

The Work of the Church

Hebrews 12:1-2

Read Scripture Hebrews 12:1-2

¹Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2

Introduction

Our galaxy is 587 thousand trillion miles in diameter. It is one of a million galaxies within optical range of our strongest telescopes. In our galaxy there are about 100 billion stars. The sun is a modest-sized star with a temperature around the edges of 6,000 degrees centigrade. It travels at 155 miles per second and yet it takes 200,000 years for it to orbit the galaxy.

Have you ever held anything as tender and precious as a tiny newborn baby? A newborn is so helpless and just a tiny little miracle.

From the vast universe to the tiny newborn; our God is the creator. It is that creator who's word holds it all in place.

It is the God of it all; the one and only God who you and I serve. We are in His business.

We must never take lightly the significance and high calling of the one we serve.

➤ What is this great work to be accomplished?

1. We must be growing in God's Word and understanding.

We must learn the teachings of Christ and obey them.

Christ says if we do not love Him we will not obey.

How can we obey if we do not learn His teachings?

God's word is where we find answers to life's questions.

God's word is where we find peace in a world of turmoil and pain.

God's word is where we find wisdom to view life from a divine perspective.

God's word is where we learn to understand that God has a purpose for each and every one of us.

God's word is where we nurture the faith that gives us great visions as a church.

We must offer biblical, informative and challenging Bible study for every age group.

We must be growing in His word.

2. We must practice loving one another.

Because of God's love, we must practice love.

Yes, practice just as a physician practices medicine, we must practice love. We must work at it.

Our love must be put into action not just words.

Christ says if we say we love Him but do not love our brothers, we are liars.

The natural response to our relationship with Him is to love others.

Loving others is a key step in putting our faith into action.

How do we love one another?

We start by not putting one another down.

We refrain from smart comments and cute sayings that belittle or hurt people.

We replace them with words that lift up and encourage one another.

Some people have tongues like the ginzo knife that cuts.

Others always have something nice and uplifting to say.

Love begins with our words and expands to our actions.

Love means genuinely caring for one another and caring for others regardless of age.

We must love one another.

3. We must be busy reaching the lost with God's word.

Illus: "Yes but it is time to close the doors, we have enough" was the welcome we got at one church.
Many people in our churches feel this way.
If this is your attitude, get on your knees.

Every church is either moving forward or moving backwards.
There is no neutral ground for churches.
If we are not sharing the gospel of Christ with others, we are moving backwards.

It is not just the responsibility of the pastor to share the gospel. It is the work of the church.

It is the responsibility of every believer.

Like a Jubilee - We must share the good news of eternal life in Christ.

I have been on mission trips to Honduras, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Belize and Mexico.

Now I have come to realize that God wants me here! God wants me serving Him right here!

It is an awesome and humbly thought that the living God has a place for me and says come work here.

Guess what, he has a work for each and every one of you too!

Find that work he calls you to do and get busy doing it.

➤ **How can we be successful at accomplishing God's work?**

1. We must put aside those things that entangle and divide us.

At the heart of God's grace is underserved mercy.

God's grace is pardon without justification.

Every Christian knows the truth, "I am a sinner!"

And, "I do not deserve God's forgiveness but His grace gives me forgiveness!"

Therefore, we must forgive others.

There is simply no room in God's work for harbored anger or resentment.

We must clear up our differences and move forward with the business of the Master.

2. We must remain steadfast to see God's purposes accomplished in our church.

Paul uses the analogy of a runner in a race to encourage us to stay the course.

Like a runner, we must be mindful of the prize and keep persisting in God's work.

We already know the outcome. The battle will be won and the church will be triumphant.

We must see to it that we are among the faithful.

3. We must have faith in God for the opportunities, resources and results.

The time has come for Barnwell Baptist church to expand it's vision.

In the words of William Carey; "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God."

We must expect and attempt great things.

We are doing great things for God and God has even greater things in store for us.

We are the family of God with the Master's business as our responsibility.

4. Our eyes must remain fixed on Jesus.

Some might say; "But I am afraid of failure. What if this or that goes wrong?"

Our savior is powerful enough to see us through the challenges and struggles if we just keep our eyes on Him.

➤ **Conclusion**

They tell me that the ACLU is forcing motels and hospitals they must remove the Gideon Bibles from these places.

I was told this week that the Bibles must be removed from Thomas Hospital and they are being removed now.

The politicians can attack the church. The judges can attack the church. The ACLU can attack the church.

But no one; not any one will defeat the work of the God we serve. He is the creator; the living God of the entire universe. His church will be triumphant. May you and I be found to be His faithful servants.

Illus: Mike McKenzie's children brought him back to the Lord. God will use any of us who open our hearts and serve him.