

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

The Role of the Church

Speaker:

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Scriptures:

Various

Theme: Live for the kingdom of God within the people of God and you will fulfill the purposes of God in your life.

Introduction: The cross is the center of the gospel and the center of the Christian life; but sometimes the broader context of Jesus' message is missed. He came preaching the arrival of the Kingdom of God, and his purposes in saving his people go beyond our individual salvation. He saves us into his kingdom which is manifest on this earth in the church. In the 3 main spheres of God, there are the family (health, education, and welfare), state (justice), and church (grace and truth).

Here are 3 points for understanding the nature of the church:

1. The Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God is God's people in God's place under God's rule (Goldsworthy). Jesus' contemporaries assumed that he had come to restore Israel as a nation. They did not understand that his purposes were much greater.

Col 1:13-14—Jesus redeemed us out of the domain of darkness (Satan's rule) and transferred us into his kingdom, which is manifest in his church.

The church acts as an embassy of the Lord, showcasing life in his kingdom and calling others to be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:20).

We must resist the worldly philosophies of our day, including the deceptions of CRT and Identity Politics, so that we can live our true identity as God's people.

2. The people of God

Belonging to any group includes distinguishing between who is in and who is out.

In the church, belonging is determined by faith in Jesus, which comes from the gospel rightly preached, and is marked by the sacraments rightly administered.

The church's primary task is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. This happens broadly, incl. in our generational transfer of the gospel to our children (Pss 145:4; 127:3-5)

3. The purposes of God

Eph 3:10—the church reveals the manifold wisdom of God, not in the ways that the world usually thinks of greatness, but according to God's priorities.

The Age to Come has broken into This Age in the church. In that way, we testify to the power of the gospel.

We must live lives of personal holiness both in order to be faithful witnesses and to resist unlawful tyranny whenever it encroaches.

We must also recognize that conflict is inescapable. It has been part of the world since the Garden itself, and so we must be bold and willing to face opposition for Jesus.

Questions:

1. How do you understand the role of the church in God's purposes? In your life?
2. How does the kingdom of God enter into your priorities in life?
3. How are you investing in others for the sake of the kingdom?