live in the age of apostles or of miraculous abilities, we still have numerous job openings that need to be filled. Not all can do the same job even if all were qualified and able to. Can you imagine a congregation of one hundred where the entire hundred members were elders, or deacons, or preachers? If all were elders, there would be deacon and preacher positions that needed to be filled.

What kind of job openings are available to us in this twenty-first century church? All three of those just mentioned; elders, deacons and preachers are positions that should be filled. Just because there is no one qualified for a job (such as elder), does not mean the job is not one that needs to be filled. It means men should be working toward making themselves qualified for the job. Let us not even consider filling such jobs with unqualified men.

There are other jobs however that all Christians must be actively engaged in. First, there is the teaching of the gospel to the lost. Every child of God is supposed to be able to teach the lost if they have been a Christian for any length of time (Heb. 5:12-14). If one has been a Christian for some time and is not able, they should repent and start preparing themselves. A very easy job, but one that is commanded for all of God's children is that of "light shiner". Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 6:16). There is work to do, but far too many brethren think that even the work of attending services is too hard for them. It is about time that every child of God began to give consideration to what their job is.

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