

## *The Work Of The Church* (V)

### *Figures*

INTRO.: 1. How did advocates of mechanical music in worship introduce a melodeon at Midway, Kentucky? When churches fail in their duty, ministers of satan view this as an invitation to introduce human schemes and programs.

2. The NT never uses the expression “the work of the church.”

- a. NT clearly shows that God expects local churches to pursue certain works; He holds them accountable for these works. Cf. Rv.2:1-2, 5; 2:14-16; 2:19; 3:2-3; 3:8-10; 3:15.
- b. The work of the church (collectively) includes . . .
  - 1) Assembling, Hb.10:24-25.
  - 2) Preaching / studying God’s word, Ac.20:7; 1 Co.14:26.
  - 3) Giving, 1 Co.16:1-2.
  - 4) Lord’s Supper, [Ac.20:7]; 1 Co.11.
  - 5) Praying together, Ac.2:42.
  - 6) Singing, Ep.5:19; Col.3:16.
  - 7) Support the preaching of the gospel, 2 Co.11:8; Ph.4:15-16.
  - 8) Relieve destitute saints, Ac.2:44-45; 4:34-35; Ro.15:25-29; 2 Co.8-9....
  - 9) Discipline in best interest of those who walk disorderly, 1 Co.5; 2 Th.3.

### **I. *Figures Emphasize Different Aspects of The Church***

- A. Mt.16:18, ***building***. Rock = foundation. The Christian is material on the foundation, 1 Co.3:10-13. 1 Pt.2:5.
- B. Jn.3:5, ***kingdom***. God is King; we are citizens. We submit to His rule, Col.1:13,18.
- C. Jn.10:16, ***flock***. Shepherd – sheep. We follow Shepherd, Jn.10.
- D. Jn.15:1-8, ***vineyard***. 1 Co.3:9. He is Vine; we are branches. Jn.15:8, bear fruit.
- E. 1 Co.12, ***body***. He is Head. We are members. Be united.
- F. Ep.1:22-23, ***body***. He is Head. We are members. Ep.2:16, reconciled in one body. Cf. 4:4-5, one body; 5:23, the saved. Respond to the Head.
- G. Ep.2:19-22, ***temple***. Hb.8:5, in OT, God required them to follow His pattern; so must we.
- H. Ep.3:14,15, ***family***. 1 T.3:15, *house* (family, Ac.10:2; 16:31; Hb.11:7).
  1. God is Father; Christ is Son over House of God (Hb.3:1-6).
  2. We enter by new birth (Jn.3), baptism (Ga.3:26-27), obedience (1 Pt.1:22-23). Obey the Father.
- I. Ep.5:23-33, ***marriage***. Rv.22:17. Ep.5:24, subject to Him in everything.
- J. 2 Tim.2:3, ***army***. Captain, Hb.2:10. We are His soldiers, 2 Tim.2:3-4. Fight the good fight of faith, 1 Tim.6:12.

## **II. Why Are These Figures Important?**

- A. Each figure emphasizes our relationship to Christ. It is “My church” (Mt.16:18), *My* kingdom, *My* flock, etc.
- B. The same process puts every Christian into each of these relationships. E.g., Ac.8, the eunuch became a stone on the foundation, a citizen in the kingdom, a sheep in the flock, etc.
- C. Each figure emphasizes that the individual Christian, not the church, makes up the church universal.
- D. Each figure emphasizes the Lord’s authority. He is the foundation, the King, the Shepherd, the Head, etc.

## **III. What Is The Essence Of A Local Congregation?**

- A. Collectivity – a plurality of saints.
  - 1. Cow; cows; \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 2. Quail; quails; \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 3. Link; links; \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 4. Tackle; half-back; \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 5. Christian; Christians; \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 6. Church; Churches; \_\_\_\_\_?
  - 7. Mt.18:15-17; 1 Co.12:14; 1 Tim.5:16.
- B. Agreement – accept common oversight and/or agreement to work together.
  - 1. To work as a congregation, each Christian must surrender a certain amount of independence, Ph.2:1-4.
  - 2. If scripturally unorganized, a church is acceptable to the Lord without elders (Ac.14:23; Tit.1:5), but this ought to be a temporary situation.
  - 3. With or without elders, the church may select authorized agents to accomplish its work. E.g.:
    - a. Ac.6:1-6, seven men
    - b. Ro.16:1, Phoebe
    - c. 1 Co.16:15-16, servants
    - d. Ph.4:10...18, Epaphroditus.
- C. Pooling of means or abilities.
  - 1. The treasury fits here, 1 Co.16:1-4. Though many contributed, the singular “gift” refers to the amount they sent to poor saints in Jerusalem. Once given, it is no longer the individual’s money, Ac.5:1-4.
  - 2. The treasury also supported evangelists, 2 Co.11:8; Ph.4:15-16.