

God ordained the purpose of the church service - Eph 4:11-13 -11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Prepare God's people for works of service

- **Building up the Body of Christ**
- **Striving for unity in Faith and knowledge of Christ**
- **With the goal of maturity of and the Body being a Body**

There is an expected outcome for the Godly functioning church, when all parties play their part - Eph 4:14-16 14 **THEN** we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. 15 **Instead**, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

- **We will no longer be confused, easily misled, immature Christians**
- **We will Only Speak the Truth and we will speak it in Love**
- **We will grow in Christ, with each member doing their part**

The most important part of any church is that they are preaching Christ - Phil 1:15-18 - 15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? **The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, CHRIST IS PREACHED**. And because of this I rejoice.

***This also means we MUST NOT give a "well intention" church a pass for not preaching Christ.**

The church services must provide the much-needed formula for Faith - Rom 10:17 Consequently, **faith comes from hearing the message**, and **THE MESSAGE IS HEARD THROUGH THE WORD OF CHRIST**.

The Bible is an essential item for our Christian lives –

2 Tim 3:13-17 - 13 while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 **All Scripture is God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 **SO THAT** the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Heb 4:12-13 - 12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

The Bible can never be distorted - 2 Peter 3:15-16 - 15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which **ignorant and unstable people distort**, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

The church must use the Bible to support and interpret the Bible - Titus 2:1 - You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.

Without sound doctrine, scripture will be used to mislead - Matt 4:5-7 - 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. **For it is written**: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." 7 Jesus answered him, "**IT IS ALSO WRITTEN**: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

It must be Bible ONLY - 1 Cor 4:6 Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, **"Do not go beyond what is written"**. Then you will not take pride in one man over against another.

The Bible is the ONLY Holy book and everything you need can be proven by the Bible only – Gal 1:6-9 - 6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

Be aware there are many dysfunctional churches due to popular demand - 2 Tim 4:3-5 - 3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, THEY WILL GATHER around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

The characteristics of a sound sermon –

Purely present God's Word - 2 Cor 4:1-2 – Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2 Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by **SETTING FORTH THE TRUTH PLAINLY WE COMMEND OURSELVES TO EVERY MAN'S CONSCIENCE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD**.

Preach Christ NOT self - 2 Cor 4:5-6 - 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Preach Christ crucified NOT what is desired - 1 Cor 1:21-25 - 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22 Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but **WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles**, 24 but **to those whom God has called**, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

Characteristics of FALSE ministries - 2 Peter 2:1-3 - But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. **They will** secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. **Their condemnation** has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

What we need to do to make sure we are in a true Bible teaching church

Test everything!!! - 1 Thess 5:21-22 - 21 **Test everything**. Hold on to the good. 22 Avoid every kind of evil.

The way to check all teachings - Acts 17:11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

We are commanded not to believe but test every spirit - 1 John 4:1-3 - Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 **This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God**, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

If they add or take away from the Bible distance yourself from them - 2 John 7-11 - 7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not CONTINUE in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

Be careful not to measure the Church by worldly standards or you will be misled

Rev 2:9-11 - 9 I know your afflictions and your poverty — YET YOU ARE RICH! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Rev 3:15-18 - 15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, **because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I am about to spit you out of my mouth**. 17 **YOU SAY, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing'**. But **YOU DO NOT REALIZE** that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.