

Monday, 24 August 2015 Ephesians 4:11-16 [1]

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and 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.

Yes, the "five-fold ministry" is one of the foundations of the promulgation of the faith, but when we restrict our thinking to those areas, we do our ministry serious damage. 1 Peter 2:9 indicates that we are all in this together; each of us is to participate in the process of attaining to the measure of the stature of fullness of Christ. This is what JI Packer often refers to in his writings as the every-man ministry. Each one is to be part of the building up of the body of Christ.

Interestingly, we can't do this as a loner Christian. The obedient saint, rolls his shirtsleeves up and asks the Spirit to assign his chores for the day.

Tuesday, 25 August 2015 Ephesians 4:11-16 [2]

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and 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.

Another area where the every-man ministry is crucial: How am I going to grow out of immaturity without the example and mentoring of those who have gone before? I not only need the teaching of those in the five-fold ministry to guide me in theological issues, I need the counsel and admonishment of

brothers who are called to live out their lives in situations similar to my own, to help me apply my faith on the ground.

Wednesday, 26 August 2015 Ephesians 4:11-16 [3]

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and 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.

A beautiful picture of what will and does happen through obedience to the principles of this passage. This is a picture of the Church triumphant. But it also encourages us to seek the Spirit for bringing the Word to bear in building a perfectly functioning Body that glorifies the Lord in every aspect of its ministry--all of life.

Thursday, 27 August 2015 Ephesians 4:17-24 [1]

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Here is another interesting teaching where I have glossed over the use of the present tense in that first sentence. I think that Paul is addressing the reality that I need to continue the transformation. The obedient life is one of continuous examination to determine where and how I need to repent and seek the Spirit's guidance.

Friday, 28 August 2015 Ephesians 4:17-24 [2]

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the

*Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. **But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.***

There is a huge assumption here--that we teaching the truth regarding the life of a disciple of Jesus Christ to those whom have been given to us. We often complain about the weak witness of the Church and its tendency to blend in with the culture, but the culpability lies with those who are called to teach and minister.

Am I teaching and living the truth as testimony to all in my [Personal Mission Field?](#)

Saturday, 29 August 2015

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Another directive--I am to speak truth, not just some of the time but all the time. I am not allowed to pick and choose the venue but to my neighbors all the time.

Lord's Day, 30 August 2015

Psalms 119:44-45 I will keep your law continually, forever and ever, and I shall walk in a wide place, for I have sought your precepts.

To keep Your Law continually means to me that I will seek to live according to Your Word over both time and space. No matter when the circumstances arise, no matter where I am, no matter what the circumstances are, I am to live within the boundaries of Your Law. I am to seek understanding of Your Word, Your precepts, Your Law, and to be unswerving in my determination to correctly divide and apply that understanding to my life. There is no aspect of my life that is to be hidden from right and proper application of Your guidance.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Psalms



August 24-30, 2015

Voices Together is extracted from my daily meditations and is shared in the hope that others will be encouraged to turn to the Psalms as a rich source of guidance for prayer and meditation.

It is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, www.ailbe.org; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ.

These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to: voices@ailbe.org

or to
Pastor John Nunnikhoven
The Church at Prison, Inc.
PO Box 8318
Essex Junction, VT 05452