

God wants His people to work together in the church

No two people are exactly alike, and anytime people are called upon to work together in a cooperative effort, it is necessary for them to discipline themselves so that their individual quirks and preferences don't obstruct the common goal. In one sense, it might be better if everything in the world could be done by people working alone or independently. But in a much more important sense, it is the "together" work that helps make the world the good place that it is. Many of the best things in life would be impossible without teamwork. Recognizing the contribution that others can make is a mark of spiritual maturity, and we should see it as an indication of immaturity if we can't work well with others in the Lord's church.

God has designed the scheme of redemption such that it involves not only the independent work of individuals but also some collective work. The local church, or "congregation," is where that collective work takes place. We are not only workers in the Lord, but we are fellow workers. We must not only operate, but we must cooperate. We need to appreciate the local congregation as the Lord has designed it — and make up our minds to contribute wholeheartedly to the work God has given the church to do.

This week, let's devote some serious thought to the fact that ***God wants His people to work together in the church***. It's a blessing that this is true, not a curse. When we lift our vision high enough to catch sight of the glorious work God wants us to be involved in, and when we look outside of ourselves long enough to notice the contribution others can make to that work, it can't help but move us toward a greater work together. It's a privilege to be a part of the "team" that is made up of the Lord's workers.

Let's be busy about the Master's business. Let's do that work collectively in the congregation, as well as individually in our private lives. Paul wrote that "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (**Eph. 2:10**). As Christians, we have work to do. To the extent that we can enjoy our work together here on earth, we will enjoy the happiness of heaven . . . together!

Monday: Acts 2:42-47

Key Idea: The church should be made up of people who enjoy working together.

Questions for Family Growth: In **v.42**, what does the word "fellowship" mean? What does it mean in **v.44** that the members of the Jerusalem congregation were "together"? What do **vv.46,47** say about their activities? Do you detect a note of joy in this passage?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:7,8**.

Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 1:10-13

Key Idea: Jesus wants us to have the right attitude about working together in the church.

Questions for Family Growth: According to **v.10**, what does Jesus want in a congregation instead of “divisions”? What are some practical things we can do that will help us to have “the same mind and the same judgment”?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:9,10.**

Wednesday: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

Key Idea: The church, Christ’s body, is made up of people who can do different things.

Questions for Family Growth: Why does a body need to have different parts? In **vv.15,16**, what should the “foot” and the “ear” not say? In **v.21**, what should the “eye” and the “head” not say? According to **v.18**, who put the church together as it is?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:11,12.**

Thursday: Ephesians 4:11-16

Key Idea: The church, Christ’s body, is healthy and grows when we each do our part.

Questions for Family Growth: According to **vv.12,13**, what is the end or goal in view when we work together? In **v.16**, what is meant by this phrase: “when each part is working properly”? When we work together in this way, what happens to the body as a whole?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:13-18.**

Friday: Matthew 20:1-16

Key Idea: In the church, Jesus is pleased when we each do all that we have the opportunity to do.

Questions for Family Growth: Does Jesus reward us on the basis of who has done the greatest quantity of work in the church? If not, what makes Jesus pleased with each individual? What different kinds of work might we do in Jesus’ “vineyard” today?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 3:19,20.**

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