

Sermon 8- 5, 2018 Why are we here? Acts 2:42

Dear Body of Christ:

This is something we all use. This is something that is used for a purpose.

- There was a need for this can opener
- Some inventor saw the need and created this item
- This item fills a purpose.

In the same way, have you have considered the purpose of the church?

- What on earth is the church here for?
- Why did God create the local church?
- What is the purpose of the local church?
- What does God want us to focus on...to expend our energy on as a church?

We see from Scripture that there are 5 basic purposes that are to characterize each church.

The 5 are: Worship...Fellowship...Growth...Service and Missions.

The church is to be driven by each of these themes or purposes as it carries out God's will.

Size is not a factor to consider in analyzing the success of a church. A church's spiritual life cannot be measured by its numbers.

Purpose no. 1 Worship – Matthew 4:10

God created us to be in fellowship with Him and to enjoy a close, intimate relationship with our creator. When we gather together, God delights in the praise and adoration of His people.

- Worshipping God is a powerful expression of our dependence upon Him
- Worshipping God is confessing our sins to Him and receiving His forgiveness
- Worshipping God is to receive strength and grace from Him
- Worshipping God helps us put our life in perspective as we ponder God's grace
- Worshipping God is what we were created to do

Purpose no. 2 Growth – Colossians 1:28

The church is to be a place where we as believers become more like Christ.

- Early Christians were called disciples - “one who learns and grows”
- Becoming like Christ is a life-long pursuit
- Our spiritual growth never ends but continues until we get to heaven
- Each of us are called by God to grow in grace and knowledge of God II Pet 3:18
- We are called to be disciples and to disciple others in the faith...How?
 - Discipling means teaching others biblical truth
 - Give me Christian books or tapes to listen to
 - Share with others Bible passages for comfort and strength
 - Support one another in the walk of faith
 - Helping people apply Biblical truth
 - Help people see life from God’s perspective
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Titus 2 “Older women...can train the younger women to love their husbands and children.”

Older men...encourage the young men to be self-controlled.
Find someone and begin to disciple him.

The best way to reach out and get into the community is to have Christians who will reproduce themselves in their everyday lives.

Purpose no. 3 Fellowship - Ephesians 2:19

The 3rd purpose of the church centers around our need to relate to one another.

- The church is to be a place where we are known and cared for
- The church is a place where we are family – brothers and sisters in Christ
- God desires that we show care and support to one another
- God desires that the church be known for its love for one another
- Acceptance...grace...sharing...forgiveness...sacrifice...are practices that are to follow
- We mirror the work that God has done in our lives
- “Every Christian ought to be like a battery that joins with other believers and corporately increases the church’s output.”

Concern for one another

- Concern for others is an important theme in Scripture
 - James 5 We are to confess our sins to one another
 - Col 3 We are to forgive one another
 - Gal 6:2 We are to bear one another's burdens
 - I Thess 4 We are to comfort one another
 - Heb 10 We are to exhort one another
 - Rom 14 We are to edify one another
 - James 5 We are to pray for one another

Purpose no. 4 Service - Ephesians 4:11ff

The local church is an extension of God's hands. Story of German church and Jesus statue after WW II. After the bombings the statue had no feet or hands. Elders left the statue as it was to remind the members that they were the hands and feet of God on earth.

- We give our lives to God and for the welfare of others
- Every believer as a spiritual gift...to be used to serve I Peter 4:10
- Apostle Paul likens the church to a human body that has many different parts and functions
- Each of us has a part to play in helping the local church to function as God intended

Purpose no. 5 Evangelism - Sharing the Gospel - Matthew 28:19-20

We are called by God to reach out into our community and the world with the Good News

- Our nation is one of the largest mission fields in the world
- Many people today in our communities are unchurched
- In Dane County only 7% of the total population regularly attend church
- Jesus was clear about His desire for His disciples to make new followers of Christ
- We are God's ambassadors of the life changing message of the Gospel

Why Go to Church?

Hebrews 10:24-25 says “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together...but let us encourage one another...as you see the Day approaching.”

True fellowship results from the presence of God’s Spirit. God is busy not just on Sunday mornings but through the week in the lives of His people.

He doesn’t work in buildings; He works in the hearts of His people...24...7....365.
God’s purpose for the church is being done by His will and by His power.