



SERIES: Pursuing Spiritual Fitness

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Saturday, August 19, 2023

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14: 26; Psalm 100; 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

TITLE: Why the Church Exists

The purpose of the Church is what? This week we've been talking about how God saves us and brings us into His family. We've learned that the Church is not a building but rather a body. We discovered Who is in charge. It's not a man, a denominational leader, or the Pope. It's Jesus Christ. He is in charge and gives life to the body. We've remembered that we gather together to grow, encourage, and serve. But today, we have two more vital essentials for the Church. One you'll love, and one you'll not want to hear.

What are these last two essentials of the church? Well, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:26 (NIV),

When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.

If I could summarize, what Paul just said is, "Church, you are meant to worship." We, as the body of Christ, are called to worship. Psalm 100 lays out both the why, and how to worship well. Why do we worship as the people of God? Because God is worthy. He saved us. He graces us out constantly and freely shows us mercy. He provides us hope and a future. That is why we worship Him.

How can we praise Him? Is it not just singing? It's not just Gaither hymns or Chris Tomlin songs. It's a thoughtful and honest prayer. It's giving our time, our treasure, and our talents - so giving, but also serving. It's encouraging each other. It's gathering together for fellowship. It's even holding each other accountable. Worship is all about giving God glory and being the Church. So worship is one of the essentials of the Church. That's the easy one.

But the other is quite unpopular. We find it in 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (NLT):

I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It's not important who does the planting or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow.

Uh-oh. You know what the Church was made for? Outreach: Scattering the seed of the Gospel and watering it with our lives. But friends, don't panic and don't shut this off. Because Paul reminds us, God is the one who saves. All we are called to do is play in the places God puts us and live with Gospel intentionality.

God saved us not for convenience or our best life now. He saved us on purpose and for a purpose. We, as the Church, are called to worship and outreach.

So here's my challenge for you today: In our app, here below, let's worship together. Let's praise our King. Share below what you love about God. Is it a story of His goodness? We want to know. Is it a trait or characteristic? Let us know. But let's not just worship in words; let's worship in outreach. What is one thing you will do to reach the lost at any cost? Remember, it's doing what you do every day, but inviting someone lost to be part of it. Pray for the opportunity and then do it. Remember, the Spirit does the saving. We just play.

I am praying for you and excited to hear from you. Now, let's go and win the day!