



INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

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Entry 5 - 11

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The Seven Characteristics of a Bible Church

Jesus said, “I will build my Church.” It is therefore the responsibility of pastors, elders, deacons and saints to discover how He builds and to follow that design. Jesus’ design for church life is universal; it will work in any country and culture. If our plans do not work in another country then we are emphasizing a cultural design and not a Bible design. The scriptures give the characteristics of a Bible church. I have discovered 7 things that every church around the world should have. Before we begin, please understand that the Church is made up of people, not buildings and that each person in God’s church is connected to Christ in a personal way. A person on a membership list is not in Christ’s Church unless they are Christians. The Church is the community of the saved.

The 7 characteristics of a Bible church are goals that we pursue. As you go through this 7 point check list, you will see areas where your church is on target and some that need strengthening. I encourage you to strengthen those areas. If a church builds as Jesus builds they will receive Holy Spirit power and the blessings of heaven. Jesus gives the keys of His kingdom to disciples who believe that He is the General contractor of the Church (Mt. 16:16-19).

Here are the 7 Characteristics of a Bible church. We will explain each one individually.

- 1. All Believers Should Be Disciples of Christ**
- 2. The Church Must be a Family**
- 3. The Church is a People of Prayer**
- 4. Everyone Should Become a Minister**
- 5. We Care for Widows, Orphans and the Poor**
- 6. The Church is the Light of the World**
- 7. The Church Must Destroy the Devil’s Works**

1. All Believers Should Become Disciples of Christ

Being a believer does not mean that a person is sold out to Christ. Many will go to heaven even though they have not lived as disciplined disciples. Unless believers become disciples, however, they will not hear God clearly, nor serve Him well and they will not complete their destiny or receive the blessings that the Lord has for them and their families. We must teach people to worship the Lord not just with their singing, but with their lives. They must read and obey the scriptures, listen to the Holy Spirit and live a life of prayer.

2. The Church Must be a Family

Many families in this world are dysfunctional and so are many church families. The Bible teaches us to bear one another’s burdens, care for each other, respect the women as sisters and mothers and the older men as honored elders. We should be involved in the lives of other believers, including the unlovely in our circle of friends. We should help them in their difficulties, not gossip about them, but cover them. This is how we fulfill the law of Christ. Be a family.

3. A People of Prayer

Jesus said, *“My house shall be ... a house of prayer for all nations.”*
Mk. 11:17

Nothing of God happens on the earth unless someone prays. So the Church is commissioned to pray. The Bible teaches secret prayer, agreement prayer with 2 or 3, congregational prayer and apostolic prayer. Don't miss the first two types of prayer if you desire powerful congregational prayer and miracle releasing apostolic prayer.

4. Everyone a Minister

The church is a hospital and people come for healing but even the wounded must soon become ministers. This speeds up their own healing, for the power of God moving through them as they care for others will leave some healing power on the messenger.

Apostles, prophets, pastors, evangelists, and teachers must train the congregation to do what they do. Every mature Christian should have ministry anointing for every area of life. Each person has different power gifts and functioning in them brings purpose and fulfillment. It is the responsibility of every disciple to discover their

identity and calling. It is the responsibility of every church leader to help equip the saints to do the ministry. Both requires a lifetime of learning and instructing and giving.

5. Widows, Orphans and the Poor

“Pure ... religion before God ... is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” Js. 1:27

Every individual and every church should minister to the poor and needy.

While preaching at a poor church in Africa, I saw people with worn out clothes and no shoes sitting on wooden benches over a dirt floor. They placed food items on a cloth in front of the pulpit. An egg, an ear of corn, a handful of rice and a tied up chicken were some of the items on the pile. After I preached the pastor said “Thank you for your gifts for the needy. Now let us go and find someone who is more poor than we are so that we can give these things to them. Everyone must care for the poor and needy. Many blessings are held back because we fail to care for widows, orphans and the poor.

6. The Light of the World

Jesus said, *“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.”* Mt. 5:14

This mandate is 2-fold. It involves evangelism as well as being a prophetic voice in society.

Every believer is called to minister the love of Christ to their neighbors and to lead them to salvation. And the church should fight for godly morals in our schools, in the political arena and on main street. That is why we vote for someone who is pro-life, pro-family, pro-freedom and pro-Israel. We are the light of the world. We must shine brightly until Jesus comes.

7. Destroy the Works of the Devil

“The Son of man was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” 1Jn. 3:8

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil and He commissioned us to do the same.

“He ... gave them authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.” Lk. 9:1-2

It is one characteristic of a Bible church to cast out demons, heal the sick, break curses and set the captives free.

No church is perfect, but we want change. We want to build as Jesus builds. AΩ



Christians for
Messiah Ministries

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