

Absolute Principles of The Work of God

Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

(John 4:34)

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Absolute Principles of the Work of God

Many brothers believe that there are several ways to do God's work. They believe that some can do in one way, some in another. Some do "discipleship", others large gatherings. Some do personal evangelism, others mass evangelism. Some do spiritual warfare, others Bible studies. Some others believe that God's works should be done with the combination of all these methods.

Those who make these claims, do not see anything else other than methods. That is the problem with the so called "discipleship". To many people it is just one more method. The method of discipleship usually involves gathering some brothers and give them the teaching of some booklet. Jesus did not command to make discipleship, He commanded us to make disciples. This method is not disposable, on the contrary, it is an unquestionable principle of God's work.

Some ask us if we believe that we have the correct "method". If we think that everyone should copy our way of doing the work. Others come to a point of accuse us that indeed it is what we think. There are still others who sincerely want to make disciples, and ask us to what extent they need to do it as we are doing. They want to know what things are indispensable and which can change according to the circumstances and the locality where they work. The goal of this study is to bring clarity to these issues.

Principles

Absolute

Practices

Relative

Methods or Principles?

We need to understand something basic. The methods are **relative**, but the principles are **absolute**. That is, the methods may change with time, place and circumstances, but the principles never change. The principles are unquestionable and permanent. Therefore, discover and practice these principles is fundamental in the work of God.

All our practices or methods must have originated from principles. No matter how many practices we have, or how these practices change, they must emanate from immutable principles.

Concerning these things, there is today a common misunderstanding: it is thought that only the goal is absolute in the work of God, but the strategy is relative. “What” God wants is absolute, but “The How” God wants is relative. What matters is the objective, but each one try to achieve it in the way that he understands. We affirm that **this is a mistake**. We can not do God's work in the way we want. God's objectives are sublime, are divine. He does not give us such a tremendous work saying “do as you wish”. That does not mean that he will give us details about the practices. But will guide us regarding the principles of the work, about “WHAT” he wants and “THE HOW” he wants.

Absolute Principles of the Work in General

1. The Eternal Purpose of God

No one can question Rom 8:28-29. If we want to cooperate with God, we have to work on that purpose. We can not work to: save a lots of people, fill the hall, keep them in the church, have a great and recognized job, etc. If we do not work like Paul (Col 1:28, Eph 4:13), we do not cooperate with God in a complete manner.

2. Jesus is our only landmark

We must not look only to Jesus Christ at the cross, at the resurrection, or at the throne. We must look to the Jesus worker, his way of operate, his strategy of action. Successful men, the recognized worldwide ministries, will not serve as a Landmarks. Unless to the point that they follow Jesus. See Mat 17:1-5, Heb 1:1-3.

3. The apostolic word is our only source of information

The Old Testament is useful (2Ti 3:16), but do not serves as a base. The O.T. contains shadows and figures (Col 2:16-17, Heb 8:5; 9:23; 10.1), but the New Testament contains the reality which is Jesus and the Church. If we were intending to build an earthly nation, we should seek the principles for such in the O.T., but the church is a heavenly nation (Eph 2:6, Heb 12:22), and the principles for its construction are in the NT (see also Gal 4:8-11).

4. The order of Jesus is that we must make disciples

(Mat 28:18-20)

To understand well what this work is, we have to go to the New Testament and see carefully:

- What was a disciple to Jesus (Luk 14:26-27; 14:33, Joh 8:31, 13:34-35, 15:8);
- How Jesus made disciples, what message he preached and what conditions were placed (Mat 18-19; 9:9; 19:16-22, Luk 9:57-62, 14:26-33);
- How he took care of his disciples (Mar 3:14, Joh 17, Mat 5:1-2).

5. The only preaching that makes disciples is the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom

We must know well the difference between the gospel of the kingdom and the gospel of offerings. If we preach salvation without the conditions of the discipleship, we will not be making disciples, but a gathering of people without commitment and submission to God.



We cannot consider the way of Jesus work, as something relative.

We must do it as he did it.

6. The strategy of God to fulfill his purpose is the service of the saints

If we do not fully understand Eph 4:11-16, we can either gather a lot of people, but we will never cooperate deeply with the purpose of God revealed in Rom 8:28-29 and Eph 4:13.

7. All recognition of the ministry must be on the fruit of the service (Mt 7:16)

There must be the fruit of lives reached, transformed, edified for someone to keep on growing in the ministry. In more traditional sectors of the church, the recognition comes through a theological course. In the sectors so called “renewed”, recognition is the charisma, or the eloquence in the teaching. In the NT times, the elders arose from within the church, and were recognized for their service and the righteous life (Tit 1:5-9).

8. Pastors and other leaders must be and do everything that they want the other disciples to be and do (Act 1:1; Heb 5:1-3)

Must be the example, not only regarding personal holiness, but also regarding to the service. They have to be relate in the joints and ligaments, to preach the gospel, to make disciples, edifying them, established churches in the households, etc.

9. All teaching and structure must be kept in simplicity (2Co 11:3)

We can not have a “package” too large. Paul gave the whole counsel of God for the Ephesians in just three years (Act 20:27). Jesus commanded us to observe all things (not the whole Bible). If the church is full of biblical intellectualism, and is always looking for novelties, will be very difficult to edify disciples. The novelty in the church is that love and obedience increase, and many get converted to the Lord.

10. Everything is done in the houses

See Act 2:46, 5:42; Rom 16:10,14,15, 1Co 16:15,19, Col 4:15.

The Holy Spirit led the church to the homes, not to make little meetings with prayer, singing and preaching, but to be all that the church should be (specially to develop the ministry of the saints). In large meetings with lots of people, you can not ordain the saints for their ministry. For that reason, we must to meet in homes, in small groups.

Specific Principles for the Home Groups

1. Let them be small groups

It is not always possible to keep the groups smaller as would like because of the slowness in forming new leaders. But we must make every effort in this direction, because with many people is very difficult to specifically supervise all the ministries in the group.

2. That everyone in the group understand what is the work of group

Must have a mind freed from the “meeting addiction”. They must understand that the main work is not the one done at the group meeting, however, is made throughout the week by all the group members (ie, companionship, evangelism in the streets, visits to contacts, the care with the disciples, the meetings with the disciplers, the meetings with the core group, leadership meetings, trips to the nearby cities, visits to brethren from other congregations, etc.).

3. That leaders be formed in everything that they must be producing in the groups

If someone does not have a solid experience of fellowship, evangelism, edification of the disciples and formation of new disciplers, how will they lead the group to have such experience?

4. Working by levels

Jesus is the model of the work, and he worked in levels (He had the crowds, the 500, the 120, the 70, the 12, and among them, Peter, James and John). For each level there is an intensity of accompanying. Each locality must pursuit the best way for distinguishing levels in the groups. The way we do that it is relative. But do not distinguish levels within the group, is leaving aside an absolute principle that we perceive in Jesus’ Ministry.

5. That the group meeting be full of participation

The disciples who make part of the group, not only must work during the week, but during the meetings they should participate with their prayers, testimonies from the work, etc.

6. Let there be work on the streets

Jesus spent most of his ministry in the streets. Even when edifying his disciples, he was in the streets. This created ample opportunity for constant evangelism. Fearful disciples, who always want to stay indoors, will hardly give continuity to the work. We must go out in groups, with a companion, with the disciples, with the more mature, with the whole group, in all the ways and in all the possible opportunities.