

## WHY DON'T THEY...

Most have heard at some time, someone use the above three words, followed by what they thought somebody else ought to do. It is not unusual to hear members of the church use those three words, followed by what they think others of the church should be doing. A big problem exists when there are members of the Lord's church that fail to see that they are a part of the "they". The Lord's church is one body made up of many individual members (I Cor. 12:12-27). Each member is just as important and they are also, just as responsible for the "whatever it is" getting done as all the other members. John F. Kennedy once said in a speech, "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

The apostle Paul said in his letter to the Romans, "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14). There is no better time than "right now" to get involved in the work of the church.

There is much to be done. The number one work of the church is to proclaim the gospel to every lost soul on the face of the earth. The command to, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15), continues from generation to generation. Even though it has been done in the past, those living today were not in the past, thus in need of hearing it now. "If not now, when?"

We are the workmen of the Lord. Paul said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase...Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (I Cor. 3:6, 8-9). "If not us, who?"

Our own salvation is at jeopardy if we do not teach the word of God. Ezekiel was told that as a spokesman for God, if he failed to warn the wicked, they would die, "but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezek. 3:18). Paul understood this (Acts 20:26-27). Now let us all put our hand to the plow, not wait for "them" to do it. **RCO**

## WHAT IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

Many tracts, articles and books have been written over the years with the express purpose of explaining what the church of Christ is. With the limited space available here, we wish to present a short version with which one might answer the question without the need for hours of time and at the same time, presenting the truth of what the church of Christ is in such a way that no one who claims to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God could really reject.

First, note that Jesus did in fact build His church. He told Peter when on the coast of Caesarea Philippi that He would build it upon the truth that Peter had just confessed, that Jesus was the Son of God (Matt. 16:13-18). Acts chapter two records the beginning of the church that Jesus promised to build, about three thousand souls obeying that first day with the Lord adding to the church daily such as should be saved (Acts 2:41, 47).

From the point of establishment on that day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts chapter two through the remainder of the New Testament, the church is spoken of on a regular basis. One important item concerning the church is that there was only one. After all, Jesus promised to build His church, not churches. The scriptures show that the church is also called the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). The scriptures clearly point out that there was only one body (Eph. 4:4; I Cor. 12:12-13, 20) or in other words, one church. A thorough search through the New Testament shows that during the entire time span covered in the New Testament, there was only that one church that Jesus built. No others existed and Jesus had even warned, "Every plant, which may heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

Now, this one church that belonged to Jesus Christ, His church, the church of Christ, was ruled by the gospel of Christ. He had all authority (Matt. 28:18), it was and is through Him that God has spoken to us (Heb. 1:1-2) and His inspired word is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:16) and that by which we will be judged in the last day (John 12:48; Rom. 2:16).

It is therefore this one church found in the New Testament that is made up of the saved (Acts 2:47), and of which He is the savior (Eph. 5:23). This is what the church of Christ is. There is no argument that can be made against these truths.

*Robert*