

The Purpose and Plan of the Church

Acts 2:37-46

Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?”

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.

39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

46 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,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

The New King James Version. (1982). (Ac 2:37–47). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Introduction

Michael Griffiths, the British writer, said, “Christians collectively seem to be suffering from a strange amnesia. A high proportion of people that go to **church** have forgotten what it’s all about. Week by week they attend the services in a special building. They go through their particular time-honored routine. They give little thought to the **purpose** of what they’re doing. The Bible talks about the bride of Christ, but the **church** today seems like a ragged Cinderella, hideous among the ashes.”

Many believe that if they go to church on Sunday morning on a regular basis that they have fulfilled their obligation to the Lord.

We may even acknowledge that the service was great, the preaching was good, and short. I was able to give my ten percent, and I encouraged a brother who was having a bad week

So now I can go have a good lunch with some friends, watch a football game or take a nap.

and say I have fulfilled all that the Lord has required of me for Church..

Not so simple.

Church is more than a Sunday event
Its more than gathering together
to sing and hear a sermon
it more than 1hr.

Church is not a Sunday event but rather a daily lifestyle
Church is not a Building of brick and mortar.... it is a body of
believer made of Body and spirit.
You don't come to church, you are the Church.

Churches have allowed themselves to become a set of
routines and programs that if done correctly constitute church.

But church is a living breathing moving Christ honoring, Bible
believing group of people

We have over the years forgotten what the true purpose and
plan of the church is.

We have substituted the true church for a weak, impotent,
program ridden package of ministry want a be's

We think that ministry occurs at worship on Sunday or when
an ordained pastor performs some ministerial task.
But that cannot be further from the truth

The Bible teaches that you are the ministers, You are the
ministry.

Ephesians 4:11

11 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry,

equipping

katartismos: a preparing, an equipping

Original Word: ΚΑΤΑΡΤΙΣΜΌΣ, ΟΥ, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: katartismos

Phonetic Spelling: (kat-ar-tis-mos')

Definition: a bringing to a condition of fitness, perfecting.

Cognate: **2677** *katartismós* (a masculine noun) – properly, exact adjustment which describes how (enables) the individual parts to work together in correct order (used only in Eph 4:12). [See 2675](#) (*katartizō*).

Ministry

diakonia: service, ministry

Original Word: ΔΙΑΚΟΝΪΑ, ΑΣ, ἡ

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: diakonia

Phonetic Spelling: (dee-ak-on-ee'-ah)

Definition: waiting at table; in a wider sense: service, ministrations.

Cognate: **1248** *diakonía* – *ministry*; active service, done with a willing (voluntary) attitude. [See 1249](#) (*diakonos*).

For the believer, [1248](#) /*diakonía* ("ministry") specifically refers to Spirit-empowered service guided by faith ([4102](#) /*pístis*, "the Lord's inborn persuasion").

Another Crisis of equal value is the “new Unchurched Movement” among Believers

There are a number of reasons that have contributed to is

Among the most popular are

1. Ritualism and Routine, Formality
2. Spontaneity and informality
3. Over emphasis on Music and less on Preaching
4. Underemphasis of music and too much preaching
5. Unserved Leaders
6. Churches that look too much like a rock concert
7. Hypocrisy in all forms
8. Too much emphasis on Money
9. programs program and more programs

These whether good or bad have led to a large number of families that have given up not the search for a good church and have decided just to stay home.

In some cases it is understandable that you could get more out of reading a 1960s JC Penny Catalog than going to some churches.

And this can lead to some serious discouragement and disillusionment with the church

But on the other hand it needs to be noted that there is a whole lot more to the church than what you get out of it, Church is deeper and more profound than what we get if it is done Biblically.

Another and even more subtle challenge facing the church today is the infatuation with self. or Me-ism

It used to be that we were concerned with how big our screens could get, (i.e. Big Screen TV) but now our greater concern are the small screens.

the Smart phones. Where some one can literally engross himself into his on little world and become complete separated from all other forms of live.

The digital world is taking over by storm.

There are more and more headlines I read of you being able to completely digitize your life and have no human contact whatsoever.

We're in the middle of the biggest communication shift since the advent of the printing press. Facebook has over 900 million users. Four billion YouTube videos are watched every day. And last year alone, Americans sent 1.8 trillion text messages.

And who knows how many tweets are made on twitter especially since the the tweeting President Elect Donald Trump.

We are so digitized that some pastors have started saying turn your bible on instead of open your bible

But I am not all down on technology , It has made many aspects of my life easier and some it has made harder.

But that is not my concern.

For instance take any average waiting area, whether in a hospital or a restaurant, and notice how many have there phones out looking at them and how many are actually talking

We are just getting started in this new digitized world and it is already going the wrong way.

The new DUI is TWD (Texting while Driving)

Now its common for a police officer or Highway patrol to ask to see you phone if you are in an accident to see if you have been texting.

People have been killed by someone texting and driving the the text- er was found guilty of vehicular manslaughter

And these are serious issues, but in the church we are facing even a more serious problem.

More and more people are coming to a church building with out ever being the Church.

We are consumed with Self.

There's an alarming rate of self-promotion, narcissism, and deep-rooted desire for validation through social media.

But it's easy for us to develop a sense of entitlement when we live in a world where technology, such as social media, enables instant gratification. Children are becoming fame obsessed with posting their entire lives online.

"Look, I just ate lunch."

"Look, I just did my toenails."

"Look, I just cut my hair."

"Time" magazine called it "The ME ME ME Generation".

Millenials are lazy, entitled narcissist

A small new study shows how exactly we use social media to feed our egos.

The research, published in the [journal Computers in Human Behavior](#), shows that Twitter fuels younger adults' narcissistic

tendencies by acting as a megaphone for their thoughts, while Facebook fuels middle aged adults' narcissistic tendencies by serving as a mirror where they can curate images of themselves.

The new social media is breeding a church full of people with narcissistic steroids,

They have a disorder for this:,,,,,

“Full-bodied narcissistic personality disorder

“They unconsciously deny an unstated and intolerably poor self-image through inflation. They turn themselves into glittering figures of immense grandeur surrounded by psychologically impenetrable walls. The goal of this self-deception is to be impervious to greatly feared external criticism and to their own rolling sea of doubts.” This is how Elan Golomb describes narcissistic personality disorder in her seminal book [Trapped in the Mirror](#). She goes on to describe the central symptom of the disorder – the narcissist’s failure to achieve intimacy with anyone – as the result of them seeing other people like items in a vending machine, using them to service their own needs, never being able to acknowledge that others might have needs of their own, still less guess what they might be.”

*Zoe Williams, Health and Wellbeing
The Guardian*

It is going to be a huge huge problem for the church.

For the purpose and plan of the Church.

The Church cannot function with a group of self absorbed people

It is total contradictory to Ministry, service, worship

This was the problem with the church at Laodicia

Rev. 3:17

17 Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

They were self Sufficient and needed nothing

Self should be last on your list when we think about Church.

Matthew 16:24

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

Mark 8:34

And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

Philippians 3:7

But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Luke 5:11

When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

Luke 14:33

"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

Acts 20:24

"But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Romans 12:1

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Romans 13:14

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Colossians 3:3

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Titus 2:12-13

instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

Romans 15:1

Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

1 Corinthians 8:13

Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.

2 Timothy 2:4

No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

1 Corinthians 10:24

Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.

John 3:30

"He must increase, but I must decrease.

The Church literally cannot service in the context of self centered self absorbed, narcissistic people. IT ceases to be the church.

Lesson

Mt 16:16–19

- 16** Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- 17** Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.
- 18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- 19** And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

The New King James Version. (1982). (). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

I. Christ is Lord of His Church

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church,

Peter

Petros: "a stone" or "a boulder," Peter, one of the twelve apostles

Original Word: Πέτρος, ου, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: Petros

Phonetic Spelling: (pet'-ros)

4074 *Pétros* (a masculine noun) – properly, a stone (pebble), such as a small rock found along a pathway. **4074** /*Pétros* ("small stone") then stands in contrast to **4073** /*pétra* ("cliff, boulder," *Abbott-Smith*).

upon this rock

epi

ἐπὶ

on

Prep

tautē

ταύτη

this

[DPro-DFS](#)

tē

τῇ

the

[Art-DFS](#)

petra

πέτρα

rock

[N-DFS](#)

What does the **This** refer to;

What ever the This is it is also the Rock

16 Simon Peter answered and said, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

The truth that Christ is Lord of His church may sound somewhat benign to a casual listener in our generation, but the struggle for Christ's authority in the church has come to us through the ages on a sea of blood. Thankfully, literal bloodshed over the issue is no longer very common. But faithful Christians are still waging a fierce moral and intellectual battle for Christ's lordship over the church.

One of the major early catalysts in the Protestant Reformation was a book by Jan Hus, a Bohemian Christian who preceded Martin Luther by a full century. The book was *De Ecclesia* (The Church), and one of Hus' most profound points was proclaimed in the title of his fourth chapter: "Christ the Only Head of the Church."

Hus wrote, "Neither is the pope the head nor are the cardinals the whole body of the [true] holy, universal, catholic church. For Christ alone is the head of that church." Pointing out that most church leaders in his era actually despised the lordship of Christ, Hus said, "To such a low pitch is the clergy come that they hate those who preach often and call Jesus Christ Lord."

Hus' candor cost him his life. He was declared a heretic and burnt at the stake in 1415.

More than a hundred years later, already at odds with the papal establishment, Martin Luther read *De Ecclesia*. After finishing the book, he wrote to a friend, "I have hitherto taught and held all the opinions of Jan Hus unawares; so did John Staupitz. In short, we are all Hussites without knowing it."

Emboldened by his reading of Hus, the reformer took up the fight for Christ's honor as true head of His church. Luther wrote, "I am persuaded that if at this time, St. Peter, in person, should preach all the articles of Holy Scripture, and only deny the pope's authority, power, and primacy, and say, that the pope is not the head of all Christendom, they would cause him to be hanged.

Yea, if Christ himself were again on earth, and should preach, without all doubt the pope would crucify him again.”

In many ways, the question, who is Lord of the church? was the over-arching issue of the Protestant Reformation from the start. (That’s what Luther was tacitly acknowledging when he said “we are all Hussites.”)

Of course, Roman Catholic canon law still insists that the pope is her supreme earthly head and the ruling vicar of Christ in that capacity.

But the historic Protestant commitment to Christ’s lordship over the church has also subtly eroded, and that is a trend that deeply concerns me. It’s an issue I have written much about over the years.

For example, some evangelical leaders aggressively teach that it is not even necessary to confess Jesus as Lord in order to be saved. That’s what the so-called “lordship controversy” is about. It would be hard to imagine a more obvious attack against the lordship of Christ over His church, but “no- lordship theology” has thrived for years and seems to be gaining strength.

Evangelicals also gave birth to the “seeker-sensitive” movement wherein church services are tailored to please trend-savvy unbelievers. Novelties ranging from circus acts to slapstick are deliberately injected into corporate “worship” in order to keep worldly minds entertained. That is a practical denial of Christ’s lordship over His church, relegating His Word and ordinances to secondary status while granting hedonistic fashions the right to determine even the order of worship.

Feminists want to redefine the idea of headship, eliminating the idea of authority from the concept altogether. That, too, is a frontal attack on Christ’s lordship over His church.

Bible translators and paraphrasers who tamper with the true sense of God's Word; emergent church leaders who question the clarity of everything Christ has said; and above all, preachers who seem to talk about everything but Scripture — all of them do what they do in direct defiance of Christ's rightful authority over His church.

One thing would do more than anything else to answer every challenge to Christ's authority: the restoration of clear, powerful, expository preaching to its rightful place at the center of all the church's activities. If we truly believe Christ is Lord of the church, then the church needs to hear His voice. His Word must be proclaimed and its content taught accurately, systematically, and unrelentingly whenever the church comes together.

Jan Hus said the same thing. Declaring that the lordship of Christ over His church means emphatically "that the Christian ought to follow the commandments of Christ," Hus then cited Acts 10:42 ("[Christ] commanded us to preach to the people") and called on church leaders of his day to preach the Word of God at every opportunity — even though a papal bull was then in force, strictly limiting how and where the Scriptures could be proclaimed.

The church today is badly in need of reformation again. And Christ's lordship over His church is still the central truth we must recover, which requires the unleashing of His Word among His people again. We cannot merely float along with the latest evangelical trends and expect things to get better. Like Jan Hus and Martin Luther, we need to fight for the honor and authority of Christ as Lord of His church.

From Ligonier Ministries and R.C. Sproul. © Tabletalk magazine, used by permission. Website:

www.ligonier.org/tabletalk.

Psalm 118:22

The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.

Ephesians 1:22*Verse Concepts*

And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

Ephesians 5:23*Verse Concepts*

For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

box

Colossians 1:18*Verse Concepts*

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

II. Christ Builds His Church

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

III. Christ Plans His Church

IV. Christ Gives Purpose to His Church