

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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HOW THE BODY OF CHRIST FUNCTIONS

Jim Stauffer

We recognize the church is the body of Christ. I wonder if our thoughts go beyond that initial recognition regularly.

CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY - Col. 1:18 *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.* It is therefore, His body. After all, He purchased it with His own blood.

(Acts 20:28) He makes the decisions for it just as our head makes decisions for our body. He decides because He is the One who understands both the needs and functions of each member of the body just as our head does for our body.

WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE BODY - To be reminded of the roles of each of the members take the time to read; **Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:11-16.** Each member of the human body performs a valuable task. This is also true of the members of the body of Christ. **(1 Cor. 12:15-20)** The members of the human body are related to each other as are the members of the body of Christ. **(Rom. 12:5)** As a result we suffer when another member suffers. A broken toe gets the attention of the entire body. So it must be when a member of the body of Christ is suffering physically or spiritually. **(1 Cor. 12:21-26)** Because of the diversity in the members of our body the complete task of sustenance and maintenance is accomplished. This also is the design of the body of Christ. **Rom. 12:6** *And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; 7 or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; 8 or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.* Paul says this makes the body perfected or complete. **Eph. 4:11** *And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ:* Because of their connection members of both the human body and the body of Christ, *love one another - Rom. 13:8 - edify one another - Rom. 14:19 - comfort one another - 1 Th. 4:18*

- admonish one another - Rom. 15:14 - serve one another - Gal. 5:13 - bear one another's burdens - Gal. 6:2 - and forgive one another - Eph. 4:32. Since we assuredly respect the perfection of the design of the human body and trust it to function properly, we must have the same trust in the body of Christ.

ARE WE MINDING OUR BODILY FUNCTIONS? Are those who have the knowledge and ability to teach functioning on a scale that equals the need? What about those who have the ability to minister to those with various needs? If just a couple of people are doing this and more are needed will the task be sufficiently accomplished? The same goes for the one who has the ability to exhort, to give, to rule, to show mercy, to bear another's burden, to restore an erring brother, etc. Ask yourself if you would be happy if your heart, lungs or kidneys performed at the same level as the members of the Lord's body are currently. Consider evangelism as the life blood of the body of Christ. After all if none are taught and converted, where will this body be in 10, 20 50 years? When you meet someone new or renew an acquaintance with an old friend, ask yourself and subsequently them about their spiritual condition. Is that not the example the Lord left us with? Is it not the most important consideration for any man? Consider what you can do to bring their spiritual condition to the point it needs, to become a member of the body of Christ. Do the same with each member of the body currently. If you are unable to provide that, tell them you know someone who can and recommend a member of the Lord's body who has the ability to perform the needed function. When my foot or hand needs attention and treatment to become whole again, I do not rest until that service is provided for it. Why do we not do the same with every member of the body of Christ? There is a reason the Holy Spirit used this analogy. It is the easiest for us to understand.

PICK UP THE SLACK - Read the recommended scriptures. Determine what God has given you the ability to do and do it with all your might in full recognition of the statement of the Lord.

John 9:4 *We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*

The Church Treasury

by Terry W. Benton

Quote:

It is true that the disciples were instructed to treasure up some things, *"And concerning the collection that [is] for the saints, as I directed to the assemblies of Galatia, so also ye -- do ye; on every first [day] of the week, let each one of you lay by him, treasuring up whatever he may have prospered, that when I may come then collections may not be made;"* (I Cor. 16:1-2). But you cannot term this, "church treasury" and form a doctrine with rules and guidelines attached with it. They had no, "church treasury", as you say. The expression, "Church treasury", or, "common collection" did not come out of the mouth of God. (Quoted from a house-church-denominationalist).

Reply:

Not only can a church have a treasury, but they must have one if they are going to do the work that God ordained should be done by the church. The local church is to have a "collection," and the collection is called "treasuring" (in verb form), and by implication that which is collected is the treasury. The above verse shows that every church had its own collected treasury. This is to be done every first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1-2). In the particular case, this collected treasury was to be designated and set in ready collected position so that it would not have to be gathered out of the houses when Paul came. This pooled or collected fund was a treasury of that church. Thus, it was the church treasury of the Corinthian brethren. It is foolish to say that you cannot call it what it is. It was the act of treasuring (God's expression) that allows it to be a "treasury" (noun form). This treasury was "your gift" (I Cor. 16:3). Notice that it was not a bunch of individuals gifts, it was pooled by the church to become "your gift." It would be silly to say that "the church gift" is an unscriptural expression that did not come out of the mouth of God. The combined church is the "your" part, and the fact that it had become one "gift," "your gift" means it was the church's gift. So, the gift was a treasury collected by the church and ready for Paul to come by and endorse.

If the church did not have this treasury, God would not have been pleased with them for their selfishness and covetousness. Now, that was a starter precedent for Corinth to see a need far away and feel a common need to collect for that need. Corinth should have seen a need to collectively support those who have sown spiritual things (I Cor. 9:11). Those who had been preaching the gospel to them, including Paul, should have been given "your material things". Well, how would that have taken place, if they had done as they should? It would happen like the common gift they collected on the first day of the week for the poor at Jerusalem. If the church had collected material things to send to Jerusalem, then they could collect material things to give to preachers of the gospel. But, watch this: Once a church understands there are needs such as poor saints in other parts of the world, and preachers of the gospel that God ordained should live of the gospel, and

the church desires to fellowship (share) in these ways, then the church will see a need for a regular treasury. There is no escaping this as we will demonstrate by the Scriptures.

What is to be done with regular collections?

Seeking to support men who labor in the word is a good way to "fellowship" those men in the gospel. Paul pointed out that in the beginning of the gospel, *"when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only"* (Ph 4:15). Notice that a church should share with preachers of the gospel. How would they do that? They would have regular collections and send it to various gospel preachers. That is a *"sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God"* (Ph. 4:18). (We will demonstrate in another article that giving was for the work of preaching the gospel, not for the fact of being an apostle). What is not acceptable and well-pleasing to God is for brethren to teach that we ought NOT "share" with gospel preachers, when God "ordained" that the church should do this very thing (I Cor. 9:14). Paul took "wages" from other churches (II Cor. 11:7-8) when he should have been supported by Corinth. Corinth was simply blind to this need. It is the need to give as well as the specific need that is being emphasized. The churches of Macedonia saw an "opportunity" to give and wanted to be a part. Paul said they were *"imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints"* (II Cor. 8:4). The diligence of the churches of Macedonia was an example by which Paul wanted to *"test the sincerity of your love"* (Corinth) (II Cor. 8:8). So, giving is a test of the sincerity of our faith and love. Do we love the gospel and believe in supporting all the men we can who are dedicating their lives to it? Are we wearing blinders and seeing only what we want to see? If a church does not see a need to support needy saints far away and near, they are wearing blinders. If they do not see a need to support men who devote their time and life to sowing spiritual things then they are wearing blinders. God is not pleased with the house-church mentality. It looks for reasons not to give regularly. It invents phony reasons not to have and support preachers of the gospel.

Churches should see a need to support elders who *"labor in the word and doctrine"* (I Tim. 5:17-18). Such laborers in the word and doctrine are *"worthy of his wages."* His spiritual sowing is worth far more than any material wages reaped by him. If secular education is important enough to give wages to school teachers, then gospel preachers and elders who labor in the word are worth far more. Carnal brethren have blinders on and cannot or will not see it, but God said that man who labors in the word is definitely worthy of his wages. No man should do it for the money, but a man should have a right to expect that brethren appreciate spiritual things and labors of a man to learn the word better and expound upon it. Timothy could give himself to reading and meditation and his "profit" from doing so would greatly benefit the church (I Tim. 4:13-16) potentially enlightening them in treasures of wisdom and knowledge and also making them aware of spiritual

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dangers of false teachings. This could save him and *"those who hear you."* What price can a church put on this work? The laborer is worthy of his wages. Saving one soul is worth more than the whole world. So, how can you measure the worth of gospel preaching that saves the man and those who hear him and provides protection to the church against apostasy? Now, in order for the church to pay "wages" to such worthy men, the church has got to have a regular source from which to pay those wages. What is this source? It is the common collection, the church treasury. A church has to gather a collection regularly in order to pay wages to worthy men in the gospel and other needed works of the church. This is God's plan, but unfortunately, there are rebellious men among us from time to time who do not want to do the will of God in this matter. They not only fail to do it themselves, but they seek to persuade others not to do it, and they invent arguments to justify their positions. Peter said they *"speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through licentiousness" (II Pet 2:18)*. They pretend that they are "free" from "organized religion", but are slaves of corruption.

We should be as organized as the church at Philippi (**Phil. 1:1**) who pooled their funds and supported Paul time and again (**Phil. 4:14-18**). We should be as organized as Corinth so that we know when the "whole church" has come together and can exercise discipline against a member that walks disorderly (**I Cor. 5**), organized enough to judge cases between brethren in dispute (**I Cor. 6**), organized enough to take the Lord's Supper together in the proper way, organized enough to conduct our assemblies decently and in order (**I Cor. 14**), organized enough to know what the church can and should support from a regular treasury, such as needy saints, and gospel preachers all over the world, as well as at home where we have men laboring in the word and doctrine, and also the ones we need to *"take into the number"* to be charged to the church (**I Tim. 5:8-16**). If the church can and should be *"charged"* and pay wages, then there must be a common and regular treasury from which to pay those charges and wages and support those men who labor in the word and sow spiritual things. There are some things for which the church *"ought not"* be charged (**I Tim. 5:16**), but there are some things for which the church ought to be charged. The church should be charged with appreciating the value of the gospel enough to let the teacher receive back *"material things"* with such thankfulness for the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ and His gospel, that it moves all members to want to give freely to the collection each week to keep it going and to keep men and their families going in this great work. The church ought to be charged with appreciating the riches in Christ enough to make sacrifices to help the church pay wages to laborers in the gospel. The church ought to be charged with love for brethren enough to desire to help brethren in need near and far away. When a church opens its heart and mind, it can see needs that demand a commitment to regular giving on the first day of every week. Giving does not stop with one thing. It opens the door to consider many other things.

Those who foolishly argue that the gift from Corinth to Jerusalem was a one-time deal, miss the point altogether. That was a door-opener for them to consider many other needs near and far away. What else would a collection be needed for? How about men who minister spiritual things to the lost and to the brethren here and in other places? How about *"widows indeed"*? How about anything that accommodates the work of the church in doing its work? How about the rental or purchase of a meeting place? How about Bibles and tracts to hand out to people? How about edification materials to teach each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs? (song books and class materials). The needs are endless when you open your eyes. Therefore, a good church learns to see and yearns to give as much as possible to all that should be charged to the church. A treasury from which to pay wages of support to preachers and widows indeed and elders who labor in the word and doctrine, and also from which to give to needy saints near and far away is a scriptural church treasury.

Going back to the argument made at the beginning. A church must have a treasury to do what God "charges" it to do. A treasury is collected from the saints at regular intervals. The example in **I Cor. 16:1-2** is a suitable example that authorizes us to follow it as a pattern of when and how often we can give to the common cause. There is not just one cause to which the church should give (poor saints), but many others. Since the church should pay wages to workers in the word and to widows indeed, then the church must have a treasury. It is shown in the Scriptures and implied in the things the church fellowshiped. All members should do their share in a local church to give as they have been prospered. The collection of the local church is scriptural in every way. In fact it is not scriptural for a church to not have a money box or treasury from which to do these things it is charged to do. Those who teach otherwise are blind and should now be enlightened by these truths. If they refuse these truths, then they should be refused membership in any scriptural church.

The house-church-denomination is often composed of such people as would deny the need for a regular church treasury. If Paul wanted the church at Corinth to look as far away as Jerusalem for needs to support, then how long should it take a house-church to see endless needs and therefore the need for endless giving? They are blind about needs and sometimes intentionally so. But, they also often invent false arguments about supporting gospel preachers as another excuse not to give regularly. We have addressed this matter in a limited way here in this article, but will deal more in-depth with that in a later article. From the above references it should be easy to see that brethren who refuse to support gospel preachers are refusing to do what God ordained should be done. These brethren need to be marked and avoided as divisive (**Rom. 16:17**). The argument that the expression "church treasury" is not found in the Bible is foolish. It would be as foolish as saying that "personal Bible study" is not a biblical phrase and therefore we cannot do it or say it. Such foolishness is not worthy of further comment.

Eph. 2:19 *So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;*

1Pet. 2:9 *But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

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LORETTA TAPP IS HAVING HEALTH ISSUES THAT CURRENTLY PREVENT THE RESUMPTION OF CANCER TREATMENTS SO FAR.

OUR CURRENT STUDIES ARE: SUNDAY MORNING AND WEDNESDAY EVENING: EVIDENCES

SERMON SUNDAY AM: "LEARNING TO TRUST IN GOD"



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins

Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10