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Introduction

Why Our Church?

Experts disagree on the exact number. But one thing is sure. There are many Protestant denominations (churches) today. Hundreds, even thousands.

Which leads to such questions as, Why the Seventh-day Adventist Church? What is our purpose?

The answer is simple: God raised up this church to preach “present truth,” the three angels’ messages¹ of Revelation 14:6–12.

Yes, there are many churches around us and many with strong outreach and evangelistic² programs too. But, at last count, there is only one church that preaches the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14. That church is ours—and that is why we are here.

Our church may be doing many things. But, most important, we should try hard to lead as many people as we can into God’s eternal kingdom. We may call it “spreading the gospel,” “evangelizing the world,” or preaching “present truth.” But our real business is to tell the Jesus story so that people will accept Him as Lord and Savior and become His disciples (followers).

Most local churches are involved in many activities. And all of those activities are good and useful. But our challenge must be to make sure that we as a church work hard in reaching the lost with the “everlasting gospel” (Revelation 14:6).

Of course, we have modern tools such as TV and computers, but the work is huge (big). And when all the evangelizing is said and done, the work still is carried on by millions of volunteers inspired (filled) by a love for God and for lost souls. It is a love for those people whose sins Jesus accepted on the cross just as much as He accepted ours.

Each believer is personally responsible for evangelism³ and witnessing. But the whole group of Seventh-day Adventist believers (the church) has a group responsibility, too. Each member is to contribute to the evangelistic goals of the church. By working together we win many precious (important) souls for Christ. This is a very important point to remember. It needs to be done at the local church level. If not, it just will not get done.

In outreach work, understanding spiritual gifts also is important. It is impor-

1. three angels’ messages—doctrine (teaching) preached by the Seventh-day Adventists. It teaches that the Seventh-day Sabbath is to be faithfully kept in honor of the triune (Three-in-One) God, who is Creator and Redeemer (Savior), according to Revelation 14:6–12.

2. evangelistic—having to do with spreading the good news about Jesus to the world.

3. evangelism—the act of spreading the good news about Jesus to the world.

tant to encourage members to discover how they are spiritually gifted. And it is also important to give them opportunities to make use of those gifts. Church fundamental (basic) belief number 16 says, in part: “God gives spiritual gifts to all members of His church. Each member is to use them in loving ministry [work done for God] for the good of the church and of people. The Holy Spirit shares these gifts with each member as He chooses. And these gifts give all the abilities and ministries that the church needs to do and finish its God-given duties.”—*Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 2005), page 237, adapted.

An understanding of the gospel story and a personal connection to (relationship with) Jesus Christ will help people to work with the right spirit for saving souls. Evangelism and witnessing should be sparked by love, not by fear or guilt.

As with any study, this quarter’s lessons will help a person’s knowledge of the Bible to grow. That is fine. But the goal is not just for us to gain knowledge, no matter how wonderful the knowledge is. The goal is for us to use that knowledge for good. And the greatest good is to give those who face eternal loss the opportunity for eternal life.

That is the reason for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. What better one could there be?

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