

THE MEASURE OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

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TEXT: MATTHEW 28:18-20

THESIS: WE AIM TO SEE HOW THE CHURCH IS TO IMPLIMENT THE DIVINE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH.

INTRODUCTION: FUNCTIONAL AND DISFUNCTIONAL CHURCHES

1. Disoriented pastors and leaders
2. Dysfunctional churches: no purpose, dealing with problems, sin, etc.
3. Dying churches

I. IDENTIFY THE DIVINE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

The 3 E's: Evangelism, Exaltation, and Edification.

The 3 W's: Witness, Worship, and Work

The 3 F's: Outward Focus, Upward Focus, Inward Focus

Biblical Presupposition:

1. The identity of the church: Christ's Institution (Mat. 16:18)
2. The nature of the church: Christ's Body (Eph. 2:20-22)
3. The basis for the church's function: the Word of God (I Tim. 3:14-16; Titus 1:5)
4. The purpose of the church: the Great Commission (Mat. 28:18-20)

THE THREE FOLD PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

A. Exalt God: A Worshipping Community (Eph. 1:3-14; I Pet. 1:4-10; Acts 2:42-27)

1. Through its existence (Eph. 1:3-14)
2. Through its activities (Acts 2:42-47; Col. 3:12-17; I Cor. 10:31)
3. Through its gatherings (Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:19-26; Rom. 15:1-6)

B. Edify the Saints: a Working Community

1. Through the mutual exercise of the gifts (Eph. 4:1-16; I Pet. 4:10-11; I Cor. 12:13-27)
2. Through the mutual affection of the Body (Jn. 13:35; I Thess. 3:11-13; 4:3-12)
3. Through the care of its spiritual health (I Thess. 5:12-24; Rom. 15:14; Heb. 10:24-25)

C. Evangelize the Lost: a Witnessing Community (Acts 1:8; Mat. 28:18-20)

1. Through the preaching of the Gospel
2. Through the sending of missionaries
3. Through the planting of reproducing churches

II. IDENTIFY WHAT HINDERS THE CHURCH'S PURPOSE

A. Failure to Implement the Whole Purpose of God

1. Ignorant of the purpose by pastor and people
2. Misplaced priorities: the classroom, playroom, storage room, emergency room, workroom
3. Lack of resources: trained workers (Eph. 4:11-12)

B. Failure to Overcome Its Obstacles (see Book of Acts)

1. Persecutions (Acts 3-4, 7-8): through courageous preaching
2. Spiritual failure (Acts 5): through church discipline
3. Special needs (Acts 6): met needs without neglecting priority
4. Leadership development (Acts 6): the art of delegation
5. Lay involvement (Acts 8): every member a minister

6. Partiality/prejudice (Acts 8-11): the oneness in Christ
7. Doctrinal divisions (Acts 15): clear doctrinal beliefs

III. IMPLEMENT THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

A. Prioritize the Purposes: Do What is Important

Identify and instruct the church on the purposes.

B. Program the Purposes: Do Plan the Purpose

1. Establish programs that fulfill the purposes of the church
2. Pastors organize their lives on the purposes of the church

C. Push the Purposes: Do What is Planned

1. Instruct
2. Recruit
3. Motivate

D. Pay for the Purposes: Do Invest in the Purpose

1. Hire staff in accordance with the purposes
2. Pay only for what facilitates the purpose

E. Promote the Purposes: Do Motivate the Church

1. Preach on the purposes
2. Promote the purposes by every means

F. Perfect the Purposes: Do It Better

1. Evaluate the progress of the church
2. Make changes to improve the purposes (not just to change)

CONCLUSION: THE MEASURE OF A HEALTHY CHURCH IS ONE THAT IS LIVING OUT ITS PURPOSES UNDER THE POWER OF GOD IN ITS COMMUNITY.