

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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Members in Particular

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular”
I Corin. 12:27

Dear beloved of God, the apostle Paul used on more than one occasion the human body as a type of the Church body of Christ. Knowing that those called of God, ordained and predestined to be the members of his Bride Church collectively, yet we are also identified as those as members of a local called out assembly of believers. The latter, appears to be a greatly neglected priority in the minds and hearts of many a professing believer. We live in a society which progressively has become less and less desirable to be **accountable** to anyone, even among those of Christ Church.

If God permit, I would like to attempt to build a case and point for the scriptural admonition to be identified with others of like belief and order.

Jesus said, “But seek ye **first** the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt.6:33).

Jesus further expressed, “And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father, or mother more than **me** is not worthy of **me**: and he that loveth son or daughter more than **me is not worthy of me**” (Matt. 10:36-37). Our true and ultimate family is those born of God called to be part of the Church of Jesus Christ, with whom we shall spend eternity.

The Church as LIVELY STONES making a “spiritual building”:

“Ye also as lively stones (plural), are built up a spiritual house, and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (I Peter 2:5).

“now therefore ye are no more strangers, and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God: And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom **all the building** fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: In who **ye also** are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:19-22).

The Church made up of MANY MEMBERS being useful to all:

*“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and **all the members** of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body **is not one member, but MANY**. If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the **MEMBERS** every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, **I HAVE NO NEED OF THEE**: Nor again the head to the feet, **I HAVE NO NEED OF YOU**. (I Corin. 12:12-21).*

*“but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, and all members rejoice with it. **Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular**”
(I Corin. 12:24-27).*

*Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ Jesus, as one who has attempted to pastor among God’s people for over 32 years, it never ceases to amaze me of the lack of priority that professing believers in Jesus Christ place upon the local called out assembly, as referred to as the CHURCH. I ask you, how does the local assembly of believers function as a **BODY** when parts of the body are absent? Now I am addressing those who have been persuaded by God to offer themselves among a local assembly requesting acceptance into the full fellowship and servitude of such local assembly.*

*I honestly believe there has been a negligence of scriptural teaching on the composition, construction and function of the local called out assembly of the Lord’s people. If in fact (which I believe it is) the local Church is made of living stones(mortal physical believers) fitly joined together as the holy building and temple of God, where God the Spirit is present to bless his people to worship HIM in Spirit and in Truth, how is it that many take this **building of God** as something of little importance as the meeting times of the assembly come around, it is as if they have to decide whether they should attend or not?? How can those which have expressed a desire to be part of the local assembly be used as **members in particular** when they do not attend? How can these that have given lip service for a love of Zion’s host and the gathering of God’s heritage minister as parts of the body when they are **not present**? How can those who desire to be apart of a local assembly suffer with those that suffer if they are not present? How can those that have come asking the local assembly for a Church home here below pray for those with needs for body and soul when they don’t attend the meeting? They that **neglect** the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is, are also **neglecting to admonish one another** as we see that blessed day approaching,*

whether it be the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ or the appointed time of physical death. **WE NEED EACH OTHER! We have not been called to be islands unto ourselves and some conduct themselves.**

I can hear some saying among themselves, “this preacher is trying to load the Lord’s people down with a “ball and chain” of duty and obligated works.” NO! Dear brethren, I am merely trying to figure out those that have expressed a hope in Christ and a desire to be faithful among the members which make up a local assembly can neglect the calling which God has put upon EVERY elect heir of divine sovereign grace. Are you an EYE? Are you a FOOT? Or maybe an EAR? The body **NEEDS YOU** to function in the fullness of Christ-honoring worship, lest Paul’s writing be in error.

I am saddened as some of God’s called servants (elders & pastors) travel as much as 400 miles one way monthly to minister to a little flock of God’s people and there are folks that do not attend because “oh well, I just don’t feel like going to Church today”, “I’m going fishing with my grandson”, “A friend I haven’t seen for a while invited to visit”, “I am going traveling and enjoy retirement”, “I wanted to watch a sports event on television.”

To those Church assemblies which meet once a month, there ought not be **ANY** excuse why a person that has ask for a Church home among that assembly is not there when the doors open, apart from divine providence hindering ones attendance (sickness, etc.).

In the church of my original membership in South Georgia, it was a common question ask during the business conference, “Are there any who were not present during the last meeting who would feel so led to give a reason of their absence?” Often, one would stand and give a valid reason why they were not present at the previous monthly gathering. I used to think that was sort of a “busy body” tradition that was carried out. But as I got to examining the reason why the Church was interested in the persons absence, I began to see the **ACCOUNTABILITY** that God’s people have to one another and especially to the Lord’s Church assembly as a **member in particular**. Do God’s people have the right to decide whether or not they should go to their home church meeting? It is my humble opinion, if you have to **decide** whether or not to go to church, you ought to just stay home!

Beloved, while I am riding this “hobby horse,” I’ll never understand why folks come in the meeting house about the time the singing is over. They just come meandering in the meeting house “Oh well, here I am, so I missed the singing.” I ‘d like to ask those folks, “don’t you like singing worshipful anthems to our God and Saviour? Then why don’t you get here at meeting time? Are you late for work every day?”

What if the elder/pastor showed up 20-30 minutes late for every meeting? How many would sit by tolerating that in time? It appears to me that the elder/deacons of any Church assembly ought to remind folks what time the assembly of God’s people meet

and that all are expected to be there to enhance the worship of our God who deserves ALL honor, praise and glory.

Finally, let me please apologize to any of God's children who are unable to attend a worship meeting because there is not a meeting of those of sound doctrine in your vicinity or that age and or physical infirmities hinder you from attending. I pray God's richest blessings be upon you and that his loving mercies be multiplied by divine sovereign grace.

*For you that are a bona fide member of a local church assembly by your heartfelt desire to be a faithful servant and member of such assembly, support your Pastor and Deacons with your **FAITHFULNESS** and love to the brethren and sisters by **being there when they need you, which is EVERY meeting**. Support your Elder/Pastor with the demonstration of your love financially as well, most are older and retired living on limited incomes, yet will travel over hill and dell to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus seeking to be used of God the "feed his little Lambs and Sheep"...Our God has given his Church **GIFTS**, pray for them, respect them as God's **GIFTS** for the ministry of the everlasting gospel!*

I submit this composition of pondering thoughts as I lament over Zion's care.

Respectfully, by Christ's merits alone,

April 6, 2006; revised January 8, 2012