

THE EQUIPPING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12For the perfecting (Strong’s #2677, maturing complete furnishing, equipping into selflessness) of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (Ephesians 4:11-12)

1. We see God’s great objective brought out in Ephesians 4. The Spirit and even all of the personality gifts relate to the edification of that unique strange mystical group of people the – Body of Christ.
2. I am so glad all direction in is the Head – Christ. Here is my body, God does not expect my hands to be my brains. He expects them to serve what my mind directs. When we get over into thinking the church is a building, ministry, or organization we also can forget Christ is the Head of the Body and therefore there should be nothing originating in us; only receptivity to perform and do that which is actuated and directed from the Head.
3. We run around doing things for God maybe that is why we often are feeble in our approach to God with our mind or emotions instead of knowing how to live from the Living Head. We try to produce what we think the Head wants to produce, but the Head wants to make the program. He only asks us to function as members, not as the Head.
4. It seems to take us a long time to find this out. We are so used to directing from our own natural self – our own head directing what our body is to do. All direction; all programs anything that is worthwhile at all must originate in God.
5. God must have us the Body through whom He executes and moves upon the earth. What a great burden that would take off of our hearts and lives if we could ever believe and learn this central truth.
6. The Churches in the Book of Revelation have a work complex, instead of a worship (bow our head to the ground) complex. We must stop shoving the Body of Christ out into the world with artificial objectives such as: trying to bring the world to the Lord, clearing up politics, and getting everything ship shape. Where did that come from? From religious traditions of denominational doctrines of men.
7. It is not about doing something for God but about becoming something in God. So, in the Body of Christ, it is easier to do programs and activities than to abide, evolve, and become. God is after us becoming like His precious Son Jesus Christ.
8. The Body is made of raw material; redeemed humanity. God’s emphasis is upon building a Body, and not upon redeeming the world. He has placed the personality gifts there, “FOR the perfecting of the saints, FOR the work of the ministry, FOR the edifying of the body of Christ:”
9. The equipping of the Body is so that the Body can mature and grow spiritually, “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Ephesians 4:13-14)
10. Coming into “the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” is our objective in this life. Make no mistake this objective is God’s

objective and reaching it will kill us dead spiritually, but that is okay this is another objective of God, us dying so that He may live. 11. John shares Jesus' words, "Verily, verily (another double imperative), I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. 25He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." (John 12:24-26) Where are we going? The same place His Father took Jesus, to His death!

11. There is no greater work in our life than us falling into the ground and dying to our selfishness and self-seeking for when we lose our life (our desires, our emotions, our plans, our life) God can now live through us.. Our spiritual death is God's opportunity to life. If we lose our life for His sake we shall find eternal life. God equips the Body of Christ not to live, but to die. How much faith do we need? Just enough to believe God can raise us (like Jesus) from the dead.

12. Experiencing loss in our lives is a great teacher. Our gain in God is measured in our loss. How much of the world and self can we lose? At that same measure of loss so is the gain in God we experience no more no less.

13. "The unity of the faith" is not worked in the Body by coming together to eat or fellowship, we have prayer breakfasts that will never develop unity with the Body of Christ, but all enduring the same hardships, persecutions, tribulations (with the same heart condition) and the like will develop unity within the Body of Christ. The loss is the common denominator, now we have something in common on which God can begin to build His character in us, our loss.

14. As we come into "the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:" We will be able to function and operate as God does, flow with the Spirit and each other. We will be able to become correctly fitted into the Body of Christ and take our place where God has ordained us to fit in to support the over all structure locally and globally. We will be able to, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:15-16)

15. We will be able to "speak truth in love" and not lies, guile, and deceitfulness. We will be able to grow up and not be a baby needing the milk of the word.. Paul shares these word to "those in Italy" perhaps Rome, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:12-14)

16. We will be able to give God a return on His investment in us. Did you know God is looking for a return on His investment in us? Not in money. He owns the cattle on a 1000 hills and the hills, but God is looking for a return in our giving to other as He gave His Son. Giving is at the heart of the Gospel. And we will experience eternal life now on earth, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) We – the Body of Christ will not have to wait to experience heaven, we can have heaven on earth now.