

Describe The Ideal, Biblical Church! How Would You Respond?

This morning in my weekly men's Bible study, I started our discussion by asking this question to all the men present: If you were to plant a new church, what would you have and what would you need in your Church for it to be faithful? In other words, describe the ideal, biblical church for me. But I told the men that with every answer they gave, they must prove it with chapter and verse! In our 30-minute discussion, the men responded with these Scriptures and marks of the ideal, biblical church.

1. Ephesians 4:12 - Equip the Saints

The first answer immediately came as a brother shouted out Ephesians 4:12! The ministry must be all about equipping the saints to do the work of service! The primary duty of the leaders that God gives to the church is to equip God's people to do the work of ministry for God's glory.

2. 2 Timothy 4:2 - Preach the Word

Another brother then immediately turned to 2 Timothy 4 and read verse 2: to preach the Word of God. This is the preeminent call and duty of every faithful minister, to teach and preach the Bible with clarity, with accuracy, with fidelity, and with power. A faithful church must preach the Word.

3. Mark 11:17 - House of Prayer

One brother turned to the gospels and mentioned how Christ described the Temple as a House of Prayer. The church must be a place where prayer -- fervent prayer -- is prioritized!

4. Colossians 3:15-16 - Instructing one another with psalms, hymns & spiritual songs and giving thanks to God

Then, one brother turned to Colossians 3 and read about the need to instruct and teach one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs as we make melody to God and give thanks to Him! He pointed out the need to sing, to give thanks, to teach, to instruct -- and all this happens as the Word of God is richly dwelling with us.

5. Titus 1:5 - Appoint Godly elders

Next, a man took us to Titus 1 where Paul exhorts Titus to appoint elders in every city. But not just any kind of 'leader' will do; Titus must appoint the right kind of elders. They must be men who are above reproach. So we discussed the need to have godly, above reproach shepherds.

6. Ephesians 4:1-3 - Maintain Christian unity

One brother stated that Ephesians 4 must be a central text so that we would remember to walk in a manner worthy of the calling (v.1) and that believers would walk in all humility, with gentleness, with patience, and show great tolerance for one another in love, all the while striving to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This is the church protecting its unity!

7. Matthew 28:18-20 - Make Disciples, Baptize and Teach Them

We then turned to Matthew 28 where we were reminded of the mission of the church: to GO and SPEAK! To go out and speak forth the gospel and make disciples. And then to baptize them (practice the ordinances of baptism and, also, the Lord's supper), and then to engage in the ongoing responsibility of teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded. This is life-on-life discipleship as believers grow in grace and follow Christ together.

8. Acts 2:42 - Devote themselves to teaching, prayer, breaking of bread & fellowship

One brother directed us to Acts 2:42 where we observed the example of the early church where they regularly devoted themselves to four primary essentials. They intentionally gathered for the Apostolic teaching, for prayer, for the breaking of bread (communion or hospitality/ meals) and regular fellowship.

9. Acts 2:44-45 - Serving one another

Then, another brother encouraged us to look at that same context and observe how the early church provided for others in need and ministered to one another in tangible, particular ways as was profitable to serve and love and care for one another. A faithful church serves one another.

10. 3 John 6-8 - Equip and send off faithful missionaries and be fellow workers with the Truth

Finally, one brother reminded us of the paramount and joyful privilege of giving financially in the context of the church so that we can equip and send and support missionaries to go out "for the sake of the Name!" Indeed, the church sends out missionaries who are faithful so that they may do gospel work near and far and in so doing, the church engages in a glorious ministry where they are "fellow workers with the Truth" (3 John 6-8).

Not bad for a group of guys putting our minds together at 6AM on a Friday morning before they head off to work! May the Lord keep us faithful to His work, His Way, and according to His Word -- because Christ Alone, the Head over His Church -- is altogether lovely & worthy!