

The Missionary Purpose of God's People

Missiology, Chapter 8

What is the Church?

- **Definition** – *ekklesia* – *a body of believers, baptized upon their profession of faith in Jesus Christ, who have joined together voluntarily in the Holy Spirit for the purpose of promoting Christ's redemptive purposes for humanity* (Dana, 1944)
- **Implies...**
 - The church is visible
 - The members are baptized believers
 - The church is voluntary in association
 - The church has the task of discipling the nations

Discipleship

- Teaching converts to observe the commandments of the Lord.
- Teaching has to include modeling the desired behavior, and helping newer believers develop the habits of a disciple
- The teaching includes obedience to the Great Commission

Metaphors

- **The people of God**
 - Relationship – God initiated the church
 - Responsibility – His care and our loyal obedience
- **The body of Christ**
 - Christ's headship
 - Unity with him in purpose
 - Unity with each other in ministry
- **The temple of the Holy Spirit**
 - Worship – in the presence of God
 - Presence – Christ is with us
 - Power – to live in unity and obey his direction

Missionary Purpose of the Church

- We are called to
 - Be a missionary people, and
 - Do missions
- Our Purpose
 - Evangelism
 - Discipleship
 - Worship
 - Ministry
 - (Fellowship) – not discussed

Evangelism

- Def: Communicating the good news of salvation in the power of the Holy Spirit so that people have a valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and become responsible members of one of his churches

Worship

- The missionary purpose of worship is to bring all the world to the foot of God's throne to sing his praise and give him his rightful place as Lord of all.

Social Ministry

- Doing good in Jesus name
- Jesus made this an eschatological act by his declaration of his fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy

The Missionary Nature of the Church

1. Rests on the missionary nature of God
2. Includes two mandates
 - The cultural mandate
 - We are accountable for the well-being of God's creation
 - We are accountable to do good to all men
 - The evangelistic mandate
 - Making disciples of all nations

Combining the Two Mandates

- The Wide View – Inseparable and equal
- The Narrow View – One subsumes the other
 - Cultural Priority – Achieving justice is the totality of missions
 - Evangelistic Priority – Social ministry flows from the process of evangelization
- The Prioritized View – Evangelism first

The Prioritized View

- Both mandates are essential parts of the biblical view, but priority must be given to evangelism
- Support for this view
 - Jesus' approach
 - Paul's approach
 - Donald McGavran's conclusion
 - Peter Wagner's conclusion
 - Conclusion of Lausanne, 1974
- The conclusion we reach is that the nature of our missionary purpose is evangelistic

The Missionary Nature of the Church

- ✂ Expresses at least three **motives**
 - The Glory of God – extended to the ends of the earth
 - The Redemption of Humanity
 - Forgiveness of sins
 - Freedom from bondage to sin
 - Making known the wisdom of God
 - To the angels
 - Including the Gentiles in his redeemed people

The Missionary Nature of the Church

1. Includes a calling and responsibility to do missions
 - Every local church is accountable for the Great Commission
 - Go into the world
 - Proclaim the gospel
 - Establish new churches
 - Disciple these converts
 - No church may “remain at ease in Zion”

Missions and the Kingdom of God

In the Bible the Kingdom of God is ...

- A present reality and a future realm
- Intended to be universal in scope

Several truths spin off of the above...

- God is sole and sovereign ruler
- There can be only one Kingdom – implies warfare with the kingdom of darkness
- He will be victorious for he is omnipotent
- Entry into the Kingdom of God comes only through repentance and faith in Jesus
- The church is the agent of the Kingdom of God

Missions and the Kingdom of God

- The missionary call of the church is to be the agent of God's kingdom in this world. – that "agency" is its proclamation of the gospel.
- The missionary purpose of God's people is inextricably connected with the nature of the New Testament church.