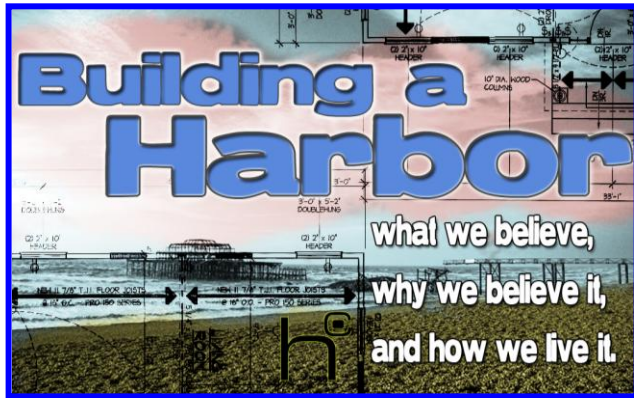


April 22, 2007



# The Missional Church

**“This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”**

Jeremiah 29:4-7

## What is the church?

**Ephesians 5:25** *Husbands, love your wives, Must as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*

The church is the community of Christians for all time who have been loved and saved by Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:25). The church includes the people of the Old Testament (i.e. Deut. 4:10; Acts 7:38; Heb. 2:12 cf. Ps. 22:22). In every church, there are people who are not Christians (Matt. 13:24–30), including wolves sent by Satan to lead people astray (Acts 20:29–30). While it is possible for Christians to know who else is a Christian (i.e. the frequent references to Christian brothers and sisters), ultimately only the Lord knows exactly every person who is and is not a Christian (2 Tim. 2:19).

## Should all Christians be vitally involved in a local church?

**Hebrews 10:25** *Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

The Old and New Testaments were written to communities of God’s people who regularly gathered together for such things as teaching, fellowship, worship, etc. The Bible is clear that every Christian is a part of the larger church body and is expected to participate in the life of a local church with the gift(s) God has given him or her (1 Cor. 12:1–31). It is therefore a sin for someone who claims to be a Christian not to be actively loving his or her Christian brothers and sisters (1 John 1:7, 3:17–18, 4:21) and seeking to build up the church (1 Cor. 12:7, 14:6, 14:12, 14:26b).

## Who is the ultimate head of the church?

The Scriptures are clear that Jesus Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:9, 1:22–23, 4:15, 5:23). Jesus is the Apostle who plants a church (Heb. 3:1). Jesus is the Senior Pastor who builds the church (Matthew 16:18). Jesus is the Senior Pastor who rules the church (1 Peter 5:4). And, it is ultimately Jesus who closes churches down when they have become faithless and/or fruitless (Rev. 2:5). Therefore, it is absolutely vital that a church loves Jesus, obeys Jesus, imitates Jesus, and follows Jesus at all times and in all ways according to the teaching of His Word (Col. 3:16).

## What are the sacraments?

**Baptism** occurred through the immersion of a person completely under water and then raising him up (Mark 1:5-1:10; John 3:23) to show that he was united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:1-7; Col. 2:11-12). Baptism is to be done in the name of the Trinity (Matt. 28:19). Baptism is to be done for Christians who demonstrate saving faith (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47-48; Gal. 3:27). Baptism does not save anyone, but instead shows that God has saved him or her solely by His free grace (Gal. 1:10; 5:4; Eph. 2:8-9). Baptism is commanded for God's people (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38).

**Communion** was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper as a means by which God's people could continually remember and celebrate His body (shown in the bread) and His blood (shown in the wine) shed for the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:26-29). The final communion for God's people will be at the Wedding Supper of the Lamb with Jesus at the end of history in His Kingdom (Rev. 19:9). The church is to celebrate communion with a sober confession of sin and recognition of why Jesus died and rose (1 Cor. 11:17-34) and partake together to show that they are unified by Jesus (1 Cor. 10:17). Therefore, communion is only intended for Christians (1 Cor. 11:29-30).

## What is Missiology?

**Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.**

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

### Christianity is comprised of three basic groupings:

1. There is **the gospel** of Jesus Christ which is the heart of the Scriptures and the revelation of God, and which must be kept in the forefront of every Christian's life.
2. There are **the culture** in which people live their lives. These lives both shape and are shaped by those cultures and the gospel must be fitted (not altered) to particular people, times and circumstances so that evangelism can effectively occur.
3. There is **the church**, or gathering of God's people – which does include people who are not Christians (Matt. 13:24-30) – where people are built up in their faith and knitted together in loving community so that they can faithfully engage people in the culture with the gospel. If this process fails to continually occur, the focus moves from the gospel to either cultural agendas or church agendas that are often different than God's agenda, which is the gospel.

**Missiology is simply an unwavering commitment among God's people to the \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ as the church.**