

Ecclesiology—Doctrine of the Church: Missions

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I. Missions—The church's function in the world.

- A. To proclaim the praises of God—*4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. 9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy (I Peter 2:4-10).*
- B. To witness of Christ—*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).*
- C. To be ambassadors for Christ—*Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you (John 20:21); Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5:20).*
- D. To preach the Gospel—*And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted (Mark 16:5); 44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things (Luke 24:44-48).*
- E. To carry out the ministry of reconciliation—*18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of*

reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:18-19).

- F. To make disciples—16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:16-20).

II. Missions—corporate responsibility.

- A. Equip saints for the work of ministry—11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- B. Maintain pure message—3:14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. 6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. 7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. 10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. 11 These things command and teach. 12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 Neglect not

the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee (1 Timothy 3:14-4:16); 6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Galatians 1:6-9).

- C. Confirm calling of missionaries—1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away (Acts 13:1-3).
- D. Send missionaries—And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away (Acts 13:3); 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Romans 10:14-15).
- E. Support missionaries—10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. 14 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. 15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. 18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. 19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:10-19).

III. Missions—individual responsibility.

- A. Develop in relationship with the Lord—A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things (Matthew 12:35); I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is

that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Romans 12:1-2); 4:17 This I say therefore; and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.....6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.....6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.....6:20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (Ephesians 4:17-6:20).

- B. Meet the needs of others in the body, which is the church—24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (Hebrews 10:24-25); 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked. 25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular (I Corinthians 12:14-27); From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:16); 8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (I Peter 4:8-11).
- C. Live an exemplary life—Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:16); 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.....11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.....15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing

ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.....21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.....3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous (I Peter 2:9-3:8).

- D. Proclaim the Gospel of Christ—But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear (I Peter 3:15); 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.....8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.....4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word (Acts 1:8; 8:1-4); And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Rev 22:17).

IV. Missions—the method of church perpetuity. Jesus promised: *I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18)*. God set some in the church, first apostles (I Corinthians 12:28). Then Jesus gave His church the great missionary commission —19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:19-20). The following comments concerning the missionary methods of church perpetuity are extracted from Chapter 1 of *Baptist Church Perpetuity or History* by W. A. Jarrell in 1894.

- A. Webster defines perpetuity as *the state or quality of being perpetual.....Continued existence or duration*.
- B. The late and lamented scholar, J. R. Graves, LL.D., wrote: *Wherever there are three or more baptized members of a regular Baptist church or churches covenanted together to hold and teach, and are governed by the New Testament.....there is a Church of Christ, even though there was not a presbytery of ministers in a thousand miles of them to organize them into a church. There is not the slightest need of a council of presbyters to organize a Baptist church.*
- C. The scholarly S. H. Ford, LL.D., says: *Succession among Baptists is not a linked chain of churches or ministers, uninterrupted and traceable at this distant day.....The true and defensible doctrine is, that baptized believers have existed in every age since John baptized in Jordan, and have met as a baptized congregation in covenant and fellowship where an opportunity permitted.*
- D. Since the term *Succession*, from its being used by Romanists, may mislead the uninformed into the belief that Baptists believe the Apostles have been succeeded by apostles and hierarchal bishops—bishops who have received the Spirit from the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, and, then, episcopal

grace, the phrase *Church Perpetuity* is preferable to the phrase *Church Succession*. The apostolic office terminated with the death of the last of the Apostles. It was intended only for the closing of the New Testament canon and the organization of the first churches. The New Testament, and other church history, certainly teach there were no other bishops in apostolic churches than pastors of one congregation—the diocese and the diocesan bishop having been born in the third century.

- E. Every Baptist church being, in organization, a church complete in itself, and, in no way organically connected with any other church, such a thing as one church succeeding another, as the second link of a chain is added to and succeeds the first, or, as one Romanish or Episcopal church succeeds another, is utterly foreign to and incompatible with Baptist church polity. Therefore, the talk about every link *jingling in the succession chain from the banks of the Jordan to the present* is ignorance or dust-throwing.
- F. The only senses in which one Baptist church can succeed another are that the church leads men and women to Christ, then through its missionaries or ministers baptizes them, after which the baptized organize themselves into a Baptist church; or, in lettering off some of its members to organize a new church; or, in case the old church has fallen to pieces, for its members to reorganize themselves into a church.
- G. All that Baptists mean by *Succession*, or *Church Perpetuity*, is: There has never been a day since the organization of the first New Testament church in which there was no genuine church of the New Testament existing on earth.
- H. The **Mother-church** concept—a Mother-church establishes a Baptist mission and then organizes the mission into a new Baptist church. This Mother-church process identifies the convictions of the new Baptist church as acceptable to the Mother-church, and therefore, acceptable to all who fellowship with the Mother-church. While the Mother-church process is helpful in establishing fellowship ties for the new church, the Mother-church process is not necessary for the establishment of new Baptist churches.

V. Missions—present analysis.

- A. Prayerlessness.
- B. Failure in personal Christianity.
- C. Vicarious giving.
- D. Leaving proclamation to *experts*.
- E. Inadequate discipling.

VI. Missions—recommendations.

- A. Emphasis on personal communion of believer with the Lord.
- B. Emphasis in the Lord's churches on individual responsibility of living and proclaiming the Gospel.
- C. Commitment to disciple.
- D. Constant examination of methods and means to remove counter-productive extrabiblical practices in missions.
- E. Prayer for direction and wisdom in the advancement of missionary endeavours.