

## GOD'S AGENDA AND THE CHURCH'S ROLE

God's agenda is the ultimate restoration of all things through Christ Jesus. He wants to bring transformation to people, communities, and nations today, through local churches. He wants churches to model now the future reign of Christ.



### **Role of the Church in Society:**

God's grand agenda is to restore all of His creation under Christ Jesus, and the church is the principal agent He is using today in that agenda. Christians often believe that God's only objective is to redeem the souls of mankind.

However, the Bible tells us it is much bigger. Just as all of creation experienced brokenness at the Fall, God's restorative agenda includes the redemption of all creation from its brokenness in the physical, spiritual, social, and wisdom arenas. God ordained the church to be the primary institution to accomplish this work prior to Christ's return.

How can the church serve as His agent of restoration? First, the people of the church must be given a clear and multifaceted vision of God's grand agenda. Second, they must be equipped by the church to represent and advance God's agenda in the spheres where they live and work. The church fulfills its role as it equips its people to move into all areas of society, doing works of service that advance God's agenda to restore all things to Himself.

### **Jesus' Model of Development:** Jesus is the model for all believers:

- According to Luke 2:52, Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, favor with God, and favor with man. In common terms, we can say that Jesus grew physically, spiritually, socially, and in wisdom. These four areas are useful for planning development in our individual lives, families, churches, and communities.
- Jesus grew toward the purpose God had for His life. Likewise, so should each believer.
- Conditions for Jesus' growth were adequate to reach God's purpose, but not affluent. Similarly, our development does not require affluence but adequacy.
- Jesus grew into a life of service, proclaiming as well as demonstrating the Good News. Each believer's life should in some way reflect this pattern.
- Jesus was a "development agent" for people with whom He came in contact. We, also, should be "development agents" for others—laboring, serving, and guiding others to God's intentions.
- The ideal human development can be summarized as "moving toward God's intentions in all areas of life."

**Kingdom Mathematics:** All believers are called to invest what they have in the work

of the Kingdom. Nobody is too insignificant or too lacking in talents or resources to be of use to God, because God Himself gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

All Christians have a "talent bank" of material and nonmaterial resources. It is not the size of our talent bank that is important to God. He is far more concerned that we make available to Him whatever is in our hand, whether we consider it large or small. In His wisdom, He has chosen to use us and our sacrificial, obedient giving. When we give God the little we have, He takes our weakness and turns it into strength. This truth can be stated as a formula: Our weakness plus God equals strength.

**God's Intentions for the Church:** Christ instituted the church to demonstrate His glory—to honor Him through loving obedience, letting our communities see God's full agenda by watching the church. To the degree that God's will is done on earth, heaven's conditions come to earth. God wills that we minister to people in every area of their brokenness. To the degree that believers disobey His intent, a wall is created that keeps the world from knowing God's good intentions for both the present and the future. The church should be a window in that wall, through which people see the full panorama of God's concern for the whole person and the whole of life.

The Word of God provides numerous illustrations of how He wants the church to serve Him:

- As a symbol of things to come (Zechariah 3:8)
- As an embassy of the Kingdom (John 17:18)
- As salt that purifies and as a lamp in the darkness (Matthew 5:13-16)
- As an obedient servant (Philippians 2:5-8)
- As a letter that can be read by all (2 Corinthians 3:2-3)
- As a good neighbor (1 Peter 2:12)
- As a first taste of something delicious (Romans 8:19)

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