

The work of the church

- See the divinely-appointed work given to the church so that we will be zealous for doing it and doing it in God's way.

The church's mission and work are God-given, divinely-appointed

- Colossians 3:17
- God-given, not men, not tradition, not government-mandated
- The church not a democracy where we determine what we think would be good for the church to be involved in
 - Ephesians 1:22-23
- Determined by what is written in the New Testament – the doctrine of Christ and the apostles
 - US government: constitutionally assigned roles; amendments possible
 - Businesses, schools: setup with a charter; amendments possible
 - But NT not amendable.
 - Disobey to your own harm and destruction
 - Misapply to your own harm and destruction
 - Misunderstand to your own harm and destruction
- Satan has clever ways to corrupt
 - Change terminology
 - Scope-creep
 - “Just your interpretation”
 - Others?

Recognize the Christian's purpose in life

- To Glorify God!
- Ephesians 3:21
- 1 Peter 4:11
- 1 Peter 2:9-10
- 1 Corinthians 10:31

What is the mission and work of the church?

- We are speaking in this lesson about the work assigned by God to the local church
- There is no collective functioning of the church universally
- We will see there are 3 main areas of work divinely-assigned to the church
 - Evangelizing
 - Edifying itself
 - Relieving its own needy

- The church has been assigned the work of evangelizing – preaching and teaching the word of God
 - Began with instructions to the apostles:
 - Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15
 - Acts 1:8
 - The church is the pillar and ground of the truth
 - 1 Timothy 3:15
 - The local church sending men to preach and teach
 - Acts 11:22-24
 - Acts 13:1-3
 - The local church having fellowship, sharing, in the preaching of the gospel by supporting men who preach the gospel
 - 1 Corinthians 9:1-15
 - It is good that the church support a preacher where he is working
 - Verses 11-12

- The church has been assigned the work of evangelizing – preaching and teaching the word of God
 - A church may help spread the gospel in other areas by supporting preachers in other places
 - 2 Corinthians 11:8-9
 - More than one church supporting a preacher
 - Philippians 1:3-5; 4:15-20
 - When a church had fellowship in the preaching of the gospel, the money was sent directly to the preacher
 - Christians individually also have a work to do in this
 - Acts 8:4
 - Matthew 5:13-16

- The church has been assigned the work of edifying itself
 - Edify = to build up spiritually
 - Seen in the beginning
 - Acts 2:42
 - Gifts given for purpose of edification; goal is spiritual growth
 - Ephesians 4:11-16
 - Needed to grow and prevent from being led astray
 - 2 Timothy 4:2-4
 - Edification when assembling to worship
 - Hebrews 10:24-25
 - 1 Corinthians 11:17; 14:26
 - Discipline required
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15
 - 1 Corinthians 5:1-13
 - Christians individually also have a work to do in this
 - Hebrews 4:12-13

- The church has been assigned the work of relieving its own needy saints
 - The local church relieved its own needy saints
 - Acts 2:44-45
 - Acts 4:32-35
 - Acts 6:1-6
 - When a church could not relieve its own, another church or churches sent to the needy church
 - Acts 11:27-30
 - 2 Corinthians 8, 9
 - That there may be equality of need
 - 1 Corinthians 16:1-3
 - Romans 15:25-26
 - The church did not collect funds for benevolence for non-saints
 - Acts 11:27-30
 - Benevolence is not a means to propagate the gospel; it was a work of the church for saints
 - Christians individually also have a work to do in this (and their benevolence extends beyond just saints)
 - 1 John 3:17
 - Galatians 6:10
 - James 1:27
 - Matthew 25:31-46
 - Luke 10:25-37

- No other work than those works found in the New Testament
 - Preaching the word
 - Edifying itself
 - Benevolence for its own
- To add any other work not found in the New Testament is to go beyond what is written
 - 2 John 9
- We saw different patterns in finances for support of preaching vs. benevolence
 - When a church sent money to a preacher, it was sent to him
 - When a church sent money to another church for relieving its needy saints, it was sent to that church
- Without authority:
 - For a church to be an intermediary or sponsoring church for the work of the local church
 - For another organization to be created to coordinate or execute the work of the local church