

The Growth of the Body

Ephesians 4:11-16

Introduction

1. Many Christians are not growing, many churches are not growing. Why?
2. People not doing their part.
3. The Lord designed the church so that it will grow when every part does its share.

Discussion

I. The Lord's Gifts (Eph. 4:11-12)

- A. Apostles and prophets in the New Testament Scriptures (Eph. 3:4-5)
- B. Evangelists: Proclaimers of God's word.
- C. Pastors and teachers: feed the flock, guide, protect, teach on continual basis.
- D. All meant to equip, put tools in the hands of the saints (Eph. 4:12).

II. The Lord's Purpose (Eph. 4:13-15)

- A. The Lord has a purpose for everything.
- B. The result of His pattern: when saints are using the tools that Jesus gives them.
 1. Unity of faith
 2. Unity of knowledge
 3. Perfect man
 4. Comes to the fullness of the stature of Christ (be as He is)
 5. Not foolish and ignorant as children (Prov. 22:15)
 6. Firmly grounded in truth, against false doctrine (Col. 1:23).
 7. Speak the truth in love
 8. Grow up in Christ (all be as that described in Eph. 4:1-6)

III. Our Responsibility (Eph. 4:16).

- A. Many want to put responsibility on others.
 1. "It's the preacher's job. That's what we pay him for."
 2. I don't feel comfortable, not confident, let someone else do it.
 3. I don't have time.
- B. God places the responsibility on us: "...every part does its share"
 1. He gave leaders to equip the saints.
 2. But it is up to the saints to use those gifts to grow.
 3. Why do congregations not grow?
 - a. Not because God's word is weak, not because God's pattern is flawed.
 - b. But because the individual members of the body are not doing their part: they do not pay attention, do not seek first the kingdom, **THEY DO NOT TAKE GOD SERIOUSLY!**
- C. If we are going to grow, we must learn to do our part: make God more than a pastime, learn to love Him with all of our heart, soul, mind, for this is the greatest command (Matt. 22:37).

Conclusion

1. The Lord's church is a body (1 Cor. 12:20, 27). If some of the members of the body are not functioning as they ought to, the body is handicapped.
2. If you are not doing your part as a member of that body, you are causing the Lord's body to be handicapped. Jesus says to cut such a one off (Matt. 5:29, 30; Matt. 7:19-20).

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