

Church Matters

Our Mandate Matters
Sunday October 18, 2009
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Message Truth:

Does church matter to you? If so, how much does it matter? A lot or a little? Many today believe that spirituality matters, or even that Jesus matters, but too few actually think that church matters at all. Sadly, with increasing frequency many often believe church does not matter - that is until they need one. The fact is the church does matter, and it matters a lot. Why? The church matters to Christ; he founded it and calls it His bride. No other organization on the planet has the mandate of the church. The church is the only institution tasked with bringing the light of Christ into this dark world. By God's design the truth about His son Jesus Christ is to be found through His church.

⁸Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. ⁹I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret **from the beginning.** ¹⁰**God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom** in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹**This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Ephesians 3:8-11 (NLT)

The Church is Unique Among Human Organizations

- Only the church is endeavoring to execute God's eternal plan.

- Only the church is commissioned with being good news and telling good news.
- Only the church is interested in saving the soul and reconciling mankind to God.
- Only the church seeks good for all of society.
- Only the church is founded by Jesus Christ.

The word ἐκκλησία occurs in 111 verses of the Greek NT.

Matthew	2	Acts	22	Romans	5
1 Corinthians	21	2 Corinthians	9	Galatians	3
Ephesians	9	Philippians	2	Colossians	4
1 Thessalonians	2	2 Thessalonians	2	1 Timothy	3
Philemon	1	Hebrews	2	James	1
3 John	3	Revelation	19		

Mandate Matters

Because the church's mandate from its founder makes it unique among all other human institutions we should focus on our mandate. Church matters to God, church matters to Jesus, so church should matter to you.

1. The I _____ of the Church

¹³When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the

living God.”¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.”¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and **on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**¹⁹ **I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.**²⁰ Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

Matthew 16:13-20

● The church is built upon the f_____ of C_____.

³ After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, **he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.**⁵ **For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”**

Acts 1:3-5

¹² Then **they returned to Jerusalem** from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city.¹³ When they arrived, **they went upstairs to the room where they were staying.** Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.¹⁴ **They all joined together constantly in prayer,** along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the believers **(a group numbering about a hundred and twenty)**

Acts 1:12-15

2. The B_____ of the Church

¹ When the day of Pentecost came, **they were all together in one place.**² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent

wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ **They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.**⁴ **All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.**

Acts 2:1-4

3. The I_____ of the Church

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, **“Brothers, what shall we do?”**³⁸ Peter replied, **“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**³⁹ **The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”**

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

⁴¹ **Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand** were added to their number that day.

⁴² They **devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching** and to the **fellowship,** to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer.**⁴³

Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.⁴⁴ All the believers were together and **had everything in common.**

⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, **they gave to anyone as he had need.**⁴⁶ Every day **they continued to meet**

together in the temple courts. They **broke bread in their homes** and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,⁴⁷ **praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.** And **the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

Acts 2:37-47

What exactly did they understand to be their mandate? It is best and most cohesively taught in Matthew’s gospel. We speak of it as the six purposes of the church.

● The Great Commandment

³⁴ Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: " **'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'** ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: **'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:34-40

1. The church has a mandate to "love God" which we call w_____.
2. The church has a mandate to "love our neighbors as ourselves" which we call m_____ or s_____.

● The Great Commission

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.** ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ and **teaching them** to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:16-20

3. The church has a mandate to "make disciples" which we call e_____.
4. The church has a mandate to "baptize them" which we understand to be f_____.
5. The church has a mandate to "teach them to obey" which we call d_____.

● The Great Conflict

¹² Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. ¹³ "It is written," he said to them, " **'My house will be called a house of prayer,'** but you are making it a 'den of robbers.'" ¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. ¹⁶ "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, " **'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?**" ¹⁷ And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night. Matthew 21:12-17

6. The church has a mandate to keep "His house a house of p_____."