

“The New Us: The Ideal Church”

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January 30, 2022

Scripture

1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, **making mention of you in our prayers;**

3 constantly **bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, **knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you;**

5 for **our gospel did not come to you in word only**, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

6 You also **became imitators of us and of the Lord**, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

7 so that you **became an example to all the believers** in Macedonia and in Achaia.

8 For the word of the Lord has **sounded forth from you**, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and **how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God**, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

Thessalonica: THE IDEAL CHURCH

The Location -> Northern Greece

The Culture -> A “Free City” and a Commercial Mecca

The History -> Acts 17 (and 19 and 20)

1. A CHURCH FOCUSED ON PRAYER led by a PASTOR FOCUSED ON PRAYER

1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

2 **We give thanks to God** always for all of you, **making mention of you in our prayers;**

2. A CHURCH WHERE FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE IS PARAMOUNT

3 constantly bearing in mind **your work of faith** and **labor of love** and **steadfastness of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

A Church That Works

The Church is on a Mission for Jesus **Work of Faith ON BEHALF OF Jesus Christ**

It does not merely attend on Sundays or Wednesday nights but it's in operation at the home and office of its members.

James 2:14-17, 26

*"What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? **Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.**"*

"For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."

Ephesians 2:8-10

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that none may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them".

Workmanship is "Poima"	->	A Poem -> Believers are God's creative poetry
Created for the purpose of good works	->	Intrinsically Good Work
Which God Prepared Beforehand	->	Divine Appointments -> Predestined
We Should Walk in Them	->	As we live in Christ, working for Him

A Church That Loves Others

The Church Loves as Jesus Did **Labor of Love FOR Jesus Christ**

1 Corinthians 13:4-13 -> The Excellence of Love

4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child,

I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. **But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

John 13:34-35 -> *Love one another even as I have loved you.*

Love Inside the Church – Other Believers

John 11:33-36 – Lazarus is Dead

*Therefore, when Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled, and He said, “Where have you laid him?” They *said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept. So, the Jews were saying, “See how He loved him!”*

Love Outside the Church – The Lost

John 4 -> The Woman at the Well

Luke 13:34 – Jesus to the Unbelieving People in Jerusalem

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her young under her wings, and you were unwilling.”

A Church Focused on Christ's Return

The Church was in Tribulation

Steadfast Hope IN Jesus Christ

- A Free City but a Powerful Jewish Presence
- Engaging the Community with the Gospel

2 Timothy 3:12

Indeed, all who want to live in a godly way in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Matthew 5:11-12

"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way, they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

3. A CHURCH WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE CHOSEN (That is: SAVED)

4 knowing, brethren **beloved by God, His choice of you;**

Churches of Revelation:

	TITLE	COMMENDED FOR	CRITICISM	INSTRUCTION
EPHESUS (2:1-7)	THE LOVELESS CHURCH	Rejects evil, perseveres, has patience	Love for Messiah no longer fervent	Do the works you did at first
SMYRNA (2:8-11)	THE PERSECUTED CHURCH	Gracefully bears suffering	None	Be faithful until death
PERGAMOS (2:12-17)	THE COMPROMISING CHURCH	Keeps the faith of Messiah	Tolerates immorality, idolatry, and heresies	Repent
THYATIRA (2:18-29)	THE CORRUPT CHURCH	Love, service, faith, patience are greater than at first	Tolerates cult of idolatry and immorality	Judgement coming; keep the faith
SARDIS (3:1-6)	THE DEAD CHURCH	Some have kept the faith	A dead church	Repent; strengthen what remains
PHILADELPHIA (3:7-13)	THE FAITHFUL CHURCH	Perserveres in the faith, keeps the word of Messiah, honors His name	None	Keep the faith
LAODICEA (3:14-22)	THE LUKEWARM CHURCH	None	Indifferent	Be zealous and repent

The Ideal Church is filled with CHOSEN / SAVED people!

Where it's not just on the sign out front...like **Sardis**

Where it's not about living on past glory...like **Ephesus**

Where Jesus is not on the outside looking to get in...like **Laodicea**

Where people really love God; it shows in how they love each other...like **Philadelphia**

4. A CHURCH OF ACTION ALONG WITH WORDS

The Church Has a Voice

1 Thessalonians 1

5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, **but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction**; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

7 so that **you became an example** to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

- The Gospel came with Words -> Woe to Me if I Don't Preach
- The Gospel came with Holy Spirit Power -> Visible Transformation
- The Gospel was lived out by a Pastor personally "All-in" -> Paul Proved It
- The Church followed Paul's example -> "As I follow Christ"
- The Church BECAME THE example, themselves

1 Corinthians 9:16

*For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for **woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.***

1 Corinthians 11:1

Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

Acts 1:8

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

5. A CHURCH WITH AN ECHO

The Church Sounds out from inside its doors

1 Thessalonians 1

8 For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that **we have no need to say anything.**

- The Church Isn't Focusing on Solely Consuming Knowledge
- The Church Reverberates Truth -> **A Literal Echo (sounded forth)**
- The Church Became a Megaphone for the Gospel
 - Within Greece

- Around the Christian World
- Without Needing the Pastor to Tout His Congregation

James 1: 21-25

*“In humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. **But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.** For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.”*

If You’re Only Hearing the Word, You’re Missing the Point of “Church”

6. A CHURCH REPENTED AND REDEEMED

The Church is Transformed with a Testimony

1 Thessalonians 1

9 For they themselves report about us, what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,

10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

- Paul was hearing about the Church from others -> Timothy and Silas, primarily
- The Church was made up of individual testimonies
- The Church understood the truth and was committed to live by faith
- The Church was longing for Jesus’s Return to be **finally** free from sin

Romans 7 -> Paul didn’t do what he wanted to do, and he did what he didn’t want to do

So, this is the **IDEAL CHURCH**:

1. A CHURCH FOCUSED ON PRAYER led by a PASTOR FOCUSED ON PRAYER
2. A CHURCH WHERE FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE IS PARAMOUNT
 - a. The Church "Works"
 - b. The Church Loves Others
 - c. The Church is Focused on Christ's Return
3. A CHURCH WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE CHOSEN (That is: A SAVED CHURCH)
4. A CHURCH OF ACTION ALONG WITH WORDS
 - a. The Church Has a Voice
5. A CHURCH WITH AN ECHO
 - a. The Church Sounds out from inside its doors
6. A CHURCH REPENTED AND REDEEMED
 - a. The Church is Transformed with a Testimony

Does this sound like Calvary Baptist Church?

Pastor Geoffrey's Characteristics of the Ideal Church Member:

- F Faithful
- E Evangelistic
- A Available
- S Sacrificial
- T Teachable