THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN EVANGELISM

INTRODUCTION:

1. The church of the Lord is the greatest institution that ever challenged the attention of man.

2. The church was planned in the mind of God in eternity, before the world and man came into being. Eph. 3: 9 – 11

3. God brought it into being at the appointed time. Gal. 4:4; Matt. 16:18; Mk. 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2: 1 – 4

4. The church was purchased with the blood of Christ. Acts 20:28

5. The mission, worship, work and organization of the church is revealed in the New Testament.

6. The word “church” comes from the Greek word Ekklesia, which means an assembly; a congregation; a called-out group.

I. THE WORD “CHURCH” IS USED IN TWO SENSES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. The UNIVERSAL sense – This includes all the saved; the totality of the people called from the world into the body of Christ. Matt. 16:18; Heb. 12:23; Eph. 2:6

   (1) This assembly does not congregate in one body on earth.

   (2) This assembly has no work.

   (3) This assembly has no common treasury.

   (4) This assembly has no organization.

   (5) The church universal is a relationship with God. I Cor. 1:9

2. The church LOCAL is made up of God’s people in a particular locality or community. These people have joined together to carry out the functions that God has assigned to a congregation.

   (1) In the Local church one not only has a relationship to God, but also a relationship to other Christians.

   (2) In the Local church one has entered into a fellowship arrangement.
(3) The Local church has organization. Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23

(4) The Local church is functional.

(5) The Local church has a common treasury. I Cor. 16: 1 – 2; Acts 2:42

(6) The Local church has work to do.

II. LOCAL CONGREGATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT ENGAGED IN THREE BASIC MISSIONS:

1. EDIFICATION: Eph. 4: 11 – 16; I Cor. 14: 12, 19, 26, 31; Matt. 28:20; Acts 2:42

   (1) Worship is a means of edification.

      A. Singing. Col. 3:16

      B. Lord’s Supper. I Cor. 11: 28 – 30

      C. Prayer

      D. Giving. Acts 20: 35

      E. Teaching. Acts 20:32

2. EVANGELISM: The proclamation of the gospel.

   (1) In the local community and in other localities in the world.

      A. The Thessalonian church. I Thess. 1:8


III. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS THE ONLY ORGANIZATION THROUGH WHICH THIS WORK IS TO BE DONE.

1. The work of evangelism is ASSIGNED to every church. I Tim. 3:15

2. It is not a work that a church may assume at its own pleasure.

3. It is a work that the Lord assigns from the first day of existence.
(1) When a church ceases from this work it loses its identity as a New Testament church.

4. The field assigned is the world. Matt. 13: 38; Mk. 16: 15 – 16

IV. TWO KINDS OF CHURCH WORK.

1. A work to which the churches of Christ are related unequally.
   
   (1) The work of the church in taking care of its own members is a work where churches are unequally related.

   A. A church has a relationship to its own members that no other church has when it comes to their needs.

   B. So, in time of benevolent need, one church can give to another church to take care of its own needs. Acts 11: 27 – 30; I Cor. 16: 1 – 2

2. A work to which the churches are related equally.
   
   (1) Evangelizing the world is the other kind of church work.

   A. This work has been assigned by the Lord to all the churches.

   B. All are related equally to this obligation, according to their ability.

   (2) Churches in New Testament times never gave to another church to do a work which both churches were equally related to.

   A. So no church ever gave to another church the funds to preach the gospel.

   B. Each church controlled its own money in preaching the gospel.

V. EXAMPLES OF CHURCHES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

1. The church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch. Acts 11: 22 – 26

2. The church at Philippi supported Paul in preaching the gospel.

   (1) Phil. 1: 2 – 5; 2: 25 – 30

   (2) They supported him directly. Phil. 4: 14 – 16

   (3) They supported him in Thessalonica. Phil. 4: 16
(5) They supported him in Corinth. II Cor. 11: 8 – 9

3. A church in supporting a preacher of the gospel is having *fellowship* with him in the gospel. Phil. 1:5

4. God gives credit to members of the church who give of their money on the first day of the week to support men who preach the gospel. Phil. 4:17

5. A preacher renders service to the church for Jesus’ sake. II Cor. 4:5; I Cor. 9:19; II Cor. 11:8

6. Passages showing the importance of preaching:

   (1) II Tim. 4:2

   (2) I Cor. 9:16

   (3) I Cor. 1:21

   (4) II Tim. 2:2

CONCLUSION:

1. In New Testament times there were no missionary societies or sponsoring churches.

2. Preachers were supported directly by churches.

3. This is the Lord’s way today.