



*For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth... in every place.
(1 Thessalonians 1:8)*

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Worship	9:30 AM
Bible Study	10:30 AM
Worship	6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Study	1:30 PM
Bible Study	7:00 PM

Bible Call

(618) 667-9603

www.collinsvillecoc.org

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FILLING A ROLE OR FILLING A PEW

BY WAYNE JONES

As members of the church of Christ, it is our duty and privilege to attend the weekly worship services and appointed times of Bible study (Hebrews 10:25; 13:17). For those times we should be deeply thankful and honored. However, we do not need to be deceived into thinking that we have met our spiritual obligations to Christ or to His church by merely attending services. Through the influence of Satan we have started to equate faithfulness with church attendance. While attendance is vital and important, it (in no way) constitutes the totality of our service and faithfulness to God. So, the question that titles this article is a valid one, indeed. Are we filling an active role in the work of the local church or are we simply filling a pew at service times?

The Danger of Merely Filling a Pew

It has never been Satan's desire that man totally abandon faith in and service to God. It has been his desire that we do just enough to appease our sense of duty or guilt, but not enough to meet God's demands. For example, Satan does not mind that person believing in God or even in Christ; however, he gets concerned when a person is willing to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. The same is true once we become members of the church. Satan is not overly concerned that we attend church services, so long as we are not involved in the "extra curricular" activities (i.e., visitation programs, Bible classes, youth devos, door knocking, etc.). Sadly, many have been convinced that their weekly attendance is the limit of their requirements as a member of the church.

The danger in this philosophy is obvious. If God requires more of us than our weekly attendance, then those who are satisfied with such do not meet God's expectations. If God does expect me to teach the lost, study my Bible at home, help out with the young people or visit the sick and I fail to complete those expectations, then I will stand accountable for those failures.

The Blessing of Filling a Role

Paul informed the church at Corinth that "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" (1 Corinthians 12:12). In the chapter from which this reference is taken, Paul was addressing a problem concerning their roles in

the local church. Some were elevating one role over another role. In this passages (and others like it) Paul tries to defuse the situation by showing that everyone's role is vitally important to the work of the church. This role could be physical (i.e., setting up tables and chairs, mowing the grass or fixing the communion). This role could be spiritual (i.e., leading in prayer, teaching a class, or heading a visitation team). The completion of such tasks makes the work of the church continue as it ought.

All of the work which needs to be done in the local church cannot be handled by the preachers or the elders or even the deacons. There is work for all of us to do and there is great blessing associated with this work. According to inspiration, church work is fruitful (Colossians 1:10), church work brings glory to God (1 Peter 2:12), church work reveals our faith (James 2:18ff), church work is good and profitable (Titus 3:8) and work is why we were created in Christ (Ephesians 2:10).

Eternity Hangs in the Balance

What will convince a church member to fill a role when he or she is satisfied with merely filling a pew? First love, should be enough. God has loved us enough to send Christ to earth so that we might be saved. He loved us enough to reveal his requirements for us on the pages of Holy Scripture. He loved us enough to prepare a place of eternal rest for those willing to do His work.

Second, we should be motivated by the future. There is coming a day when Christ will judge the world and (for church members) that judgment will be based on what we either have or have not done. The judgment scene of Matthew 25 reveals that how I have or have not helped those in need will be a determining factor in my judgment. In the often quoted words of Christ, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

So we ask again, are we filling an active role in the work of the church or are we merely filling a pew at service times. There is a danger in the later; at the same time there are great blessings in the former. May we all be "always abounding in the work of the Lord.

TLM

GLORY HALLELUJAH, WHAT GREAT NEWS!

The sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden set off a chain of events, guided by God, that would ultimately make it possible to be saved from sin (Genesis 3:15). Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and while the animal sacrifices could not take away sin (Hebrews 9:22; 10:4). The only blood sacrifice that could satisfy the innate, holy, and pure justice of our sovereign God would be the sacrifice of a pure and innocent Being. More than that, the sacrifice of a Divine Being. Above and beyond that the sacrifice of the very Son of God (Isaiah 53).

Being a Divine and spiritual Being, Jesus Christ could not die in His normal, self-existing, form (John 4:24). The second member of the Godhead became a man through the miraculous virgin birth so that He could die for mankind (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25). The blood sacrifice of the sinless Son of God was so powerful it could atone for the sons of all mankind from Eden to eternity (Hebrews 9:27, 28). The atoning blood of Jesus poured out in His death, along with the glorious resurrection of Jesus by the power of God our Father spelled doom for Satan. Satan the serpent in Eden (Genesis 3:15), that tempter and the deceiver (Matthew 4:1-3, John 8:44), cannot now win. God has made atonement, reconciliation, and redemption possible through the blood of His Son (Romans 5:6-11). God has shown victory over death to be possible through the resurrection of His Son (1 Corinthians 15). Satan now faces an eternity in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone (Revelation 20:10).

Glory, Hallelujah, what great news! God's love for mankind is so powerful that He would sacrifice His Son for our salvation (John 3:16). God's love for mankind is so strong that He would die for mankind (1 John 3:16). Your sin prevents you from fellowshiping God (Isaiah 59:2; 1 John 1:3-9). Your sin will keep you out of heaven. Your sin will damn you to an eternity in the same lake that burns with fire and brimstone, in which Satan will be cast (Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8). But praise be to God we can escape the wrath of God by being washed in the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:14; Revelation 1:5). Are you washed in the blood?

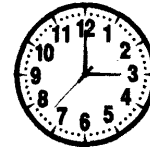
The blood of Jesus Christ will wash our sins away at the moment of, and not preceding our baptism into the body of Christ (Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16). This is why Jesus said, "He who believes and his baptized will be saved..." (Mark 16:16) Have you been baptized into the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus

Christ (Romans 6:4-7)? If not, then you have not been washed in the soul saving blood of the Son of God. If not, then you are lost in your sins. If not, then you are not saved and you will not be in heaven. Only those who obey God will be saved (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:8, 9). Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Have you been immersed in water for the remission of your sins? If not, you need to go find someone to baptize you as soon as possible. The Jews didn't wait (Acts 2:41). The Ethiopian didn't wait (Acts 8:36). The jailer didn't wait (Acts 16:33). Why are you waiting?

- Kevin Rutherford -

*(Taken from the
West End Church of Christ News -
December 14, 2009)*

Mabery's Minutes



We now have thirteen very capable men serving the congregation as deacons. The elders have met with them and encouraged them to meet monthly that they might work with one another in their respective areas. They will also have a representative meeting with the elders each time they meet. Some of them may need a while to develop their ideas and their responsibilities, but I am sure all of these men will be of great service to the congregation. Be sure to encourage these men and keep them and their families in your prayers.

The Correspondent

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