

“Flickering Lamps – Christ & His Church” (Blackaby)
Week 1: ‘Christ’s Purpose for His Church’ (Revelation 1 & 2)
September 16, 2020

Chapter 1: Christ’s Purpose for His Church

“The Ephesian church had a solid list of exceptional behavior. They only had one shortcoming. One sin negated everything that was praiseworthy, for they had neglected what was most important.” (p7)

“Christ’s declaration might appear harsh. After all, the church’s conduct was generally admirable. But Christ will not tolerate a church that forgets its purpose.” (p7)

I. The Three Purposes of the Church

“God created the Church for His eternal purposes. Christ is its Head (Col. 1:18), and He is the One who builds it (Matt. 16:18). I believe the Scriptures teach that God has three primary purposes for the Church. These are to glorify God, to make disciples, and to bless their community. When local congregations fulfill these purposes they have God’s power, pleasure, and provision at their disposal. When churches forsake God’s purposes, they invite God’s judgment (Rev. 2:5).” (p8)

1. To Glorify God

Eph. 3:20-21 “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

Romans 11:36 “For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

“The ultimate purpose of every Christian is to glorify God. There is no higher calling...The keys to glorifying God are first to love God, and second, to serve God God’s way. Every church must ask the pivotal question: Are we bringing glory to God by our actions? If not,

repentance is in order. Any church that is not exalting Christ by its behavior has lost its reason to exist.” (pp8 & 9)

2. To Make Disciples (Matt. 28:18-20)

Goal of discipleship:

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3. To Preserve & Bless Their Communities

Matthew 5:16 “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

“God’s people are to be both a preservative & a blessing wherever He plants them.” (p11)

“There are churches that could shut down today and their community would never know they were gone. Nothing in the neighborhood or city would change. That’s tragic! God intends for local churches to be such a blessing to their community that even unbelievers would be saddened if they were ever to relocate or close their doors.” (p11)

II. A Special Purpose

“In addition to these general purposes, God gives local churches specific assignments or a focus that drives much of what they do.” (p12)

“What brings God glory is when churches accomplish only what only God can do. Churches bring God glory when they focus on what He cares about - when they act, talk, and look like Christ.” (p14)

Prayer:

Is your life glorifying to God?

Are you still growing as a disciple and are you making disciples?

Are you being the hands and feet of Jesus? What is the Lord asking of you?