



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

Does It Matter Whether a Person Serves God?

Chuck Northrop

The only logical conclusion to Peter’s sermon in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost following the Lord’s crucifixion is Jesus is “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). The word “Lord” refers to a person having authority or power and can be translated master or ruler. To the house of Cornelius, Peter declared Jesus “is Lord of all” (Acts 10:36). These declarations show the universal reign and authority of Jesus. Since Jesus is Lord, we must serve Him.

Baptism Is Just the Beginning!

Because baptism is the “new birth” (John 3:3-5), Christians “should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). When a person is baptized, he or she begins a new life in service to God and Christ. Paul wrote, “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Once individuals become Christians, they no longer belong to themselves but belong to Christ who purchased and redeemed them with His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18-19). In Titus 2:13-14 Paul wrote, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

When individuals are baptized into Christ, the Lord adds them to His church (Acts 2:47). Since Christians are to be “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58), the church is a family of workers. The Bible teaches the church was created for

good works. The apostle Paul exhorted, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). To the Christians in Corinth, Paul explained the church has “many members, yet but one body” to accomplish the work God assigned to it (1 Corinthians 12:12-20).

The mission or work God assigned to His church in service to Him is threefold: evangelism, edification, and benevolence. While considering the mission of the church, it is necessary to realize any mission not commissioned by God is not in service to Him. For example, the mission of the church is not taking over the responsibilities of the home. God commissioned parents to bring up their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Parents who bring up their children in this way glorify God by fulfilling their mission. The church is not responsible for the responsibilities assigned to the parents and actually does a disservice when it takes over those responsibilities.

EVANGELISM

In the Great Commission, Jesus charged the church, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20). The history of the church during the first century clearly indicates the church fulfilled its mission. When a great persecution came upon the church in Jerusalem, Christians were “scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1). In Acts 8:4 Luke recorded, “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”

One reason the church is commissioned to teach all nations the gospel is because of God’s desire. Paul wrote: God “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). Also, Peter wrote God is “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

EDIFICATION

In 1 Thessalonians 5:11 the Bible says, “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.” The word “edify” means to be a house-builder. It is used in this passage in a figurative way to mean to construct, to build up, and to confirm. Concerning this mission of the church, Paul wrote,

“But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Please notice the way the church edifies is by “speaking the truth in love.”

Earlier in this chapter (Ephesians 4:11-12), the apostle wrote concerning the organization of the church. He said, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Thus, the purpose for the organization of the church is “for the edifying of the body of Christ.” In other words, for the building up of the church.

Pertaining to the organization of the church, the Bible teaches Christ “is the head of the body, the church” (Colossians 1:18). Thus, the headquarters of the church is in heaven because Christ is reigning from the “right hand of God” (Acts 2:33; 1 Peter 3:22). To edify the church, God ordained a group of men known as elders, bishops, or pastors to shepherd, lead, and oversee individual congregations of the church.

BENEVOLENCE

The ministry of Jesus included benevolence or doing good. Matthew recorded, “Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel” (Matthew 15:31). To the household of Cornelius Peter said, “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38). Similarly, in the book of Acts the church cared for the needs of others (Acts 2:45; 4:34-35; 11:29). Therefore, Paul exhorted, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).

The church’s mission is not to care for all the social ills of the world. Certainly, Jesus had the power to cure all men of the physical infirmities and to heal the social ills of His day but He did not. Jesus knew the real problems in the world are not the social ills but sin. The church must address the real problem, and then many social ills will be relieved.

The Impact of Good Work

Jesus taught, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:13-16). The results of doing what God commissioned the church to do are seen in that others will glorify God because of the good work being done. Therefore, Christians must be careful not to hide the light of influence for men will be judged according to their work. Paul wrote, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).



Observations and Concerns

February 15, 2023

Welcome Visitors! It is our Honor to Honor YOU as our welcomed guests.

“To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night” (Psalm 92:2).

Expression of Gratitude: Let us remember to give thanks for the works we are able to support and for all faithful works throughout the brotherhood.

John Grubb will be our guest speaker this coming Lord’s Day morning, February 19. We have supported him for several years. His work is mainly focused upon the Mandarin Chinese speaking peoples of the world.

The theme of the annual Oologah lectureship this year is “Hold Fast” and is scheduled for March 24-26. There is a sign-up sheet for speakers in the foyer.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ Dicie Jackson is battling pneumonia.
- ▶ Ed Dindy, father of Tia Swearingen, is scheduled to begin radiation treatments in a few weeks for his cancer.
- ▶ Nelda Hudson continues to work with doctors to get a diagnosis for her health concerns.
- ▶ Debbie Earl, mother of Russ Earl, had foot surgery and will be in a boot for several months.
- ▶ Our sympathy is extended to the Hicks family on the passing of Cory Hicks. Cory was a local chiropractor who treated several of our members.
- ▶ We extend our sympathy to the Jackson family on the passing of Dale Jackson. His memorial service was this past Saturday.

There are several sign up sheets in the foyer for various opportunities to serve.

Schedule of Services	Assignments			
		Wednesday, Feb. 15	Sunday, Feb. 19 AM	Sunday, Feb. 19 PM
	Announcements	Chris Nelson	Chris Nelson	Paul Praschnik
	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
	Prayer	Russ Earl	Paul Praschnik	Doyle Jackson
	Lord’s Supper (speaker)		Ross Swearingen	Russ Earl
	Lord’s Supper		Russ Earl	
	Lesson	Ross Swearingen	John Grubb	Chuck Northrop
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Paul Praschnik	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson
Sundays				
Bible Classes.	9:30 AM			
Worship	10:30 AM			
Worship	5:00 PM			
Wednesdays				
Bible Classes.	7:00 PM			
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