

Unshakeable

The Church And Its Mission

Matthew 16:18

Jesus said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overcome it."

The Church that Jesus built is not some weak, low energetic institution, it's an advancing force with supernatural power bringing hope, redemption, healing, and salvation for whosoever will. Jesus didn't build an organization, he built an organism.

The Church is the physical, visible, manifestation of Jesus himself in the world, doing his work, such as calling sinners to repentance, proclaiming the truth of God to the nations, and preparing to receive the next generation and the good news and you and I are a part of it. We all have a part to play.

The church is also described as a body because it's made up of many parts. All the parts are diverse and have different functions, but all are operating in harmony with one another. Turn with me to ***1 Corinthians 12:12-13 "The body is a unit, and though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So, it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given the one spirit to drink."***

- ***"Though all it's parts are many, they form one body."***
- This means that the church should walk in unity with the same focus and mission.
- ***"For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jews or Greek, slave or free, and we were all given one Spirit to drink."***
- This means that no matter who you are, male, female, black, white, Hispanic. No matter if you are rich or poor, ***"we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body."*** This is what makes the Church beautiful. It has been said that Sunday is the most segregated time of the week. May this world see the beauty of the church through our many colors and diverse parts.

- ***Verses 14-20 “The body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where with the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where with the sense of smell be? But in fact, God has arranged the parts in the body, everyone of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.”***
- This brings me to my next point. We are **all needed** in the body of Christ. Being a member of the church means you’re an active and functioning member.
- Do you know how to remain a member of a country club? Pay your dues. Do that and people will be available to serve you. Do you know how to remain a biblical functioning member of the church? Give abundantly and serve without hesitation.
- We get in trouble when we serve with the wrong motives. If you serve for validation, prepare yourself to be offended. If you serve for praise, prepare yourself for a let down. **Give abundantly and serve without hesitation!**
- Notice I said the word biblical functioning member. In some churches you can stay on the role for many years and never show up or give. You can remain an active member at another church by being a CEO Christian: you know, Christmas and Easter Only. You can even be a revered member in a number of churches by giving a nice sum of money to the church each year, even though you never lift a finger in service of ministry.
- But please understand. That type of membership is not biblical, functioning membership. That approach to membership is man-made, man-centered, and man-maintained. It is totally contrary to what the Bible teaches and has no place in our churches.

- Each part that 1 Corinthians 12 Described, the foot, the hand, the ear, and the nose are all supposed to function. The feet are supposed to walk. The hand is created to grasp and hold. The ear is made to hear. The eye is made to see. The nose is made to smell.
- Because we are all different with different gifts and abilities, we will function differently from other members. But if we are true biblical church members, we will be functioning members. One of the ongoing questions you should ask yourself and God in prayer is, how can I best serve my church? You should never ask yourself if you should be serving your church.
- I was in a coaching session with a church planter last week and he told me that a family left his church because it was too small. I could sense the hurt and frustration in his voice. Unfortunately, this is the mentality of a lot of people. They want to be part of the country club where they are served instead of a Biblical church where it's not about them but about serving others. Remember, we are to give abundantly and serve without hesitation!
- The Church also has a three-fold objective. 1. World evangelization. 2. To minister to God. Someone once said, man's chief and highest end is to glorify God and to fully enjoy him forever. 3. The last objective is to make disciples. Let's take a look at each one.

1. World evangelization.

- Jesus, as he was going up to heaven gave a charge to the church when he said go into all the world and make disciples from all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything he had commanded.
- The characteristic of the early Jerusalem church was that it was growing. The Lord added to the church daily those who are being saved. Even under persecution, the early church scattered the gospel message wherever they went.

2. The second objective of the churches is to minister to God.

- We were all created to worship. Worship has many avenues of expression. In a real sense, all of life can be a great and vast praise service to God.

Even the mundane acts of life can be worship to God. Think about it, how we work, our attitudes, the way we clean the house, how we treat others is all worship and ministry to God. Don't confine your worship to a worship set on Sunday morning. Let your life be your worship song to the Lord.

3. The third objective of the New Testament church is to make disciples.

- Evangelism is the winning of new souls to Christ, worship is the church directed toward God, and discipleship is the development of new Christians into mature believers.
- Developing mature believers does not happen randomly. It is a deliberate act to make decisions to grow in your faith and understand why you believe. Maturity does not come cheap; it comes at a high cost.
- In the book of Galatians chapter 5, the author gives us a glimpse of the characteristics of a mature believer. It's called the fruit of the Spirit. Here is the list: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These are the marks of somebody who is growing in their faith.

In closing, the church has a high call and a specific mission not only in this community but worldwide. I thank God that Jesus did not leave us as orphans to accomplish this all by ourselves, but he sent the Holy Spirit to empower us to do the work of the ministry. He has gifted and designed each of us to be a part of the body of Christ. Now is the time, today is the day, there is no putting it off until tomorrow because we have a mission to seek and to save that which is lost.