

HEALTHY CHURCH 3: PARTNERSHIPS AND DENOMINATIONS

THE BIG POINT TODAY: AT IMMANUEL...

- we have a responsibility to help grow other healthy local churches;
- we need other local churches to in order to maintain the health of Immanuel.

1. PARTNERSHIP: WORKING TOGETHER

“**Partnership**” (Greek: *koinonia* – “fellowship”) = loving, purposeful, committed, energetic, and sacrificial working together, for the cause of the Gospel.

(a) loving and giving (see Philippians 1:5, 1:7, 2:1, 3:10, 4:14)

Philippians 1:3-7, “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.”

Philippians 4:14-16, “Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. ¹⁶ Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again.

(b) church planting, needy Christians and prayer

Romans 15:22-33

- **Help for global evangelism and church planting**
- **Money for Christians in need**
- **Praying for gospel workers**

(c) Applications:

individual missionaries and churches... deeply committed to a few ... who are committed to the verbal witness of the local church... praying, giving, communicating... and going

2. DENOMINATION: BEING ACCOUNTABLE TO OTHERS

(a) Groups of congregations can also be described as a “Church”

Acts 9:31, “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.”

Acts 8:1, “And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”

Acts 15 – a council of “apostles and elders” (from several churches) deliver a “judgement” on behalf of “the church”

(b) An application: a regional denomination is a “church” – and is wise

The Church of England *is* a “Church”

The health of the local church should be helped by a faithful denomination – in disputes over doctrine and discipline, and in the selection, appointment and removal of elders.

“Independents” disagree

Types of denominations: e.g. Anglicanism/Episcopacy vs. Presbyterianism

Immanuel and the CofE...

FURTHER READING:

On mission and gospel partnership:

Andy Johnson, *Missions: how the local church goes global*
Kevin DeYoung, *What is the mission of the church*

On denomination and church government:

Guy Prentiss Waters, *How Jesus runs the church*