

Essential Truth

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 12th, 2012 • Pastor Chris Lankford

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

~2nd Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

1) Why Does The Local Church Exist?

- A) The purpose of the missional church is making disciples which engage pre-Christian people by going to their turf, providing bridges into a church family, and teaching the good news about Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).
- B) The missional church is made up of all followers of Jesus Christ, but is led by those who God has raised up as leaders (Ephesians 4:11-12). God provides leaders to the church for the purpose of equipping people for missional living.
- C) The local church (locations/organizations) exists in order to provide a place for this maturing process (Ephesians 4:13). In the same way our emotions and physical bodies always mature and develop, all missional followers of Jesus Christ are to mature and develop (Hebrews 5:12-6:2).
- D) The local church equips the missional church through the Word of God (2nd Timothy 3:16-17). The local church exists to equip missional followers of Jesus Christ in doctrine for the purpose of clarity (2nd Timothy 2:14-17a) and avoiding false biblical teaching (1st Timothy 4:1-8).

F) Training in God's Word provides transformation (Romans 12:2). Transformation is an inward change of heart/mind which produces an outward change of practice. The purpose of transformation is a life which is progressively more like Jesus (John 17:7) This benefits the local church (Hebrews 10:23-25) and missional church (John 13:34-35).

2) How The Local Church Equips Missional People

- A) Church leaders equip people most obviously through the accurate teaching of the Word of God (2nd Timothy 2:15) for training in righteous living (2nd Timothy 3:16-17).
- B) Church leaders example righteous living (1st Peter 5:1-3) and equip people in evangelism, baptism, biblical teaching, fellowship and community, communion, prayer, spiritual warfare, sacrificial giving, and worship (Acts 2:41-47).
- C) Training in God's Word is hard work, exposes sin, and seldom comes easily to any person (Hebrews 4:12-13). For this reason, equipping happens through relationships with other followers of Christ (Philippians 2:1-4, 12-16).
- D) Further, the local church provides training and opportunities for service (Luke 10:1-22). This provides the missional church with practical ministry opportunities of growth and success.

3) Where It All Must Begin

- A) Every follower of Jesus Christ must believe in the message of Jesus Christ (1st John 3:23-24). But in addition to this elementary teaching, we must also become adept at understanding "the who counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).
- B) This message is contained in the Word of God. Learning to "love God" means knowing and understanding the fullness of this message through all of the Bible.
- C) Our times of preaching on Sunday, lead into deeper study of the subjects which have been introduced as we also learn to "love others" in our community of Growth Groups. All of this is to be Word of God centered (2nd Timothy 2:15).