

The Work of the Church

Review of previous three lessons:

- The NT **church is the kingdom of God** foretold of in the OT (cf. Dan. 2:28, 44; Acts 20:28 / Rev. 5:9-10) and established on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1ff).
- The church is comprised of **people** who have been **called out** of the world of sin to serve God (I Pet. 2:9-10).
- Church people **assemble** (Acts 11:26; 14:27; I Cor. 11:18; Heb. 12:23) in their **local areas** (Acts 8:1; 11:22; 13:1; I Cor. 1:2) on the **first day of the week** (Acts 20:7) to **worship** God (Acts 20:7ff).
- The apostle Paul said that the church is the *“pillar and ground of truth”* (I Tim. 3:15). This lesson shall examine the **work** of the church in light such passages.

“... to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
(Ephesians 3:10-11)

God’s Purpose for the Church:

- Spiritual (Jn. 18:36; Rom. 14:17).
- Unlike any other kingdom the world has known (Matt. 20:24-28).
- Many had a false conception of the church and its work (cf. Matt. 11:12-19).
- Jesus *“likened”* the kingdom of God to a “good seed in a field (Matt. 13:24-25), mustard seed (Matt. 13:31), leaven (Matt. 13:33), hidden treasure (Matt. 13:44), costly pearl (Matt. 13:45-46), a net cast into the sea that gathers specific fish (Matt. 13:47-48), A king who makes a reckoning (Matt. 18:23-24), a householder (Matt. 20:1-2), and a king who made a marriage feast (Matt. 22:2-3).

What is the work of the Church?

- **Evangelize** the community and world as possible (Matt. 13:3-9; Mt. 20:1-16; I Cor. 1:21; 3:6-7; 2 Cor. 11:8-9; 1 Tim. 3:14-15).
- **Edify** church members (Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:24-25).
- Provide **Benevolence** to needy saints (i.e., bearing burdens by means of the collective group of saints first day of the week contribution) (Acts 4:32; 6:1; 11:29; Rom. 15:25-26; I Cor. 16:1ff; II Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12).

The Work of the church takes into consideration the authority of God’s Word (cf. Deut. 4:9-16; Col. 3:17):

- Preconceived ideas of the church will only lead one to reject the true work of the church.
- **If I conclude by personal reasoning** that a good work for the church to be involved in is institutionalization (i.e., pooling a multitude of local churches monies together to take care of evangelizing, edification, and or benevolence to the needy in and out of the church) then I must find a direct commandment, inference or give an example of such a work.
- **If I conclude by personal reasoning** that the church ought to be involved in the entertainment business (i.e., theater, concerts, sporting events, knitting classes) then I must find a direct command, inference, or example of such a work.
- **If I conclude by personal reasoning** that the church of Christ ought to provide day care and or secular education for my children then I must find a direct command, inference, or example of such a work.
- **If I conclude by personal reasoning** that the church of Christ ought attempt to “bring people to Christ” by inviting the community to church sponsored hot dog or BBQ cookouts that all may have “food, fun, and fellowship” then I need to find a commandment, inference, or an example of such a work in the Bible.