

PURPOSE DRIVEN

The Code, Week Three

The **church** is in a bit of trouble right now...

- Dave Kinnaman estimates that 20% of churches will close in the next 18 months (that would be 60,000 churches in the US).
- Carey Nieuwhof estimates that one third of pastors are considering leaving their current positions or ministry altogether.
- Church engagement has decreased slowly for twenty years, but it's decreased drastically in the year 2020 because of Covid and politics.

My take?

First, I believe the church Jesus founded will last until he returns. (Matthew 16:18)

Second, I believe the church as we know it is being **pruned** and refined (John 15:5-8). Casual and cultural Christianity are becoming less of an option.

- If you're here for the show...
- If you're here for the tradition...
- If you're here to be perpetually cheered up...
- If you're here for sentimental reasons...

Then when things get tough and we walk through a season of suffering, ***but a church that is truly driven by God's purposes...***

PURPOSE DRIVEN

We are driven by purpose, not by programs, personalities, buildings, or budgets. We keep things simple.

Our goal isn't to be big. It's to be healthy.

The secret to being healthy is balance.

The easiest way to stay balanced is to keep things simple.

"A great commitment to the great commandment and the great commission will grow a great church." - Rick Warren

The Great Commandment...

Matthew 22:37-40 NIV

Jesus replied: " **'Love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: **'Love your neighbor** as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

The Great Commission...

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

Therefore go and **make disciples of all nations, baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything** I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- Worship - we gather together for praise and prayer.
- Evangelism - we tell the story of Jesus
- Fellowship - we connect with other followers of Jesus
- Discipleship - we grow together to become more like Jesus
- Ministry - we serve the world and each other

And we see this being lived out by the early church...

Acts 2:42-47 NIV

They devoted themselves to the apostles' **teaching** and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer**. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were **together** and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to **give** to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to **meet together** in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **praising God** and **enjoying the favor of all the people**. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

One big challenge... Think as much about the community around you as you do about your own interests and needs. Move beyond rugged individualism.

8 HABITS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

A healthy church gathers to offer praise to God.

The weekend event at the building isn't what defines us, but God shows up in powerful ways when his people get together to offer him praise.

A healthy church helps people become like Christ.

We keep it simple and make the pathway clear and help people take next steps and live a life of loving God and loving people.

A healthy church welcomes and loves everybody.

We see the image of God in all people and we create a safe space for people to explore who Jesus is and what he is all about.

A healthy church shares the good news about Jesus.

We stay focused on the gospel and keep Jesus at the center of our attention, our affection, and our devotion.

A healthy church walks in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit fills the church with all the power we need to fulfill the great commission and to bring healing to the lives of the hurting.

A healthy church cares for the most vulnerable.

We don't ignore suffering - we join it. We stand in solidarity with people who have suffered and we care, in practical ways, for the poor and the marginalized.

A healthy church keeps the focus on people.

We resist the magnetic pull of institutionalism. We don't want to create institutional machinery that requires constant maintenance.

A healthy church scatters to make a difference.

By nature, the church is a sending organization. We go out and we spread the love, the truth, and the joy of Jesus with everybody.