

Answering Basic Questions (Part 11): What Is the Work of the Church

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: 1 Peter 3:15

In our text, Peter explained that each Christian needs to be ready to give an answer for what we believe. Giving a defense for the HOPE within us requires an ability to articulate the basics of our faith. In this series, we are going to discuss some basic questions that may arise. This is to help reinforce our own faith and help prepare us to teach others as opportunities arise.

What Is the Work of the Church?

- If you ask different people, you will get many different answers to this question – this has resulted in the almost limitless activities offered by churches today
- Are all of these ideas necessary (or even good) for churches to be doing?

This Must Be Determined by the New Testament

- This goes back to our lesson on Bible authority – Jesus has all authority and we are to do what He says (Matthew 28:18, 20); this includes what we do individually AND collectively in our local churches
- Hold fast the pattern (2 Timothy 1:13) – whatever the church does must be in harmony with the NT pattern

The Church Is to Do the Work of Evangelism

- The church is the “pillar and support of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15) – by upholding and defending the truth, the church is involved in the work of evangelism
- Example of the church in Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 1:8) – churches today need to spread the gospel to their communities and beyond

The Church Is to Do the Work of Edification

- This is about strengthening and building up those in the church – it is a self-edifying body (Ephesians 4:16); as each part of the body works together, all are encouraged, strengthened, and equipped
- This is also why we assemble together (Hebrews 10:24-25)

The Church Is Authorized to Do the Work of Benevolence

- This is worded differently for a reason – evangelism and edification are ongoing works; benevolence is done as needed; example of Antioch (Acts 11:29-30); in every

New Testament example, the recipients were always Christians (Acts 4:32-35; 11:29; Romans 15:26; 1 Corinthians 16:1; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 9:12)

- As individuals, we can help others (Galatians 6:10) – but local churches are more limited (cf. 1 Timothy 5:16)

Conclusion

- So what is the work of the church? – spreading the gospel, building up its own, and helping those in need; adding other works are unauthorized and distract from the work that God has given
- Let's work together in the local church to do what the Lord has instructed us to do