

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

During April, we have studied the following four lessons on the impact of the Christian Church upon the world.

- Purchase of the Church Acts 20:28-31
- Mystery of the Church Eph.3:1-13
- Nomenclatures of the Church Eph.3:14-21
- **Mission of the Church** **Acts 2:40-42**

From 1967-74, I was an independent contractor to Christian organizations such Youth for Christ, Billy Graham, and Teen Crusades. In January of 1974, I contracted with Doctrinal Studies Inc to provide face to face teaching of the word of God instead of tapes, books, radio, and T.V as sources of spiritual growth.

Our mission was simply to teach baby believers Christian milk doctrines of salvation (1 Pet.2:2; Heb.5:13) and mature believers Christian meat doctrines of Christian Way of Life (CWL) (Heb.5:14; Eph.4:11-13) in the greater Birmingham area.

However, what emerged from this group and bible teaching over last 34 years is the church (DSBC) with multiple ministries that extend from Birmingham across America to the ends of the earth. The need for ministry training and materials and manpower and supplies and finances and structure can sometimes become overwhelming.

It appears to me that the Lord is forming us into a church similar to Acts 2:40-42.

Therefore, we are playing catch-up with internal growth, new directions, structures and policies to meet these needs as a local church. These are exciting times but not without changes and difficulties associated with these changes.

<p style="text-align: center;">This lesson will study the two general missions of the Christian church of Acts 2:40-42 Ambassadorship and Priesthood.</p>
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1. Acts 2:40-41 establishes the mission of ambassadorship (salvation, baptism, and membership) (Heb.12:23; Rev.20:12, 15)

Paul teaches us about the mission of ambassadorship in 2 Cor.5:18-21 and Eph.6:19-20. It is the external ministry of the church.

Ambassadorship (presbeia) is the grace salvation ministry of reconciling the unbeliever to God through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 14:32; 19:14; 1 Cor.15:1-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9) – “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, who gave us the ministry of reconciliation.” – “Not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed to us the word of reconciliation.” – “That we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Acts 2:40-41 shows us the results of it – “Be saved from this perverse generation! So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about 3,000 souls.”

God **pushed** us into ambassador ministry with evangelists Chuck Farmer, Tony Butler (community) and Gary Horton (national) along with our camp ministry through Boyce and Debra Smith, Tony and Sherry Butler and Davis and Denise Glenn (regional) and into world missions through Billy Morgan and Bill Sexton.

I know that there are many private ambassador ministries through people who attend this church that apparently don't need structure, training, materials, manpower, or finances. We would like to pray for your ministry if you would tell Mary Beth Holt of our prayer network or Frank Baxter of our men prayer group.

2. **Acts 2:42 establishes the mission of priesthood (hierateuma) (apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and prayer).**

Peter teaches us about the mission of priesthood in 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Heb.10:21; and Rev.1:5-6. It is the internal ministry of the church.

“And they were **continually devoting themselves** to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (2:42)

Priesthood ministry involves spiritual sacrifices and services as part of worship

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present you bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.” (Rom.12:1; 1 Cor.6:19-20)

“You also, as living stones, are being built up for a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet.2:5)

“But you are a chosen race, a **royal priesthood**, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” (1 Pet.2:9)

- **Prayer** – “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.” (Heb.13:15)
- **Fellowship** – “And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” (Heb.13:16; 2 Cor.9:12)
- **Giving** – “But I have received everything in full, and have abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.” (Phil.4:18)
- **Unconditional, sacrificial love** – “And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.” (Eph.5:2)

God **has pushed** us also into priesthood ministry. We are no longer content to just come and sit in privacy with heavy burdens that we think we must carry alone when in truth the priesthood of the church is there to help - “Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.” (Gal.6:2)

“Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.” (Rom.15:1)

We have learned that the word of God must be cycle through our souls by faith for the exchanging of conformity of worldly thinking to transformation by divine viewpoint thinking that conforms us to the image of Christ. “And **do not be conformed** to this world but be **transformed by the renewing of your minds**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Rom.12:2)

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become **conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” (Rom.8:29)