

# “Why Church?”

JUNE 8, 2014

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Today, we are going to take a slight divergent from the sermon series, “The Romans Road Rebooted” and speak on a subject that I believe we need to address as a church today more than anything else asking these questions:

- What is the Church?
- What is the purpose of the Church?
- What part do you play in the Church?
- Are you just playing games?

Have you ever played the game of CHARADES?

- **CHARADE (WEBSTER’S DICT.)**

*A composition that imitates somebody’s style or actions in a humorous way*

***While it is a JOY to be a part of Christ’s Church, it is not a JOKE,  
it is not a HUMOROUS depiction, it is not a GAME!***

**1. Because the Church is a people who were DEAD and Christ made them ALIVE...this is a SERIOUS matter!**

- **EPHESIANS 2:1-10 (ESV)**

*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins<sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—<sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,<sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,<sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

**✚ Therefore, God has given His Church a purpose, but we must know who the Church is, before we examine its purpose.**

## ***What is the CHURCH?***

- **CHURCH (WEBSTER’S DICT., 1828 ed.)**

*1. A house consecrated to the worship of God, among Christians; the Lord’s house. This seems to be the original meaning of the word. The Greek, to call out or call together, denotes an assembly or collection. But, Lord, a term applied by the early Christians to Jesus Christ; and the house in which they worshipped was named from the title*

*2. The collective body of Christians, or of those who profess to believe in Christ, and acknowledge him to be the Savior of mankind. In this sense, the church is sometimes called the catholic or Universal Church.*

- **EKKLĒSÍA (STRONG'S GREEK DICT., 1828 ed.)**

*A gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place, an assembly; in a Christian sense...an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting; a company of Christian, or of those who, hoping for eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, observe their own religious rites, hold their own religious meetings, and manage their own affairs, according to regulations prescribed for the body for order's sake; those who anywhere, in a city, village, constitute such a company and are united into one body*

**1. If we were to use this as our only GUIDE for what the Church is, we would be no different than a POLITICAL PARTY or social CLUB, but that is not God's intent for His Church.**

- **1 PETER 2:9 (KJV)**

*<sup>9</sup>But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light...*

- **1 CORINTHIANS 6:14-18 (ESV)**

*<sup>14</sup>Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? <sup>15</sup>What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? <sup>16</sup>What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,*

*"I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>17</sup>Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, <sup>18</sup>and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."*

**2. The Church is defined not by its GATHERING, but by FULFILLING its PURPOSE.**

- **ACTS 2:42-47 (ESV)**

*<sup>42</sup>And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup>And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup>And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup>And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup>And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

## ***What is the PURPOSE of the Church?***

**1. The purpose of the Church is to PREACH the GOSPEL!**

- **1 PETER 2:9 (ESV)**

*<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

- **ROMANS 1:16 (ESV)**

*<sup>16</sup>For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

- **ROMANS 10:11-15 (ESV)**

*<sup>11</sup>For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." <sup>12</sup>For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. <sup>13</sup>For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

*<sup>14</sup>How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? <sup>15</sup>And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"*

## 2. The purpose of the Church is to **STUDY** God's Word and **APPLY** it to our marriages, children and vocation!

- **2 TIMOTHY 2:14-15 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup>Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to quarrel about words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. <sup>15</sup>Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

- **2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup>All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- **EPHESIANS 5:25-27 (ESV)**

<sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup>that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup>so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

- **EPHESIANS 6:1-4 (ESV)**

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup>"Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), <sup>3</sup>"that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." <sup>4</sup>Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

- **COLOSSIANS 3:23-24 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup>Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, <sup>24</sup>knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

## 3. The purpose of the Church is to **BEAR** with each other!

- **EPHESIANS 4:1-6 (ESV)**

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,<sup>2</sup>with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,<sup>3</sup>eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—<sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

- **COLOSSIANS 3:12-15 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup>Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,<sup>13</sup>bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.<sup>14</sup> And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup>And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

- **ROMANS 15:1-7 (ESV)**

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.<sup>2</sup> Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. <sup>3</sup>For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me."<sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup>May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

## 4. The purpose of the Church is to **BEAR** each other's **BURDENS**!

- **GALATIANS 6:1-2 (ESV)**

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

- **ROMANS 12:14-16 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

- **JAMES 5:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

## **5. The purpose of the Church is to EDIFY the BODY of CHRIST!**

- **2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- **2 TIMOTHY 4:1-2 (ESV)**

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

- **COLOSSIANS 3:16-17 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup> And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- **MATTHEW 18:15-17 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

- **TITUS 2:1-6 (ESV)**

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. <sup>2</sup> Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. <sup>3</sup> Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, <sup>4</sup> and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, <sup>5</sup> to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. <sup>6</sup> Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.

## **6. The purpose of the Church comes FULL CIRCLE, when we have ALL THINGS in COMMON and not just GATHERING together!**

- **ACTS 2:42-47 (ESV)**

<sup>42</sup> And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup> And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

- **For us to be the Church that God has called us to be, we must fulfill all aspects of the purpose He has for His Church.**
- **When we hide our sin, our hurts, our failures, our struggle, and our burdens from our brothers and sisters in Christ, we are not only saying, I do not trust them, but that we do not trust God and His way for the Church to fulfill its purpose!**

- ***When we say we don't want to interfere in the lives of others when they are acting and living in contradiction to God's Word, we are saying that we do not have a sincere love for our brothers and sister in Christ and we do not have a high view of God's Church and therefore sin and apathy and complacency run rampant in churches today!***
- ***When we say we don't have anything in common with those people because they are so different from us, then you have a low view of God's Church and do not recognize that what unites us as His Church is not our dress or interests or age, but it is our identity in Christ that is essential as His Church and a low view of His Church in this area is what causes divisions in churches and a poor witness among the lost in our communities!***
- ***What part do you intentionally play in this Church? Do you have to drag yourself into this place every week? Can you hardly muster up the desire to get up on Sunday mornings and come here? Do you find it hard to believe that this church needs you? Do you find it difficult to give a priority to the Church in your giving?***
- ***Then maybe you are just playing a game of charades when it comes to God's Church. This is no laughing matter.***
- ***This is a serious issue and it requires repentance before a holy God, for God has chosen His Church to fulfill His purpose and we fulfill His purpose not just by gathering, but by FULFILLING it!***
- ***The time is short for us to do our part, we must begin and be found faithful in this today!***
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