

Glorifying God

Franklin Church of Christ
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PM Worship

Introduction:

According to **Ephesians 3:20-21**, our mission is to glorify God. That is why we exist. Our membership in this fellowship is all about our desire to individually glorify God through our corporate work and worship. At the root, no matter how we write it or say it, this will always be our mission. How do we accomplish this mission? I have discovered five overarching biblical principles that define how we can glorify God. As we look at these five principles, do more than simply hear the principles, envision in your mind what this congregation will look like when we are fulfilling them.

Discussion:

To glorify God we must...

- I. ... perform the work God has given us (**John 17:4**).
 - A. What work has God given us, His church? **I Timothy 3:15** explains that the church is the pillar and support of the truth. Our duty is to hold up the truth. Our job is to teach.
 - B. God is glorified when we are doing the work He has established for us. He is not glorified when we become distracted to do other work. If we become distracted with social concerns, welfare initiatives, political agendas, educational reform, recreational activities and entertainment venues we will no longer be glorifying God. We have to do God's work and we have to do God's work God's way if we are going to glorify Him.
 - C. Envision for a moment—what will the Franklin Church of Christ look like when we are fully fulfilling this principle for glorifying God? We will be full of teaching and working to get the gospel out. Members will be inviting people to worship and Bible classes. Christians will be conducting studies in their homes. We will be equipping people to teach the gospel of Christ in numerous settings. We will have assemblies, classes, workshops, special series, Bible schools, mail outs and all kinds of aspects of teaching and training, drawing non-Christians into Christ and drawing Christians closer to Christ. Certainly, we will always be on the lookout to provide for the material needs of our brethren. But first and foremost we will be about holding up the truth for all to see.
- II. ... teach the Father's will (**John 7:16-18**).
 - A. Jesus was not seeking His own glory, but the Father's. Therefore, as He taught, he simply taught what God had established. He did not develop His own teaching. Nor did He take the credit to Himself. He taught God's will and gave Him the glory for it.
 - B. There are already plenty of opinions floating around that men have developed about how God will deal with things. We do not need to weigh in with our opinions, we need to simply go to the word of God and proclaim His will. We need to be a people of the book that provide book, chapter and verse for what we do and teach.
 - C. According to **II Timothy 3:16-17**, God's word provides us with everything we need to be equipped for every good work. We do not need to make things up. We do not need to write our own creeds, handbooks or manuals. We need to simply teach the scripture.
 - D. Envision for a moment, what will the Franklin Church of Christ look like when we are fully fulfilling this principle for glorifying God? Each member will be devoted to the word and learning exactly what God has said so we will know what to teach. Christians will not wait on Bible classes and sermons to learn God's word but will be focused on learning all the time. Then we will not hold this learning inside but will share it with one another and with the world. Despite how others may view it, we will simply proclaim what God has said, unashamedly.
- III. ... bear fruit (**John 15:8**).
 - A. According to **John 15:1-10**, the only way we can bear fruit is to abide in Christ. The way we abide in Christ is by abiding in His teaching and keeping His commandments.
 - B. When we speak of bearing fruit, what do we mean? Most of the time, we immediately think of producing more Christians. In **Matthew 9:36-37**, Jesus referred to converting others as reaping the harvest. Certainly, producing other Christians is bearing fruit.
 - C. However, there is a more fundamental aspect of fruit bearing that we must also address. **Galatians 5:22-24** lists the fruit of the Spirit. That is, if the Spirit is in us and we are in the Spirit,

then we will bear these fruit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. As we bear these fruit, more Christians will come naturally.

- D. Envision for a moment, what will the Franklin Church of Christ look like when we are fully fulfilling this principle of glorifying God? What we will see is a congregation that is in a constant state of flux. No one will be staying the same. Rather, each of us will be growing in love, joy, peace, etc. Additionally, with each passing week, month and year others will be brought into the fold to also bear the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. We will not be filled with competition but rather recognize the point of the good soil in the Parable of the Sower (**Matthew 13:23**). The good soil produces from, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundredfold. We will not be caught up in who does more. We will simply be caught up in each of us doing what we can do.

IV. ... worship, honor and praise God in unity (**Romans 15:5-6**).

- A. Within **Romans 15:1-13**, we see that unity means we do not seek our own personal agendas. We do not demand our desires. We do not exploit our freedoms. Rather, we do everything from a mindset of accepting others and helping them live even in their weaknesses. That means we will sacrifice our own desires and freedoms in order to benefit others.
- B. This unity is to be around Christ Jesus. We are not allowed to come up with a semblance of peace and unity while sacrificing Christ's will. Rather, through perseverance, we must each get into Christ's word so we can be of the same mind (*cf.* **I Corinthians 1:10**).
- C. Further, this unity will enable us to glorify God with one voice. The use of the term "glorify" here refers specifically to our worship. One of the greatest hindrances to being able to glorify God is division among brethren. But unity draws us together helping us sing, pray, teach, share of our means and remember our Lord with one voice, glorifying God through our unified worship.
- D. Envision for a moment, what will the Franklin Church of Christ look like when we are fully fulfilling this principle of glorifying God? Do not think we will see no problems. We will always see problems. However, we will see problems anticipated and headed off at the pass. We will see problems dealt with quickly and overcome to the strengthening of brethren. We will see Christians sacrificing their own interests in order to help their brethren grow and maintain their good consciences. Further, we will see a devotion to worship as the congregation and each member wants to gather to glorify God together worshipping Him with one voice.

V. ... serve God and each other through our individual giftedness (**I Peter 4:10-11**).

- A. If we are going to glorify God, we will use the abilities God has given us to serve Him and others. In **I Peter 4:10-11**, Peter provides two examples—speaking and serving. Whether we have these abilities or others, we are to use them in such a way that God and His children are served, acknowledging God for our abilities and causing others to look to Him.
- B. **Romans 12:3-8** demonstrates this same principle. We each have different functions. God has blessed us all with different abilities. Instead of spending our time in arrogance because we think our abilities are better than others' or in complaining and jealousy because we think others' abilities are better than our own, we should simply spend our time glorifying God by using the abilities He has given us to serve Him and to serve His people.
- C. Envision for a moment, what will the Franklin Church of Christ look like when we are fully fulfilling this principle of glorifying God? We will look like a group of servants. Arrogance and pride will be removed. No one will be too good to use their abilities to serve others. Laziness will be absent from our midst. Priorities of service to others over our own desires will rule the day. Each member will grow in hospitality. The individual members will not wait for the church to organize a work to serve others; rather we will each do whatever we can, whenever we can, for whomever we can.

Conclusion:

We have a great mission. It is certainly a challenge. But we can do it. I know we can do it because we are not alone. According to **Ephesians 3:20-21**, the passage which assigns our mission, our God is able to do through us more than we can even imagine. God will help us accomplish our mission, we must simply commit ourselves to it.