

# Key Terms

“Things which must shortly  
 come to pass...”  
 “42 months”  
 “1,260 days”  
 “time, times and half a time”

**Revelation 4.1-19.21**

“1000  
 years  
 ...”

**Rev.  
20.1-6**

Last  
 Battle  
 &  
 Judg-  
 ment

**Rev.  
20.7-  
15**

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From our study of the Revelation of Jesus Christ on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. An overview of the book.

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Assembly Schedule  
 Sunday

Bible Class for all ages \_\_\_ 9:00 AM  
 Morning Worship Service \_\_\_ 10:00 AM  
 Evening Worship Service \_\_\_ 6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages \_\_\_ 7:00 PM

**VISITORS ARE  
 WELCOME!**

If you know of someone who would like to receive this publication, please let us know.

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# NAVARRE MESSENGER

Volume 4 Issue 10

March 8, 2009

## The Mission of the Church



latter as the **local church**.

While both of these entities are comprised of believers (in theory, anyway), they have different functions. The universal church has no organizational or institutional identity, other than Christ directing His people through His word. The work of this church is the aggregate behavior of all genuine believers throughout the world serving Christ in their daily lives. As these individuals perform their good works in their families, their workplaces, their neighborhoods, and their civic relations, they glorify God (1 Pet. 2:12; Eph. 3:21). This distributed activity is the mission of the universal church.

by David King

Every organization has a mission, a work that defines its reason for being. In the corporate world, most companies have a mission statement that helps the employees stay focused on their objectives.

What is the mission of the Lord's church?

To answer that question, we must first recognize a critical distinction

that is lost among those who claim to follow Christ. Even those of us who claim to follow more perfectly the New Testament model often struggle to grasp this difference. It is the difference between the Lord's body — the sum total of all God's people throughout the world — and the local congregation — a group of believers in a given location who have banded together for mutual encouragement and action. For brevity, we refer to the former as the **universal church**, and the

The local church, however, has a more restricted objective. Local congregations are given explicit instructions to provide edification for their members, through teaching and worship (Heb. 1:24-25; 1 Cor. 14), to support the preaching of the gospel (Phil. 4:14-18), and to take care of the physical needs of their own (1 Cor. 16:1; Ac. 4:34-35).

The distinction between these

two entities is taught often in the New Testament, but one example will suffice: Note Paul's instruction regarding the care of believing widows: "If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows" (1 Tim. 5:16). The universal church, acting through individual believers, has the broad responsibility to care for their own widows, while the local church is restricted to the care of those

who are truly destitute.

So what is the mission of the church? It depends on which church you are speaking of, universal or local. Each has a unique function, and that difference must be respected.

Unfortunately, most people fail to respect that difference, and end up confusing the two missions. This error is usually manifested in attempts to bring local churches under some kind of worldwide

harness — a hierarchy, a conference, a synod, a missionary society, a sponsoring church, a "brotherhood" monitor, etc. The intention is noble, but the end result is almost always the same: political power struggles that hurt the image of local churches and the Lord's body in general.

The common element in both entities, of course, is individual believers, whose actions make both successful. ~

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS UNIQUE

CHURCH - 1PET. 2:5: 1COR. 12:13 MATT. 16:13-19 UNIQUE - HAVING NO LIKE OR EQUAL

GOD PURPOSED FROM ETERNITY - EPH. 3:8-11: DAN. 2:44

JESUS - BUILDER - HEAD - SAVIOUR - MT. 16:18: COL. 1:18: EPH. 1:22, 23: 5:23

WEARS BRIDEGROOM'S NAME - JO. 3:29: ROM. 7:4: ROM. 16:16

GOVERNED BY DIVINE AUTHORITY - MT. 28:18-20: JO. 14:26: 1PET. 4:11: 2JO. 9

PILLAR & GROUND OF TRUTH - 1TIM. 3:15: ROM. 1:16: GAL. 1:6-9: ROM. 6:3-5

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP SPIRIT DIRECTED - JO. 14:26: 16:13: MK. 16:16: ACTS 2:36-41

WORSHIP - SCRIPTURAL - JO. 4:23, 24: ACTS 2:42: 20:7: EPH. 5:19

WORK DIVINELY APPOINTED - 2TIM. 3:16, 17: 1PET. 4:11

DESTINY - HEAVEN - 1PET. 1:3-5: 1THESS. 4:16, 17

This chart is courtesy of Mark Copeland's ExecutableOutlines.com and was painted by Steve Hudgins. In the days before overhead projectors and PowerPoint presentations these hand-painted charts were used with great power and success. Many of them made their way across the continent and beyond.

## The Purpose of the Church

What is the purpose of the Lord's church? Is it to eradicate poverty, disease, social injustice, illiteracy from among men? Is it to bring about a cessation of war and conflict? Is it to campaign for a temptation-free society for Christians to live in?

If the church had as one of its great goals the eradication of disease, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish that goal. Could not the same power that enabled one blind man to see have enabled all blind men to see; that enabled one lame man to walk have enabled all lame people to walk; that cured many people of varied diseases have cured all people of all diseases? And could not this same power have been given to the church in all generations?

If the church has as one of its great goals the eradication of poverty, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish this purpose. After all, He fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. He similarly fed four thousand on another occasion. Could not He who did these marvelous works have enabled His church in all generations to feed, clothe, and shelter the impoverished masses of the world through miraculous powers?

If the Lord had wanted His church to become a lobbyist group to apply political pressure toward a temptation and persecution-free society in which to live, He would have given in-

structions in that direction. He did not even lead His church into a direct effort to destroy slavery, but taught the Christian slave to be a better slave and the Christian master to treat his slaves as he would have his heavenly Master treat him (Colossians 3:22-4:1).

The church's purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity—it holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sorrowing a moment when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It tells the tempted and persecuted that there is value in these afflictions, that the testing of their faith is "more precious than of gold," and to rejoice -- It tells all to live godly lives in whatever environment they find themselves. It seeks to change people through the power of the gospel, not society through the coercion of legislators — Its weapons "are not carnal, but are mighty through God.

Its motivating theme: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" When churches become involved in hospital and health clinic work, or when they build schools for the education of their children, or when they see as one of their great missions to provide for the world's poverty, or when they feel obligated to create social upheaval and campaign for human rights, or when

they feel called upon to express their views on the government's use of nuclear armaments or whatever, they have a distorted view of the purpose of the church.

Bill Hall ~ Reprinted

### Ephesians 3:10-11

**"to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church**

**to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,**

**according to**

**the eternal purpose**

**which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord"**