

# Walk Worthy

of the calling with which you were called. – Eph. 4:1

EPHESIANS 4:1-5:21

LESSON 11 – I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH – EPH. 4:16

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# Ephesians 4:11-16

- ▶ 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

# Building the Church

## ▶ **The Church Building vs. Building the Church**

- ▶ Church growth and growth in the Christian life is growth in Christ. We abide in Him, He lives in us and through us. He is the Vine, we the branches, and without Him we can do nothing. He is, after all, the Head of the Church, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the Creator and Redeemer. And He told us He would build His church.
- ▶ And there we get at the root of the problem with much of the “church growth” schemes out there in books and seminars, etc. They forget that it is Christ who will build His church. We are involved in the process as He uses us in the building, but ultimately, we must come to hear and understand this truth – Christ does the building. We are not the Architect. We are not the Builder. We are not the Contractor or even the Building Inspector.
- ▶ *We are the building.*

# Building the Church

- ▶ Even as in evangelism we sow the seed, and water the seed already sown, it is God who always gives the increase. He harvests. He builds. Church growth is not about what we can do for God. Listen, this is serious! Church growth is not about what we can do for God to expand His Kingdom.
- ▶ Too many wrongly think that Christ empowers us for the work and that we do the work – that we make disciples and we win converts, we build the church and we reach the world with the gospel. Yes He empowers us to obey. He gives us by grace the ability both to will and to do His good pleasure. But Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith. It starts and ends with Him. He seeks and saves that which is lost. He died. He rose. He saves. He builds.

# Building the Church

- ▶ It is time that we understood this and applied the truth by doing the ministry (work of service), and in so doing get out of the way so that He can do what He does – build His church. He has given us His program. He has given us a blueprint to follow. Why do we think that we must circumvent the Word of God and find new and innovative ways to do what He tells us HE WILL DO? Why do we try to do His job? Is that not where Lucifer first sinned?? (“I will be like the Most High....”)
- ▶ Christ says to us, “I will build My church.” So let us see how He does this.

# Spiritual Power

- ▶ In order to build the Body, a spiritual entity comprised of the redeemed coming to maturity in the faith and in service to God and one another, we must find the source of spiritual power. How is this going to be done? In reality it is very simple. We do what the Apostles did. We do what Spurgeon did and encouraged other preachers to do. We do what the Bible tells us to do.
- ▶ We preach Christ.
- ▶ So from where does this spiritual power come?

# Spiritual Power

- ▶ **From Christ** – Col. 2:18-19
- ▶ Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.
- ▶ Christ, as our Head, provides life and power. He holds the Body together and enables it to function. It is He who perfectly equips the Church.

# Spiritual Power

- ▶ According to 2 Peter 1:3-4 we are told that Christ has given us “all things that pertain to life and godliness.” If Christ gives us everything we need to live and everything we need to be godly, what do we need outside of Christ?
- ▶ There is nothing to covet. Nothing to lust after. Nothing to envy or crave after. Christ is all in all. With Him and in Him we have all of our needs met – He is our Shepherd so we “shall not want.” And from Him comes the power (the desire and ability) to mature. He grows us as we abide in Him.
- ▶ He gives us through the Word the things that we need to be equipped as His saints.



# Spiritual Power

- ▶ **By Christ** – Gal. 2:20
- ▶ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
- ▶ He facilitates proper (healthy) function and growth by what we each supply as we do the good works He has prepared for us from beforehand. He gives us what we need so that we can pass that supply on and give what is needed to fulfill His requirements for growth. He serves us so that we may serve each other.
- ▶ Remember what it is that we are equipped for in the Body? For the work of ministry. By giving us the Holy Spirit, by indwelling us, God lives in and through us and we are now able to obey Him where before we had not even the inkling of a desire to know Him or follow Him.

# Spiritual Power

- ▶ This is Romans 8:9-11 in action:
- ▶ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
- ▶ And why then have we been given this power?

# Spiritual Power

- ▶ **For Christ** – John 13:34-35
- ▶ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
- ▶ We, having been equipped for the work of service, do now by use of our spiritual gifts, in obedience to our Lord, minister to one another, causing edification in love which brings about growth. Growth comes as a result of an inward supply and an inward process, not because of outward methods or forces.
- ▶ He edifies His Church and grows it. The equipping, the ministry, these He uses to work out the process of edifying the Body – building His House!

# Loving God, Loving Each Other

- ▶ Church Growth is not about numbers, money, buildings, influence, political reach or power. It is about obedience and surrender to the Lord Jesus who is Head of the Body. As we love Him and love each other we find that the ultimate expression of love is summed up for us in 1 John 1:5; 3:16-19:
- ▶ This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

# From Christ, By Christ, For Christ

- ▶ So the spiritual power necessary for church growth is from Christ, by Christ, and for Christ! Our lives, our worship, our church, our family – everything we are and have should be centered around Jesus Christ!! We do not preach self – we preach Christ. We do not grow the church – Christ grows His Church. We do not have the ability in and of ourselves to desire, believe, please, or obey God – but Christ enables us!

# From Christ, By Christ, For Christ

- ▶ We see then that for the Church to grow properly, in a spiritually healthy manner, we must have:
- ▶ 1. Christ as the Ruling Head
- ▶ 2. Unity in the Body
- ▶ 3. Intimacy (love) in our relationship with Christ and with others

# From Christ, By Christ, For Christ

- ▶ And for us to maintain intimate relationships will require:
- ▶ 1. Honesty with God and each other (about sin, ourselves and our needs)
- ▶ 2. Trust (Faith) in Christ and each other, complete and real faith (1 Cor. 13:7)!
- ▶ 3. Brotherly Love enabled by the Holy Spirit, lived in daily life

# From Christ, By Christ, For Christ

- ▶ Interesting then that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! Our all in all. So in response, where is our love? Is it found either in 1 John 2:3-6 or later in verses 15-17?
- ▶ Our love is either evidenced here:
- ▶ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.



# From Christ, By Christ, For Christ

- ▶ Or it is found here:
- ▶ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.
- ▶ What does your life say about what you love?

# Next Week

- ▶ Lesson 12 – Do You Know the Difference? – Eph. 4:15-16