

A HEALTHY BODY

Ephesians 4:1-16

March 20, 2022

1. There is Only One Body - vv. 4-6

The invisible church vs. the visible church...

The church gathered vs. the church scattered...

Greek: *spoudazontes* - spare no effort, continuous, diligent activity

v. 3 ^(NLT) - Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit. ESV: [Be] eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit

vv. 2-3 ^(The Message) - "I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences."

John 13:35

2. There are Many Different Gifts - vv. 7-11

Unity, not uniformity...

v. 7 ^(ESV), "Grace was given to each one of us."

"Grace" (Greek: *charis*)

(Romans 12:6)

Apostles

Greek: *apostolos* - to 'send' - in this sense all Christians are 'apostles'

Secondly: There were 'apostles of the churches', messengers sent out by a church either as missionaries or on some other errand. (2 Corinthians 8:23; cf. Philippians 2:25)

Thirdly: there were the 'apostles of Christ' (Acts 1:21, 22; 10:40-41; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8-9)

Prophets

A prophet was a person who 'spoke from the mouth of the Lord' and spoke his word 'faithfully' (Cf. Jer. 23:16-32).

SC Q. 24: How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?

Answer: Christ executes the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his word & Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

In a sense we are all prophets...

Evangelists

 **Pastors (ESV: *shepherds*, lit: *herdsman of sheep or oxen*)**

 **Teachers (James 4:1)**

3. The Body Grows When These Two Truths Work Together - vv. 11-16

vv. 15-16 ^(NIV84): "Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

All of these gifts were given "to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ" (v. 12)

These gifts are necessary & will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith & knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord (v. 13)

Our goal, as a church must be that we would: [Speak] the truth in love, [so that] we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (vv. 15-16 ^{NIV84})

"There are no love handles on the Body of Christ!"

(Ruling Elder Robert Vernon from Tennessee)

Application:

- We have each been given certain gifts, some natural, some spiritual.
- Every one of us has a role to play here at RPC (or wherever your home church is). If you are not "doing your part," you are hurting the church! You are hindering its growth and grieving the Spirit!
- It is crucial that we bear with each other in love, that be willing to both SPEAK the truth in love to each other and be willing to HEAR the truth spoken to us!

A Truth to Remember: God gives many spiritual gifts to His people, and they are given for the benefit and the building up of His body the church, not for individual glory or blessing.

A Challenge to Consider: Are you investing what God has entrusted to you to help build His body, the church? Are you truly a part of this body? Are you contributing to her growth and the health?

One thing I heard this morning was...

One way I heard the gospel this morning was...