

Intro

"The working method of God at any given time is to carry out His purpose through the members of the Body of Christ... the local church is God's agency in the world transacting God's business." Earl D. Radmacher

~ The church is God's chosen agent to make known his greatness, glory and grace in this dark world

Outline

1 The church belongs to Jesus

2 The church is built by Jesus

3 The church is composed of people who belong to Jesus

Text

1 The church belongs to Jesus

~ The church belongs to Christ

~ God is the author of the church, it wasn't man's idea

~ Christ is head over the church (Eph 1:22,23) *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

~ Christ is head of the body, the church (Col 1:18) *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

~ Christ is the chief cornerstone of the church (Eph 2:19-22) *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*

~ Christ is the Foundation of the church (1 Cor 3:11) *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, its Christ.*

~ The church is called the body of CHRIST (Eph 4:12)

~ Now that we've established that the church belongs to the Lord – we pose a question

~ How do we treat God's church?

~ Do we appreciate God's church?

~ If you have an appreciation for something you'll treat it with respect

~ If you loan me your car I'll drive carefully and respectfully because I have an appreciation for it

~ So what are valuable things God has given us for our benefit? Salvation, bible and his church

~ So how then do we value God's church?

1. We value the people that comprise that church (Ekklesia- called out ones)
2. We can purpose to be a part of the life of the church. What does that mean? It means we go beyond just coming and warming a chair. It means we find a role, a niche, a need and we fill it faithfully
3. We come with expectations that God minister to us through the service (the scripture, music and sermon). If we don't come with an expectation that God will meet us then we don't have a lively hope
4. God has gifted each believer with at least one spiritual gift. If you don't know what that gift is then start doing some things and you'll figure it out. But, God gave you gifts to use to help build his church. If you're not your gifts or natural talents then you're robbing God of what God has given you. If we don't use our gifts then not treating God's church very well. God didn't gift us so we can place them in the garage. Even our natural talents, we use them for God's glory
5. Pray for me study times and for the sermons I preach. Preaching is empowered by prayer. Powerful preaching is accompanied by powerful prayer. If you want your preachers to be better then pray for them

~ To treat God's church well means we see the value in it and we take care of the local church

2 The church is built by Jesus

~ Acts 2:42-47 (this follows on the heels of Peter's preaching at Pentecost)

~ Acts 5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. (This follows on the heel of the Lord disciplining the church. Ananias and Saphira lied to the HS and then miracles were done also)

~ Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. (The context is Paul and Barnabas were boldly preaching the word)

~ Jesus said the gates of hell wouldn't prevail against the church because Jesus would build his church

~ Guzik - Jesus also offers a promise - the forces of death and darkness can't prevail against or conquer the church. This is a precious promise in the heat of battle, assuring us that victory is sure.

~ Gamaliel said in Act 5:38,39, *“And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: 39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.”*

~ While we read the Lord added to the church we see also God used people in this process

~ Are we going to be part of the building process?

~ It's not the pastor's church or anyone else's church – It's the Lords

~ I had a call from an unknown caller and he said that the pastor asked him to leave this small congregational church because this individual was a hindrance to the pastor's church

~ The pastor has to be careful not to act as though the church belongs to him, its God's church. The pastor is an under shepherd under the chief shepherd (1 Pet 5:4)

~ We do some things because of a fear of missing out (FOMO)

~ I have a little bit of crypto currency and one of the managers at when we discuss it people have FOMO when it comes to crypto currency. Someone else is making money and we want to do that to

~ We should have a FOMO when it comes to the church and its success

~ We need a fear of missing out on being a part of God's building process when it comes to building the church

~ God uses people to build his church (you and me)

~ The Lord isn't going to send angels to do build his church – he wants to use you and me

~ If we don't do our job then the job won't get done

~ You can drive around and see businesses with signs that say hiring

~ One hotel we drove past when we drove through Norwich said, *“all the world is short-staffed, please be patient.”*

~ We don't want to change the name of our church to the, *“First Church of the Short-Staffed”*

~ A couple of needs for us to consider: 1 Nursery Workers 2 Covid Care Packages

3 The church is composed of people who belong to Jesus

~ The word Jesus used here in Matt 16:18 and 18:17 (2 times) is Ekklesia (from which we get our English word "ecclesiastical," referring to things that pertain to the church)and it means a group of called out ones

~ There's many names ascribed to God's people in the NT – In Acts = apostles, disciples, Christians, brethren (1:16), believers (2:44), church (2:47),

~ Body of Christ (Eph 1:22,23), Bride of Christ (Rev 21:9), Church of God (Acts 20:28), Church of the living God (1 Tim 3:15), family in heaven and earth (Eph 3:15), flock of God (1 Pt 5:2), God's building (1 Cor 3:9), God's heritage (1 Pet 5:3), habitation of God (Eph 2:22), House of God (1 Tim 3:15; Heb 10:21), house of Christ (Heb 3:6), household of God (Eph 2:19), Lamb's wife (Rev 19:7; 21:9), pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim 3:15), spiritual house (1 Pet 2:5), temple of God (1 Cor 3:16,17), temple of the living God (2 Cor 6:16)

~ Ekklesia is a group of people that have been called out of the world of sin and become part of a new entity that's neither Jewish or non-Jewish.

~ Ekklesia is a spiritual family. This spiritual family derives its life from its head and founder – Christ

~ The church then is the people group to whom we show great allegiance because often our the bonds we have with our spiritual family is better than the bonds we have with our biological family

~ Each believer has positional unity with Christ and we bring that positional unity to our relationships in the body

~ I was talking with P Whalen several months back and he was talking about church and he was saying that he was looking forward to meeting with his spiritual family on Sunday

~ We should have a desire to be around God's people. God's people offer us something our worldly friendships don't offer us – which is Christ. Let's give each other Christ

~ That being said, let's be sensitive to our fellow-believers and not treat them like 2nd class citizens because we know more than they do, we have to get the last word in

~ We sit where people sit so when we minister to them we minister to their needs instead of our opinions

~ For a sports team to do well there must be unity/chemistry, a common goal and everyone doing their job

~ We're all on the same team in a spiritual family going forward in the Lord's work and will

Conclusion

~ Christ said he would build his church. The church is a spiritual organism. Not natural so we don't approach it naturally

~ Let's make Sunday's spiritual and great

1 Plan to be here 2 Plan to be ready by having an expectation 3 Plan to be involved in the service with your focus and attention 4 Plan to be ministered to by God