

# THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD'S CHURCH

In the New Testament the word "church" is used 115 times. Every book in the New Testament was written to a church, gives the history of the church or for use in a church. Obviously then anything of such importance deserves our attention on our Journey to Victory. Let's begin this section then by considering "our church."

## Our Church

*Matthew 16:18*

The local church is the most important organization or grouping of people on the face of the earth. It is divine in its origin, divine in its purpose, and divine in its destiny.

Here we are not talking about a building. We make a mistake when we point to a building and say, "that is my church." That is the building that houses the "church" — the body of Christ — in that location. The church is people not bricks and stone and lumber.

It is His church and we the members belong to Him.

On the other hand, it is **our** church. It is made up of people just like you and me who have bonded together to be His body here in this location. As such we have been given great responsibilities and awesome privileges.

We are to be His witness here where we live and throughout the world. Jesus said, "you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) We do this by going to others ourselves to tell of Jesus and giving that others might go when and where we cannot.

The New Testament describes the church as a body and as such we all have individual responsibilities. Some are hands, some feet, some eyes, some ears, but all members of one body. It takes everyone working together for the body to function properly.

One of the folk tales of the Canadian Northwoods tells about two porcupines in the freezing weather who would huddle close together, but the closer they got together the more they were pricked by the quills of the other. So then they would move apart and then they would begin to chill and to freeze again. So they would move back

together, and again the quills would prick the other one. So they would move apart; and the process went on and on. The moral of the story is, they needed each other, but they needed each other.

And I have an idea that that is the perfect picture of the average body of believers in Christ. We need each other so much, but sometime in the abrasive way of life, we needle each other. We are one in our church and must function as one body to achieve victory in the great task God has given us.

In the **STEWARDSHIP ENRICHMENT** program before us it is only together that we can accomplish the task God has given our church. Even with the large gifts that some will make, we are all essential to victory – each of us. The Apostle Paul gave us the guidelines, “Everyone of you ...” 100% participation. Do you realize that all by yourself you can make that 100% not happen?

Say out loud and with conviction: “It is **my** church!” I know you are only one, but you are one and you matter to Christ, to the other members and to yourself.

During the Olympic Games one summer, the third runner in a relay race dropped the baton as he tried to pass it. He threw himself on the ground, wept openly and had to be helped from the arena. Think of what was involved in his failure:

- ❖ It put his team out of the running;
- ❖ It disappointed his country;
  - ❖ The success of the two runners before him was canceled;
  - ❖ The runner who was to follow never had his chance;
  - ❖ He had to live with his failure.

Others are dependent on you. Others may work and give, but only you can do what God wants you to do. Those who come before you have faithfully passed the baton to you and those who come after you must find you faithful. Don't drop the baton.

It is essential that you fill your place in your church. Your regular presence, your dedicated service, your constant prayer and your sacrificial financial support will make a difference in the impact of our church today and in eternity.

*Lord, in years past other Saints have been faithful to build our church.  
They have passed the baton to me. Help me to not drop the baton.  
Help me “run with patience the race set before me” and*

*"may those who come behind me, find me faithful."*