

The Mission of the Contemporary Church

Essential Areas of Ministry:

1. Find more effective ways to evangelize.
2. Promote sound Christian Education Programs.
3. Seek ways to effectively minister to the elderly and the less fortunate.
4. Develop effective programs to counter the influence of a Media Complex which is not youth or family friendly.
5. Promote programs, which elevate the self-esteem of children and youth.
6. Teach young people to respect authority and encourage them to strive to do well academically.

1. Find More Effective Ways to Evangelize

The Church is given a mandate to evangelize to the world. Jesus says in

Matthew 28: 18-20 ¹⁸And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, **All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.** ¹⁹**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:** ²⁰**Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world.** Amen.

Leading men and women to salvation is the single most important function of the church. The bible teaches that there is a heaven and there is a hell and that men and women will spend eternity in hell with Satan or in heaven with Jesus. Eternity is forever, this why salvation and evangelism was a priority in the ministry of Jesus.

2. Promote Sound Christian Education Programs

The Contemporary Church needs to highlight Christian resources such as:

- A. **Spiritual Resources:** The God given resources, which are acquired through salvation, prayer, bible studies, fellowship, giving, witnessing and resistance to temptation.
- B. **People Resources:** Those who are trained in Christian Education, which include State and National Denominational Workers, Church and Community Leaders. All of the preceding people are excellent resources who can be called on to enhance a Christian Education Program.
- C. **Financial Resources:** Monies should be budgeted for Christian Education, Church and Youth Programs. It takes money to pay bills, buy materials, pay staff and repair the physical structure of buildings.
- D. **Material Resources Include:** Bibles, Concordances, Commentaries, Devotional Guides, and Christian Education Handbooks. Christian based material resources are essential to a sound Christian Education program. Students and teachers will achieve more in a shorter period of time when adequate resources are ready and available.
- E. **Equipment Resources:** Young people in the Contemporary Church are growing up in the high tech communication era. Equipment resources are a fact of life. When used properly equipment resources can enhance the teaching process, which adds to the effectiveness of the overall Christian Education Program.
- F. **Facility Resources:** Fellowship halls, recreation rooms, teaching classrooms and the overall Church structure are examples of facility resources. The lack of adequate facility resources can slow a Christian Education program. Churches that have adequate facility resources have a huge advantage over those who do not. Contemporary Churches should make adequate facilities a priority to increase the effectiveness of the Christian Education Program.

3. Seek Ways To Effectively Minister The Elderly And Less Fortunate

Ministry to the poor and less fortunate was a priority in the ministry of Jesus. There are many recorded scriptures, which highlight the compassion of Jesus.

Matthew 8:2-4

²And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. ³And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, **I will; be thou clean.** And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴And Jesus saith unto him, **See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.**

Matthew 14: 14-21

¹⁴And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. ¹⁵And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. ¹⁶But Jesus said unto them, **They need not depart; give ye them to eat.** ¹⁷And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. ¹⁸He said, **Bring them hither to me.** ¹⁹And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. ²⁰And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. ²¹And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children. 1

John 5: 5-11

⁵And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, **Wilt thou be made whole?** ⁷The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. ⁸Jesus saith unto him, **Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.** ⁹And immediately the man

¹*The King James Version*, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. ¹⁰The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed. ¹¹He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. ¹²Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? ¹³And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

All of the preceding scripture highlight the compassion Jesus showed to the poor and less fortunate. All believers should pattern their lives after Jesus and have the same concerns he had.

4. Develop Effective Programs To Counter The Influence Of A Media Complex Which Is Not Youth Or Family Friendly

- A. The church is faced with a battle for the hearts and souls of the youth and young people of this age. It is a battle that the church cannot afford to lose because the salvation of an entire generation is at stake.

Ephesians 6: 10-12 (KJV) says:

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

Satan is the prince and power of this world. He has produced a variety of new ways to entice the minds and hearts of young people and youth. He is doing it through television programs, internet sites, e-mails, the mass music and entertainment complex.

- B. The Contemporary Church must find ways to combat Satan in a more effective way. Believers need to find creative ways to captivate the interests of youth and children. For a start the right people must be placed in the right positions and the church must be led by the Holy Spirit. Churches are also encouraged to

aggressively invest money and time in the development of effective youth programs.

5. Promote Programs Which Elevates the Self-Esteem of Children and Youth

Ways to Enhance Self-Esteem:

- A. Teach youth about their heritage and background. Let them know the contributions and achievements of persons who share their personal heritage. Youth who know about their heritage tend to have a positive outlook, which translates, into social and academic success.
- B. Parents are encouraged to balance praise and criticism. Excessive praise or criticism can be harmful. Children need to be praised when they follow rules and guidelines and they should be given constructive criticism when they intentionally violate rules of conduct or fail to spend enough time doing their school work, home chores etc. Parents should be led by prayer and the Holy Spirit in knowing when to praise and when to give constructive criticism.
- C. Youth should be allowed to engage in wholesome recreational activities. Life is not all work and no play. Youth need to be provided opportunities to relax and have fun. Stress affects both the young and the old. Rest and relaxation tend to reduce stress.
- D. Youth are encouraged to live a healthy Lifestyle, such as:
 1. Avoid alcohol
 2. Avoid cigarettes
 3. Avoid illicit drugs
 4. Avoid sex outside of marriage
 5. Avoid homosexual acts
 6. Accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

Youth who follow these guidelines have an excellent chance of enhancing their self-esteem.

- E. Parents and the church community need to promote programs which address youths' spiritual needs through prayer, bible study and fellowship.

7. Teach Young People to Respect Authority and Encourage Them to do Well Academically

The church should work in cooperation with parents to train young people to respect authority. Youth are encouraged to honor their parents because long life is promised to those who honor their parents. Honoring authority should extend beyond honoring parents, for young people should also honor the institutions of the church, marriage, family and civil law. Respect also extends to school officials and other adults.

Failure to respect authority is a major problem. Respect for authority leads to blessings.

The contemporary church in cooperation with parents and the school system is faced with the challenge of encouraging students to perform well academically. Today's economy demands an educated work force. Those who do not have a college education, don't have a trade, or don't own their own business is at an extreme disadvantage in making enough money to support a family. There is an African proverb that says "It takes a village to raise a child." This is true in today's world.