

What Is the Mission of the Church?

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A mission is an assigned task, and there are myriad of missions various individuals and/or groups have been sent to accomplish. A secret agent may be sent by his nation to accomplish some covert operation in a foreign land. An army unit may be deployed on a peace keeping mission. Or, a politician may be sent to a foreign government to conduct diplomatic negotiations. These are all various kinds of missions. Similarly, the church has a mission to accomplish. However, her mission is not an assignment by men but is assigned to her by God. Nonetheless, men have given various assignments to the church. Consider these:

Some have said the church exists to do good deeds. Certainly, the church as opportunity is afforded to her is to “do good unto all men” (Galatians 6:10). However, this is only partly true. The church does not exist only to do good deeds. The seeming dilemma lies in definition. What is “good” to men is not always “good” to God. For example, men often tend to justify sin (John 3:19), especially their own sin or the sin of a loved one. The church, however, has the God-given responsibility to oppose sin. After convicting the churches of Galatia of returning to the “weak and beggarly elements, Paul asked, “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16). Nearly every book of the Bible convicts men of sin, and to many, this is not good.

Others say the church exists to do right. This is an honorable statement if the right standard of authority is recognized. Every religious, social, and civic group could make the same statement. Even humanist and atheist could say such. However, is their standard from men or from God? Does the church exist to do right? Yes, but not according to just any standard. Because the church is commissioned by God, her standard is the Word of God, the Bible.

Still others say the church exists to have fellowship. Again, this is only partly true. Paul wrote, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11). Christians are to have fellowship with God and with God’s people but not with the world (2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

Sadly some folks mistakenly think the church exists to entertain or be entertained. For this reason, many churches hire “pep-rally” preachers along with “conscience-soothing” choirs. Rather than opposing sin and wickedness, anything and everything goes, and worship becomes a frolicking mass production.

What, then, is the God-given mission of the church? First, it is evangelism. Jesus said, “ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Second, it is edification which means to build up. Christians are to build each other up in the exhortations of the Lord. Paul wrote, “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). And, third, it is benevolence — doing good unto all men as opportunity is afforded (Galatians 6:10). Let us, therefore, fulfill our God-given assignments and do away with man’s preconceived ideas about the mission of the Lord’s church.