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"The Church Is Built on Leadership: It's Purpose"

Henry Blackaby said of this: "A crucial Scripture that every leader must pattern his or her life after."

Wayne Grudem shares there are three purposes of the church:
1. Worship - Ministry to God.
2. Nurture - Ministry to believers
3. Evangelism and Mercy - Ministry to the world

It is that second purpose that I want to address this morning.

I. The people called leaders

Spiritual gifts are normally bestowed on individuals, but here gifts are bestowed on the church.

A. Apostles

There are primary apostles who saw the risen Lord. Apostle means "sent ones." They are foundational to the initial church and are never repeated.
But there are secondary apostles - those who are called out. We would call these missionaries. Paul called Epaphrodictus an apostle - messenger in Phil. 2:25. He was an effective church planter - missionary pioneer.

B. Prophets

Old Testament prophets who spoke on behalf of God. They were a mouthpiece for God speaking His Word. There are no Biblical

prophets today who speak directly the Word of God to the standard of the Bible; yet there are prophets who are "mouthpieces" of God. They address the issues and speak on behalf of God.

C. Evangelists

They reach souls, share the Gospel in a clear-concise way.

D. Pastors-Teachers

These are the elders and are one office or person due to I Timothy 3: 1-7 that elders (pastors, shepherds, bishops) are to teach as part of their qualification.

II. The purpose of leaders

A. The purpose is for the church to be show Christ

Equipping - restored to its original condition, made complete - it is a medical term for the setting of bones.

God wants to restore us and He does through the local church. God wants to put us back into the condition in which we were meant to be.

Perfecting - only occurs here as a noun.

"mending nets" - Matt 4:21
"body you have prepared for me" Heb 10:5

Preparing the nets for the real work as in the mending of nets. Making something ready to express God's full intent (as seen in the body of Jesus)

We are to be the stature of Christ.

John 9:21 "He is of age, ask him." He is grown up, mature.

Not perfection, but direction.

Col. 1: 28 "present every man mature in Christ"

B. The purpose is for the church is to serve.

"to do the work of the ministry"

You don't call pastors and staff to do the ministry for you, but to equip you to do the ministry. The church is not to be a spiritual nursing home, but barracks for training soldiers of the cross.

We are to learn and have knowledge, but we are meant to put the knowledge into doing.

Syrus said that it is of no profit to have learned well if you neglect to do well. The Servant page 186

We are to be incarnational.

"Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life an ransom for many." Matthew 20:28

Ephesians 2: 10 "created in Christ Jesus for good works,..."

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

"When the church manifests the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, then the Church will be just as relevant in our day as He was in His. Mission, mercy, meeting needs, maintenance, manifesting the power and love of God...." David Jeremiah *I Never Thought I'd See the Day* page 208

C. The purpose is for the church is to be sturdy

He takes us to three places:

* He takes us to the nursery

Children - not old enough to speak, a small infant. One who is helpless

* He takes us to the sea

"Tossed to and fro" like a surging sea.
"Every wind of doctrine" - easily swayed

* He takes us to the hospital

"Carried about" - helpless like a sick person who is carried about by others

"Sanctification is a community project" - John Piper

Interdependence

Henry Blackaby "The local church is to nourish, feed, protect and guide babies toward spiritual maturity."

D. The purpose is for the church to speak

"the truth with love"

Truth without love brutality - ungracious
Love without truth hypocrisy - unfaithful

speaks of love again in verse 16

Right in the middle of the greatest discourse on spiritual gifts Paul reminds Corinth of the greatest gift - Love - I Cor. 13

But this could also mean "our lifestyle." a consistence in life - the way we live.

Satan is about the opposite:

"trickery" means cube - refers to dice - signifies slyness or trickery which Satan plays tricks with the truth

Craftiness - subtle - they do it purposefully