

“The Mission of The Bridge Bible Fellowship, Part Two”

“Our mission is to glorify God by multiplying mature disciples and healthy churches that know Jesus Christ and make Him known.”

- **“Our”** = the task of ALL of us.
- **“Mission”** = purpose; reason for existence; ultimate goal & purpose. The focus of what we do as a church that helps us say YES or NO to a lot of good ideas. That which drives our ministries, our calendar, and our budget. (Mk. 1:33f; Jn. 17:4; Lk. 19:10)
- **“is”** = not “was” in the past or “will be” sometime in the future. **“IS”** now and will continue to be. It’s bigger than us! It’s humanly impossible. It will require all of us trusting God and serving wholeheartedly. It’s not something we can complete in our lifetime. It will be something we pass on to future generations if the Lord doesn’t come back soon.
- **“to glorify God”** = our ultimate purpose for existence! (1 Chron. 16:28f; Ps. 22:23; 50:23; 115:1; Is. 60:21; 61:3; Jer. 9:23f; Mt. 5:16; 2 Cor. 5:9; 2 Thess. 1:6-12; 1 Pet. 2:12; Rev. 5:13; 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:31; Is. 43:6f)
- **“by multiplying”** = not “adding”; everyone involved in reproducing themselves
 - **“mature disciples”** = not just the **QUANTITY** but the **QUALITY** of the disciples! (Col. 1:28f; Eph. 4:11ff)
 - 1) We are called to **FOLLOW** – no matter what the cost – Mt. 4:18-22; 19:23-29
 - 2) We are called to follow **NOW** – Mt. 4:18-22; 8:18-23
 - 3) We are called to follow Christ **EXCLUSIVELY** – no competition – Mt. 19:16-22
 - 4) We are called to **SELF-DENIAL** – Mt. 16:24-27; 6:19-21
 - 5) We are called to be **TRANSFORMED**, not CONFORMED – Rom. 12:1-2
A transformed disciple (“*Choose the Life*,” by Bill Hull, pp. 18-20): a) **Believes** what Jesus believed (transformed **mind**); b) **Lives** the way Jesus lived (transformed **character**); c) **Loves** the way Jesus loved (transformed **relationships**); d) **Ministers** the way Jesus ministered (transformed **service**); e) **Leads** the way Jesus led (transformed **influence**)
 - 6) We are called to **PERSEVERANCE** – 1 John 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:7; Mt. 13:18-23
 - 7) We are called to **BEAR FRUIT** – Jn. 15:5-8; Mt. 7:16-20
 - **“and healthy churches”** = we are also to MULTIPLY CHURCHES! Healthy churches! (Jn. 17:15ff; Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 2; 11; 13; 14:21-23 [cf. Titus 1:5]; 20:17ff)
Note the Apostle Paul’s commitment to **ESTABLISH** churches (Greek word “**sterizo**” = strengthening, establishing, supporting, and/or stabilizing) – Acts 14:21-23; 15:36-16:5 (“churches” were increasing in number daily); 18:22f; Rom. 1:8-15; 16:25-27; 1 Thess. 3:1-13; 2 Thess. 2:16f

Paul’s establishing process:

- **Phase 1:** He proclaimed the gospel (Acts 14:19-21; 16:6-10; Rom. 15:17-19)
- **Phase 2:** He gathered the Christians together into community, strengthening them in their faith, and appointing elders in every church to oversee the community (Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5)
- **Phase 3:** He continued the process of establishing the churches, both by letter and by visits, training key men to assist him in the establishing process (Acts 16:1-5; Phil. 2:19-30; Rom. 1:8-15; 16:25-27; 2 Cor. 1:12-2:13; 7:5-12; 1 Thess. 2:17-3:10)

- **Phase 4:** He used the churches as a base for taking the gospel to new frontiers, encouraging the churches to participate with him in the furtherance of the gospel (Phil. 1:3-7, 27-30; 4:10-20)
- **Phase 5:** He charged the key men he had trained to assist him in fully establishing the churches; to find faithful men that they could train to carry on this task for the next generation (2 Tim. 2:2)

Why is it critical to establish a church?

- Eph. 2:19-22 – we are all part of a body (house) and we need to know where we fit in
- Eph. 4:11ff – each person does his/her part and then the whole church matures
- Eph. 3:8f – Paul’s job description: 1) Preach the Gospel; 2) Establish the church (mystery) – provide the organization for the church to be established
- Eph. 3:10 – GOAL = spiritual realm looks at a church established in this pattern and sees the wisdom of God: a unified, submissive, obedient group of people in a community of faith that shows Satan what he missed by rebelling
- 1 Tim. 5:21 – God, Jesus, and chosen angels are watching what you are doing in the church!
- How do we establish a church that is not “ONE MAN-CENTERED” (i.e., the paid professional)?
 - Eph. 5:18ff – filled with Holy Spirit >> everyone is in the process of establishing
 - Col. 3:16ff – Word of Christ richly dwelling >> everyone is in the process of establishing

Where part do spiritual gifts play?

- 1 Cor. 12 – for the building up of the BODY
- Eph. 4:11ff – equipping the saints for the work of service > builds up the entire body
- 1 Peter 4:10-11 – determine your gifts & employ them (speaking; serving)
- **“that know Jesus Christ”** = Disciples AND Churches that KNOW Jesus Christ intimately and love Him fervently (Rev. 2; Lk. 10; Jn. 14-16)
- **“and make Him known”** = telling others about Him; leading others to Him; helping others grow in Him; helping others tell more people about Him...

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Discussion Questions:

1. What are some biblical qualities of a “healthy” church? (Support your answers with Scripture) What is your role in helping this church develop those qualities?
2. What does the word “establish” mean? Why is it critical that each local church be “established?” What happens when a church is not established? What helps a church become established? What role do the elders play in this process? What role do the other church members play?
3. How might we as a church do a better job of strengthening other existing churches in our area? What might keep us from trying? What might keep other churches from letting us help them? How might we overcome those challenges?
4. What is your part in helping us carry out this mission statement? How does your ministry area help our church accomplish this? What could you and others in your ministry area do more effectively to help us carry out this mission?
5. Read Acts 5:40-42; 20:24; 21:13f; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 1:27-30; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; 2 Tim. 4:6-8. What was the attitude of these people toward fulfilling their mission? What is yours?