

Be the Church (Eph 3:10) pt 6 Why Church Matters

Intro: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor

Church-Wide Prayer: Food & Clothing Drive (Rom 15:13): Peace, comfort, healing & hope

- Praise God - last year 2600+ ppl helped! 1800 food hampers given away!
- Praise God - Thanksgiving! Personal - provision, relationships, freedom, safety!
- PRAY - the Lord to bring those in need Oct 18! inside & outside the church!
- PRAY - Opportunities to BE the Church - evening next week - Friday give away!
- PRAY - strength, joy, health, belonging, blessing over those serving/running the event
- PRAY - for those taking the Hearing God seminar - to be Know God more (9:00am)
- PRAY - for upcoming BAPTISM & SET FREE - PRAISE - God for what HE is doing!

INTRO: Who is the best QB to ever play the game? Answer: Tom Brady

Suppose he said, "I want to become a member of the **NFL**, but I don't want to join a visible team that meets together for training, practicing and deployment on game day as a team."

He said his desire was, "Just me and Coach Belichick! That's ALL that's needed!"

Would Brady have won the most SB of any player in NFL history, dominating the stats and playing 3 full hall of fame careers??? NO!!!

Or, Example: "I want to become a member and pilot in the **Air Force**, but I don't want to join a visible fighting squadron that meets together for training, planning and deployment."

Is this going to be the guy the turns the tides a battle? Probably NOT! Unless his name is Maverick!

BOTH of these examples are BIZARRE. And so is the notion that one can be a member of the universal church without joining a visible local church for training, encouragement and deployment as a body!"

1 Corinthians 12:12-18 The body is a unit, though it is composed of many parts. And although its parts are many, they all form one body. So it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given one Spirit to drink. For the body does not consist of one part, but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact, God has arranged the members of the body, every one of them, according to His design.

RECAP: what is the Church? A called out assembly – the Family of God – we are called to SERVE others and to invest UPWARD, INWARD & OUTWARD

Yet, Many still find church optional. Or, they attend but engaging in the church is optional.

Common Questions and Objections RE: Church:

- Church is a gathering of people. Great! I'll just gather with my friends. That is my church.
- I get more out of podcasts than my local preacher! (it's hard to compete with everyone online!)
- Church doesn't make a difference in my life!
- I have more important things to do!

- It's too much work to build relationships in church!
- I've been hurt by the church!
- I don't trust the people in the church!
- I don't know of any good churches!
- The church is full of hypocrites!
- I'm a part of the universal church – sure! But I don't need a local church!

FIRST: Some of these are valid! Some seem like an excuse! But ALL of them are reasons people struggle with RE: the church.

SECOND: ALL churches are made up of HYPROCRITES and SINNERS. YOU AND I, ARE INCLUDED IN THAT.

Today: WHY CHURCH MATTERS

A. Jesus Loves the Church – (AND SO SHOULD WE!)

1. Jesus said He would build His Church!

- **Matthew 16:18** (BSB) And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.
- **Ephesians 2:20** (BSB) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone.
- **Acts 2:47** (BSB) ... And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. (3000 SAVED, BAPTIZED & ADDED TO THEIR NUMBER = LOCAL CHURCH)

2. Jesus died for His Church!

- **Acts 20:28** (BSB) ... Be shepherds of the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.
- **John 15:13** (BSB) Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

3. Jesus sanctifies the Church!

- **Jesus sanctifies, washes, corrects, directs, encourages, frees from sin! Sets apart!**
- **Ephesians 5:25–27** (BSB) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her 26 to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to Himself as a glorious church, without stain or wrinkle or any such blemish, but holy and blameless.

4. Jesus uses the Church to reveal Himself

- **Ephesians 3:10** His purpose was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,

5. Jesus is coming back for His BRIDE - THE CHURCH

- **Revelation 19:7-8** ... For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. She was given clothing of fine linen, bright and pure.”

How can we say we love Jesus if we do not love His Bride, the Church?

Yet, despite this, many people today have little use for Christ's Bride – the CHURCH.

B. Jesus Purposed the Church:

1. To be the fullness of God on the earth!

- **Ephesians 1:22-23** And God put everything under His feet and made Him head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

- **What does this mean?** The CHURCH is the representation of God on the earth! THAT IS A MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY WE HAVE!
 - We are to demonstrate to the world – who God is, what He is like, and what living under His rule is all about! We are to multiple, spread and make the world a BETTER PLACE!
2. **To Minister to God (UPWARD) – Glorify & Worship God!**
- **1 Corinthians 10:31** So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.
 - **Colossians 3:16 (BSB)** ... sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.
 - **Worship in the church is not merely a preparation for something else: it fulfills a major purpose of the church right now.**
 - **Ephesians 5:19-20** Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. **To Minister to Believers (INWARD) – Nurture and Discipleship.**
- **Ephesians 4:11–13 (BSB)** And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for works of ministry and to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, as we mature to the full measure of the stature of Christ.
 - Paul said that his own goal was not simply to bring people to initial saving faith but to “present every man mature in Christ” (Colossians 1:28).
 - **1 Corinthians 14:26** What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a psalm or a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. All of these must be done to build up the church.
 - We are called to MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS – who love & obey him! Who love & serve His Church! And who share Him with the world!
4. **To Minister to the World (OUTWARD) – Evangelism and Mercy**
- **Matthew 28:19–20 (BSB)** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you ...
 - **As people COME TO CHRIST** – they ENTER the Church – from here – The Church equip and helps them mature in their knowledge of JESUS – the Church sends them to GO repeat!
 - **We are also called to show MERCY** & take care of the WIDOWS, ORPHANS & NEEDS of those around us!
 - **James 2:14-16 (BSB)** What good is it, my brothers, if someone claims to have faith, but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you tells him, “Go in peace; stay warm and well fed,” but does not provide for his physical needs, what good is that?
 - **James 1:27 (BSB)** Pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.
 - **Food & Clothing Drive! Oct 18** – This is a MASSIVE opportunity for us to BE THE CHURCH. Ministering to the needs of those INSIDE & OUTSIDE the church! From any church! ALL are welcome! This is a KEY FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH.

- **Our Job & Purpose as the Scattered Church:** 1) Feed & clothe those in need! 2) Pray for ppl's healing & other needs; 3) Stand against evil in society! 4) Participate in civic activities! 5) Attempt to influence government & education policies! 6) Be active in the education of youth! 6) Work hard to build up our communities! 7) SHARE THE GOOD NEWS!
- **The Church should be LEADING THE CHARGE in all of these areas! The WHOLE CHURCH – Not just a few people!**
- **PRIMARY FOCUS: for people to KNOW JESUS! we share Him and demonstrate what He's like!**

5. To be the Source & the Foundation of Truth in the world!

- At Jesus' trial before Pilate Jesus revealed His purpose in coming into the world.
- **John 18:37** (BSB) ... "For this reason I was born and have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice."
- **What do we mean by truth? Truth is that which conforms to fact or reality – the way things really are.**
- **CONTRAST: Adam & Eve – God said vs Satan said** - In the beginning God warned Adam and Eve that if they disobeyed and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would surely DIE!
- The serpent (devil) came along and contradicted God's claim, telling the couple that if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it would instead make them wise like God.
- **Which of these claims conformed to reality?**
 - i. Adam & Eve experienced DEATH emotionally, spiritually and physically! GOD SAID – WIN!
- **WHY THIS MATTERS! Ephesians 2:1-2** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you used to walk when you conformed to the ways of this world and of the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience.
- **Satan is now the prince and ruler of this world** (Jn 12:31; Eph 2:2). **Satan PRIMARILY USES LIES TO RULE THIS WORLD!**
- **Governments use lies to rule & control people.**
 - i. **Current LIES:** Israel, individualism! Live your truth! You are enough! Put yourself first! Love is love! Being white is racist! The gender binary is colonialism! You can be whoever you want to be!
 - ii. **Why does this matter?** JUST LIKE IN THE GARDEN – LIES ALWAYS PRODUCE DEATH
 - iii. Our government & media is pushing a narrative that mental health and suicide amongst young people can be mitigated through transition from one gender to another and to embracing every sexual desire! To "live their truth"
 - iv. **Does this conform to reality?**
 - v. NO! There is much evidence to the contrary!
 - vi. **In fact, countries like SWEDEN**, who led the way have suffered LAWSUITS! Because the PROMISE OF LIFE WAS A LIE.
- **Corporations also use LIES!** to attract customers, even if their products hurt these consumers. E.g., tobacco, alcohol, drug, social media and pornography industries. They are meant to enslave their customers to bring profit to corporations.
- **You can SEE the EFFECTS of Satans rule on the earth! We are to usure in the Kingdom of Heaven!**

- **GOOD NEWS:** in all this is that God's truth even now **SETS PEOPLE FREE** from the enslavement and death of Satan's lies, IF they will believe and follow God's truths.
- **John 8:32 (BSB)** Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
- But it's not just knowing or **believing** the truth that sets us free; it's **obeying** and living out the truth that sets us free.
- Jesus claimed to testify to TRUTH & he claimed to BE THE TRUTH
- **John 14:6 (BSB)** ... "I am the way and the truth and the life ...
- If we ignore His TRUTH claims and warnings – we do so at our own PERIL!
- **What this has to do with the Church:**
- **Jesus came and proclaimed truth – then LEFT and charged the CHURCH TO CONTINUE HIS WORK!**
- **1 Timothy 3:14–15 (BSB)** ... I am writing you these things 15 in case I am delayed, so that you will know how each one must conduct himself in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (cf. 1 Tim 6:20-21; 2 Tim 1:14; Col 2:8)
- **The WORLD DOES NOT DEAL IN THE CURRENCY OF TRUTH!**
- **The responsibility of guarding and promoting truth in the world was given to the Church.**

Will you help the Church?

We are either building God's Kingdom or our own. One of Jesus' TRUTH claims was that **NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS.**

The Church is broken. It is FULL of sinners. But the Church is the beautiful BRIDE OF CHRIST! The FAMILY OF GOD! And THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD!

Will you serve? Will you give? Will you sacrifice? Will you partner? Will you pray? Will you BE the Church?

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024

Cruise ship → → → → → Battleship

1. **Life on Mission** (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus
2. **Next Gen** (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging
3. **Israel & Persecuted Church** (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom "to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel"
4. **Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer
5. **Church Renewal:** Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers