

HELPING ONE ANOTHER GROW UP

Ephesians 4:12-16

1st implication of what God's done for us:

walk in unity. 4:1 "WALK in a manner worthy of the calling to which you've been called."

Unity in the body of Christ 4:1-6

By God's design, the church has unity.

We're one. We have common roots & common faith.

Diversity in the body of Christ 4:7-11

Within our unity there's diversity of functions.

When Christ came & defeated enemy, He returned from battle to distribute gifts to His followers.

As church uses gifts, we help each other grow up.

Unity of purpose in diversity of gifts 4:12-16

Gifts are diverse but function together to build up the whole body.

Total picture: when each part does its part, the church grows and prospers

Like physical body...

All parts work together under direction of head.

All parts help each other & body makes progress.

Purpose for gifts 11-12 *"He gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds & teachers, ¹²to equip saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ"*

2 purposes for giving gifted people to church:

1) To equip all God's people to serve Him

Who should do work of ministry?

Not the pastors! Not the elders!

No job we pay other people to do

Not job of staff/leaders to do work of ministry for us!

In most churches 20% of people do 80% of work!

Gifted people are called to equip *all* God's people for ministry—build up entire body so we *all* serve Him.

Ministry at Calvary is *ALL* of our ministry!

At Calvary **about 80% involved in some ministry!**

2) [2nd purpose] To build up the entire body.

We all add something to each other; it's done by whole church helping each other grow up.

Completion of process How long will this go? **13**

"Until we all attain to the unity of the faith & the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"

3 goals: Process isn't finished until we all...

1) Reach unity in faith in the knowledge of Christ

2) Reach maturity (NOT perfection = **grown up**)

3) **Become completely Christlike**

When gifted people function as God desires His people to function, the body develops Christlike character.

Process continues 'til we *all* become totally Christlike—

—united in faith —grown up —just like Him

Until then, our job isn't done!

Results of Process 14-16 “So that we may no longer

be children, tossed to & fro by the waves & carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by crafti-ness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵*Rather, speaking the truth in love, we're to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,* ¹⁶*from whom the whole body, joined & 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.*

2 results achieved:

1) We will stop being childish

Opposite of being grown up is to be childish.

Difference between being childlike and childish

To enter God's kingdom we must become childlike. —reference to trust & dependence on God

Childish looks at instability; children change minds quickly & easily— “I'll never play with you again!”

Children chase fads: beany with propeller, slinky, hula-hoop. Adults are *supposed to* outgrow fads.

Yet adults jump from theological fad to fad—instead of standing on rock—God's Word.

We pursue experience; or whatever feels good!

Christ's purpose in giving gifted people to the church: help believers develop from babyhood to maturity.

When we reach maturity...

No longer tossed back & forth by the waves.

No longer carried away by every wind that blows our way.

Mature Christians aren't taken in by every religious novelty that comes along.

When body functions rightly, we stand firm on truth

—not our experience —not our opinions

God has spoken; we have to know what *HE* says!

Functioning spiritual gifts results in stability.

—knowing what we believe & why.

—not gullible—subject to ideas that blow our way

2) [2nd result] We'll grow up

When body functions properly parts work together so each develops as God planned.

2 evidences body's working properly:

1) **"Pulling together" as part of body of Christ**

Isolated Christians can't minister to others.

We should be functioning, cooperating part

2) **Love between members of body of Christ**

We care about each other enough to tell truth in love!

We care too much to let people go down wrong path.

We care too much to let people stay as they are!

Florida church held ground breaking service. Instead of shovels, they brought old plow, borrowed a yoke; 2 strong men were hitched up. 2 couldn't pull plow. Bldg Comm took rope; plow didn't move. Officers added, SS teachers; still plow didn't move. Finally *every member* took hold. With *every member* pulling together, plow moved & ground was broken.

Every member of the body has a part to play

As each part fulfills its part, body grows together & becomes all God wants it to be.

Servant magazine: Lady approached me in store: "I left your church. You want to know why I left?" "You weren't meeting my needs".

I answered, "Did you ever tell anyone what your needs were?" She couldn't recall so I raised another question. "If 500 people in church have that attitude, how are anyone's needs going to be met? Who will do need-meeting?"

She demanded, "Then tell me who will." "This is what will work: when people stop saying, '**They**'re not meeting **my** needs' & start saying, "Whose needs can **I** meet?' needs will be met; people will minister to each other."

Every member of the body has a part to play

Elders role: help us all discover our part & get involved in serving God as part of His body.

If you don't know where *you* fit, talk to elder or staff.

When we understand our role, we should all get involved!