

Ephesians 4:11-16

Introduction

- I. While on earth, Christ personally guided His disciples (John 14:25–26).
- II. After His ascension, he gave gifts unto men (Eph. 4:11–16).
- III. His church would grow, not by the wealth or the astuteness of members, but by spiritual means.
- IV. The church was not planted by human wisdom, brought into existence by human will, nor is it ruled by human authority.

Discussion

I. His Gifts To The Church (Eph. 4:11)

- A. Apostles were the ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20).
 1. They were eyewitnesses to the resurrection (Acts 1:21, 22).
 2. They were personally guided by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13).
 3. They left no successors (cf. Mormon “Council of Twelve”).
- B. Prophets were those under the immediate influence of the Spirit.
 1. A prophet both foretells and forth tells the truth (Acts 11:28).
 2. There were prophets in the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:10; cf. Acts 13:1).
- C. Evangelists are men who publicly proclaimed the gospel message.
 1. An evangelist is “a bringer of good tidings, an evangelist; this name is given in the NT to those heralds of salvation through Christ who are not apostles” (Thayer).
 2. Word (Gr. *euangelistes*) was only used in two other places:
 - a) “Philip the evangelist...” (Acts 21:8).
 - b) “Do the work of an evangelist...” (2 Tim. 4:4).
- D. Pastors and teachers refer to men who are elders (shepherds of the flock).
 1. “The omission of the article from teachers seems to indicate that pastors and teachers are included under one class” (Marvin Vincent).
 2. “Pastor” is the Latin word for shepherd.
 3. Early church was an island in a sea of paganism, and godly elders were there to shepherd the flock and protect it from harm.
 4. Their work was within the local congregation (Acts 20:28).
 5. Jesus is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14; 1 Peter 5:4).
 6. “Apt to teach” is a qualification (1 Tim. 3:2).

II. Reason For The Offices (Eph. 4:12)

- A. “The equipping of the saints” (Gr. *katartismos*).
 1. “The word is used in surgery for setting a broken limb or for putting a joint back into place” (Barclay).
 - a) Used in Mark 1:19 of men who were “mending their nets.”
 - b) Used in Gal. 6:1 of “restoring” a fallen brother.
 2. The basic idea is that of putting a thing into the condition it ought to be.
 3. “to prepare God’s people for works of service” (NIV).

- B. "For the work of the *ministry*" (Gr. *diakonia*).
 1. We are all ministers of God!
 2. We all have work to do.
 3. Service is the basic idea—it includes any service rendered to anyone needing help, whether physical or spiritual.
- C. "For the edifying of the body of Christ" (Gr. *oikodomeo*).
 1. Used in Matthew 7:24 concerning the wise man who "built" his house.
 2. Used in the sense of a plant, establish it where it is not known, enlarge its borders by bringing others into it by preaching the word.

III. The Result (Eph. 4:14–16)

- A. Christians become full grown, steadfast and no longer children.
- B. "Children" is almost always used as in "childish" (Heb. 5:13; 1 Cor. 3:1).
- C. Speaking the truth in love (seeking the others highest good).
- D. Grow up in Him (2 Peter 3:18; Heb. 5:14).
- E. Growth of the body by each member doing his share (1 Cor. 12:12–20).

IV. How Will This Be Accomplished Here?

- A. Through the wisdom of men?
 1. By the "social gospel"? No!
 - a) We are not losing young people because we have too few parties, but because we have failed to teach them the will of God and then live by what we have taught.
 - b) The home is the center of social activity (1 Cor. 11:20–22).
 - c) There is good derived by associating with Christians (1 Cor. 15:33).
 2. "The conviction obtains that in far too many instances today, brethren are leaving the word of God to serve tables, thus reversing the order of the apostles (Acts 6:2). In such instances the study has become the office and the preacher a religious bell-boy. Should he be inclined to demur, knowing in his heart that such prostitutes his proper mission in life, he is informed that times have changed and that he must adjust himself 'or else.' The 'or else' too often becomes the deciding factor and another preacher graduates into an ever increasing number of men, no longer with the time nor the disposition to give themselves to the ministry of the word and prayer." (Guy N. Woods, *Gospel Advocate*, Dec. 6, 1979).
- B. Through the preaching of the gospel (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:1–5).
 1. The Equipping of the Saints.
 - a) Sermons.
 - b) Bible classes
 - c) Tracts.
 - d) Bulletins.
 - e) Home Bible studies.
 - f) Our tape, video and book Library.

2. For the Work of the Ministry.
 - a) On the job training—home studies with your friends.
 - b) Pass out tracts to answer their questions.
 - c) Mail our bulletins to your friends, and then ask them about what they read.
 - d) Encourage and embolden you by public debates with false teachers.
 - e) We are commanded to go and teach (Matt. 28:18-20), not just invite other to worship services.
3. For the Edifying of the Body.
 - a) In depth studies will produce mature Bible class teachers
 - b) Elders and deacons are needed to make the congregation complete.
 - c) The young people need to see good examples from their elders.

Conclusion

- I. When brethren are at peace and are edified, they will be multiplied (Acts 9:31).
- II. Are you doing your part for the growth of the church?