

Equipping the Saints | Ephesians 4:11-16

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Equipping the Saints

1. Spiritual gifts

- a. "But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."
(Ephesians 4:7)

2. Church leadership

- a. Apostles & Prophets
- b. Evangelists
- c. Shepherds & Teachers
 - i. "About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil." (Hebrews 5:11-14)

3. The saints equipped

- a. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)
- b. "Your life is much bigger than a good job, an understanding spouse, and non-delinquent kids. It is bigger than beautiful gardens, nice vacations, and fashionable clothes. In reality, you are part of something immense; something that began before you were born and will continue after you die. God is rescuing fallen humanity, transporting them into His kingdom, and progressively changing them into His image and He wants you to be a part of it." (Paull Tripp)

Edifying the Saints

1. Unity

- a. "...eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:3)
- b. "I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." (John 17:23)

2. Christlikeness

- a. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5:22-24)
- b. "We are to imitate children in their humility and innocence, but not in their ignorance and instability. Immaturity is evidenced in instability, rootlessness, lack of direction, doctrinal indecision, and susceptibility to manipulation and error. At the heart of childish immaturity is the lack of theological discernment." (Andrew Lincoln)

3. Truth

4. Love

- a. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient..." (1 Corinthians 13:1-4a)