

Basics... Why Our Church Exists!

Part 6 - Putting It All Together!

October 18, 2009

Today we wrap up our series... "Why the Church". Our journey brings us to this conclusion: The Church is God's tool to build the faith of those who believe and hope to a world that is searching for something more! When the church is working well, it is a powerful agent for life change. Let's look at the connection between our mission statement and our purposes.

I. Our Motivation...Why the church?

A. God builds the church

Matthew 16:18 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

1. He chose the church to work out his purposes for mankind and to change the world. He will build it!
2. I can't grow the church. I am called to be faithful and fruitful, not fretful!

B. We need each other...the Body of Christ

¹⁴For the body is not one member, but many. ¹⁵If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. ¹⁹If they were all one member, where would the body be? ²⁰But now there are many members, but one body. ²¹And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; I Cor. 12:14-22

1. We are a...

- Family not an educational endeavor

- An organism not an organization
 - Relational not institutional
2. 5 Benefits of a Healthy body (Church)
- Every member is useful and needed. Our gifts will be utilized
 - No one is more important or valuable than another. People are valued
 - God designed us to be interdependent
 - Pride is negated because some less visible members are actually the backbone of the church!

II. Our Mission: To become a community of authentic Christ-followers by knowing Him and making Him known!

- A. **To Become:** Worshipping God by honoring Him with our lives. God's power to live on! It is a process!

Psalm 34:3 "O Magnify the Lord with Me; Let us exalt his name together"

Matt 22:37-40 (The Great Commandment) "Love the Lord your God with all your heart..."

1. Everything starts with worship. We worship God before we work for God. Matthew 4:10. Unfortunately too many people: Worship their work, work at their play and play at their worship!
2. Exalting God with our whole life and declaring His greatness. We are able to bring pleasure to God through worship. Worship is far more than music – anything you do that brings glory to God is an act of worship. Every activity can be transformed into an act of worship when you do it for the praise, glory, and pleasure of God.
3. Honoring God is a life-long adventure that takes patience, commitment, and intentional focus. What really matters is who we are becoming in this process. Ultimately, the Christian life is about building an intimate relationship with Jesus as the Holy Spirit changes us from the inside out, and letting Him transform the way we think, behave and live

"As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more" 2 Corinthians 3:18b NLT.

4. Application: Would people say that you are becoming more like Jesus? Does your life honor God as an act of worship?

B. **A community: Connecting** through authentic biblical fellowship. God's **people** to live with! It is **personal**.

Hebrews 10:25 "And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of His coming back again is drawing near."

1. Life is meant to be shared. God intends for us to experience life together. The Bible calls this fellowship. Real fellowship is much more than just showing up at services. It is experiencing life together.

2. As members of Christ's Church we are called to belong and not just believe! We are identifying with Him and our church family.

"You are members of god's very own family... and you belong to God's household with every other Christian." Eph. 2:19 (Living Bible)

3. Application: Are you involved in authentic Biblical fellowship? Are you in a Life Group, Men's Fraternity or Women's Bible Study?

C. **Christ-followers: Serving** through ministry and acts of compassion. God's **profession** to live out! There is a **price**.

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Rom 12:11 "Serving the Lord"

1. Christ-followers are by definition servants because that is how Jesus defined His life!

Matthew 20:28 Didn't come to be served but to serve!

2. A ministry mindset is a reflection of spiritual maturity. We seek opportunities to give back, not an obligation that we dread.

3. Our service ultimately should bring God glory.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

4. He has given each of us the opportunity to serve others and make a real difference in our community. When you serve others in Jesus' name, you're ministering.
5. **Application:** Where are you serving? What is your ministry?

D. **Knowing Him:** **Growing** through Bible study and personal discipleship. God's **principles** to live by! There is a **plan**.

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it" Joshua 1:8

1. Maturing in our knowledge of Christ and applying His truth is part of our daily routine; Growing in our relationship with Christ is a non negotiable. We make time for it!

Teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. Col. 1:28

2. Growing believers are reproducing themselves through their disciples.

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2

3. **Application:** Are you systematically studying God's Word for yourself? If Sunday mornings is all you get, you will become spiritually malnourished.

E. **Making Him Known:** **Reaching** the community and the world through evangelism and missions. God's **purpose** to live for! There is a **passion**!

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" 1 Peter 3:15

1. Sharing Christ with our friends and neighbors is part of the Great Commission which is restated in all 4 gospels (Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-49, John 20:21), and Acts 1:8!
2. To all Jesus says "Come" and to believers he says "GO!"

3. Does predestination, election and God's sovereignty negate this command? No way!

¹³for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." ¹⁴How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

4. **Application:** How often do you verbally share your faith with someone else? If we have the great news (example cure for cancer), why don't we open our mouths?

F. Summary: Our Church will grow...

1. **Stronger** through worship and honoring!
2. **Larger** through evangelism and reaching!
3. **Closer** through fellowship and connecting!
4. **Deeper** through discipleship and growing!
5. **Broader** through ministry and serving!

III. Our Model... Applying our purposes to my family!

I want my kids to...

A. Worship: Love Jesus with all their heart.

Matthew 22:37 "Jesus replied: 'Love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 6:5.

B. Evangelism (Reach): Have a passion to share Christ as a way of life.

Rom. 1:16 "For I am not ashamed up the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation."

C. Discipleship (Grow): Be able to read the Bible and apply it to daily living.

⁹How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. ¹⁰With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. ¹¹Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.

D. Fellowship (Connect): Marry a growing Christian and pass the spiritual baton to their children.

*Be ye not **unequally yoked** together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? II Cor. 6:14*

E. Ministry (Serve): Be involved in ministry and serve God faithfully.

Eph. 4:11-12; "Equipping people for the work of the ministry..."

Table Talk

1. Of the 5 purposes for the church, which ones do you think we need to work on as a church?
2. Self-evaluation: Ask yourselves the following questions...
 - ✓ **Worship**: Would people say that I am becoming more like Jesus? Does my life honor God as an act of worship?
 - ✓ **Fellowship** (Connect): Am I involved in authentic Biblical Fellowship? Am I in a Life Group, Men's Fraternity or Women's Bible Study?
 - ✓ **Ministry** (Serve): Where am I serving? What is my ministry?
 - ✓ **Discipleship** (Grow): Am I systematically studying God's Word for myself? Am I growing spiritually?
 - ✓ **Evangelism** (Reach): How often do I verbally share my faith with someone else? What keeps me from sharing my faith?
3. What other scriptures support each purpose?
4. How is our Mission different from our purposes?
5. What would have to change in your life for these purposes to be lived out in your home?