

Join Us

Starting January 7, 2025  
6:30 PM

# Pastor's *Bible* STUDY

**NEW**

**T o p i c**  
**"How the Church Works"**

Online: Zoom ID 9736781217 Password: 6781293

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Rev. Melvin E. Wilson  
Pastor/Teacher



## Part 1

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Online Bible Study

6:30 pm

Zoom Meeting ID 973 678 1217, Passcode 6781293

Call-In 929-205-6099, Meeting ID 973 678 1217

Rev. Melvin E. Wilson, Pastor/Teacher

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## I. WHY ARE WE HAVING THIS STUDY?

- A. What I have come to realize after almost 44 years in ministry.

**Most church members don't know, have never known, don't care to know, or don't think they need to know how their church works. By "works" we mean...**

- B. This applies to churches of all denominations, faiths, and non-denominational churches.
- C. Many in pastoral and lay leadership don't want you to know how the church works.
1. "Just accept what we do and don't ask any questions."
  2. "This is how we do it here."
  3. "We don't have to explain anything to you."
- D. This issue is connected to the issue of church hurt. How?
- E. Because many people don't know how the church works and have not been taught or bothered to learn how the church works, the "work of the church" suffers.
1. Question for you: "What is the work of the church?" Please jot down your answer.

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## F. MAJOR ISSUE: LACK OF COMMITMENT TO GOD AND TO THE INSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH!

1. Many don't take their membership in the church seriously.
2. Many don't see the church being relevant and don't take the church seriously.
3. Many see the church as being dispensable. "Church hop."
4. Many approach the church with a sense of entitlement.
5. Many "use" the church and the leadership for personal purposes.

## II. BIBLE STUDY GOALS

- A. To help us understand the main ways the church does its work.
- B. To help us "reimagine" our membership in the church of our choice.
1. Not just showing up on Sunday. In and out.
  2. Not just being a "pew member"
  3. Not being aware of what the church does on a daily basis
- C. To encourage us to develop a higher and deeper level of commitment to worship and service. "Ownership, Buy In"
1. Worship – what we do in the church building
  2. Service – what we do outside of worship

### III. GUIDING BIBLICAL PASSAGES

#### Matthew 16:13-20 NIV

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup> They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup> "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. **<sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.** <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." <sup>20</sup> Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

#### 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 NIV

Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. <sup>3</sup> Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. **<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. <sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.** <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,<sup>[a]</sup> and to still another the interpretation of tongues.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

#### 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 NIV

<sup>6</sup> Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. <sup>7</sup> Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. <sup>9</sup> As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." <sup>10</sup> Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. <sup>11</sup> You will be enriched in every way so that you



can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. <sup>12</sup> This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. <sup>13</sup> Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. <sup>14</sup> And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. <sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

#### IV. THE SPIRITUAL & PRACTICAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THIS STUDY

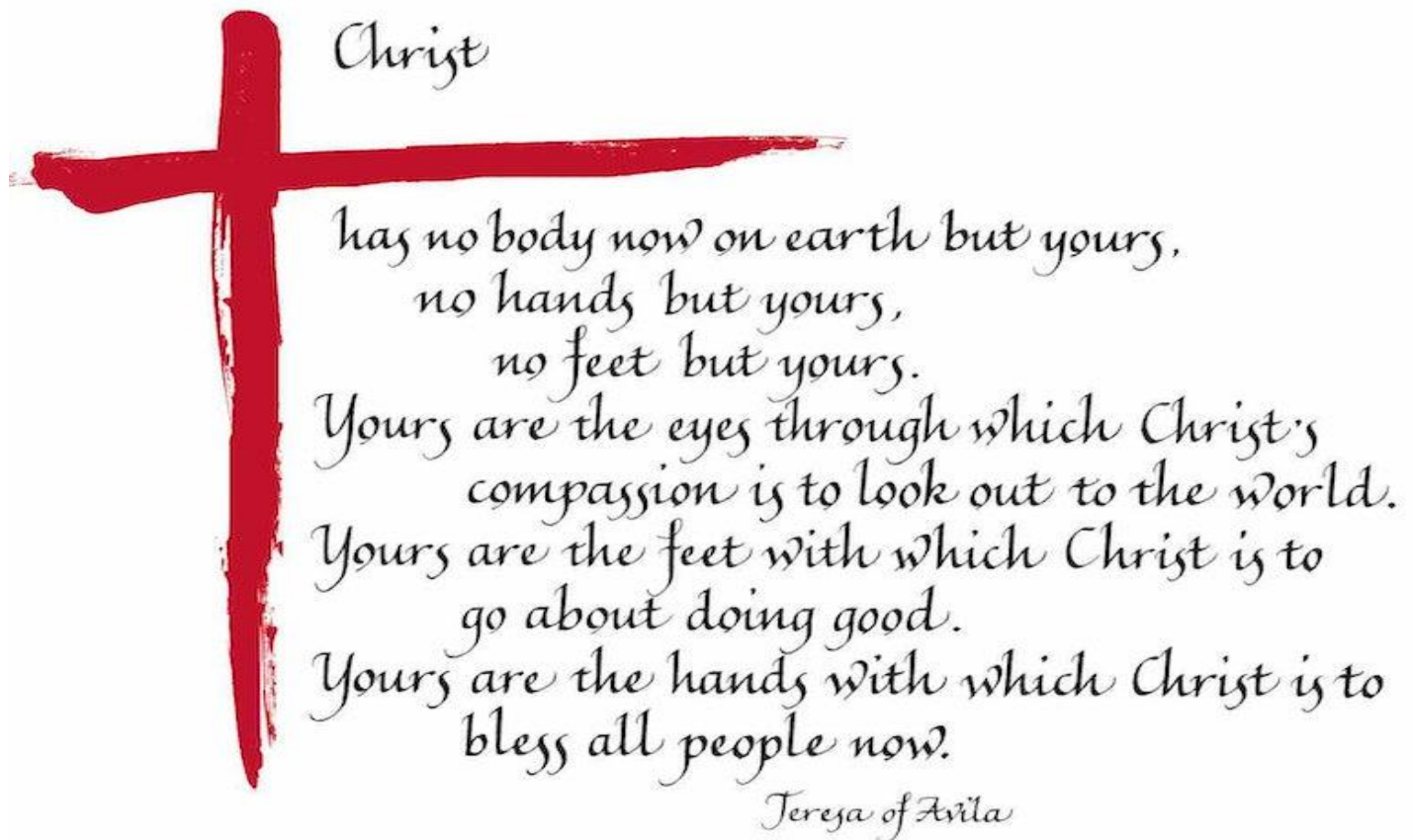
**Spiritual:** The church is the “body of Christ,” which means that Jesus Christ is the head of the church.

**Practical:** The institution of the church works (or doesn't work) because of the **giving** done by people in 3 main areas:

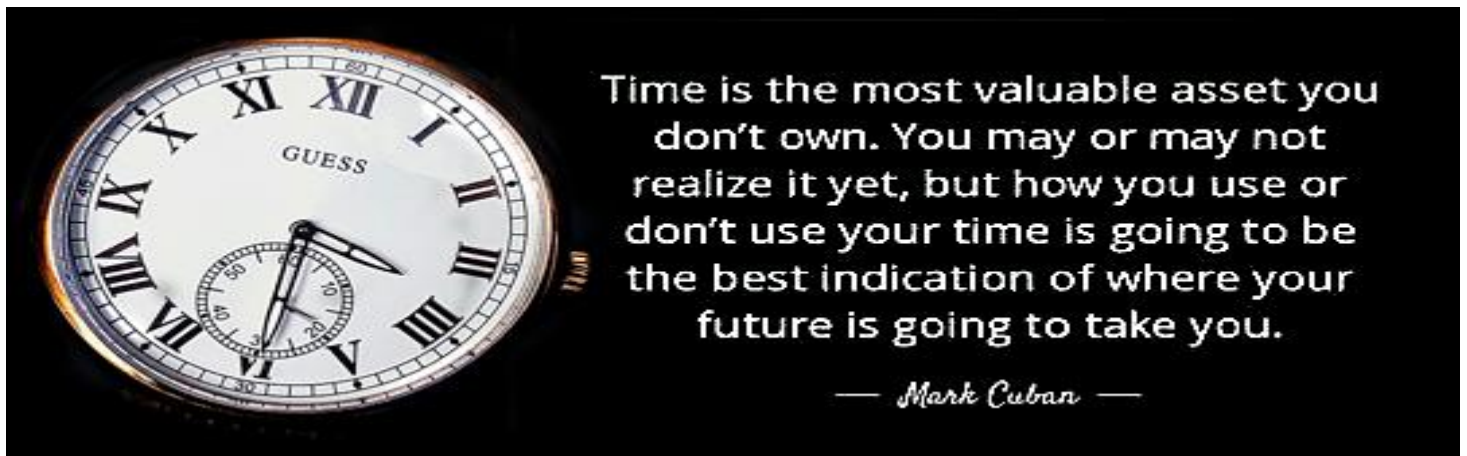
1. The Giving of Time

2. The Giving of Gifts/Talents

3. The Giving of Money



## V. THE CHURCH WORKS WHEN PEOPLE GIVE THEIR TIME



**Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV**

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

# Give God Your Time

- A. Areas of the church that won't work unless we give our time:
1. Worship
  2. Study, workshops, seminars
  3. Prayer, meditation, spiritual development
  4. Pre-worship preparation
  5. Meetings to handle **“the business of the church”**
    - a. Administrative and business practices
  6. Rehearsals
  7. Set up/Takedown/Cooking/Cleaning
  8. The outreach & community service aspects of ministry
  9. Tending to sick and shut-in
- B. But don't churches pay people to do that stuff??? Don't we have Officers to do all of that???

### James 2:14-26 NIV

<sup>14</sup> What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? <sup>15</sup> Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. <sup>20</sup> You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? <sup>21</sup> Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. <sup>23</sup> And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,"<sup>[e]</sup> and he was called God's friend. <sup>24</sup> You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone. <sup>25</sup> In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? <sup>26</sup> As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

**THE CHURCH WORKS WHEN PEOPLE GIVE THEIR TIME.**

### Colossians 3:23-24 NIV

<sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord**, not for human masters, <sup>24</sup> since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.

**It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**

## VI. CONCLUDING QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- A. Are there limits to how much time you will give to various areas of the church's ministry?
- B. Do you resent or "feel some kind of way" about the time you give to the church?
- C. Have you ever volunteered to do something in the church without being asked? Do you look around to see if anything needs to be done? Are you willing to do something about what you see?
- D. How much of a priority is the full life of the church to you?
- E. Do you feel an obligation to be present for worship, meetings, or service activities? Do you make it when you can or when it fits into your schedule? Or, do you participate out of love?
- F. Do you need to be acknowledged for the time you give in various areas?
- G. Do you see the benefits of the time you give to the church?





The amount of time we  
give to something indicates  
it's importance to us.

Jim George

quote fancy



**What you do with your time and talent  
is critically important.  
Pay attention.**

*Someday*

*Someday*

*Someday*

TODAY'S TWELVE GIFTS TOUCHSTONE  
from Charlene Costanzo

**VII. NEXT WEEK – THE CHURCH WORKS WHEN PEOPLE GIVE THEIR  
GIFTS/TALENTS**

## **OFFER EXTENDED TO 7 PM TONIGHT!**

You may have noticed the AME cardigan sweater that I wore a few weeks ago. Sis. Kathleen Turpin Merritt also wears one. Many of you asked how you could get one. You have a one-time opportunity to order one today. The sweater is \$67. **You do not have to pay today. You can pay when they arrive.** If you want one, I need your name, size, cell number, and email address. Text me at (914) 562-6331 with this information.

