

## Building up the Church! I Cor.12:28-31//Eph.4:1-16

We have been talking about the church, the church belongs to Christ because he bought it; He is its founder. Last week we talked about the church as the body of Christ, every person in the church has a part to fulfill. A role to play.

Christ has said that he would build his church. (Matt.16:18). **How did Jesus begin to build his church?** By giving leaders to the church. These leaders are gifted by him to accomplish his purposes.

In **1 Cor.12:27-30** we hear about leaders God has given his church.

**God has appointed these leaders in the church.**

*Apostles*

*Prophets*

*Teachers*

*Miracles, healing, helping, administration, various kinds of tongues.*

These are gifts (there is a diversity of gifts in his body). God has given them the church in order to build it up.

The church started with the preaching of the apostles during the day of Pentecost. Acts 2. As the church continued to expand we hear about prophets, and teachers as well as the manifestation of these gifts. **When God gives you a gift, he expects you to use it so his church can be built up.**

**Why did God appoint leaders and give gifts to his church?**

**Eph.4:1-16** In this passage we have a similar list of gifts.

**What is God's purpose in gifting people in his body, the church?**

*-Apostles*

*-Prophets*

*-evangelists*

*-shepherds (pastors)*

*-Teachers*

**-For equipping the saints (the church) for ministry.**

The word equip means (prepare, bring to a condition of fitness). Equip the church to do ministry, service. The saints are to do the work of service and the leaders are the coaches, the ones providing the training. *Illustration: sports, fitness workout, marathon. Equipping and training always takes place in order to build the team to be the best.*

**-For the building of the body.** This training is done for the building up of the body of Christ. To edify the church of Christ.

**So the church would reach maturity (v.13) The outcome of building the church is**

**maturity.** (v.13). until we all attain unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. A sign of someone growing or maturing in Christ is unity in the faith and in the knowledge of Jesus. The first Christians were one in their beliefs; they were one in what they knew about Jesus. Peter encouraged the church to continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus. ***2 Pet.3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to him be glory both now and forever. Amen***

### **This maturity is to the fullness of Christ!**

**Christ's church is to continue to grow to the standard of Christ.** (The full measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ). God's people are to be like Christ. We have been called to be patterned in the image of Christ **Rom.8:29**. The church is to represent Christ on earth, then it must live like Christ, attaining to the full measure of Him.

Some people say, when I grow up I want to be like this person or that one. *Players imitate and develop their game patterned by other players. Examples Kobe looks a lot like Jordan in his style of playing. Kobe developed his game to the measure of Jordan.* The church, you and I are to grow to be like Christ on this earth. He is the pattern you and I are aiming in our maturity.

### **The sign of a mature person: (v.14-16)**

-**Stable faith.** No longer be children tossed back and forth by waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching.

-**Speak the truth in love and continue to grow in every aspect into Christ, the head of his church. (v.15).**

When the body is attached to Christ, united with him, then the parts of the body are working together. This will cause the body to grow as it continues to be built up in love.

Unity with Christ and with one another, as we do the work we have been called to do will cause the church to continue to be built up. ***Christ is building his church through you and me.***

Christ said he will build his church and he gave gifts to his people to equip/train members of the church to do ministry; Christ's purpose in doing this is that his people reach maturity displayed in unity and knowledge of him; also in portraying an unshakeable faith. **How mature are you in your faith?** He wants you to continue to grow in unity, love and knowledge of Him. ***The church is where God placed gifted leaders to help you cultivate your gifts, grow your faith and develop you into a mature disciples of Jesus Christ.***

This is another reason why the church matters!