

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**Ephesians 4:14-16**

**Lesson #19**

**Proper working**

**12/03/2017**

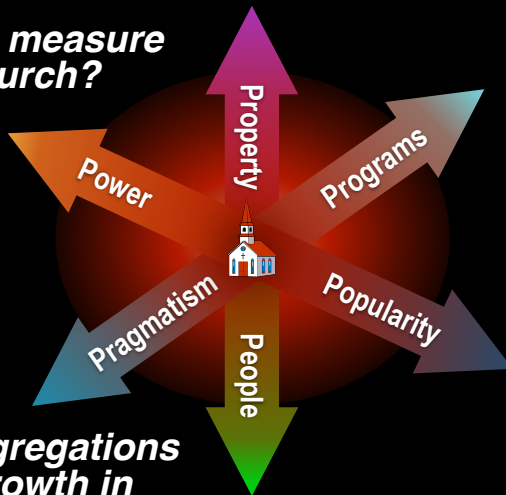
## The dysfunctional church

- is where the ministers minister and the congregation congregates to consume, complain, and criticize.
- is where everyone is infected with terminal cases of churchianity, bibliolatry, and individualism.
- is where leaders feel entitled to lord it over, manipulate around, and prey upon the sheep.
- is where members are expected to look busy, act holy, and be happy as they show up, shut up and cough up.



**What is the church's calling?** <sup>1</sup>

**Is this the measure  
of a church?**



**Some congregations  
define growth in  
terms of six things.**

<sup>2</sup>

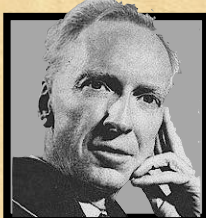
**Matthew 28**

“18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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, 20 **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you**; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

- This “**Great Commission**” has been regarded as the mission statement for the Christian church by most evangelical congregations.

“You have one business on earth  
- to save souls.”

John Wesley <sup>3</sup>



**Oswald J Smith**  
(Pastor / author)

“Any church  
not involved in the Great  
Commission  
has forfeited  
its biblical  
right to exist.”

<sup>4</sup>



**A.B. Simpson**  
(founder of CMA)

“The Christian  
is not obedient  
unless he is  
doing all in his  
power to send  
the Gospel to the  
heathen world.”

<sup>5</sup>



### Matthew 28

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- Until the 17th cent. this text was **applied to the Apostles only** and it was “fulfilled” in their lifetime.

### Romans 16:25-26

“my Gospel . . . according to the commandment of God . . . **HAS BEEN** made known to all the nations.”

- The term “Great Commission” was not used until the 19th cent. by **Hudson Taylor**.

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## What had Jesus commanded?

John 14-17 is an example.

Jesus’ ministry called his disciples to:

- bring the good news of his kingdom to the **JEWISH** community.
- love one another.

### John 15:17

“This I command you, that you **love one another**.”

**NOTE:** The focus is on **LOVE** and **ONE ANOTHER**.

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### John 14

“<sup>25</sup> These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.**”

### John 16:13

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; . . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.”

**This can be understood as Jesus’ endorsement of the apostles’ teaching.**

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# Identity in Action

## A study of Ephesians

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## The structure of Ephesians



### What is our calling?

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of **the calling with which you have been called**,” 4:1

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### Ephesians 4

“<sup>11</sup> And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, **to the building up of the body of Christ;**”

**The mission is to “build up the body of Christ” the church.**

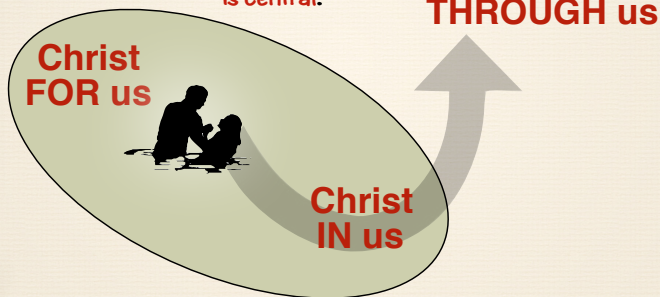
**World evangelism is a PART (but only a part) of this mission.**

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## The Mission

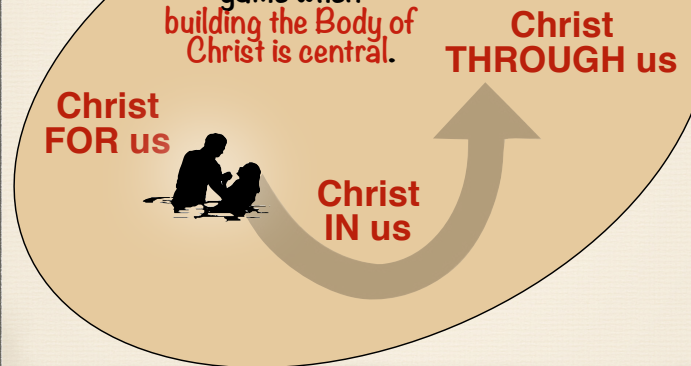
This is the ball game when the new birth experience is central.



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## The Mission

This is the ball game when building the Body of Christ is central.



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### Ephesians 4

“13 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. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which 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.”

14

### Ephesians 4

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### Goal #1 - Be transformed (to the image of God)

1. **Unity** - Bring believers together. (solidarity with the majors and gracious with the minors of the faith)
2. **Maturity** - Bring believers to adulthood. (secure, strong, and steadfast)
3. **Fullness** - Bring believers to full humanity. (an integrated life)

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### Ephesians 4

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### Goal #2 - Be not conformed (to the values of this world)

1. **Stability** - Bring believers to stability. (remaining faithful and yet flexible)
2. **Security** - Resisting seductive teaching. (fades, trends, political correctness, etc.)
3. **Scrutiny** - Discerning deceitful people. (recognizing those who lead others astray)

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“15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which 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.”

### Means - common tools & individual roles

1. **Tools** - Use words and attitude to shape lives. (integrated Christ likeness)
2. **Participation** - Everyone needs to show up. (It takes a community to build a disciple.)
3. **Propriety** - Focus on your part. (respect the different roles of others)

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## Walking in a manner worthy of our calling in the Epistles.

1. We are **commanded** to do many things and world evangelism is a part but not central or emphasized.
2. The way we relate to **one another** in the community of faith is emphasized.
3. The way we relate to the outside world is a **show and tell** ministry of our faith, hope, and love.
4. A big part of being salt and light is in how we **respond** to life's ups and downs.

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## Improper working of spiritual Body parts.

1. **Obstructors** - parts that are bent on tearing down rather than encouraging one another.
2. **Snobs** - parts that refuse to give or receive ministry from some other parts.
3. **Spectators** - parts that shut down and refuse to operate at all.
4. **Dominators** - parts that become "mission control" of all other parts.
5. **Rebels** - parts that resist the directions of the head and follow other plans.



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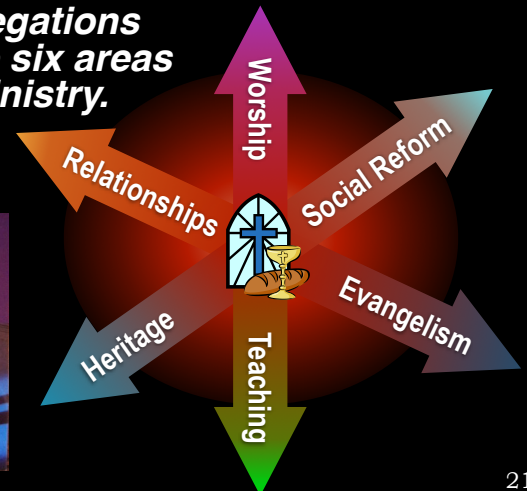
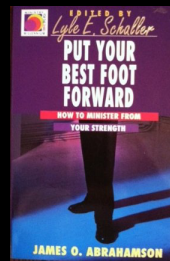
## Some "sacred cows" that may reflect our world more than God's kingdom.

1. **Church as a means to a bigger end** - over emphasis on individualism.
2. **Leadership as human pyramid** - rethink church structure and expectations.
3. **Mission as world evangelism** - seek a Biblical balance.
4. **Growth as nickels & noses** - as opposed to unity, maturity, and service.



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## A healthy Christian congregations cultivate six areas of ministry.



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