The Mission Of Christ’s Church

Intro: As a basis for our study, turn to 1 Cor. 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

The church is the saved; Acts 2:47 “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” They have been saved from sin; Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” and saved for service to God; 1 The. 1:9 “For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;”

Church is a translation of the Greek word ἐκκλησία (ekklesia) (from ἐκ—ek— meaning “out of” and κλησίς—klesis—meaning “a calling”).

Vine writes: “It has two applications to companies of Christians, (a) to the whole company of the redeemed throughout the present era, the company of which Christ said, “I will build My Church,” Matt. 16:18, and which is further described as “the Church which is His Body,” Eph. 1:22; 5:23, (b) in the singular number (e.g., Matt. 18:17, R.V. marg., “congregation”), to a company consisting of professed believers, e.g., Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:13; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:5, and in the plural, with reference to churches in a district.”

The church at Corinth was to abound in the Lord’s work. “Nothing walks with aimless feet; the church has a mission given by the Lord.”

I. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IS TO SAVE SOULS.

A. The universal need.
   1. Man is lost in sin.
      a. Rom. 3:10, 23 “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one... 23For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”
      b. Gal. 3:22 “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”
      c. Eph. 2:1-3 “And you hath be quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 3Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 4 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”
      d. 1 John 1:8, 10 “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.... 10If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
   2. The danger is eternal death.
      a. God’s wrath:
         (1) Rom. 1:18 “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;”
         (2) Rom. 2:5 “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;”
         (3) Eph. 5:6 “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”
         (4) Col. 3:6 “For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience;”
b. Death:
   (1) Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
   (2) Jam. 1:15 “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

3. The great need is salvation.

B. The Great Commission

1. Mat. 28:18-20 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 
" 20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

2. Mark 16:15-16 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

3. Luke 24:46-47 “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

4. John 20:21-23 “Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: 23Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

5. Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

6. Notice Matthew’s account:
   a. The apostles were to go into all the world.
   b. They were to preach the Gospel to every creature.
   c. They were to teach them to do what they had done—go into all the world and preach the Gospel to ever creature.
   d. Therefore, this great commission is just as applicable for us today as it was for the apostles.

C. Who is to teach the saving Gospel to the lost?

1. It is a saving Gospel.
   a. Rom. 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
   b. Jam. 1:21 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

2. Individual Christians
   a. Acts 8:1, 4-5, 12 “And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles....Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. 9Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.... 12But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”
   b. 2 Tim. 2:2 “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”
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3. Congregations
   a. Eph. 4:12 “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”
   b. Acts 13:1-5 “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. 4So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. 5And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.”
   c. Acts 14:26-27 “And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. 27And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”

D. Avenues of activity.
   1. The pulpit (public proclamation)
   2. Radio and television
   3. Tracts and papers
   4. Personal evangelism
   5. Missionaries

E. There is a place for every Christian to labor for Christ.

II. The Mission Of The Church Is To Strengthen The Saved.

A. The need for edification:
   1. 1 Pet. 2:1-2 “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby;”
   2. 2 Pet. 3:18 “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
   3. Col. 2:19 “And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.”
   4. Eph. 4:11-16 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13Till 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: 14That 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: 15But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16From 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.”
   5. Rom. 12:4-8 “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 4So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 5Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 6Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 7Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”
B. Who is to strengthen the saved?
   1. Individual Christians
      a. Rom. 14:19 “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”
      b. Rom. 15:2 “Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.”
      c. 1 Tho. 5:11 “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.”
   2. Congregations
      a. Acts 13:1-2 “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”
      b. Eph. 4:11-12 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

C. Areas for growth:
   1. Socially
   2. In business
   3. In the home
   4. Spiritually

D. Avenues of activity:
   1. Worship
   2. Bible classes
   3. Special classes, training groups (singing classes, personal work programs, preacher training classes, etc.)
   4. Personal study

E. There is a place for every Christian to labor.

III. The Mission of the Church is to Serve the Suffering

A. The need:
   1. Deu. 15:11 “For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.”
   2. Mat. 26:11 “For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.”
   3. John 12:8 “For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.”

B. Why help the poor?
   1. It is commanded; Gal. 6:10 “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”
   2. In view of the judgment; Mat. 25:31-46
   3. It is part of pure religion; Jam. 1:27 “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
   4. Because we love them; 1 John 3:17 “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”
   5. Promised blessings
      a. Acts 20:35 “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
b. 2 Cor. 9:8-9 “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: 9(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.”

C. Who is to do this work?

1. Individuals
   a. Mat. 25:31-46
   b. 1 Tim. 5:16 “If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.”

2. Congregations
   a. 2 Cor. 8:1-5 “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; 2How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 3For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; 4Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.”
   b. Gal. 6:10 “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

D. How is this to be done?

1. This is in the realm of expediency.
2. The ability of the church or individual, the nature of the case will determine the method(s) to be employed.

E. There is a place for each of God’s servants to serve in this area.

Conclusion: Ephesians 3:21 “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” God is glorified in the church when the church is faithful to its mission. Let all of God’s people truthfully sing: “I will work, I will pray, I will labor every day in the vineyard of the Lord.”