

The church is healthy and grows when each member does his part

It would be a good thing if we each could realize how important our individual roles are in the body of the Lord. Sometimes we may get to thinking that our part in the work is so insignificant that it would not be missed if we did not do the thing that is ours to do. But that is never really true. As a “body,” the church of the Lord must have the function of every one of its parts or “members.” None are unnecessary; all are vital. We need to be careful that we do not sell ourselves short in the Lord’s work.

Probably none of us wants the body of the Lord to be crippled or diseased. We want to be a part of a group of people who are spiritually vital. But the church as a whole cannot be what it ought to be unless its individual members recognize the importance of each of their roles. It is the clear teaching of the Scriptures (**Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19**) that *the church is healthy and grows when each member does his part*. There is no member who can truthfully say that he has no stake in the health and growth of the body. Whatever each does has an impact — for better or worse — on the body. The whole cannot be greater than the sum of its parts.

It so happens that the Lord’s work, or at least a part of it, is a collaborative work, a *group* effort. We are stronger, and the work prospers more greatly, when we work *together*, and each of us needs to see the extent to which our own part of the work is important to the overall effort.

This week, let’s devote some attention to the matter of our individual involvement in the Lord’s work. As we study the Bible and talk of these things in our families, let’s think of how we can serve more actively and fully in the work which is, after all, the greatest in the world. We are truly blessed to work and worship with fellow members who have much to offer. A harvest of souls awaits in the communities that surround us. We need to bring out the best in one another, for the Lord’s sake. So let’s resolve to find greater joy in our life in the Lord by delving more deeply into the work that He has given us to do. It is simply a fact that “the happy people are those who are producing something; the bored people are those who are consuming much and producing nothing” (W. R. Inge). So how productive are we — individually — in our part of the Lord’s work?

Monday: James 2:14-17

Key Idea: We cannot go to heaven on our faith alone — we must do the Lord’s work.

Questions for Family Growth: What is the difference between “faith” and “works”? What example does James give of a work we might do? Do our works earn or merit our salvation? What does it mean that “faith without works is dead”?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 17:16.**

Tuesday: Nehemiah 4:1-23

Key Idea: Great works can be accomplished in the Lord if we will work together.

Questions for Family Growth: In Nehemiah's day, what was the work the people of God were engaged in? What problems and discouragements did they encounter? How would working together as a group have helped them?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 17:17.**

Wednesday: Mark 12:41-44

Key Idea: We should not think that our "little" part in the Lord's work does not matter.

Questions for Family Growth: What did Jesus see happen as He sat in the temple opposite the treasury? What did He say about this deed to His disciples? How is it that the widow did more than all the others had done?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 17:18.**

Thursday: 1 Thessalonians 5:14

Key Idea: We need to encourage fellow Christians who are not doing their part.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean to be "unruly" (NKJV)? What does "faint-hearted" ("feble-minded" in the KJV) mean? What does it mean to be "weak" spiritually? What does God say we should do for those in these conditions?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 17:19.**

Friday: 1 Corinthians 15:58

Key Idea: We each should abound in the Lord's work.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean to be "steadfast" and "immovable"? What are some ways we each can "abound" in the Lord's work? What does it mean that our work is not "in vain" in the Lord?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 17:20.**

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