



How Does the Church Function?

1 Peter 2:9-12

October 3, 2021

Pastor Mickey Klink

Introduction

In this sermon we explain the four responsibilities of the local church – every church’s job description.

The Text: 1 Peter 2:9-12

⁹ But you are a *chosen race*, a *royal priesthood*, a *holy nation*, a *people for his own possession*, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

There are four responsibilities (functions) that scripture assigns to every local church:

(1) The church functions as a Ministry of Presence (“a chosen race”).

Definition: Inhabit the local community with gospel intentionality as a holy temple in the Lord.

- Purity from (fortification)
- Defense against (domination)
- Relevance to (accommodation)
- Faithful presence within (incarnation)

(2) The church functions as Ministering Priests (“a royal priesthood”).

Definition: Serve as God’s ambassadors in the community and spiritual ministers in the congregation under the high priesthood of Christ.

- Corporate sense – priests among the nations
- Individual sense – priesthood of all believers
- Restricted sense – the office of pastor-elder

(3) The church functions as Ministering Pilgrims (“a holy nation”).

Definition: Oversee the congregation’s allegiance to Christ and his kingdom as the international and eschatological people of God.

(4) The church functions as a Ministry of Proclamation (“a people for his own possession”).

Definition: Administer the institutional forms of God’s covenant people for the work of the gospel.

- The preaching and teaching of God’s Word – Christ’s Prophetic office
- The administration of the Ordinances – Christ’s Priestly office
- The ministerial care and oversight of the Church – Christ’s Kingly office

Response

Every Christian needs to know and help fulfill the duties in their local church’s job description.

Sunday Text Questions for 1 Peter 2:9-12 (“I Will Build My Church” Series)

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- 1) Starter Question: What are the purposes and benefits of a job description?
- 2) Read the text aloud and discuss together any significant observations or issues needing clarification.
- 3) How do the four descriptions of the church in the first half of v. 9 help teach Christians about the identity and ministry of the church?
- 4) Which, if any, of those four descriptions are new to you or are especially important in your opinion?
- 5) How does v. 9 give every local church its job description?
- 6) What part of the church’s job description are you participating in faithfully? Which part of the church’s job description is more difficult for you?
- 7) How does God expect every disciple to live out their Christian life not only in the church but as part of the church’s ministry and mission?
- 8) Read Exodus 19:5-6. How can the apostle Peter use these descriptions to define the church when they were originally applied to the nation of Israel?
- 9) How does the second half of v. 9 explain the ultimate purpose of every local church?
- 10) What does v. 11 mean when it calls Christians “sojourners and exiles?”

Further study this week: Passages in the Old Testament that apply to the Church: Deuteronomy 7:6 (Mon); Deuteronomy 28:9 (Tues); Leviticus 11:44-45 (Wed); Deuteronomy 14:2 (Thurs); Psalm 33:12 (Fri).