

Paralysis in the Body

By David Wright

Paralysis is one of the most distressing afflictions a person can suffer. A healthy body lifts, pushes, pulls, twists, or whatever else it is told to do. A paralyzed body, however, refuses to work. Because of injury or disease, it is unable to respond to the head's commands.

As physical paralysis handicaps the body, so spiritual paralysis hampers the church. Paul says that Jesus "is the head of the body" (Col. 1:18). If the church is the body of Christ, then the Lord's people should always obey the Head. This is Paul's point. According to the complete text of Colossians 1:18, Christ "is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent."

Although Christ ought to be first in all things, the body often refuses to work for him. This failure certainly isn't due to an inability to see what needs to be done. As Jesus puts it, "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Matt. 9:37). The scarcity of workers is due to a lack of faith and love. Genuine faith in God's word means believing that work for Jesus is richly rewarded. The Bible says to be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58). And sincere love for others means making personal sacrifices of energy, time, and money to share the Gospel with the lost.

Victims of physical paralysis must wait for further advances in medical science. In a few more years, doctors may discover the key to healing spinal cord injuries. But spiritually paralyzed children of God must not wait. By his grace they can repent of their failure to work and become more responsive to the Head.

Family Workbox

Jesus taught his followers to pray (Luke 11:1-4). Parents must likewise teach their little disciples to pray. One way to do this is to make suggestions before the child begins speaking to God (e.g., "Let's thank the Lord for our food, clothes, and house--and don't forget to pray for your sick grandmother").

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