

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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You Have A Responsibility

The Church of our Lord is growing all over the world. It is my privilege and yours to be a part of this success story, in fact, the success of the New Testament church depends upon me, depends upon you, feeling this personal responsibility. So in view of the growth of the church, I would like to suggest some responsibilities which I believe you should share.

1. You have a responsibility to make suggestions. Just because the elders have been chosen elders, does not mean that they are more intelligent than others in the congregation. It does not mean that they are more experienced. It does not mean that they have been successful in every aspect that will touch upon the work of the congregation. So you have a responsibility to the elders to keep your mind alert to the things that are being done, to the things that could be done, to the things that should be done, and to the things that are being done, that should not be done. Any of the elders will be happy to make time available for you to talk with them about ideas you have about the work of the church. Please remember that as you make suggestions that will help the congregation to grow, that you are helping the body of Christ to grow and Christ will be pleased.

2. You have a responsibility to do your part in each work program of the church. The larger the congregation becomes the more possible it is for someone to be overlooked, to be missed. The more possible it is that someone will have talents that are not being used. Remember you are not just withholding your talents from this congregation you are withholding your talents from Christ. You are holding back the over all work of the church because you are not using your talents to the fullest in the work of the Lord.

Over the past several years, several programs, which the elders felt were necessary additions, have been put into operation. Because of the lack of "members accepting responsibility" these programs have not been successful. Some people visit our congregation, having been drawn to come and worship with us because of the good works that they see, but no special notice is made of their presence, no record is made of their visit and no one calls at their home to discuss

with them their responsibilities to God, nor try to answer their questions about the religion of Christ. Some members of our congregation cease to attend, will drop out, no one will call and ask them why, because in many instances these who have been asked to check the absentees have not accepted their responsibility, so a very vital part of the work of the church goes undone. These individuals drop back out into the world of Satan unnoticed and, the fact that they are unnoticed makes their difficulties even greater. So we each share a responsibility in whatever program the church is trying to work, each one has personal responsibility, not just to the elders of this congregation, you have a responsibility to God.

3. You have a responsibility to live your life by the principles of the New Testament. Jesus gave us the parable of the net. As the fisherman's net was brought in, it contained all manner of fish, some were good and should be kept, some were thrown away. This is a perfect illustration of the church, the church contains all kinds of people. And these, all kinds of people, are subject to all kinds of temptations. When one is over taken in a fault they must repent and ask God to forgive, and he will. But often there are those who "give in" to temptations on a continuing basis, their lives become a reflection upon the religion of Christ, their conduct is not in keeping with that of a Christian. If this is true of you and you are not going to correct your life, then certainly you should withdraw yourself from serving publicly in the congregations.

The elders of a congregation have too many things to do to be a detective agency. It is not possible in a congregation as large as Seventh & Mueller, and it will become even larger, for the elders to know the ins and outs of each individual members life. Because of their lack of knowledge, they may call upon someone to serve who is, "running around on his wife, drinking with his friends, or someone who is living in adultery. These who are working in a public way in the congregation are not saying to that congregation that we are perfect, but they are saying, by presenting themselves to the congregation

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Some Things You Should Know. . .

You should know that the church was—
Built and paid for by Jesus Christ. Matt. 16:13-18; Acts 20:28.

Built on Christ as the only foundation. 1 Cor. 3:11.

Not built upon Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or any other man. 1 Cor. 1:12-13.

Fully established on the first Pentecost after Christ arose from the dead. Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; Mk. 1:9; Acts 2nd chapter.

You should know that, in the new testament, the church is called—

The temple of God. 1 Cor. 3:16.

The bride of Christ. Eph. 5:21-32.

The body of Christ. Col. 1:24; Eph. 1:22-23.

The kingdom of God's Son. Col. 1:13.

The house of God: 1 Tim. 3:15.

The church. Eph. 3:10.

The church of God. 1 Cor. 1:2.

The church of the firstborn, Heb. 12:23.

The church of the Lord. Acts 20:28.

The churches of Christ. Rom. 16:16.

You should know that members of the church are called—

1 Cor. 12:27 - members.

Acts 6:1 - disciples.

Acts 5:14; 11 Cor. 6:15 - believers.

Acts 9:13; Rom. 1:7; Phil. 1:1 - saints.

1 Peter 2:9; Rev. 1:6 - priests.

1 Jno. 3:1-2 - children.

Acts 11:26; 26: 28-29; 1 Peter 4:16 - Christians.

You should know that the three permanent classes of servants in the church are—

Elders, who are bishops, overseers or pastors. Their duty is to oversee and feed the flock. Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

Deacons to serve the church. Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:8-13.

Evangelists to teach and preach God's word. For their work and qualifications, see Eph. 4:11; books of 1st and 2nd Tim. and Titus.

You should know that man did not—

Purpose the church. Eph. 3:10-11.

Purchase the church. Acts 20:28.

Build the church. Matt. 16:18.

Name its people. Acts 11:26; Isa. 62:2.

Add to the church. Acts 2:47.

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A sermon can help people in different ways. Some rise from it greatly strengthened; others wake up from it refreshed.

A PRESIDENT AND A KING

When Herbert Hoover was president, he and Mrs. Hoover and an official group from Washington stopped one beautiful Lord's day morning at a little church building in the mountains of Pennsylvania. Most of the members of the little church were out for a drive to enjoy the beauty of the day. They gave little thought to the importance of assembling for worship and edification. Only 13 people were present when the president's party came in. Afterward when the people of the community heard the news, they said: "If we had known the president would have been there, we would have gone." True Christians know when they assemble with the church to worship, the King of Kings is present. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." To miss this blessing is disastrous. It is disobedience to Him who loves, cares, and who told us "Do not forsake the assembling together."

Some Things You Should Know (Cont.)

Give the church its doctrine. 11 Jno. 9-10; Gal. 1:11.

You should know that the church and body of Christ are—
The same. Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 1:24.

You should know that Christ himself—
Loved the church. Eph. 5:25.
Bled for the church. Acts 20:28.
Established the church. Matt. 16:18.
Called the church his. Matt. 16:18.
Added people to the church. Acts 2:47.
Is the head of the church. Eph. 5:23; 4:4; 1:22-23.
Will save the church. Eph. 5:23; 4:4; 1:22-23.

You should know that in the church are—
Redemption. Eph. 1:7.
Forgiveness of sins. Col. 1:12-14.
Sanctification. Eph. 5:25.
All spiritual blessings. Eph. 1:3.

You should know that in order to get into the church you must—
Believe in Christ. Jno. 8:24; Acts 16:31; Heb. 11:6.
Repent of your sins. Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30.
Confess your faith in Christ. Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37-38.
Be baptized. Matt. 28:19, Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Gal. 3:27.

You should know that in new testament times there was—
One family of God. Eph. 3:15.
One kingdom of Christ. Col. 1:13-14.
One body of Christ. Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4.
One bride of Christ. Rom. 7:1-7; Eph. 5:22-23.
One church of Christ. Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4.

You should know that baptism requires—
Water. Acts 10:47.
Much water. Jno. 3:23.
Going to the water. Acts 8:36; Matt. 3:5-6.
Going into the water. Acts 8:38.
A burial. Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12.
A planting. Rom. 6:5.
A washing. Acts 22:16.
A birth. Jno. 3:5.
A raising out of the water. Col. 2:12.
A coming out of the water. Acts 8:39.

You should know that in baptism—
Sins are washed away. Acts 22:16.
You are saved from sins. 1 Peter 3:21; Mk. 16:16.
You have remission of sins. Acts 2:38.
You get into Christ. Gal. 3:27.
You get into the church. Acts 2:37-47.
You put on Christ. Gal. 3:27.

News!

The Church of Christ in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas will conduct a gospel meeting July the 19th through the 25th. Brother Hubert Plumlee of Baytown, Texas, will be the speaker. Brother Plumlee is a strong proclaimer of God's truth, you would do well to come and hear him as he speaks for the master. Services will be at 7:30 p.m. each evening.

If you have a meeting coming up, if you will let us know at least 6 weeks in advance we will be happy to run it free in the Fulton County Gospel News.

You walk in newness of life. Rom. 6:3-5.
You obey Christ. Acts 10:48; 11 Thess. 1:7-9.

You should know that the faithful church—
Must worship in spirit, and truth. Jno. 4:23-24.
Must meet upon the first day of the week. Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25.
Must sing (not play). Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.
Must pray. Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 2:1-2.
Must edify one another. 1 Cor. 14:15-27.
Must take the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:26; 1 Cor. 11:20-32.
Must give of their means. 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 11 Cor. 9:7.

You should know that the work of the church is—
Preaching the gospel. 11 Tim. 4:1-7.
Teaching. 1 Tim. 3:1-2; Eph. 3:10-11.
Visiting the sick. Matt. 25:34-40.
Caring for the fatherless and widows. James 1:27.

You should know that the same church today—
Is in your community.
Is not a denomination in any sense.
Is faithful to God's word.
Is ONE in fact and teaching.
Gains members by obedience to the gospel.
Has the same freedom from human powers.
Has the same names for its members.
Has the same names for the church.

You should know that you can know you are a member—
By obeying as described.
By following examples in the book of Acts.

A Tribute To . . .

By Carol Keller

Prov. 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

At a time when there is an accelerated and widespread deterioration of the home, it is refreshing to hear one speak lovingly of the godly influence of their home. Carol Keller shares a bit of her feelings for her parents.

I didn't realize what a great blessing my parents were to me until I enrolled in college and was away from home. They are both Christians. For as long as I can remember (and even before), we all attended worship together. The congregation was small and we were all close. I remember spending a lot of good times in our Bible classes. There were times my parents and the three of us girls would sing together on Saturday night. Sunday mornings were special times. We were often dressed to leave for the church building half an hour before time to go. We would sit together and discuss the lessons, sing together or just quietly study. This was never planned or regulated. It just seemed to happen. Mom always arose early and had us eating breakfast early enough to provide plenty of time to be ready. She made possible a peaceful and enjoyable time.

My parents gave us a real sense of security and love. Mom was always home with us when we were young. If they went anywhere, we were taken along and not left with a baby sitter. When it was necessary for a sitter, we were kept by my grandparents.

We spent so many beautiful hours in the woods, along streams. Wherever we went or whatever we did, we did as a family unit. Daddy and I would often go for a walk in the country after an evening's work. We would just walk and talk. I have always treasured these moments. At home, Mom and Daddy both spent time with us whether cooking, gardening, playing games, or whatever. Home was a refuge—a place of happiness, a place we enjoyed.

When we grew up and it was time to leave home, we still felt the love and concern even while away. Home was a pleasant thought to look forward to returning during the holidays and vacations. Our parents encouraged us to use our own judgment and make our own decisions. Daddy spent time encouraging me and helping me make difficult decisions. Much of what they taught was by their examples. They loved God and wanted to please Him. Thus, their lives were a blessing to us. They taught us material things are unimportant, but lives, people and love are great treasures.

(Continued on Page 4)

My Church

"My Church" is located at 5th and Pine Sts.; mine is located on East Main Street; mine at 611 Elm Street, etc. In talking with people about the church, I have been able to ascertain that most folks have a misunderstanding as far as the proper concept of the church is concerned. It is absolutely essential for all men to know about "the church" and our "relationship" to it.

First, the word "my" referring to the church (as mine-implying ownership) is a misnomer, i.e., a name wrongly applied. "My" in reference to the church in the New Testament is used only by Jesus Christ. "Upon this rock I (Jesus) will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Jesus sets forth the fact that he will build the New Testament church and that it will belong to him. (1) Christ purchased the church with his own blood - Acts 20:28. (2) Christ bought the church - I Cor. 7:23. (3) Christ is the foundation - I Cor. 3:11. (4) Christ is the builder - Matt. 16:18. No other man, living or dead, has ever purchased, bought, founded or built the church of the Bible, therefore, it would be improper for any of us to use the term "my church."

Secondly, the word "church" is misconstrued to mean an edifice. Jesus used the term "church" not in an edificial sense but in a people sense. (1) "Added 3000 souls . . . to the church" - Acts 2:41, 47. (2) "There arose a great persecution against the church" - Acts 8:1. (3) "Salute the church that is in their house" - Rom. 16:5. (4) "Unto the church of God at Corinth" - I Cor. 1:2. (5) "And he is the head of the body, the church" - Col. 1:18. (6) "They are many members, but one body" - I Cor. 12:20. (7) "To the elect, those chosen out, selected" - Green's Greed English Lexicon; "Picked out or gathered out" - Vines' Expository Dictionary: "Ye are an elect race . . . a people for God's own possession" - I Pet. 1:1; 2:9.

The greek word for "church" is EKKLESIA - "A calling out of" (Vines). The "ekklesia" or elect is the church. What is the church? An edifice setting on a particular location, or the people in a particular location? The answer is easily ascertained. Supply the word "CHURCH" in an edificial sense to the passages listed above and notice the absurdity. The "church" is the "people"; God's ekklesia is the people. Let us be careful about referring to the church as "mine" and also be cautious about referring to the church as 5th and Pine Street, etc.

—Mike Wilson
Church of Christ
5th and Pine
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A Sunday Evening Drama

Time: Sunday evening, May, 1971,
11:00 p.m.

Place: Could be Miami, Oklahoma or Anytown, U. S. A.

Scene: The home of a church member. The neighbors (also church members) have spent the evening playing cards and visiting in general. It is now time to go home, and while the ladies are cleaning the room, the men engage in this conversation: (Bob) "I wonder if anybody went to church tonight? It's a mighty hot night, and I expect most people knew better than to get out in this kind of weather". (Joe) "Well, I fully intended to go, since I missed this morning, but the baby was puny and I didn't feel good either. I had planned to send Pete and Bill to Bible Study this morning, but the little rascals got up and went hunting before I awoke. I don't know what I am going to do with them. They have very little interest in the church although I have told them time and again they ought to go." (Bob) "This younger generation! My two daughters are just as bad. I let them go to the dance last night on the condition they would get up and go to Bible Class, but they didn't get in till two this morning and I just didn't have the heart to make them get up. I have threatened to take them myself next Sunday morning." (Joe) "You can't blame the young people too much. There is not much enthusiasm up there. Nothing to attract the young people. They ought to know you have to have something to entertain the young folks before they will attend church. Too, the preacher hops up and condemns them every time they do anything. Guess he doesn't realize that boys will be boys, eh Bob?" (Bob) "Yes, and that reminds me of the feature at the Plaza this Wednesday night. It is one about the love life of a French maid. Why don't you and Mary be our guests? Bring the whole family." (Joe) All right, it's a date. I was trying to think if there was anything important on the calendar but it is a week from Wednesday before we have our Club meeting. We'll see you at 7 on Wednesday night." "Good-bye"

The door banged, and a plaque reading, CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THIS HOUSE fell from the wall, breaking into little pieces.

(In light of our recent Sunday evening and Wednesday attendance figures, could this drama be going on in our congregation here in Mammoth Spring, with our members in the starring roles?)

—Copied

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"Some who plan to repent at the 11th hour die at 10:30."

You Have A Responsibility (Cont.)

as a public servant, we are trying. They must not be willingly and continuously giving in to some particular temptation. Sometimes the elders have been criticized for using a particular individual because of some doubt that has been raised. The elders cannot withdraw fellowship nor cannot forbid some individual serving, because of some rumor or some murmuring that has gone on among the congregation. If you know and have the facts that some persons life is out of order, and these facts can be proven with two or three witnesses, then you have a responsibility to present these facts to the elders that they may use them in forming a proper judgment and making the decision as to who will serve, publicly also determine who may need discipline within the body of Christ.

4. You have a responsibility to prepare yourself for leadership in the church. It is God's will that elders make decisions and see that the work of God is progressing in each congregation. In the beginning, when the church was new, God inspired certain men to do these things, but now it is God's plan that men prepare themselves both by studying and by working, that they may be able to guide, with wisdom, the affairs of the church. You should know what these requirements are, you should keep your life so that when the times comes either by reason of age or by reason of need within the congregation, that you can fulfill this great need before God, and before the world. A fundamental principle of being a leader is that before you become a leader, you must be willing to be led, you must be willing to accept the admonitions and the suggestions of these elders. For in due time, you may be making these suggestions and decisions yourself.

That which is accomplished by the congregation will be the sum total of the activities of each individual member. That means that if you are doing nothing, the over all work of the congregation will be held back to this degree. But if every member will look about and see where he or she can serve most effectively, take this as a personal responsibility. The sum total of all our working together will be great, the souls saved will be great, and eternity will be greater because we have lived.

Vance Greenway.

The noblest contribution which any man can make for the benefit of posterity is that of a good character.

IF THE CHURCH DOES NOT MISS YOU WHEN YOU ARE ABSENT . . . IT IS PROBABLY MORE A REFLECTION ON YOU THAN ON THE CHURCH.

A Tribute To (Cont.)

When we grew up, they allowed us to choose what we wanted to be and do. They gave encouragement and counsel (usually we asked for it), but the final decision was always up to us. They told us not to be concerned if all we got out of college was a good husband. The money was well spent.

Home is still beautiful. They still love us and show their concern, but in no way try to guide our affairs. We are all on our own. Whatever decision is made is accepted by them. If we seek advice, they give it. Otherwise, the decision is ours even if it is unwise . . . I have never ceased to be grateful to God for the beautiful parents He gave me. They are such a blessing. I pray I have been as much a blessing to them.

(Editor's note: "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies . . . her children rise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praises her." (Prov. 31:10, 28) Carol's life shows the love, concern and care given her early in life. The great psychologist, Adler, said: "What is put into the first of life is put into all of life." How careful we must be to feed our children well, early. No good parent would think of allowing their children to go all day and night without a bite of food. How many do allow children to go much longer without a bite of spiritual food? Starvation comes in different forms. Effects of negligence is written across lives years later in terms of sin, unfaithfulness, and unbelief. Children are the victims of the ones who love them most. Effects of love, care and concern show up years later in terms of fruitful, useful, happy, productive lives. God bless you, Carol, and those wonderful parents who trained you. Thank you for sharing these thoughts.)

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"He who puts God first, will find God with him at the last." (Read Matt. 6:33)

L - O - V - E

An "L", an "O", a "V" and an "E"
Spells love as we can plainly see.
Our Heavenly Father sends His
To all people everywhere freely.

The word is small,
The meaning is great.
Pass it on to others.
Do not hesitate.

Love for one another
Does not cost a thing;
When it is returned,
What great happiness it brings.
(G. A. Ammann)

Too Young Or Too Old?

Jesus emphasized over and over in the book of Revelation: "Be thou faithful." His concern or preference was never age, status, or race, but FAITHFULNESS.

Do you feel too young to do great things for Christ? Jefferson was 33 when he drafted the Declaration of Independence; Ben Franklin was 26 when he wrote "Poor Richard's Almanac"; McCormick invented the reaper at 23; Charles Dickens was 24 when he began his "Pickwick Papers"; and 25 when he wrote "Oliver Twist"; Newton was 24 when he formulated the law of gravitation; Bryant was only 19 when he wrote "Thanatopsis".

Do you think you are too old to do great things in the kingdom? Tennyson wrote "Crossing the Bar" when he was 80; Kant penned his famous philosophical works when he was 74; Verdi at 80 produced "Falstaff" and at 85 "Ava Maria"; Titian at 98 painted the historic picture "Battle of Papanto".

Jesus was crucified at the age of 33, but he finished the work he came to earth to do. Joseph ruled in Egypt at the age of 30. When but a lad in the temple of Shiloh, Samuel had already drawn so close to God that Eli's doom was revealed to him. Seasoned warriors of Israel looked on with amazement and chargin as the lad, David, slew the Philistine champion. But the apostle was "Paul the aged" when he wrote Philemon. John was almost 100 when he wrote the book of Revelation. If you are young, there is a place for you. There is a niche for you to fill. It isn't how long a person lives, but how. If you have lived long and done much, there is still a place in God's kingdom for you. You can still be a stone in God's building, a soldier in the Lord's army. You are not too young. You are not too old!!!

(Adapted from Broad Street Messenger)