

Re-Think Church (3) – The Purpose of the Church

Introduction: A few weeks ago we started to “think” church and to “re-think” church. We began by learning “What Is Church”. In our time together we talked about the importance of us as a new church plant “re-thinking” church – we are at a very crucial time in our young history – we need to get this right!

In week 1 We learned that church is...

1. **A Connection** – with God and people
2. **A Conversation** – Correction, Direction and Inspiration
3. **A Commitment** - We all must find our place and plug in. **Great churches don't just appear, they are built by sold out people!**

Last week we discussed “Why Church” - Why even go to church? Is it important to you or God if you are in Church? Why did God even create this thing called church? To start today let look at one very powerful and promising scripture:

1. **This is His Church**
2. **His Church is His Body**
3. **His Body is Empowered to Impact the World** – Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit God gave His body gifts...

Transition... Today we want build upon this truth even deeper and talk about The Purpose of The Church...

Matthew 16:13-19 - When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” **14** So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” **15** He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” **17** Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. **18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. **19** And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Revelation 1:10-20 - I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches ^[b] which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. ¹⁹ Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the ^[g]angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

- Put up a picture of the Tabernacle (Over-head shot showing all compartments and furniture)

- Notice – The where the church is in God's eternal plan / divine order
- The church is a school master to get us into a dimension with him!

The Kingdom of Heaven vs. The Kingdom of God

- The Kingdom of Heaven is a place (Where God resides)
- The Kingdom of God is the king's domain...everywhere they he rules
- Jesus spent most of his time talking about the kingdom of God – the book of Acts declares that even after the resurrection Jesus preached the Kingdom 40 days. It was so important that he spent his last moments on earth declaring it.
- The church is focused on the Kingdom of Heaven, but Jesus is focused on the Kingdom of God.
- If a king has authority in a region but has no representation in that place to administrate the kingdom realities, he is really just a figure head.
- Jesus said he would build His church – **The Ecclesia**
- It means called out one, but on a deeper interpretive level we must understand that Jesus came into the earth in the "fullness of time". The Roman empire was in control. The Caesar ruled from Rome, but he appointed Governors and Kings in every territory to ensure and impose the culture of the kingdom. King Herod in Jesus time is a perfect example of what I'm teaching.
- The **Ecclesia** was the Kings cabinet – these were people who were hand chosen and called out of every region and empowered to impose the Kings domain.
- Jesus is King of Kings. He appoints his cabinet (the church) for the same purpose

Ephesians 3:8-11 - To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹ and to make all see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;¹⁰ to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*,¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord

- This passage implies spiritual warfare in verse 10
- Where have we heard this phrase before – Principalities and Powers?

Ephesians 6:10-13 - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Conclusion:

Your homework for this week is to go home and study the Book of Ephesians

In Ephesians

1. Our Position – 1-3
2. Our Walk – 4:1-10
3. Our Growth – Chapter 4:11- chapter 5
4. Our Warfare – Chapter 6

Ephesians 4:11-16 - And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.