

Our Vision for the Success of the Church as Expressed in Our Sense of Purpose

Our purpose first and foremost is to be a **gospel-driven church**. The gospel is the good news to fallen men and the only hope of redemption in this world. It is what Christ has done for us rather than what we can do for Him. It is simply that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, for our justification.

Our affirmation of the truth and unique character of the gospel of Jesus Christ leads us to a desire to **offer proper worship** to God. Proper worship is necessarily about what is pleasing to God rather than what is attractive to men. Mindful that men have a sinful tendency to corrupt proper worship, we must be diligent and discerning in our effort to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

The ongoing application of the benefits of the gospel of Jesus Christ by God the Holy Spirit is called **sanctification**. The responsibility and challenge of the Church is to faithfully administer the ordained means of grace and to do everything necessary to see that the sanctification process is facilitated in each member of the church. To be sanctified is both a matter of being set apart to serve God and a process by which believers progressively reflect the character of Christ through the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The manner in which we understand and apply the gospel, offer proper worship, and support the work of sanctification must continually be evaluated to determine if the church is **pleasing to its Head and King, Jesus Christ**. The standard by which the Church determines what is pleasing to Christ is the Bible. The inerrant, infallible, and all-sufficient Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are given by God to man to inform him of what pleases Him and what duty He requires. What is pleasing to God is often counter-cultural and seldom pleasing to man. The purpose of the church is first and last to please God.

As the church reflects the purposes stated above, it will necessarily be engaged in the task of **evangelism**. Evangelism is the normal consequence of each believer's embrace of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the proper worship of God, and the ongoing work of sanctification. A church indifferent to the evangelization of the lost is a church that has failed in its fundamental mission and Christ's Great Commission.

Finally, the purpose of the church is to **love** one another. This is the glue that holds a covenant community together. This love is practical, active, and persistent. It is the most effective advertisement the church can offer to a dark and hurting world. Love is the supernatural consequence of grace in the life of a genuine believer. Love provides the vitality and redolence of a healthy Body of believers.

Purposing to be a **gospel-driven church**, to **offer** proper worship to God, to engender the **sanctification** of our members, to **please** Christ in our work, to **evangelize** the lost, and to **love** one another, we humbly rely upon God the Holy Spirit to grant us success.