

[Sunday, November 27, 2016] The Church Series, The Purpose of the Church –
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The Purpose for the Church

**The purpose of the church is to witness of Jesus Christ.
To glorify God.**

The first consideration that we took of the Lord's New Testament church was 'The Origin of the New Testament Church.' Three points that we brought were:

Was it in Old Testament?
Was it on the Day of Pentecost?
Or, Did Jesus Christ Originate His Church?

The second consideration was 'The Nature of the New Testament Church.' Four points that we brought under this heading were:

The Church Is a Living Organism
The Church Is Local
The Church Is Independent
The Church Is Autonomous

There is no higher calling in all of heaven and earth than to be called the sons of God. (Jo.1.12) And there is no higher calling for sons to service than in the Lord's New Testament church. **In the Word of God when the sons of God come into a church of God they are properly called the *saints of God*.** So what purpose does a church serve?

The purpose for the church is to do the will of God:

1. Carry out the Great Commission
2. To Build up the Faith of the Saints

First, the primary purpose of the Lord's church is to carry out the work of Christ until He returns to this earth again. The work of the church is to preach the gospel

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of Jesus Christ, baptize those which come to faith in Christ, and then to teach them to observe all of the commandments of Christ.

*Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

No other organization has the *right*, the *authority*, ἐξουσία, or the *power*, δύναμις, to carry out this three-fold commandment to preach, baptize, and teach than the Lord's churches. Luke captures both ideas of authority given at Christ's ascension and power received at Pentecost. Notice,

*Lk.24.46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:
47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

*Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

*48 And ye are witnesses [testifiers] of these things.
49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.
50 ¶ And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.
51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.*

When a church fulfils her work God receives the glory.

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Eph.3.20 Now unto him (God, v.19) that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in (ἐν) us,

21 Unto him be glory in (ἐν) the church by (ἐν) [whom? ...] Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Works independent of the Lord's churches fail to give God the glory through Jesus Christ His Son. Those who think to continue such separated service should rethink their position in light of the Word of God. The New Testament, particularly all of the epistles know nothing of believers at large. Every believer of that early period came into the church of Christ, and was encouraged to continue in the *grace of God*.

In Antioch Pisidia,

Ac 13:43 Now when the congregation [of the synagogue] was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

A number of the epistles contain these words:

Php 4:23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

A church which keeps before her this Great Commission is a church which truly loves her Lord. Apart from this she has fallen from her love to Christ, no matter what else she does.

Rev.2.1 ¶ Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

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5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

A church might be full of good programs for its membership, and do great works in the community, but if she fails to fulfil her commission of the Lord she is a shell of what she ought to be. Always remember why we are here: to preach Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. To baptize those who profess Christ at this gospel preaching. And, to teach those as they come into the Lord's church to walk with us until Jesus comes again.

Second, the purpose for the Lord's churches is to solidify the lives of her members so that they might continue to the day of Christ in faith. Being a member of the Lord's church is a *way of life*. It is a whole, new manner of life.

Church life should be a life of helping one another follow Christ through every experience of life. Not every member's experience is the same in the church. Some members will be called upon to suffer more than others for the name of Christ. But all will suffer in some measure for their identification with Christ's church. Couple this with the other normal issues of life and we have a lot that we can do to help one another in our faith as we walk with Christ. Some members have more difficulties with making ends meet, or fighting against the flesh, keeping encouraged in the Word and will of God, haven't the health or the wealth as others. But let's be clear about this. Being frail or having a lifetime of good health has nothing to do with faith, though both of these can be an avenue for showing genuine faith in Christ. Being poor or having wealth has nothing to do with faith, but both can be an avenue for the show of the power of Christ in us. If you are like me, we really need to give this much more thought. Our natural tendency is often to think that our present infirmity stands against our having a strong faith in Christ, when the very opposite is true. It is in our weakest state that He is the strongest, is it not?

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2Co 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

If we will not live for Christ now, we will not live for Christ then.

There is a measure of faith given to each one of us when we are converted to Christ that is to be used in the context of a New Testament church to help the other members of the body of which we are a part.

Eph.4.7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

...

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Must read Romans chapter 12.

To summarize the purpose of the church we, this membership is to witness of the resurrected Christ, preaching the gospel, baptizing those who come to faith in Him, teaching them to continue in all things that He has commanded, and helping one another to be faithful until He returns again.