



Word of Grace Bible Church

Winter Bible Conference

February 14-16, 2014



The Profile And Priorities Of An Effective Church

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THE PROFILE AND PRIORITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH

I. LET'S LAY SOME GROUNDWORK (From Various N.T. books)

A. The PREDICTION of the "CHURCH". (Matthew 16:13-18)

1. The *meaning* of "church" is a _____.
 2. The *builder* of the church is _____.
 3. The *beginning* of the church would be _____.
 4. The *owner* of the church is _____.
 5. The *foundation* of the church is the _____.
 6. The *durability* of the church is seen by _____.
_____.
- So what is Jesus Christ doing and not doing in this present age?

B. The NATURE of the "CHURCH".

1. It is referred to in a _____ sense. (Eph. 1:22-23; 2:14-16; 3:5-6)

- **When did the Church begin?**

- _____ STATES WITH ADAM OR ABRAHAM AS THEY DON'T DISTINGUISH ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH, NOR WOULD THE CHURCH THEN BE AN OT 'MYSTERY'
- SOME _____ CLAIM WITH JOHN THE BAPTIST AS THEY HOLD TO THE 'TRAIL OF BLOOD' BELIEF
- _____ BELIEVE THAT IT STARTED WITH THE DAY OF PENTECOST
- _____ BELIEVE IT STARTED MID-ACTS SINCE THE MYSTERY WAS CONNECTED WITH PAUL

- **What saith the Scriptures?**

- 1) **What places believers today into the Body of Christ? (1 Cor.12:13)**

- 2) **When did the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit begin? (Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-4)**

3) Is there evidence following Pentecost that the Church is now in existence?

- a) The usage of the word _____ in Acts 2:47, 5:11, 8:1, 8:3, 11:22, 11:26, 12:1,5; 13:1; Gal.1:13; 1 Cor.15:9; 10:32; etc. gives proof of its existence.
- b) The usage of the phrase _____ which is a unique church age term of identification with Christ due to the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit. (Rom.6:1-5; 16:7; Gal.1:22; 3:26-29)

4) What does it matter?

a) If you view the Church as synonymous with Israel, numerous problems result such as ...

- You will lack a consistent normal, historical, grammatical _____.
- You will end up mixing _____ and putting believers under the law as a rule of life (Rom. 6:14).
- You will _____ the unconditional covenantal promises made to ethnic Israel by applying them to the church today.
- You will destroy the unique _____ position, orientation, and ministry of the church (Col. 3:1-4).
- You will rob the church of its _____ – the imminent return of Christ and the Rapture of the Church. (Titus 2:13; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)

b) If you fail to distinguish the beginning and birthday of the church as occurring after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ...

- You will mix the _____ (such as the Sermon on the Mount) with the _____, ending up with doctrinal and practical confusion.
- You will fail to distinguish the Gospel of the _____ with the Gospel of the _____.
- You will confuse the issue of _____ with the issue of _____ (how one is saved).
- You will take the _____ right past the cross and place it on the backs of church-age believers.

- c) **If in an effort to “rightly divide the Word of truth,” you end up wrongly dividing it by starting the church post-Pentecost ...**
- You will interpret the _____ as being non- Church and not for today (Mt. 28:18-20).
 - You will eliminate the practice of _____ for believers and possibly the _____ as well.
 - You will conclude a _____(early Acts) and a _____ (later Acts) when the Bible eliminates such a distinction (Eph. 2:11-18).
 - You will wrongly conclude that Peter preached a _____ than Paul did (Gal.2:7-9; 1:8-9).
 - You will reduce the parts of the Bible to us as being only the _____ (even perhaps only his prison epistles), possibly relegating late written New Testament books such as 1 John, 2 John, 3 John (A.D. 90-95), to apply to another dispensation.

2. It is referred to in a _____ sense. (Col. 4:15-16; Phil. 1:1)

• **What the Church is NOT:**

- a) A _____
- b) A _____
- c) Another name for _____
- d) Not the _____
- e) Not the same as _____

• **What about the place of the para-church?**

• **What can you learn from this?**

- a) That the _____ finds _____ in genuine _____.
- b) That the Church is both an _____ [universal] and an _____ [local].
- c) That the _____ is of _____ in the _____ for this present age under the dispensation of grace.
- d) We should recognize and appreciate the universal church but _____ in a doctrinally sound local church!

II. LET'S EXAMINE SOME DETAILS (From the Book of Acts)

A. What are the MARKS of an Effective Church?

1. Their *congregation* consisted of _____ and _____ believers in Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:41)

- What did Peter mean in Acts 2:38?

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent,

and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;

and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- Can this conclusion further be supported by this context and comparing other verses in the book of Acts?

- What does the Bible say about church 'membership'?

1) There is no _____ stating any kind of official church membership requirements.

2) If one was a believer in Jesus Christ as Savior, the local church in their geographical area was their _____.

3) There was, however, a real sense of _____ to a local body of believers with spiritual leadership.

- Why is this first element so important for an effective church?

2. Their *spiritual leadership* consisted of _____ and _____ men. (Acts 2:42a)

- Why is this crucial to being an effective church for Jesus Christ?

- How and what did the development of spiritual leadership in the church consist of?

a) Initially the _____ were given by the Lord Jesus Christ the highest leadership authority in the Church.(Acts 2ff)

b) In addition, there was the appointment of _____ [also called pastors or overseers] that were called under Christ's Headship to positions of functional spiritual leadership in local assemblies, seemingly following the structure of Jewish synagogues. (Phil.1:1; Acts 14:23, 15:6, 22-23, 16:4, 20:17, 28; 1 Tim.5:17)

c) _____ were eventually chosen and appointed to address certain physical and spiritual needs and to function over certain ministries under the elders' authority in the local church, allowing the elders to maintain their God-given priorities. (Acts 6; 1Tim.3:8-13)

- **What must you remember about spiritual leaders in your local church?**

3. Their *instruction* came from sound _____. (Acts 2:42b)

- **Is sound doctrine really that important to being an effective church?**
- **What is the emphasis in churches in our day?**
- **Is there much pressure to compromise doctrinally or to not speak out against false teaching?**
- **What is the other imbalance in some doctrinal churches?**

4. Their *fellowship* and *focus* was around _____ and _____. (Acts 2:42c)

- **Are these really that important to being an effective church?**
- **What happens when you lose this focus?**

5. Their *dependence* was on _____ as reflected through _____. (Acts 2:42d)

- **How exactly do you live the Christian life?**
- **Is individual and group prayer really that important to being an effective church?**

6. Their *concern* for others caused them to be an _____ to both the _____ and the _____. (Acts 2:44-47)

- Is a healthy “body concept” perspective really that important to be an effective church for Jesus Christ?
- What is God’s blueprint for ministry? (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- How does this fit into the “one-anothers” of the NT?
- What is always the key to horizontal relationships and ministry?
- What is crucial to remember in all of this?
- How does a spirit of sacrifice show itself?

7. Their *like-mindedness* resulted in _____. (Acts 2:46-47)

- How do you enjoy practical unity with fellow-believers in Christ?
 - 1) By having _____ that desire to guard this unity. (Eph.4:1-3)
 - 2) By learning and holding to _____. (Eph.4:11-15)
 - 3) By resolving _____ exercising love and practicing grace.(Eph.4:29-32)
 - 4) By embracing _____ for relational harmony.
 - 5) By remembering the purpose of this practical unity – to _____.
_____ (Phil1:27)
- What destroys practical unity with fellow-believers in Christ?
 - 1) _____ [Prov.6:16-19]
 - 2) _____ [Rom.16:17-18]
 - 3) _____
_____ [Heb.12:15; Psalm 55:21]
 - 4) _____
_____ [Titus 3:10-11]

8. Their *willingness* to _____ and _____ as the practical need required allowed them to fulfill their God-given priorities and meet needs. (Acts 6)

• How did this manifest itself in the early church?

- BY CHANGING _____ FROM THE TEMPLE TO OTHER PLACES SUCH AS HOMES, SYNAGOGUES, OR A SCHOOL [2:46,5:42, 19:8-10]
- BY APPOINTING _____ AS NEEDED [ACTS 6]
- BY CHANGING _____ FROM SUNDAY MORNINGS TO THE EVENINGS WHEN NEEDED IN SOME PLACES [ACTS 20:7-10]
- BY CELEBRATING THE _____ FROM EVERY DAY [ACTS 2:46] TO ONCE A WEEK [ACTS 20:7] TO AS OFTEN AS YOU DO IT [1 COR.11:26]

9. Their *power* was the _____.

- Acts 4:31-33
- Acts 6:3
- Acts 11:21-24
- Acts 13:2-12

• Why is this so important to remember?

Because when we fail to factor in the power of the _____ we will rely on _____ or resort to _____, etc. to accomplish God's objective of building His Church instead of _____.

10. Their *testimony* was impactful in _____ and _____ for JESUS CHRIST which brought GLORY TO GOD. (Acts 2:47)

• What can you learn about evangelism in the NT?

- a) It is never limited to the _____.
- b) It is usually initiated by _____.
- c) It is best done when _____.
- d) It is best done when people are _____.
- e) It is ideally to lead to further _____.
- f) It is to result ideally in _____.
- g) It requires much _____.

• Can you expect opposition when preaching the Gospel and sound doctrine?

B. What does this MEAN to you?