

## Building up Christ's Church

Eph.4:11-16

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When a church closes its doors or no longer functions as a beacon of light for Jesus; it makes me wonder upon which foundation was such church built. When Jesus said he would build his church, he also made the promise that it will transcend time, not even the forces of evil will overpower it.

The church began with the preaching of the apostles and prophets, as Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. **(Eph.2:19-20)**

Paul tells us that in building his church Christ gave gifts to men to train or equip the saints (church)

***Christ gave these to the church.***

***Apostles*** (Those sent on a mission)

***prophets*** (preachers, God's communicators)

***evangelists*** (the sharers of good news, ability to lead others to Jesus)

***pastors*** (shepherds, elders): those who guard, care and protect the flock

***teachers***: those who give instruction from God's word.

*-These are given **to equip** the church, (saints) for the work of service (ministry) for **the building up** of the body of Christ.*

**Christ's church is being built as everyone is prepared and empowered to serve or minister:** the word equip in this context has the idea of bringing someone to a condition of fitness. This is what a trainer or coach do, they don't do the work for you, they show you how to do it and empower you to do it. *The church is not being built up if the people are not being trained and empowered to use their gifts in serving God. The church can't be built up if its members do not see themselves as ministers, servants.*

**How did Jesus train his apostles?**

Jesus trained the twelve through **modeling, giving them instruction** and **empowering** them to do what he'd trained them to do. He showed them how and then **released** them to multiply themselves in the world.

This training and equipping of the church (saints) will go on for a while.

Until.....we all reach **unity in the faith** and **in the knowledge of Jesus Christ**.

-Until we reach **maturity** (to become more like Jesus): Attaining to the fullness of Christ (measuring up to the standard of Christ)

Then **(So that)**.....We won't be infants (immature) in the faith

-We won't be swayed and deceived by false teaching (we won't be unstable Christians)

Instead..... *We will speak the truth in love and continue to grow in Christ (meaning to continue to be attached to him)*

-We will continue to build his church by doing our part within the body. The body is healthy when all its parts are working properly. The church is built up when each member does his part. When its members utilize their gifts and abilities. This is how Jesus keeps on building up his church today, through you and me.

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