

## Systematic Theology, Lesson 33: Ecclesiology: The Doctrine of the Church, Part 4

### 1. The Practice of the Church

#### a. The purposes of the church

##### i. Ministry to God: \_\_\_\_\_

1. **John 4:23-24:** But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.
2. **Rev 22:8-9:** I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. But he said to me, “Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.”
3. **Eph 1:12:** to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

##### ii. Ministry to believers: \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Col 1:28:** We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete [i.e., mature] in Christ.
2. **Eph 4:12-13:** for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

##### iii. Ministry to the world: \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Matt 28:19-20:** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

2. **Acts 1:8:** but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.
3. **Acts 2:44-46:** And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.
- iv. **GCBC Statement of Faith:** (“The Church,” paragraph 9): We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God by building itself up in the faith, by instruction of the Word, by fellowship, by keeping the ordinances and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.
- v. **GCBC Mission Statement:** GCBC exists to exalt Christ, edify the saints, and evangelize the world to the glory of the triune God.

b. The ministries of the church

i. \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Acts 6:4:** But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.
2. **1 Tim 4:13:** Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.
3. **2 Tim 4:2:** preach the word; . . .

ii. Ordinances<sup>1</sup>

1. Baptism
2. Lord’s Supper

iii. Fellowship<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> More on the ordinances will be covered in the next systematic theology lesson.

<sup>2</sup> For more on fellowship, see the eight part series: Dan Burrus, “Biblical Fellowship,” available at GCBC sermonaudio.com webpage.

1. **Acts 2:42:** They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
2. **Phil 1:6:** in view of your participation [i.e., fellowship] in the gospel from the first day until now.
3. **Phlmn 6:** *and I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

iv. Prayer

1. **Matt 6:9:** Pray, then, in this way: "Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name."
2. **Acts 6:6:** And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.
3. **Acts 12:12:** And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

v. Music

1. **Col 3:16:** Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.<sup>3</sup>
2. **Eph 5:19:** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.

vi. \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Matt 28:19:** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the ministry of music from Col 3:16, see: Paul Fuller, "Why We Sing," sermon available at [gracelakeville.org](http://gracelakeville.org).

2. **1 Thess 5:14:** We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

vii. Mercy

1. **Acts 11:29:** And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send *a contribution* for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.
2. **1 Cor 8:1-4:** Now, brethren, we *wish to* make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, *they gave* of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints.
3. **1 John 3:17:** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

- viii. How are these ministries carried out? Through every member utilizing \_\_\_\_\_ . **GCBC Statement of Faith** ("The Church," paragraph 10): We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service.

c. Spiritual gifts<sup>4</sup>

- i. Definition of spiritual gifts: "A spiritual gift is any ability given to an individual supernaturally by God through the Holy Spirit so that the recipient may utilize that ability to minister to the needs of the church, the body of Christ."<sup>5</sup>
- ii. Disbursement of spiritual gifts: supernatural gift to every \_\_\_\_\_ .
  1. **1 Cor 12:11:** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

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<sup>4</sup> For more on spiritual gifts, including the issue of the cessation of some spiritual gifts, see the seven part series: Jeff Rich, "Spiritual Gifts," available at GCBC sermonaudio.com webpage. Note: sometimes a discussion of spiritual gifts is done in conjunction with a discussion on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (a.k.a., pneumatology).

<sup>5</sup> Thomas R. Edgar, *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit: Affirming the Fullness of God's Provision for Spiritual Living* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregal, 1996), 36.

2. **1 Pet 4:10:** As each one has received a *special gift*, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
- iii. Purpose of spiritual gifts: carry on the work of the ministry in the \_\_\_\_\_.
1. **1 Cor 12:7:** But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
  2. **1 Cor 14:12:** So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek to abound for the edification of the church.
  3. **Eph 4:11-12, 16:** And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. . . . from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.
- iv. Variety of spiritual gifts: six different New Testament passages contain lists of spiritual gifts (**Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 7:7; 12:8-10; 28; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 4:11**).
- v. Spiritual gifts are to be used in love. **1 Cor 13:1-3:** “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.”<sup>6</sup>
- vi. **GCBC Statement of Faith** (“The Church,” paragraph 11): We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ.

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<sup>6</sup> For more on the broader principle of love from 1 Corinthians 13, see: Dan Burrus, “A More Excellent Way,” three part sermon series available at [gracelakeville.org](http://gracelakeville.org).