

**Life in the Body Ephesians 4:11-16 The Body and Disciple-Making 7/2/24**

1. What is the Church?
  - a. Ephesians 2:20, “having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*,”
    - i. Christ is the Cornerstone of the church. He is the author and founder, and leader of the church.
    - ii. Apostles and prophets are the foundation of the church. Once the foundation is laid, you begin to build upon that foundation.
  - b. 1 Cor 12:12-20 - the body of Christ

“For even as the body is one and *yet* has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For also by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For also the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot says, “**Because I am not a hand, I am not *a part* of the body,**” it is not for this reason any the less *a part* of the body. 16 And if the ear says, “Because I am not an eye, I am not *a part* of the body,” it is not for this reason any the less *a part* of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? **If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has appointed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.** 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many members, but one body.”

    - i. We need to see that when we are not growing spiritually or in a pattern of sin, it is not just affecting myself, but the whole body. And when we are in a state of growth and maturity, that too affects the rest of the body.
    - ii. The church is the means and method by which God has designed for us to grow into Christlikeness. And we see this a little more clearly stated in Eph 4:11-16.

2. Ephesians 4:11-16

“And He Himself gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming, 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *that is* Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being joined and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the properly measured working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

a. V. 11

- i. Evangelists, pastors, and teachers are to equip all believers to do the work of ministry.
- ii. Pastors are also called to shepherd the flock and to equip the flock to make disciples who will continue this pattern (1 Tim 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5:1-2).

b. 6 Reasons why Preaching is to be Held in the Highest Regard in the Church

- i. Christ prioritized preaching throughout His ministry.
- ii. Biblical preaching is to be a regular fixture in all churches (1 Tim 4:16, 2 Tim 4:2).
- iii. Preaching was the priority of the early church (Acts 2:46).
- iv. God commands pastors to preach (2 Tim 4:2).
- v. God’s kind of preaching is to continue despite cultural approval or lack thereof.
- vi. God intentionally designed preaching as His primary method of making truth known.
  - 1. Not only the message but the method
  - 2. Designed to be offensive

- vii. God's priority of preaching indicates it is sufficient and powerful to bring about the needed change and restoration of the human soul.
  - 1. Meaning that God's Word is the sufficient source of change and transformation of the heart.
  - 2. What is a critical implication of this for those of us who don't preach?
  
- c. V. 12-13
  - i. All believers in the church, since we are all a part of the body, are to be equipped toward the work of ministry.
  - ii. How are we equipped?
    - 1. Preaching
    - 2. Reading books
    - 3. Being discipled
    - 4. Discipling others
    - 5. The avenues of equipping we have set up: CDBC, Entrust, ladies Bible study, Sunday equipping classes, etc...
  - iii. Which also means that every Christian must have a ministry. We are placing ourselves in the avenues of equipping so that we can have a ministry and make disciples.
  - iv. The work of service is for the purpose of building up the body of Christ.
    - 1. To a greater image of Christ/Christlikeness
    - 2. To be more useful to each other as we too are growing in Christlikeness
  - v. The goal for every believer is to be fully Christlike, which will not happen until glorification.
  - vi. Therefore, discipleship always continues.
  
- d. V. 14
  - i. One of the goals of disciple-making is that we are no longer tossed around/carried away by every false doctrine and man-made ideas.

- ii. We are to be stabilized in biblical truth by growing in biblical discernment. We are not led astray by false teachers and teachings, even within the church (Acts 20:28).
  - iii. We are to be mature and grow out of spiritual childhood. Kids are easily offended, moody, self-consumed, not thinking of others, and flaky. As believers, we are to be growing into spiritual adulthood.
- e. V. 15
- i. “Truthing in love” is the ability to speak the truth, to administer the truth in a loving way.
  - ii. 1 Thess 5:14, “We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.
  - iii. Mark 6:34, “When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.”
- f. V. 16
- i. The result of all this is that the body of Christ is held together:
    - 1. By Christ as the head
    - 2. By equipped members working healthily and maturely putting themselves in the avenues of getting equipped.
    - 3. By submitting to the teaching of the Word.
  - ii. The local church is how Christ’s call for discipleship is fleshed out.
- g. Suggested Application
- i. Set a time to get together with another member from Cornerstone to 1) share what the Lord is teaching you, how you are seeing your sin, 2) ask them where they see they need to grow, 3) gently give them an encouragement or admonishment to grow in an area you have seen they are not yet perfect.
  - ii. Meet with someone who you know needs a gentle admonishment to repent of a particular sin they keep holding on to. Do not merely point out their

sin, but help them come up with a plan to repent. If you do not know how to do that, ask someone!

- iii. Meet your GC leader or one of the others to get more equipping on how to make disciples.
- iv. Take our counseling class which is designed to help you intentionally make disciples.
- v. Ask someone who is more mature than you to disciple you. Take the things that you are learning from that time and find someone who is maybe less mature than you to disciple them with the things you are learning. Again if you're not sure who then ask you GC leader.
- vi. Take notes on Sundays during the sermon. Later on during the week review the notes, find some ways to apply what you're learning, and meet with somebody to help them do the same thing.
- vii. Read books on theology, the person and work of Christ, anything by the Puritans, counseling and discipleship, and summarize what you are learning with the people you're meeting with.
- viii. Share with people on Sunday and at GC's what you're learning and how you're growing. Ask them how they are being challenged to grow and repent of sin. Ask them what character qualities of Christ do they see they need to continue to grow in.

h. Excuses that we often make in not making disciples

- i. Fear of man
  - 1. Fear that speaking truth will alienate you and people won't like you.
  - 2. This may be true, but we need to be willing to be faithful and speak truth in love to people so that they may see their sin more clearly and grow in maturity.
- ii. Someone else can disciple them
- iii. It's the job of pastors and elders to do this.
- iv. I am not a GC leader or elder.
- v. It's just too much for me.
  - 1. 2 Cor 2: 15-16, "For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16

to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is sufficient for these things?”

2. It is too much for everyone. It is overwhelming at times. It is difficult and it takes up time, energy, and resources.
  3. But we do it not by our strength but by the Lord’s.
  4. Col 1:28-29, “Him we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.<sup>29</sup> For this purpose I also labor, striving according to His working, which He works in me in power.”
- vi. I don’t know how. Two ways we can remedy this:
- a. Getting equipped – putting yourself in the avenues of equipping. We do this in other areas of life.
  - b. Actually do it.
- vii. Who am I to confront? I still sin and struggle.
- Rom 15:14, “But I myself am also convinced about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, having been filled with all knowledge and being able also to admonish one another.”
- viii. I haven’t been saved very long/Lack of assurance of your own salvation.
1. No matter how long we have been saved, or how we may struggle with knowing if we are saved or not, we are still called to make disciples.
  2. Matt 28 doesn’t give us excuses to not obey that command.
- ix. I don’t have time
1. “I have young kids, so...”
  2. “My job is hard and demanding, so I don’t have the time...”
  3. When we read church history, it is incredible to think about all the things these faithful men and women accomplished without all the modern devices that we have.
  4. While we may have less time to disciple others, we still have time. We just need to become better stewards of our time. Meeting with people before work, on lunch breaks, over the phone while driving, etc. Being more intentional with our time.

- x. It doesn't need to be formal – so I don't do it or spend time trying to do it.
- xi. Thinking of yourself too highly so that you don't consider others as important enough to pour out.
- xii. Trying to save the lost so I am trying to be a friend to the lost. Being friends with the world but never confronting them in their sin, not living holy before them.
  - 1. James 4:4, 'You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world sets himself as an enemy of God.'
  - 2. At times for the sake of what we call evangelism, we are compromising. We may call it trying to reach the World but we were becoming like the world and not making disciples at all. Either with evangelism or in sanctification. We must not make excuses for indulging the flesh and doing things that are either explicitly sin or maybe even not sin but are great hindrances to our own sanctification and the sanctification of others around us.
- xiii. I don't want to play the Holy Spirit in their life.
  - 1. "It's not my job to judge them and point out areas where they may need to grow."
  - 2. Gal 6:1-2, "Brothers, even if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, *each of you* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."