The Church at Work
Perfecting the Saints

What is the church?
- The people of God in the New Covenant era
  - Indwelt by the Holy Spirit
  - United with the resurrected Jesus Christ
- The local assembly of believers
  - the functional unit

What is the purpose of the church?
- Edifying, perfecting, equipping the saints
- Conformity to Christ: Ephesians 4:13-16

How does the church do this work?
- Preaching and teaching the Word
- Baptism
- Lord’s Supper
- Organization – elders and deacons
- Discipline
The Church’s Product
Doing the Work of the Ministry

**Christ-likeness** – holiness in character and work

6 lessons on the characteristics of a “churched people”
- Worship – adoration of God
- Singing – musical praise to the LORD
- Giving – support the work and believers in need
- Discipleship – living the life of Christ
- Love – The sign of discipleship
- Am I my Brother’s Keeper?
Am I my Brother’s Keeper?

An application of the love of God in us

- Love – unconditional affection leading to acts of kindness which promote salvation.

How do we react to the scruples of one another?

- Scruples: An uneasy feeling arising from conscience or principle that tends to hinder action; a feeling of doubt as to whether an action is morally right.
- How do we deal with differences of conduct among Christians in matters of conscience that produce differences where there are no specific instructions from Scripture?

Instructions from Scripture:

- Romans 14:14-23
  - the weaker brother
  - days and dietary issues.
- 1 Corinthians 8
  - the exercise of Christian liberty
  - food offered to idols
Am I my Brother’s Keeper?
Pursue peace and edification
Romans 14:13-23

Context:
- Romans 13:8 – owe no man anything except love!
- A particular case: one who is weak in faith – Romans 14:1
  - A true believer
  - Disputes over opinions
    No explicit Scriptural teaching
    Specific issues: foods and days
  - Do not quarrel or condemn
- Accountable to the Lord

My brother’s keeper (Romans 14:13-23)
- The rule: do not condemn and do not hinder my brother.
- Clarification – these are things that are morally neutral.
  - The result of application of Christian principles
  - These are matters of conscience.
- Application of the rule
  - Do not grieve your brother.
  - Do not destroy the one for whom Christ died.
  - Do not let your good be spoken of as evil.
  - Serve God’s Kingdom – righteousness, peace and joy
  - Accept the brother’s scruples as your own.
  - Keep your faith between yourself and God.
  - Do all things with a clear conscience
Am I my Brother’s Keeper?
Never make my brother stumble
1 Corinthians 8

Context: A series of questions. (7:1)

The issue – food offered to idols (8:1-6)
  ▪ We possess knowledge
    One God the Father, Creator
    One Lord, Jesus Christ
    Idols are non-entities.
  ▪ Knowledge and love

The application (8:7-13)
  ▪ The weaker believer.
    – The weaker believer does not possess knowledge.
    – The weaker believer is wrong.
    – This issue is morally neutral.
  ▪ The application is not morally neutral.
    – Do not cause the brother to stumble.
    – This is sinning against a brother and against Christ.
  ▪ The resolution:
    – My brother’s conscience is more important than food.
    – I will NEVER make my brother stumble.
Equipping the Saints
for
the Work of the Ministry

An eccentric life

▪️ Definition:
  – Departing from a recognized, conventional or established norm or pattern.
  – Not situated at or in the geometric center.
  – Having the axis located elsewhere than at the geometric center
▪️ The believer is “off center”!
  – Worship and praise God
  – Give our material goods
  – Living the life of Christ
  – Love and serve one another

The duty of the church.

▪️ Contrary to the natural order
▪️ An impossible task
▪️ A holy task