

WALK ABOUT ZION

PSALM 48:12-14

Rediscovering The Church Of Jesus Christ

A STUDY MANUAL



A CEDARS HOUSE CHRISTIAN (INTERNATIONAL) RESOURCE

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THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

“Walk about Zion, and go all around her. Count her towers; Mark well her bulwarks; consider her palaces; that you may tell it to the generation following. For this is God, our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death.” Psalm 48:12-14

WHO IS THE CHURCH?

It is crucial for the Church of Jesus Christ to know Her identity. Without this knowledge, the Church would fail to accomplish Her mandate and mission and struggle to fulfil Her purpose and destiny on earth.

There are several descriptions that define and identify the Church. The following is not a comprehensive list of such descriptions, but can be used as a starting point to knowing the true identity of the Church.

1. FOUNDED BY JESUS CHRIST

The first thing to know is that the Church originated from and was founded and established by Jesus Christ. This must be the foundation of every doctrine about the Church.

- ◆ *Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:11*

2. THE ‘EKKLĒSIA’ (GREEK)

‘Ekklēsia’ means the “called out ones.” This denotes an assembly of people called out and set apart for a particular purpose. Thus, the Church is not a building but a company or assembly of people, who have been called out and set apart to govern. The “Ekklēsia’ is the entire assembly, company or gathering of people who have received the free offer of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

- ◆ *1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 6:17-18; 1 Peter 2:9 Ephesians 2:8-9*

3. THE FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD OF GOD ON EARTH

The church is the family and household of God. All believers are children of God and members of His family on earth. Jesus Christ became one of us so that we could become His brethren and God's children and family. We are spiritually born-again into God's family, by the Holy Spirit.

- ◆ *John 1:12-13; John 3:3-7; Ephesians 2:19; 1 Timothy 3:14-15; Hebrews 3:6; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26-29; Hebrews 2:10-13*

4. TEMPLE AND DWELLING PLACE OF GOD

Other religions have temples or buildings where they worship their gods. The Church, on the other hand, is the temple of the living God. God has chosen to no longer dwell in an ark or temple built with hands. He has now chosen to dwell in human beings, born again in the image of Christ, and filled with the Holy Spirit.

- ◆ *1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Jeremiah 3:16;*

5. THE BODY OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ is the Head and the Church is His Body. Christ is Spirit and for Him to function on earth, He needs His Body, the Church. Therefore, Christ and His Church are one, and without us, He cannot accomplish His purposes on earth.

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.” - Colossians 1:18

The Church is Christ and Christ is the Church. Christ is the ‘spiritual’ identity of the Church and the Church is the ‘physical’ identity of Christ. Without CHRIST there is NO CHURCH.

- ◆ *Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 5:29-30; Colossians 2:19;*

6. THE ARMY OF THE LORD

The Church is the army of the Lord Jesus Christ, sent out by the Father to advance His Kingdom on earth. We are to fight for the souls of men, and extend and expand the influence and boundaries of God's Kingdom.

We are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but wicked evil spirits and powers that prevent people from knowing and accepting the love and salvation of God through Jesus Christ and living by the standard of His word.

- ◆ *Psalm 110:1-3; Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 6:10-13; 2 Corinth 10:3-6*

7. THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

We are the Bride of Christ. He will return one day to receive His Bride, a Church, who has made Herself ready – is youthful, without spot or wrinkle and clothed in righteousness, beauty, excellence and perfection.

- ◆ *Revelation 19:7-8; Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 21;*

8. ZION – THE CITY OF THE LIVING GOD

The Church of Jesus Christ, God, is Zion, the City and Dwelling Place of God. Jesus came to earth as the prophetic King David, to establish and sit and reign upon His throne in Zion. The spiritual Zion is the Church, where God dwells and is worshipped.

- ◆ *Hebrews 12:22; Psalm 132; 2 Samuel 5:7-10; 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Psalm 89:34-37; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 33:20-24; Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 14:1*

9. A NATION AND KINGDOM OF PRIESTS AND KINGS

- ◆ *1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:9-10*
- ◆ We will discuss this further from Page 23

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

“Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.” – Proverbs 29:18 (ESV)

The purpose of a thing is the reason for which that thing exists. If something lacks purpose or you do not understand the way it is meant to function, you will misuse or abuse, discard, devalued or destroy it. *(Proverbs 29:18; Hosea 4:6)*

What then is the purpose of the Church? What does the Church exist for? The Church has a three-fold purpose, which all make God central.

1. TO PROCLAIM THE PRAISES OF GOD

The purpose of the Church is to proclaim the praises of God, and let all the world know the good and wonderful news about our God.

“All Your works shall praise You, O LORD, and Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations” – Psalm 145:10-13

The Church exists to proclaim the praises of God and His Kingdom. We are to proclaim God’s praises with every part of our lives:

- ◆ With our **LIPS**, we are to proclaim and declare God’s praises to all. With our **LIVES** surrendered to God and devoted to Him in daily worship, prayer and obedience to His word. Through our **LIFESTYLE**, particularly in relationship with others, our deeds, offerings and works will bring praises to God
- ◆ *Isaiah 43:21; 1 Peter 2:9; Psalm 145; Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 2:42; Acts 2:46-47; Colossians 3:16*

2. TO DISPLAY THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD REVEALED IN CHRIST

Secondly, through the Church, empowered by His Spirit, God displays His manifold wisdom and power, which are found in Christ, to the principalities and powers.

◆ *Ephesians 3:10-11; 1 Corinth 2:7-8; Mark 16:15-18; 1 Corinth 2:6-16*

In displaying the manifold wisdom of God, the purpose of the Church, therefore is to reveal the Mystery Of Christ, that God planned the redemptive work of Christ from the foundation of the world.

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." - 1 Corinthians 2:7-8

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST

"Just as He chose us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love," - Ephesians 1:4

The Omniscient God had always known that it is in Christ that His purpose on the earth would be fulfilled. This was the mystery or revelation given by God to Apostle Paul, that humanity, both Jews and Gentiles, would be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. All who believed in and received Jesus as their Lord and Saviour would be delivered from sin, reconciled to God and restored to newness of life.

◆ Through the Church, all humanity is to be informed of what God has accomplished for them in Jesus Christ. We are to go and proclaim this to all.

◆ *Ephesians 2:11-18; Ephesians 3:8-11; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8*

3. TO ESTABLISH GOD'S GOVERNMENT ON THE EARTH

The third purpose of the Church is to facilitate and establish the government of Christ on earth. The government (administration, management, direction, supervision) of the world rests on the shoulders of Christ. The Church is His Body, therefore, the government rests upon the Church.

- ◆ Christ's Kingdom government is a government of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit – *Romans 14:17*

This is what God will establish on earth through His Church – as we lead and teach the people the worship and ways of God, beginning from our homes, on our streets, in our communities, villages, towns, cities and nations.

- ◆ *Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 6:10; Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-5; Psalm 2:6-9; Daniel 2:44; Matthew 5:3,5*

THE MANDATE OF THE CHURCH

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore..."

The mandate and mission of the Church are encapsulated in the Great Commission, the instructions Jesus Christ left His Church, to preach the Good News of His Kingdom, disciple the believer and disciple the nations. Everything the Church does must fit within the Great Commission.

- ◆ The mandate of the Great Commission was given by Jesus Christ to the Church on the premise that "ALL AUTHORITY" in heaven and on earth has been given to Him.
- ◆ *Philippians 2:9-11; Daniel 7:13-14; 1 Corinthians 15:24-26; 1 Peter 3:22; Hebrews 2:5-9; Colossians 2:9-10*

THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Great Commission, therefore, is the official order, commission, authorisation and mandate given by Jesus Christ to His Church, to act on His behalf, and spread the Good News to all humanity and establish His Kingdom in all nations.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” - **Matthew 28:18-20**

“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”” - **Mark 16:15-18**

FOUR KEY INSTRUCTIONS

In the Great Commission, Jesus gave His disciples four key instructions:

1. GO, THEREFORE...

1. This is a sending out of the ENTIRE CHURCH by Jesus Christ, and going forth by the ENTIRE CHURCH, in His Name, to all of community and society, in every nation, region and nations of the world.

“Go therefore...” must be the driving force of the Church, because of the authority backing the command. We are not rest on our laurels and wait for people to come to us; we are to go to our families, communities, villages, towns, cities, society and nations.

2. PREACH THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

Share, preach and teach the Gospel of the Kingdom, giving all who hear a chance to respond, that is, to accept or reject it.

- ◆ **Our given task is to preach and proclaim the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom to all and offer them the opportunity reconcile with God and become partakers of the Kingdom – righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

Through Jesus Christ, God's Kingdom has come on earth, so that what exists in heaven may be represented, replicated or manifested here on earth.

- ◆ *Matthew 4:12-25; Luke 4:42-44; John 5:17-20; Matthew 6:8:13; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 10:1-8; Matthew 24:14; Romans 14:17*

When we preach the Gospel, the signs of the Kingdom shall manifest. In the name of Jesus, we shall cast out demons, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt us and lay hands on the sick, and they will recover

- ◆ *Matthew 10:5-15; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6; Luke 10:1-12*

3. DISCIPLE AND BUILD THE CHURCH

First, we are to baptise all who respond to the Good News of the Kingdom, in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, to show that they have been joined to Jesus.

- ◆ **We must also teach and instruct those who believe to become disciples of Jesus Christ, who live according to His word and will, and are being transformed to walk in His ways.**

The Church must be disciplined to be Christlike. Christ is the Head and we are the Body, therefore, the Church must be built up to function as Christ. *(We will discuss this further in the Mission of the Church from page 18).*

- ◆ *1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; John 13:34,35; John 17: 1-26; Ephesians 4: 1-7; Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 10: 24,25.*

4. DISCIPLE THE NATIONS

In order to establish the Kingdom of God on the earth, all disciples of Jesus Christ are to be trained, equipped and released to continue the above cycle within their own communities and spheres of influence.

Through that, the Church shall disciple (teach and lead) the people in the ways of God, beginning from our homes, to our communities, workplaces, market places, villages, towns, cities and nations.

- ◆ *Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-5; Psalm 2:6-9; Daniel 2:44; Matthew 5:3,5*

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The final instruction Jesus gave concerning the Great Commission was for His disciples to wait for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was sent to be with the Church and empower her to fulfil her purpose on earth, particularly, the Great Commission

The Holy Spirit, therefore, plays the most crucial role in fulfilling the mandate of the Great Commission. Without Him we cannot go forth. Jesus specifically cautioned His disciples not to go forth without Him. The role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism is very important.

- ◆ *Luke 4:16-21; Luke 24:49; John 16:7-11; Acts 1:4-5; Acts 1:8*

**All Authority has been given to Me....
Go therefore... Preach the Gospel... Disciple and
Build the Church... Disciple the Nation**

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH (1): EVANGELISM

The primary mission of the Church is evangelism, that is, “*Go and tell all,*” the Good News about what Jesus has done for humanity, and that the Kingdom of God can be accessed through belief and faith in Him and repentance in His name.

WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

It is the Sharing and spreading the Gospel, through personal witness, preaching and teaching, in order to persuade someone to believe and be converted

KEY WORDS

- ◆ **Sharing** – inviting others to partake of, use, experience, or enjoy what you have
- ◆ **Spreading** – to make widely known; or to distribute over among a group or over an area
- ◆ **The Gospel** – The Good News. The teaching or revelation of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom
- ◆ **Personal Witness** – personal revelation, encounter, experience and testimony of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ **Preaching** – publicly proclaiming
- ◆ **Teaching** – to give knowledge, train or instruct
- ◆ **To persuade** – to convince; to cause someone to accept or believe something through continuous and sustained effort
- ◆ **To believe** – to accept something as true
- ◆ **Converted** – to be changed and adapted and made suitable for a new purpose.

The mission of the Church is to spread the Gospel. We have been sent to all of community, society and nation to share the Good News – through personal witness, public proclamation and teachings – and persuade and give all an opportunity to be convinced or reject our message.

THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY

“And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.” - Jeremiah 3:15

The second mission of the Church is to disciple the believers, build them up in Christlikeness, equip them to serve the Lord and build the Church.

The task of discipling, equipping and building the Church is to be spearheaded by the five-fold ministry gifts which Jesus gave as the Leadership of the Church.

CHRIST’S GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

“Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT)

The Fivefold ministry are actual functions and ministry gifts/offices bestowed upon men and women, who have been chosen and appointed by Christ to represent Him, namely, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. *(Mark 3: 13-19; Luke 10:1-20)*

SOURCE OF THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

The fivefold offices are first and foremost held by Christ, who is the Chief of them all.

- 1. Chief Apostle:** Jesus is the Chief Apostle of the Church. He was the ‘Sent One’ who came from heaven to earth. *(John 4:34; Hebrews 3:1)*
- 2. Chief Prophet:** Jesus Christ is the Prophet through whom God is now speaking to all humanity. *(Deuteronomy 18:15; Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 21:11; Luke 24:19; John 6:14; John 7:40)*

3. **Chief Evangelist** : Jesus is the ultimate soul winner. For three and half years, Jesus went about evangelising – preaching and proclaiming the Gospel. (*Matthew 4:23; Luke 8:1; Luke 9:6; Luke 19:10; Luke 20:1*)
4. **Chief Shepherd or Pastor**: Jesus is the Chief Shepherd of the Church. He said so Himself. His love, care, compassion, care and protection of His sheep is unparalleled. (*Isaiah 40:11; John 10:11; John 14:14-15*)
5. **Chief Teacher**: Jesus Christ was known as the Teacher. He taught with great knowledge, wisdom and authority. (*Matt 23:8-10; Matt 7:28-29*)

When Christ ascended, He sovereignly bestowed the fivefold ministry on men and women, called, chosen, appointed and ordained by Him, according to His own will, purpose and pleasure. (*Mark 3:13-15*)

- ◆ **Therefore, the individual functions of the fivefold ministry do not work solely on their own or in isolation from each other, as they are all part of a whole. The fivefold offices must work in synergy to fulfil Christ’s purpose for the Church.**

APOSTLE

An apostle is one who is set apart, ordained, consecrated and sent by Jesus Christ to represent Him in a generation, community or geographical location. This is someone who has received a direct revelation of the risen Christ and is sent out by Him with a specific assignment to a specific people group. The revelation of Jesus Christ totally transforms the world of the apostle.

Role Of An Apostle

- ◆ The Apostle is ‘sent’ by Christ to represent Him by faithfully proclaiming the true and full Gospel and demonstrating its works.
- ◆ Apostles carry a governing grace – and seem to exert a greater dimension of the authority of Jesus Christ.

- ◆ Apostles lay foundation to the work of the Lord, to ensure that the Church is built and operating according to the Master plan of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Apostles face and endure hardship and the challenges that accompany the office, and carry a burden in line with the size of the assignment.
- ◆ Sign and wonders often follow the apostolic office.
- ◆ *Mark 3:13-19; Acts 9:1-19; Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 9:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Corinthians 11:23-28; 2 Corinthians 12:11-13*

PROPHET

A prophet is a person chosen by Jesus Christ to be a vessel for declaring His mind to the saints and their generation. The New Testament prophet is different from the Old Testament prophet.

The Role Of A Prophet

- ◆ The New Testament Prophet is called by Jesus Christ as His personal representative to ensure that the Church is shown the way forward in its walk with and service to Him.
- ◆ Therefore, the prophet is a conduit or mouthpiece through whom Jesus speaks to His Church and the world.
- ◆ Prophets reveal God's heart to His people, giving guidance and revelation to individuals and the Body of Christ.
- ◆ Prophets keep the saints on the path of holiness.
- ◆ *Acts 13:1-3; Acts 11:27-29; Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 12:28*

APOSTOLIC AND PROPHETIC FOUNDATION

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.” - Ephesians 2:19-22

- ◆ The apostolic and prophetic gifts are the foundation upon which the Church of Jesus Christ is being built. The revelation of Christ (apostolic) and the declaration of His mind (prophetic) keeps the Church focused on Her assignment, and current and in tune with the present will, plans and purposes of God.
- ◆ Therefore, when these two gifts are absent or in decline, the Church grows weak, cannot stand the storms that rage against Her, and strays from her mandate and mission. (*Matthew 7:24-27*)

EVANGELIST

An evangelist carries a huge burden and passion for the lost and unsaved, as well as a special grace and anointing to preach the Gospel to them. Their preaching comes with great conviction and draws many to the Lord. They have a special grace and ability to bring in the harvest more than any other member of the fivefold. They often have signs and wonders following them to confirm their message.

The Role Of An Evangelist

- ◆ Evangelists carry Christ's burden for the lost.
- ◆ They preach the Gospel of the Kingdom with much passion and power
- ◆ Their role is to populate the Kingdom, by creating more converts
- ◆ Teach and equip the Believer and Church to reach out to the unsaved.
- ◆ *Acts 8:5-8, 26-40; Acts 21:9; 2 Timothy 4:5;*

PASTOR OR SHEPHERD

A Pastor or Shepherd is one who is called by Jesus Christ and vested with the authority to feed and care for the flock committed to their trust. The pastor is the 'heart' of the church. He is a shepherd who deeply cares for his sheep, and is ready to lay down everything for them. **Jesus, taught a lot about the sheep and shepherding the sheep, giving us a great example of what a pastor should look and be like.**

The Role Of A Pastor/Shepherd

- ◆ To raise and care for the Church
- ◆ To feed, nurture and raise the saints, to grow in the knowledge of the Lord and obedience to His word and ways.
- ◆ The pastor's greatest concern is always the well-being of his flock, not only bringing training, but correction and protection where necessary.
- ◆ To equip the saints to develop their giftings and guide them to step into the calling of God for them.
- ◆ To act as the bridge between the different offices of the Five-fold Ministry and link them with the flock.
- ◆ *Acts 20:28-29; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Ezekiel 34*

TEACHER

A teacher is one called by Christ and given deep insight and understanding of the Word of God. A teacher carries the anointing and capacity to rightly divide and present the truths within the scriptures to the saints in such a way that they are able to hear, understand, learn, do and be transformed.

The Role Of A Teacher

- ◆ To teach, edify and disciple the church
- ◆ To illuminate scripture and reveal hidden truths to the believer and Church. This creates a hunger for the Word of God.
- ◆ To show the way for the saints to walk and be established in the Word
- ◆ To make clear the principles of God and show how they are for our good. Good teaching should show clearly the way God wants His people to go
- ◆ To bring transformation in the life of the believer through sound teaching.
- ◆ *Acts 13:1; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Timothy 1:10-11*

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH (2): DISCIPLE AND BUILD THE CHURCH

“Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.” Ephesians 4:12 (NLT)

The second part of the Church’s mission is to disciple believers to become like Christ, equip them to serve the Lord and build the Church. It is the corporate responsibility of the Fivefold Ministry to lead the Body of Christ in discipling, equipping and building the Church.

THREE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

The Five-Fold Ministry has three main the responsibilities regarding this aspect of Church mission: **DISCIPLE, EQUIP AND BUILD**

1. DISCIPLE THE BELIEVERS

Discipling the believer is a fundamental part of Church mission. All who come to faith in Christ must be taught and disciplined to:

- a. **To know Jesus Christ, the Son of God:** Not a casual knowledge of His name, but to know Him by the Word and Spirit, His person, nature, will, plans and purposes. (*Hebrews 6:1; Ephesians 1:16-17; Philippians 3:8-11; Col 1:9-12*)
- b. **To live the Kingdom lifestyle:** The instructions for living the Kingdom lifestyle are found in the teachings of Christ, especially Matthew Chapters 5-7, and the Epistles, e.g. the Book of Ephesians. (*Ephesians 4:1-3; Psalm 15; Psalm 24:3-6; Acts 2:40-47; Acts 4:32-35; Matthew Chapters 5-7*)
- c. **To grow in Christlikeness:** Believers would grow and mature in the Lord, becoming more and more like Christ, partaking in His, nature,

essence, power and glory. Growing in Christlikeness also means that believers must develop the character of Christ, that is, the Fruit of the Spirit.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. - Galatians 5:22-25

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit is the visible attributes of a transformed and true Christian life, and reveals and manifests the nature and character of Christ in us.

- ◆ It is essential that believers are disciplined to allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in our lives and continue the work of transformation in us and making us more like Christ.
- ◆ *Luke 2:40, 52; Ephesians 3:14-19; 2 Peter 1:2-81 Corinth 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 11:1*

2. EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR MINISTRY

Equipping the saints (or believers) to do the work of ministry is a fundamental part of Church mission.

Ministry is simply service to God. Therefore, every believer must be equipped – taught, trained, enabled and released – to serve the Lord, according to their particular callings and the grace given.

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. - Romans 12:1

- ◆ Believers must be taught to sacrificially serve the Lord, with their body, time, talent, possession and substance. (*Acts 2;44; Acts 4:34-35*)
- ◆ Believers must be taught to serve the Lord at home, at school, at work,

in the community, marketplace and wherever they find themselves.

- ◆ With the help of the Holy Spirit, the callings and spiritual gifts of believers must be identified, built and raised up, and released.
- ◆ *Acts 4:32-37; Acts 13:2; Acts 9:10-15; Epistles of 1st and 2nd Timothy*

3. EDIFY AND BUILD THE BODY OF CHRIST

“Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” - Acts 2:41-47

Edifying and building up the Body of Christ is also a fundamental part of Church mission. The Body of Christ must be built up in two ways:

- a. **Numerically:** Build the Body of Christ numerically through evangelism, winning more souls, growing and expanding the Church, and populating the Kingdom.

“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” - Acts 6:7

- b. **Spiritually:** Build the Body of Christ spiritually to become mature, that is, Christlike, Kingdom-mind and living the Kingdom lifestyle. The Body of Christ must become mature in character (love), knowledge, wisdom, strength and power, in word and deed.

Therefore:

- ◆ Believers must be taught to worship and pray.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to read, study and obey the word of God.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to know, live and walk in the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to love one another.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to live as disciples of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to be the salt and light wherever they are.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to share the gospel with others.
- ◆ Believers must be taught to disciple other younger believers.

- ◆ *Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 2:40-47; Acts 4:32-35; Acts 6:1-7; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 3:14-21; Ephesians 6:10-20; 2 Timothy 2; Titus 3:1-8*

THE MATURE CHURCH

“This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.” – Ephesians 4:13-16 (NLT)

When the mission of discipling, edifying and building the Church (Body of Christ) has been fulfilled, we will have the following outcome:

1. **CHRISTLIKENESS:** Believers will behave, speak and act like Christ. Believers will also walk in the fulness of the Holy Spirit and demonstrate the power of God, like Jesus did.

◆ *Luke 4:14-14; Acts 10:38; Acts 11:19-26; Romans 12:9-21; Ephesians 3:14-19*

2. **TRUTHFULNESS:** Believers will know, live and walk in truth so they will not be deceived. They will longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

◆ *1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-14; Hebrews 6:1-2*

3. **SPIRITUAL GROWTH:** The Body of Christ will grow and function like Jesus Christ in every way. He is the Head, from whom all the parts of the Body are joined and held together, with each part doing its own work. (*Romans 12:4-5*).

4. **UNITY:** The Body of Christ, the Church, will grow and to be stronger in love and unity. Doctrines are the main things that divide the Church, but if we have the LOVE and MIND of Christ, we would still be united.

◆ *John 1:16; John 13:35; John 17; 1 Corinth 12:27; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 2:9-10, 19; Rom 12:4-52; Peter 3:15-18*

CHRIST REVEALED TO THE WORLD

The world will know we are the Body of Christ and will see and recognise Him when the Church is built up in love and unity.

Jesus admonished His disciples in **John 13:34-35...**

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus also earnestly prayed for the Church in **John 17:17:20-23...**

“...That they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD (1): PRIESTS TO OUR GOD

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” – 2 Peter 2:9

The Church is the Royal Priesthood, that is, God’s Kingdom and Nation of kings and priests on the earth. In order to fulfil her purpose, mandate and mission, the Church must rediscover her identity and function as the royal priesthood in our homes, communities, marketplace, society and nations.

ALL BELIEVERS

In all things, Jesus Christ is our example, and He is both King and Priest, after the order of Melchizedek. Christ serves as a Priest from His Throne, making the two offices complete in one Person. The two offices are not separated in Him. (*Zechariah 6:12-13; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6, 9*)

Therefore, every believer is a priest and king. The two offices are not separated in us. ALL believers have been made priests in Christ, and all believers have been made kings together with Him.

WHO IS A PRIEST?

- ◆ Priest – Hebrew: “*kohen*”

A priest is someone consecrated and sanctified to minister before God. He is someone who ministers to God and so can minister to others. A priest is one consecrated to stand before God on behalf of the people.

Unlike in the Old Testament (OT), every New Testament (NT) believer is a priest. Through the atonement of Jesus Christ, all believers have been made priests to God and given access to Him. (*Hebrews 4:14-16*)

- ◆ Every believer, therefore, is required to function as a priest.

- ◆ However, there are several things we can learn from the OT about our role as priests. The OT priest had three main duties - (1) to minister to God, (2) to mediate between God and the people and (3) to teach the people the ways of God. We are required to do the same, as NT priests of God.

1. MINISTER TO GOD

The **first function of the priesthood** is to minister to and serve God. The priests were to minister at the altar and care for and guard the sanctuary and everything within it that is sacred, including the priesthood itself. – *Exodus 28:1; Numbers 18:5, 7*

- ◆ **Brazen Altar:** The priests were to ensure that the fire was always burning upon the Brazen Altar. They were to put wood on the fire daily to ensure its continuity. This represents our continuous lifestyle of sanctification, worship and prayer. (*Leviticus 6:12; Hebrews 12*)
- ◆ **Table of Shewbread:** The priests were to minister to God at the Table of Shewbread. The shewbread represents the word of God. So, as priests, we are to have a continuous fellowship with God in reading, studying and obeying the Word. (*Ezra 7:10; 2 Timothy 2:15*)
- ◆ **Golden Lampstand:** The priests were to minister to God at the Golden Lampstand, which represents the Holy Spirit. They trimmed its wicks and changed the oil daily, to make the lamp burn continually. As priests we must also live in the Spirit. (*Exodus 25:31-40; Ephes 5:18*)
- ◆ **Altar of Incense:** The priests were to minister to God at the Altar of Incense, and burn incense each morning and evening. This represents prayer and worship. (*Leviticus 16:12; Numbers 16:46; Revelation 5:8*)

“These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.” - Colossians 2:17 (ESV)

As priests to God, we must follow the pattern of the OT priesthood and also have a ‘Personal Altar,’ abiding in the Word and Spirit, and a lifestyle of Sanctification, Worship, Prayer and Intercession. (John 4:21-24)

2. MEDIATE BETWEEN GOD AND THE PEOPLE

The second function of the priesthood is to mediate between God and the people around us. *Hebrews 5:1-4*

In the OT, the priests offered daily sacrifices for sin and prayers to God on behalf of the people, and the people consulted with them to know the mind and will of God. The priests lead the people in worshipping God in the appropriate manner and way, and acted as judges and settled disputes between the people.

- ◆ Therefore, the priests were the point of contact between God and the people. Anytime the priesthood broke down, or failed, the people went further away from God and disobeyed His laws.
- ◆ *Deuteronomy 12; Exodus 28:30; Deuteronomy 17:8-13*

In the NT every believer is a priest, not just those in the five-fold ministry. By the power of the Cross and the indwelling Spirit, every believer has access to God, therefore, all believers are expected to fulfil the mediatory role between God and the people around us – our families, communities, society and nations. (*Hebrews 4:14-16*)

- ◆ We are to pray for our nations, leaders, communities, families, etc, to ensure that there is peace, holiness and godliness around us. We are also to pray for the unsaved to come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” - 1 Timothy 2:1-6

- ◆ We represent God and His Kingdom before the people. Therefore, our priestly role is an intercessory one. All believers must be intercessors.

Our effectiveness as representatives of God’s Kingdom depends on how connected we are with God, our King. As we minister to God as priests,

we are enabled to minister to others and the world.

- ◆ *Isaiah 62:6-7; Hebrews 8:1-2; 9:23-24; 10:11-14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14;*

3. TEACH THE PEOPLE

“For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.” - Ezra 7:10

In the OT, the priests were required to teach and lead people to walk in the laws and ways, plans and purposes of God, and in righteousness.

“The law of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and equity, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.” - Malachi 2:5-7

Whenever the priests departed from this role, the people went astray and judgement came upon the land and the people.

- ◆ *2 Kings 17:24-28; 2 Chronicles 16:3-6; Isaiah 55:8-9; Ezekiel 44:23-24; Jeremiah 23:18, 22*

As NT priests, we are also to teach and lead the people of the world in God’s word, laws, ways, plan and purposes. We are to live in righteousness and expect the same from others, saved or unsaved.

- ◆ We are to lead, guide and instruct our families, communities, societies in the ways and fear of God. We are to counsel and guide government and people in authority, saved or unsaved, to uphold righteousness and to lead in the fear of God.

We are to be an example to all around us, by living in accordance with the word of God and demonstrating it to others. This applies to all believers, but especially, those in leadership. (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 2:9-12)

THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD (2): KINGS ON THE EARTH

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” – 2 Peter 2:9

God’s plan has always been that man would walk in relationship with Him and exercise dominion on the earth. Man was created to rule, dominate and maintain the earth. (*Genesis 1:26-28*) *Ps 8:4-8; Ps 115:16*)

- ◆ When Adam and Eve fell, man lost his connection with God, and consequently, also lost the authority and power to rule and exercise dominion on the earth. However, Jesus Christ, having paid the full price for sin, has taken back the authority and power, and through Him, humanity can assume their position of dominion on the earth, once again. (*Matthew 16:18-19; Matthew 18:18*)

THE SCEPTRE OF JESUS CHRIST

“The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” The LORD will stretch forth Your strong sceptre from Zion, saying, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.””
- **Psalm 110:1-2**

- ◆ Jesus Christ, the King of kings, alone possesses all authority. As joint-heirs with Him, we have been made kings on the earth.

As kings, we carry the sceptre of Jesus Christ. A sceptre is a symbol of authority. Through the Church, God the Father is stretching forth the sceptre of Jesus Christ, His Son, to all humanity.

- ◆ **The message of the Gospel is the sceptre of Jesus Christ, which God is extending through the Church to all. (*Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8*)**

- ◆ As kings, the Church (every believer) has been given authority and power through the Holy Spirit to preach and proclaim the Gospel, and destroy the works of darkness (by casting out demons, healing the sick and setting the captives free), and thus, establish the Kingdom of God on earth.
- ◆ **Isaiah 61:1-4; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16: 15-18; Acts 1:8**
- ◆ *Luke 7:1-10; Mark 1:21-27; Matthew 6:9-13; Matthew 10:7-8; Matthew 16:19; Luke 9:1-2; 1 Timothy 6:13-16; 2 Corinthians 10:4-6*

FIGHTING KINGDOM BATTLES

- ◆ It is in our role as kings that we fight against the enemy and establish the Kingdom of God as a social reality on the earth. God's Kingdom glory is manifested in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (*Romans 14:17; Luke 2:13-14; Isaiah 11:1-11; Isaiah 32:16-18*)

The Church's kingly role includes fighting spiritual battles to overthrow satanic strongholds and influence on people. We are to do this through prayer, intercession and warfare, preaching the Gospel, teaching and declaring the word, and demonstrating the works of the Kingdom to all.

First of all, it is important to know that we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies. Our warfare is not necessary with people.

"For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places." - Ephesians 6:12

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled." - 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

THE TARGETS OF OUR WARFARE

Our warfare, however, is against...

1. Evil rulers, authorities and mighty powers of the unseen dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.
2. The devil, wicked spirits, powers and authorities who are behind the evil and wicked things that people think, believe, say and do, which are contrary to the purposes of God revealed in Christ Jesus, *e.g. religious, cultural and political systems, ideologies and philosophies.*
3. All that people represent, stand for and act upon, which is contrary to God's word, will, plans and purposes, *e.g. immorality, wickedness, injustice, idolatry, murder, crimes, adultery, greed, witchcraft, sexual perversions, etc.* (These can be described as the works of the flesh).
4. Anything that undermines and prevents us from accessing the full benefits of our salvation and living in its fullness, *e.g., sickness, diseases, poverty, fear, oppression, etc.*
5. Anything that stops people from knowing the love of God through Jesus Christ, and accepting Him as their Lord and personal Saviour, *e.g. cultural, ideological and religious strongholds and mindsets*
6. Anything that stops the Church from growing and functioning as we should, *e.g. worldliness, divisions, persecutions, fear*
7. Anything that hinders the advancement and establishment of God's Kingdom on earth, *e.g. persecution, religion, the anti-Christ.*

"But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever... Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." - Daniel 7:18, 27

It is in our function and role as kings that the Church shall establish the Kingdom of God, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, as a social reality in our families, communities, marketplaces, society and nations. (Romans 14:17; Isaiah 32)

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH (3): DISCIPLE THE NATION

"I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.'" - Psalm 2:7-8

JESUS DID NOT COME JUST TO GET INDIVIDUALS SAVED; HE CAME TO SAVE AND RECLAIM THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

- ◆ The final part of Church Mission, therefore, is to establish the Kingdom by discipling the particular nations where the Church resides. This is an integral part of the Great Commission, given to us by Jesus Christ. (*Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 21:24*)
- ◆ If the Church fulfils her mission to evangelise and disciple and build the Church and fulfils her role and function as the Royal Priesthood, the Church shall fulfil her mission to disciple the nation. All disciples of Jesus would be trained, equipped and released to serve the Lord within their spheres of influence.
- ◆ Through that, the Church shall teach and lead the people in the ways of God, beginning from our homes, into our communities, workplaces, marketplaces, villages, towns, cities and nations.

"It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." - Micah 4:1-2 (ESV)

- ◆ *Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-5; Psalm 2:6-9; Daniel 2:44; Matthew 5:3,5*

THE CHURCH'S INFLUENCE

1. Salt and Light

The Church is the salt and light of the nation. Salt and light are both agents of influence.

- ◆ As SALT, we will deliberately seek to influence others by showing them the unconditional love of Christ through good deeds and bring them the peace and hope that are found in Jesus.
- ◆ As LIGHT, we would bring the knowledge and understanding of the Gospel and God's word and ways to our communities and nations.
- ◆ *Matthew 5:13-16; Mark 9:50; Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 6:23*

2. Fragrance of Christ

The Church shall be the sweet-smelling flavour, fragrance and essence of Christ in the nation. The aroma of Christ will begin to fill the nation as it emanates from the people of God. The presence of the Church will not only change the atmosphere but will also act as a buffer and guard to prevent the old atmosphere from returning

- ◆ *Samuel 7:13; Matthew 5:13-16; 2 Corinthians 2:14-15)*

3. Ambassadors of Christ

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." - 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

We are ambassadors for Christ in our nations. Our mission is one of reconciliation – reconciling the world to our God, through the awesome, incomparable and powerful Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

Discipling the nation shall bring about cultural transformation.

◆ **Read: *Micah 4:1-5; Isaiah 2:1-4***

The influence of the Culture will affect the seven key areas of our culture, namely, *language/media, marriage/family, government, socio-economic, education, the arts and religion.*

- ◆ By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church must influence the nation in all these seven areas. The Church shall influence how the people within the particular community, society or nation think, act and live, in alignment to and accordance with the word and ways of God.

The Church's influence will shine forth because the Church herself is abiding by the laws and word of God, and is alive and demonstrating the Kingdom in righteousness justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- ◆ As the Church's influence spreads in the nation, the nation shall begin to look up to and seek guidance from the Church, to lead and teach the ways (word) of the Lord in all the seven areas (mentioned above), and the Church shall have a voice to boldly declare God's paths of righteousness and justice, which lead to peace and joy.

THE KINGDOM ESTABLISHED

As the Church fulfils her mission, the kingdom of God shall be established in the nations. The fear of God shall spread in every area of our culture, as disciplined and Spirit-filled believers take their place in all areas of community, society and nation. This would transform the culture of the nation to God's kingdom culture, where there is righteousness, where there is peace and where there is joy!

"Then the seventh angel sounded: and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" - Revelation 11:15

LET THE
TRUTH
BE TOLD

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