

“Making My Life A Ministry”
A Study in the Practical Meaning of Ephesians 2:10

03 – “The Ontological and Methodological Priorities of the Church”

Introduction: Thinking about the church – is our view biblical?

Some Characteristics of the Traditional View of the Church

1. the “church” = _____
2. church members are part of an _____
3. the ministry belongs to the _____
4. “_____” is the work of the church
5. Laymen give _____ to the ministry
6. giving patterns determine _____
7. members are essentially _____
8. elders _____ of the church
9. deacons _____ buildings and grounds
10. women are _____ in the home
11. the organization is _____
12. change is _____
13. spiritual life is _____, except on Sundays
14. small groups are _____
15. the church is the _____
16. evangelism is a _____
17. worship: worship leaders do the worship thing; congregation is _____

Some Characteristics of the Biblical View of the Church

1. the “church” = _____
2. church members are part of a body – _____
3. the “ministry” belongs to _____
4. the work of the church is _____
5. laymen give _____ to the ministry
6. needs and ministries _____ the budget
7. members become _____
8. elders _____ the people
9. deacons serve _____
10. men lead _____ in the home
11. the _____ is people oriented

12. change is welcome because _____.
13. spiritual life is nurtured _____ (by personal spiritual disciplines)
14. small groups _____
15. the church is the _____
16. evangelism is a _____
17. worship: leaders lead, congregation worships, God _____

Key Question: How do we get from traditional to biblical?

We must establish our understanding of **Identity – Purpose – Priorities** with respect to the church.

Main Idea: When we accurately define the church biblically as to its identity and purpose, then we are able to practice the real priorities of the church.

Key Texts:

John 4:23-24

“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.” “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

1 Peter 2: 5, 9

you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Matthew 28:19-20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Eph 4:11-12

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service (ministry), to the building up of the body of Christ;

The Ontological Identity of the Church

“Ontological” = the church as it essentially is, its essential nature.

- Given the goal of God’s seeking worshippers through salvation in Christ, the church is to be a body of saved worshippers, who worship in spirit and in truth.
- Given the church’s designation as a royal priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices to God, the church is a body of redeemed worshippers, as well as redeemed witnesses.
- The number 1 ontological priority of the Church is worship. The church and its members need to see themselves as essentially worshippers.

The Methodological Purpose of the Church

“Methodological” = the church as it functions, its missional nature.

- Given the great commission, the church’s goal is to make fully established disciples.
- Given the great strategy of equipping, the church’s goal is to make fully implemented ministry members.

The Functional Priorities of the Church – thus a “Mission” statement

In order to be a Mission Force, (rather than a mission field), in all dimensions of ministry the church needs to bring together its ontological and methodological callings.

1. To evangelize the unchurched with the knowledge of God; (the “going” part of the Great Commission, the witness of the church to the lost)
2. To equip those assimilated into the church’s fellowship and ministries, so they may be discipled and equipped to minister also; (making disciples, equipping the saints)
3. To exalt together the glory, goodness and grace of God’s powerful reality - in worship that is centered in Christ. (to be those God has sought in Christ’s salvation).